WP3 - POWERPACK TOOLKIT ACTIVITIES

Social well-being: Card status game

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1. General Information

Well-being dimension: Social awareness, empathy, inclusion, active bystander behaviour
Target age group: 9–14 years
Activity format: Experiential simulation and reflection activity
Duration: 15–25 minutes
Group size: 6–25 students
Transversal approach: develops empathy, social awareness and active bystander skills by allowing students to experience inclusion, exclusion and group dynamics firsthand. It integrates social-emotional learning, cooperative learning and ethical reasoning across multiple contexts, fostering reflection on responsible and supportive social behavior.

2. Learning Objectives

- Recognize how social status and group behaviour influence how people are treated.
- Experience feelings related to inclusion, neutrality, and exclusion.
- Reflect on the role of bystanders in unfair situations.
- Identify positive ways to support others and promote respectful interactions.

3. Materials Needed

- a standard deck of playing cards
- tape or sticky notes (optional, to place cards on foreheads)

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4. Activity Steps

Step 1: Preparation (3-5 min)

Give each student one playing card and ask them to place it on their forehead (or hold it up), without looking at it. Everyone else can see the card, but the student cannot. Explain that students will walk around the room and interact briefly with each other, based on the card they see;

- High cards (K, Q, J, A): Treat the person with respect and interest (smile, talk to them, include them).
- Middle cards (7–10): Interact normally or neutrally.
- Low cards (2–5): Ignore slightly, avoid interaction, or end conversations quickly.

Step 2: Interaction round (5 min)

Students move around the room and interact with several classmates. They treat others according to the card value they see, as described above.

Students should not reveal their own or other students' cards. During the interaction, students try to guess their own card value based on how people treat them.

Step 2: Reflection (10-15 min)

After the interaction, students look at their cards and sit in a circle for discussion.

Possible reflection questions:

- How did you feel during the activity?
- Did anyone feel ignored or excluded?
- Did anyone notice unfair treatment?
- Did anyone try to change the situation or include others?
- What could an active bystander do in such situations in real life?

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5. Teacher Notes & Tips

- Make it clear that ignoring others is only part of the simulation, not acceptable behaviour outside the activity.
- Watch interactions to support students who may feel uncomfortable.
- Link the experience to bullying, exclusion, popularity, or group dynamics in school.
- The discussion afterwards is the most important part of the learning process.

Cross-curricular use:

- Social Studies: to discuss social hierarchies, inclusion, fairness and rights, linking classroom experiences to society and ethical behaviour.
- Drama / Performing Arts: role-play scenarios from the game, practising non-verbal communication, emotional expression and collaborative problem-solving.
- Language Arts: write reflections, journal entries or short stories about their experiences, exploring perspective-taking, empathy and narrative voice.

6. Reflection prompt for students

- How did you feel during the activity?
- Did anyone try to change the situation or include others?
- How can we notice when someone is being treated unfairly?
- What can an active bystander do in such situations in real life?
- How could we make everyone feel included?

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7. Tips for adaptation for children with special needs

Easier Version (Early Primary / extra support):

- Reduce group size for easier social management.
- Use fewer card categories instead of all 13 values.
- Provide visual prompts or badges for high/medium/low status so students can quickly recognize interactions.
- Allow a pretend round to ensure understanding of the rules.

Medium Version (Medium Primary / more independence):

- Encourage students to observe body language and social cues to guess their card.
- Give minimal teacher guidance, allowing students to manage interactions themselves.
- Add a reflection prompt after each round to discuss feelings and bystander actions.

Adaptations for Students with Special Needs:

- Use simplified rules or color-coded cards for students with cognitive or attention difficulties.
- Pair students with supportive peers to scaffold participation and reduce anxiety.
- Include additional debriefing and discussion, using visuals or structured sentence starters for students who need help.

8. References (methodological approach)

The activity is grounded in social-emotional learning, cooperative and experiential learning approaches, fostering empathy, perspective-taking, ethical reasoning and active bystander behavior through guided reflection on social interactions.

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