

This information sheet is part of a set that was prepared based on the experiences of NP workers in Quebec. The purpose of these info sheets is to equip facilitators for their facilitation role and for managing more specific situations in order to advance the skills development and support of each participating parent. They complement and supplement other program documents.

Program

Nobody's Perfect



GENERAL INFORMATION

Facilitation Tips

All human beings belong to groups that exert considerable influence. Whether in families, occupational activities or recreation, a significant percentage of human activity is carried out in groups.

Not only is the group the primary context for learning, identity building and skills acquisition, it can also be a powerful catalyst for personal and social change.

A FEW RULES FOR PRACTICE

- Since there are different types of interventions, approaches and groups, facilitators must adapt their methods to the needs of the participating parents.
- Group intervention does not suit everyone's needs; you have to determine whether this is the right method for each person who wants to participate in an NP group. A group approach meets some, but not all, needs.
- A facilitator must be sensitive both to the behaviour and needs of each member and to the group's dynamics.

- Achieving the group's objectives depends partly on good planning of group activities. That planning must be adapted to each group, based on the characteristics of the participating parents.
- Everything that happens within a group is a learning opportunity.
- It is important to be creative when intervening in a group.
- The facilitator must be able to justify his/her interventions.
- The facilitator must enable each member and the group as a whole to gain a feeling of power, enabling them to act effectively.
- To be effective, a group must be based on an atmosphere of trust and acceptance.
- The facilitator must always be attentive to the strengths and skills of the participating parents.

Evaluating each meeting

- Since learning that goes unidentified is lost learning, it is crucial to evaluate each meeting and do an end-of-program evaluation.



- It is important to take the time to enable the participating parents to incorporate what they have learned:
 - “In one word, how would you describe the meeting?”
 - “Two words that made a big impression on you?”
 - “One aspect that has changed for you?”
 - “What did you learn about yourself? About the others?”
- Starting halfway through the program, it is important to do a meeting countdown with the group to announce that the end is approaching and begin the mourning process. At the second-last meeting, announce that some participants may be tempted not to show up and that some parents will experience discomfort: “Together we’re going to learn how to say goodbye.” “We’re in the process of experiencing bereavement; we’re learning how to end relationships.”

As a facilitator, you have to remember that the parents are likely to arrive at the final meeting in a state of panic, with more problems than at the start of the program. The group needs to be reassured and reminded of what they have learned and the difficulties that have been resolved.

PLANNING A GROUP PROGRAM

A) Establishing the objectives:

- Each meeting and the entire group program must be well planned out.
- Establishing an overall plan facilitates the planning for each meeting by considering the topics to be addressed at the appropriate time for addressing them based on the group’s different stages of development.
- Planning enables the facilitator to properly “lead” the group toward achieving its objectives..
- Each meeting objective must contribute to achieving the group’s general objective.
- Establishing objectives also helps in
 - providing the parents with information about the content and the group approach;
 - evaluating and correcting the group approach along the way;
 - determining when the meetings can end; and
 - evaluating the outcomes.

B) Choosing the activities:

- To use learning activities effectively, the facilitator must be prepared and flexible.
- An activity is chosen in keeping with the meeting’s objective.

Sample activities: working alone, in twos or in threes; working as a whole group; doing a roundtable, brainstorming, situational scenarios, etc.

Note: A group made up mainly of mothers will run differently than one made up of fathers.

ADULT EDUCATION

“Setting an example by being the example” means **walking the talk and following through on what I say and share, in order to draw on all the learning processes of the person in front of me.**

It is the example you set for the participating parents during the group meetings that will have the greatest impact on their participation style. If you want the meetings to focus on their skills and empowerment, let them see how you are taking their experiences, aptitudes and expectations into account when facilitating.

The primacy of the group process, as upheld by the facilitator, emphasizes the importance of sharing responsibility, power and knowledge between the facilitator and the participants.

“The magic of a group” is therefore a powerful driver of learning.



The adult education model is based on the following assumptions:

- Adults need to know why they have to learn something.
- Adults need to be treated as individuals who are capable of managing themselves and do not appreciate being told what to do.
- Adults are prepared to learn if the knowledge enables them to deal with real situations.
- Adults are motivated internally by the desire to increase their personal or occupational satisfaction, their self-esteem, etc.

The learning situation in adult education:

- fosters an informal, relaxed, egalitarian, friendly learning atmosphere that focuses on the learners' self-esteem, needs, and desire to cooperate;
- enables adults to draw on their own experiences, independence, ability to adapt to change and inherent motivation.

The facilitator becomes someone who supports the tapping of those resources and maintains a balance between the training structure and the amount of independence given to the participant.

TO SUMMARIZE, ADULTS LEARN BETTER WHEN ...

- the learning aligns with what they want: adults know what their needs are and are always happy to share the responsibility for their own learning.
- the learning is participatory: active involvement in the learning process makes it more effective and impactful because it is easier to put into practice.
- the learning is based on real-life experiences: adults bring with them a host of experiences that they are eager to share.
- the learning is paired with thinking: adults like to ponder past experiences, draw conclusions and derive principles that they will be able to apply in the future.
- the learning is reaction-based: to be effective, the learning must factor in reactions that are both positive and negative and that suggest changes and improvements.
- the learning is based on respect for the participant: mutual respect and trust between the facilitator and participant and among the participants enhances the learning process.
- the learning occurs in an atmosphere of safety: it is crucial for the facilitator to establish an atmosphere that is conducive to respectful interactions.

