



Deprived Backgrounds

Pupils coming from families with many children



Pupils coming from families with many children



Classroom-based tips (focus on instructional methods)

1. **Create new experiences for learners.** Most pupils from large families may not have ever left their town or county. It is up to educators to offer pupils new learning and cultural experiences; encourage them to watch videos about other parts of the world, invite guest speakers to your class to talk about their experiences, and take your class on field trips.
2. **Challenge stereotypes about large families or parents who have many children** that may become apparent in the curriculum or in discussions in the classroom.
3. **Teach about diversity and differences** by presenting or referring to different types of families that exist all over the world, without making references to specific individuals in the class, or their families. Emphasise that there are many different types of families: some with a few children, some with many children; some without children; some with both parents present, some with one parent present; and some with grandparents or aunts and uncles and so on.
4. **Become aware of your own stereotypes** about pupils from large families and consciously work to resolve them.
5. **Share your thoughts and findings about pupils from large families with your colleagues**, to encourage them to reflect upon the issue as well.
6. **Present the advantages of large families**, without referring to individual pupils or their families by name: e.g. cooperation, sharing, taking initiative, self-reliance, assuming responsibility.
7. **Ensure all pupils in your class feel they belong to a team**, in which everyone has a responsibility, giving them opportunities to be positive role models in your classroom. Children from large families quickly learn to work together as a team. They understand that being part of a larger group requires everyone to do their share and that trying to skip out on their chores or responsibilities may have a negative effect on others.
8. **Provide time during the school day for homework completion**; pupils may be more able to complete homework at school rather than at home, in the presence of many siblings and distractions.



School-based practical tips (focus on instructional methods)

Class Divisions / Arrangements

Include pupils from large families in events and activities by differentiating and emphasising their roles. For example, consider giving adequate parts to pupils coming from large families and emphasise their capacity for flexibility and taking initiative.

Community

Organise educational visits and school excursions. Trips are essential for every pupil's development and interaction with the surrounding environment. Take advantage of grants and funding that can help a whole classroom of pupils visit unexpected places.

Curricular Adaptations

1. Organise educational visits and school excursions. Trips are essential for every pupil's development and interaction with the surrounding environment. Take advantage of grants and funding that can help a whole classroom of pupils visit unexpected places.
2. Include pupils from large families in events and activities by differentiating and emphasising their roles. For example, consider giving adequate parts to pupils coming from large families and emphasise their capacity for flexibility and taking initiative.

Food (canteen, visits, camps, trips)

Provide school canteen discounts for pupils coming from low-income families. These should be provided discreetly.

Educational visits / field trips / camps / school exchanges / trips abroad

1. Organise educational visits and school excursions. Trips are essential for every pupil's development and interaction with the surrounding environment. Take advantage of grants and funding that can help a whole classroom of pupils visit unexpected places.
2. When organising school trips, provide gratuity or reductions for pupils from families with financial challenges. These should be provided discreetly.

Parents / Parents Associations

1. Build relationships; provide supportive relationships with pupils and their families, irrespective of their financial and educational background.

2. Arrange meetings between the parents and the staff to discuss pupils progress, and to enhance the collaboration between home and school. This will help to monitor progress and to discuss issues that might be related to pupils' social life, such as marginalisation, social interactions with peers, behaviour at home and self-esteem.

School Celebrations / Events / Activities

Include pupils from large families in events and activities by differentiating and emphasising their roles. For example, consider giving adequate parts to pupils coming from large families and emphasise their capacity for flexibility and taking initiative.

School Purchases

Equip the classrooms with computers for each pupil so as to offer equal learning opportunities for those who do not have a computer at home.

Pupil Support

1. **Build relationships;** provide supportive relationships with pupils and their families, irrespective of their financial and educational background.
2. **Offer pupils extra support if possible,** including individual teaching support, and language support;
3. **Provide school canteen discounts for pupils coming from low-income families.** These should be provided discreetly.
4. **Arrange meetings between the parents and the staff to discuss a pupil's progress,** and to enhance the collaboration between home and school. This will help to monitor progress and to discuss issues that might be related to the pupil's social life, such as marginalisation, social interactions with peers, behaviour at home and self-esteem.
5. **When organising school trips, provide gratuity or reductions for pupils from families with financial challenges.** These should be provided discreetly.

