The Hjalli-Model in Iceland...

Margrét Pála Ólafsdóttir M.Ed, MBA
Author of the Hjalli-Model
Matthías Matthiasson Cand.Psych

The most controversial kindergarten in Europe

Now an Innovative Educational Company

From the year of 1989

- Single-sex departments in kindergarten
- Special gender-curriculum
- No traditional children’s toys or books
- All-nature playground
- Same arrangement in primary schools
- Making own text-books
• Semi-private, in 9 towns in Iceland
• 12 Kindergartens (12 months-5 years
• 4 Primary schools, 1 also secondary
• 2,000 students
• 430 employees
• Long waiting lists
• On top in tests

The Hjalli Model ... Overview

Program of the Day

7.30 Reception - choice
8.30 Breakfast in groups
9.00 Grouptime – planned activities
10.30 Choice-meeting and playtime
12.00 Lunch – in groups
12.30 Grouptime (rest for the young children)
14.00 Choice-meeting and playtime
15.30 Refreshment in groups
16.00 Choice-meeting and playtime
17.30 Closing time
Grouptime

- Planned activities
- Always the same teacher with the same children all schoolyear long
- Same age and same sex
- 5-10 children pr. teacher (depends on age)
“Welcome to the grouptime“
The teachers are always active with the children
Choice meeting and playtime

- Always the same offers; blocks
- Playing outside is an offer for 30-40% of the group
- A certain number can choose the same area
- The first on the first choice meeting will be the last on the next one and so on ...

Choice meeting on the mat
1. Direct Discrimination

2. Monopoly on Traditional Roles and the Reversed Mirror

3. Gender Differences
Experience ...

Nature ... Or Nurture ...

From Venus og March ???

Not enough
The Hjalll-model

1. Automatic gain
2. Gender-based curriculum
   • Accepting strengths and fighting weaknesses
   • Compensation
3. Interaction every day
GENDER CURRICULUM
Training Social and Individual Skills – Taking Turns
1. Discipline
A session of four weeks in September

respect, behavior, courtesy, conduct

School uniforms to create solidarity
Learning to wait

Enjoying a peaceful environment
More peaceful and quiet than other kindergartens

Even get bored :-)

Taking responsibility
2. Independence

A session of four weeks in October

self empowerment, self-confidence, assertiveness, expression

Believing in your self
Being the master of your own life

Making choices every day

Creating own solutions
Making your own things
3. Co-operation
A session of four weeks in November
tolerance, helpfulness, broadmindedness, unity
Exploring the world together

Open-ended Material to Decrease Competition
Learning that 2 is more than 1+1

A big boy can help a smaller friend
4. Positivity
A session of four weeks in January
positive attitudes, honesty, optimism, joy

Training joy and happiness
Never stop playing
Frank and open-hearted

Tackling difficult tasks with a smile

Sing to increase your well-being
Train with the teacher to „break a rule“

5. Intimacy
A session of four weeks in February

friendship, caring, closeness, love
Intimacy as planned activity

Built-in kindness
Showing concern and affection

Result from training ...
Big kids taking care of the small ones

Courage
A session of four weeks in March

courage, energy, activity, initiative

[Image of children]
Easy with a little help from a friend

Just letting go...
Maybe hurting yourself

Just scream and tolerate the pain ...
Working in an unusual situation

Daring to be dirty...
No lines and no erasers
Mistakes for a week

Boys are also training their courage

Pink and proud
Daily Interaction

Making a gift for their friends
Meeting every day in planned activity
More information: www.hjalli.is

- Top results in co-ordinated tests for all schools in Iceland
- Improved results for our boys in mathematics
- Repeated measurements of parents satisfaction with the schools
- Comparison study in Reykjavik including all kindergartens in the city showed that our kindergarten came out as the number one school in Reykjavik
- Self evaluation of girls who previously were students at Hjalli
- They call themselves the "Hjalli girls"
- - qualitative study
- A study on views of children from Hjalli 10 years later
- - more positive view towards the other gender

Studies