QUELQUES RÉFÉRENCES POUR EN SAVOIR PLUS

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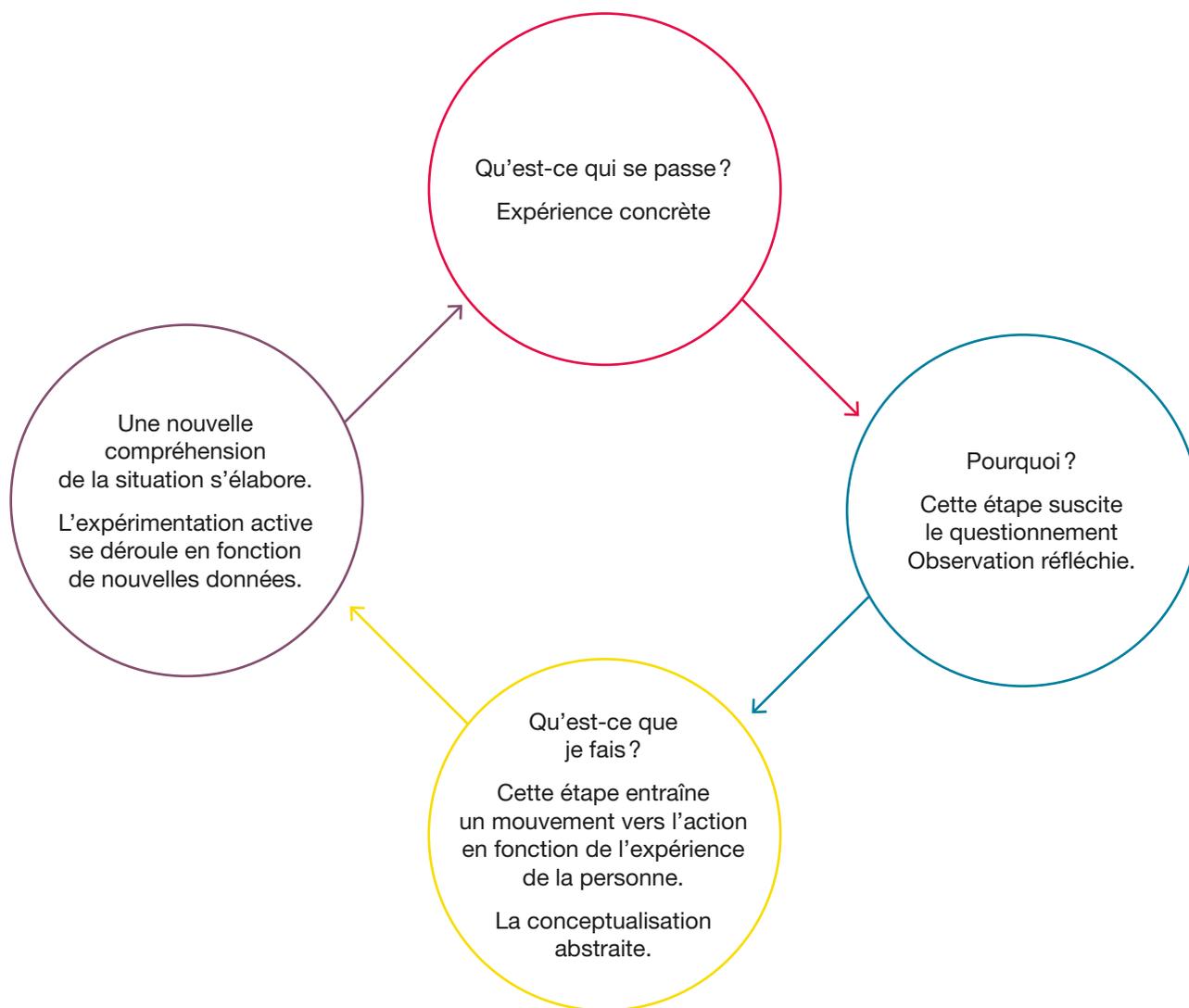
Cette fiche a été élaborée avec le soutien financier de Family
Resource Programs Canada et l'appui de l'Agence de santé
publique du Canada.



ANNEXE : LE CYCLE D'APPRENTISSAGE FONDÉ SUR L'EXPÉRIENCE (KOLB ET FRY, 1975)

Le style d'apprentissage, c'est le mode personnel de saisie et de traitement de l'information. C'est donc la manière préférentielle d'un individu pour aborder et résoudre un problème. Le cycle d'apprentissage quant à lui, favorise une plus grande intégration et fluidité des apprentissages en permettant le recours à un ensemble de compétences.

L'approche andragogique offre des expériences d'apprentissage qui permettent aux participants d'acquérir des renseignements et des connaissances, et d'appliquer ce qu'ils ont appris de façon concrète et significative.



Ce processus, lorsqu'il est intégré par le participant, lui permet d'enrichir son expérience d'apprentissage, d'augmenter sa confiance en lui et en ses capacités. D'où l'importance de permettre une pratique régulière lors du programme de groupe comme dans le cadre de Y'a personne de parfait.