**Conflict resolution in sociomoral discussions in Kindergarten**

**Abstract:**

The aim of this study is to assess children’s strategies of conflict resolution during sociomoral discussions in Kindergarten. The reading and discussion sessions with 5-6 year-old children were run according to DeVries & Zan (2012) and Schillinger (2013) using the illustrated dilemma stories by Goolsby and DeVries (1994; translated to German by Knoop & Lind, 2012). The main goal of the group time activity is to foster children´s reflections about socio and moral issues. The stories used for the discussion present a hypothetical moral dilemma which is close to the children´s experiences in Kindergarten. The conduction of the discussions is based on the pedagogical principles of teaching as proposed by DeVries & Zan (2012) and Lind (2012). After reading or telling the story and reassuring that children understood the dilemma, teachers encourage children to recognize different perspectives of all characters involved in the story and to engage on reflexion. Teachers accept the opinions and positions of the children and do not place value judgements. A particular aim of the discussion is to promote children`s awareness of different points of view. The discussion sessions were videotaped. Qualitative content analysis of children`s contributions was performed according to Mayring (2010). Children`s suggestions for conflict resolution during the group discussion were analysed in relation to Kohlberg`s theory of moral development and Selman`s stages of perspective-taking. Results show that children tried to avoid conflicts. They made efforts to find solutions so that children (in the story) could play together again. Most arguments were second-stage level arguments (Kohlberg). Children showed awareness about different perspectives, but they did not consider all of them in their resolutions (Selman first stage). Friendship is shown to have a particular influence on the solutions presented.

**References:**

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