

LISBON
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Family gatherings for refugee families in Norway

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Family gatherings

- Family gatherings for refugee families across Norway
- The gathering lasted over three days on campus, boarding schools, refugee centers or hotel
- Refugees from different countries: Kosovo, Somalia, Chechnya, Kurdistan and Afghanistan - only one nationality at every family gathering

Family gatherings

- 7 to 10 families
- 16 -20 children between 6 and 18 years, participated in trauma groups
- About 20 trainees from the local health team and professionals from the community participated, e.g. doctors, nurses, teachers, social workers, observed our work
 - teaching and supervision
- 2 psychologists, a musician, an interpreter and interpreting assistants

Structure of sessions

- Morning meeting for all families
- Trauma group for children and adolescents 2 hours
- Teaching for parents 2 hours
- Lunch
- Trauma group for children adolescents continue, 1 hour
- Parents meeting 2-3 hours
- Teaching and supervision of trainees

Structure of sessions

- Morning Meeting:
 - all the families gathered
 - introduction,
 - creating a common platform and understanding of the therapeutic work we do
 - Get approval from parents
 - Music: create fellowship and communication between us and them, a signature tune for the gathering

Trauma groups for children

- Trauma groups for children and youths
 - Presentation - map of participants to remember names and who is siblings
 - Map of their home country
 - Create a common platform for working in the group:
 - “across the bridge”,
 - psychoeducation about trauma and trauma intervention
 - Regulate emotions
 - «Soft methods» to help them begin to symbolize their traumatic experiences

Trauma groups for children: structure

- Task group
 - Sitting around table
 - Psychological training
 - Soft methods
 - Workbook
- Talking group
 - Tell their story
 - Rituals
- Music

Task group

- Workbook
- Soft methods –
 - word associations
 - psychological training
 - finding words to feelings
 - Complete sentences that captures their situations
 - Create stories to pictures
 - Diagram of how they feel in different situations throughout a day

Task group

- worst memory
- the story of their lives
- expression of feelings through different methods:
 - placing feelings in the body
 - grading feelings in circles and charts
- write letters to family in their homecountry or people they lost – saying goodbye
- relaxation exercises
- creating a safe place

Talking group

- In working with the soft methods often traumatic experiences comes forward
- Most of the children wants to tell their story more systematic
 - group leaders have to be very sensitive to the other members in the group
- Sitting in a circle, together as siblings
- Create a narrative
- Symbolize
- Integrate

Talking group

- realization
- integrate memories
- affect regulation
 - The structure of the meeting
 - Music
 - Safe place
 - Switch between emotion and cognition
 - focusing on the psychoeducation and models for understanding the integration of trauma and anxiety

Trauma groups for children

- Music
 - Very famous children's musician in Norway
- Using music as a therapeutic tool
 - To create a structure for the group
 - open and close the group
 - song where children can sing along
 - Cohesion and safety
 - Transitions in the group process
 - Regulate emotions

Parents meeting

- collaborative meeting
- motivate them to talk to their children about their experiences
- briefing about the children group
- information from parents:
 - the childrens trauma experience and loss
 - what they worry about regarding the kids
- supervision of parents to continue work from the children's groups at home
- questions from parents about how to help the children

Teaching parents

- stress and stress management
- an understanding between different cultures
- information about the Norwegian school system