

Documenting SRHR best practices

Pepe the lizard: Preventing the sexual abuse of children¹

Date: 11-02-2023
Country: Colombia

Organization: Profamilia Colombia
Contact: Jesus Pardo, CoE coordinator jesus.pardo@profamilia.org.co

Introduction

In 2022, 11,300 children aged 5-10 were sexually abused in Colombia². Since 2021, Profamilia has strengthened its strategy to address children between 6 and 9 years of age on the importance of affection and self-care, sexual rights, gender, personal relationships and health. Through discussions about the experiences of Pepe, the lizard, they identify how to enjoy responsible and respectful affective relationships, highlight risk factors for child sexual abuse, how to avoid them and how to respond to them.

In schools and community spaces, Profamilia organises a children's fair, which lasts four hours and consists of six stations. Each station takes approximately 25 minutes and includes at least two activities that help children reflect, discuss and learn about sexuality in an age-appropriate way. The fair is one of three strategies that make up Profamilia's 'Un, dos, tres por las infancias' programme.

Stations' Outline

1. Amazing world of love and affection: By discussing photos in which Pepe is exposed to situations of violence or risk, **emotions**, feelings and affectivity are identified. Then, each participant can take a selfie with Pepe, expressing their emotions or identity.
2. Amazing world of what makes me happy: Through a puppets' play representing traditional ideas about **gender** roles, with prompts from the narrator, participants can express their ideas. A space to un-learn stereotypes and to imagine more equal gender roles is created. Then, each participant draws a picture of a situation that is usually assigned to a gender that could be different, for example boys and girls playing at cooking.
3. Amazing world of rights to live: The story of Pepe and his sister Aleja is read aloud. It presents risky situations and, in four moments, asks participants to choose one of three options on how Aleja and Pepe respond. The story illustrates decisions focused on self-care. Next, the '**sexual rights** wheel' is played, discussing examples. Finally, each participant has a sheet with 8 images of Pepe in which rights are violated. On it, they stick stickers of feelings that these situations can generate.
4. Amazing world of body care: The group divides into pairs to put together jigsaw puzzles of Pepe. There are various designs showing different forms of **self-care and healthy lifestyles** (for example Pepe taking care of his personal hygiene, Pepe resting). When they are assembled, they are shown to the group and discussed.



¹ This methodology has been developed by Profamilia independently, without GAC support. It is one of 14 examples from Profamilia's practice documented in *Se hace camino al andar*, a booklet produced by Profamilia's CoE with GAC support.

² UNICEF

Then the group puts together a cartoon about self-care. Each participant has a part of the cartoon on a sheet of paper, which is stuck on two banners with ten vertical boxes.

5. Amazing world of self-care and prevention of sexual abuse: This station encourages participants to adopt **protective factors against child sexual abuse**. First, appropriate ways of expressing affection are discussed, using 'the colour wheel'. Then the group makes up a story: a Pepe doll is passed around as a speaking token, so whoever has it adds a part of the story.
6. Amazing world of friendships and values: Here there are three games: 1) *Values bowling* (each one has a label with a friendship value) 2) *Colourful Friendships* where pairs of participants advance on a colourful mat with colourful inflatable dice, identifying important aspects of friendship and 3) *Pepe's Foosball*: about family and its role in our lives.



Complementary approaches

In addition to the fair format, where a shorter intervention is required, Profamilia offers a one-hour puppet show.

In addition, they offer workshops for families, for teachers and for children aged 6-9.

Profamilia is developing a website that has additional materials for this age group where they hope to publish SRR podcasts that children can listen to.

Potential for replication

This methodology and materials are a simple, engaging, organised, and effective way of addressing key aspects of sexuality education at primary school age. Profamilia is keen to share this experience via their CoE in upcoming years. Profamilia's approach can be complemented with experiences from other MAs, to generate key messages and a suit of recommended activities that would position IPPF to help families and schools around the world to openly discuss sexuality and sexual wellbeing with young children, setting a safe environment for further discussions later in life.