

## **School governance (for children)**

The Convention on the Rights of the Child recognizes the right of children to express themselves on issues that concern them and, more broadly, the right to participate in their development and the development of structures in which they are involved. In this context, the child-friendly school must allow children to play a more active role in school life.

Thus, children can organize themselves into government or government school children to improve the environment or conditions of school life, improve relationships within the school and the community, to remove all forms of discrimination or resolve academic problems.

- Possible areas of application
- Hygiene (clean school classrooms, latrines, personal hygiene for children, water hygiene, hand washing, hygiene of food sold at the exit of the school, etc. ..)
- Health (Health Club followed vaccinations students or younger siblings in the family, keeping the pharmacy school, links with the clinic, student information on STDs and AIDS, sex education etc ...)
- Fight against discrimination (discrimination against girls, unequal distribution of responsibilities and chores, injustices in the school, and integration of children with disabilities and orphans, etc ...)
- Environment (planting trees, flowers, burning garbage, painting buildings, etc.).
- Culture, Sport (choir, dance, drama, sports, etc. ..)
- Solidarity (supervision of students in difficulty and CP SIL by CM students, support for disabled children, etc.).

Advice

It is better to choose a small project succeed and want to do too much and do not do it.

- Learning Objectives

In government or government school children, children are actors and decision makers. This approach, which involved children by letting them exercise responsibility, is very informative and almost always gives excellent results. It is part of the so-called active pedagogies.

The Government or Government school children helps students:

- exercise real responsibility;
- to organize a team, develop team spirit and solidarity;
- to set goals and work rules;
- establish self-discipline;
- develop self-confidence, enhance their own abilities;
- identify problems and find solutions;
- learn to account;
- learn the basics of associational life, local democracy.

Advice for teachers:

Teachers can use pedagogically through the various disciplines of the program, the activities of the Government of the children. These activities correspond to "scenarios" advocated by the NAP.

- The organization of children

Children organize themselves in the image of a government, its ministers and ministries. They can follow the following steps:

- Organize discussions on the Government or government school children and areas that need to be improved in school and in the life of the school.
- Discuss the criteria to be a child-friendly school and children's rights.
- Select areas, areas in which we want to do business.
- Students form a team for each area selected.
- Students elect ministers (by sector) and Prime Minister (who coordinates all).
- By sector, set goals and develop an action plan with activities to be undertaken to achieve the objectives.
- S arrange for these activities, establish work rules, predict how we will monitor and control the activities in the action plan.
- Conduct activities.
- Report to the results (keep a notebook, accountable to students, teachers).
- Organize a meeting for parents and explain what has been done. Each minister says his action and results.

Three (3) tips:

- a) Divide responsibilities among a large number of children, so that everyone has at least a little responsibility.

b) The responsibilities may be rotating. Eg ministers change every quarter or once a quarter and two other responsibilities also change.

c) Do not forget to evenly distribute responsibilities between girls and boys. Girls must play a role, as boys: they must also be Minister and Prime Minister.

The whole process is very educational. It provides children with situations found in everyday life. It develops thinking skills, organization and animation.

- Tools

Each team will have a book which shall be entered:

- The objectives and main activities
- The list of students as part of "ministry"
- The list of committees established
- The decisions and conclusions of each meeting
- Results
- Miscellaneous

- The teacher's role

The teacher will play the role of initiator to initiate the idea and help children to organize. Then it will play an advisory role and support, albeit discreet, light, leaving both children responsibilities and decision-making.

- Links with the School Director and BDE

The Director of the school and diocesan office are informed of the implementation of the Government or Government school children.

"Departments" who need support to carry out certain activities explain their project and clarify their application, preferably during a meeting (they can also write a query).

The School Director and / or the diocesan office can support the activities of a particular "department" in different ways:

- Providing support a resource person, providing expertise, advice.
- By providing a local, a wheelbarrow, tools, supplies, etc ...
- By providing a small budget, the team will report children
- Etc.

- A health club at school?

It is interesting that each school has a health club run by students with the support of teachers and resource persons.

The health club can be one of the "ministries" Government or government school children. If the theme is chosen health as a priority issue, the health club itself can be organized in Government schools or Government children.

An example of meeting with parents

After 6 months of operation, the Government school children in Benin, which focused its activity on school health, urged parents to explain their actions.

Children themselves have organized the meeting and it is they who led from start to finish. Each Minister (7 students CE2 and CM2) presents its field of action and results and why these actions were taken. Prime Minister (a student of CM1) entered and opened the debate with parents.

At the end of the meeting, parents expressed their surprise at all that the children have made and their ability to carry out this meeting to clearly present what they had done. They said that their children had learned a lot and even gave a lesson. They left very happy and the kids were both very proud and valued, ready to go even further.

- A Children's Parliament at school?

Some schools have already established a Children's Parliament which includes students representing all classes of the school.

Its goals:

- Promote the Rights of the Child to students (and teachers, parents).
- To respect the rights of the child in school.