

# *Persona Doll Method in Hungary*



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## Persona Doll method

- Effective, non-threatening and enjoyable way to raise **equality issues**
- Innovative way to counter **stereotypical and discriminatory** thinking
- For the age of 3-8 years



# For whom?

- Pre-school teachers (3-6 years)
- First grades teachers (6-8 years)
- Teacher training students
- Teacher trainers
- School psychologists

## Persona Dolls in practice

- own individual personalities
- life histories
- likes and dislikes
- visit, usually at circle or group time and
- children quickly accept them as friends
- they share their joys and sympathize with them when they are sad.



# Persona Dolls

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Majority”

Roma

Asian

African-American

Overweight

Wheel chair

Glasses



# Using Persona Dolls

- Involving other teachers
- Involving parents
- Dolls come in circle time, once a week
- Dolls belong to teachers not to children
- Dolls don't speak, they whisper to teacher, who translates

# The basics of Persona Doll method

- The dolls help children to express their feelings and ideas, think critically, challenge **unfair treatment** and develop **empathy** with people who are different to themselves.
- The Dolls and their stories are powerful tools for exploring, uncovering and confronting **bias**.
- Raise awareness and offer opportunities for reflection and discussion of issues including **racism, gender, disability, health, culture, religious** and other equality issues.

# And more...

- help them **unlearn** any prejudiced and discriminatory attitudes and actions they may have absorbed and to develop the skills they need to challenge racism and other social inequalities
- build their sense of identity and **feelings of belonging**
- build relationships based on **respect** for themselves and for others
- encourage them to be enthusiastic, empathetic, thoughtful and **critical learners** willing to question their own assumptions and beliefs.
- learn about their own **rights and responsibilities** and the rights of others
- address **controversial** issues, e.g. racism in circle time, in citizenship education and in other areas of the curriculum
- practice **democracy** and take meaningful action to bring about change.

# Other topics to be discussed with the Dolls

- Death
- Moving
- Birth
- Elderly
- „Listen to me”
- Poverty
- Teasing

# Persona Doll versus „class doll”

- Different in size
- Special (not in the store)
- Does not stay in the classroom
- „Human” problems
- A class mate, not a toy

# Persona Doll trainings in Hungary

- Pilot trainings
  - 2007 december (Debrecen)
  - 2008 march (Budapest)
  - 2008 april (Budapest)
  - 2008 september (Budapest)

# **„Eastern European Persona Dolls**

- **Different countries, different problems**
- **Eastern European network**
- **Roma case studies**
- **Financial issues**
- **Time constraint of teachers**
- **Educational policy reforms**

# Problems to come . . .

- Financing
- Time
- Parents
- Self-knowledge
- Importance



**Thank you for your attention!**

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