Teacher Professional Development

Provide training for teachers, such as educational psychologist services related to the main difficulties that pupils from large families may encounter in their schooling.

Technology

Equip the classrooms with computers for each pupil so as to offer equal learning opportunities for those who do not have a computer at home.

Supportive Literature

Definition: According to the European Large Family Confederation, “the term ‘large family’ shall have the meaning determined in its Statutes or by the legislation of its respective country. Since this size is not the same in all member organizations, a large family is considered to be one that is raising three or more children.” (http://www.elfac.org/fileadmin/user_upload/PDF/STATUTES_ELFAC.pdf)

Characteristics:

According to Livia Sz. Olah, “large families with 4 or more children are rare in Europe, ranging between 0.6-1.5 per cent in Southern Europe (with higher prevalence in Cyprus and Greece), to 3- 4 per cent in Anglo-Saxon countries and Western Europe, and more than 5 per cent in Hungary and Finland.

We find for countries of high-fertility regions that a relatively large portion of family benefits was spent on services. This is seen only for the most recent years for Southern - and Central-East European countries, except for Hungary where mothers with very young children have extremely low labour force participation rate, hence the service-expenditures probably reflect care-services for older children, which may have less impact on fertility levels.”

(<http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/family/docs/egm15/Olahpaper.pdf>)

Important factors to support families:

1. Financial support for families through benefits, allowances, grants or benefit supplements. Special attention was given namely if it is about family poverty or large families.
2. The reconciliation of work and family life: this objective also covers the promotion of gender equality in access to employment and the creation of conditions so that working parents, especially mothers, can improve their daily life).
3. Although service provision is in many ways tied in with policies related to reconciliation of work and family life, it emerged as an autonomous category that includes references to governmental investment in new facilities and/or improving service provision to families in order to increase coverage rates.
4. The definition of policies aimed at the strengthening of family life. This category includes a broad range of objectives related to parenting itself (in terms of the relationship between parents and children), but also to the family institution in general and its role in society (for instance, the fight against increasing divorce rates in the Russian Federation is one example of the general concern over the family as an institution).
5. The last major category which emerged is related to legislative and/or political measures to protect women and children. This includes, namely, the improvement of existing legislation, or the introduction of new laws, with the purpose of enhancing the protection of children living in institutions.”

(http://www.leavenetwork.org/fileadmin/Leavenetwork/Links_publications/Family_Policy_in_Council_of_Europe_member_states_en.pdf, p.22, 23)

Useful Websites

World Health organization www.who.int

Institute of Child Education and psychology www.icepe.eu

http://www.leavenetwork.org/fileadmin/Leavenetwork/Links_publications/Family_Policy_in_Council_of_Europe_member_states_en.pdf

<http://www.edchange.org/publications/PDK-Pedagogy-of-Engagement.pdf>
<http://www.edutopia.org/blog/how-does-poverty-influence-learning-william-parrett-kathleen-budge>
http://www.elfac.org/fileadmin/user_upload/PDF/STATUTES_ELFAC.pdf
<http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/family/docs/egm15/Olahpaper.pdf>
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Relevant Articles and Reports

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EU Reports

European Commission (2007). Europe's Demographic Future: Facts and figures.
European Commission (2008). Demography Report 2008: Meeting social needs in an ageing society.
European Commission (2010a). Lisbon Strategy evaluation document.
European Commission (2010b). Europe 2020: A strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth.
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European Commission (2013). Barcelona objectives: The development of childcare facilities for young children in Europe with a view to sustainable and inclusive growth.

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Neuman, S. B. (2008). *Educating the other America: Top experts tackle poverty, literacy, and achievement in our schools*. Baltimore, MD: Paul H. Brookes.

Olah, Livia. *Changing families in the European Union: trends and policy implications*, analytical paper, prepared for the United Nations Expert Group Meeting, "Family policy development: achievements and challenges", New York, May 14-15, 2015

William H. Parrett and Kathleen M. Budge, *Turning High-Poverty Schools into High-Performing Schools*, <http://www.edutopia.org/blog/how-does-poverty-influence-learning-william-parrett-kathleen-budge>