

## KEY WORDS

Fostered children  
Decision making process

## THEMES

Maintaining of the link between families and fostered children;  
Use of a method to understand the decision making processes and improve the educational strategies.

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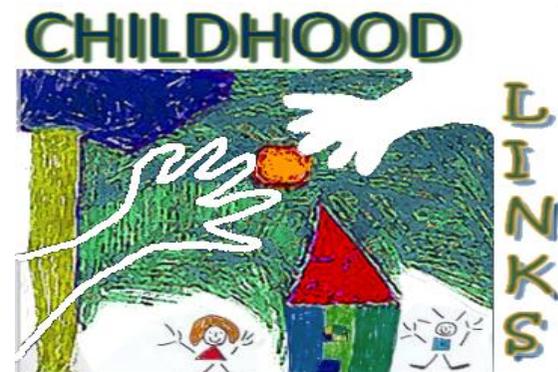
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# CHILDHOOD LINKS

Innovative method  
to maintain the link  
between families  
and fostered children  
in Europe

## Author of the method (CEFERH - Grenoble Fr)

The method comes from the clarification interview of the decision-making processes and is organized into 3 steps:

1. The clarification of the facts and acts of a sequence;
2. The clarification of decisions made during this sequence;
3. The clarification of the decision-making process during the actions (focusing on some decisions specific to the selected sequence).



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CHILDHOOD LINKS is a project dealing with minors temporary fostered to communities or families. The social workers in charge of these should do their best to facilitate the relation between the minors and their parents. It is therefore necessary to provide them with tools and methods allowing the maintaining of the family links.

CHILDHOOD LINKS proposes an innovative method, developed by CEFERH (FR), to promote the maintenance of the relations between parents and fostered children, based on the identification of the decision making processes at the origins of given educational choices. This method is supported by TRIADE, a software allowing the graphical schematization of the decisional process under investigation.

CHILDHOOD LINKS consortium is composed of 8 partners (training centers, universities, children homes) from France, Spain, Czech Republic and Italy. The method has been tested in the different participant countries, with the aim to test its effectiveness and its potential transfer to different contexts.



## The training

To test the method, each country implemented a short training course, involving professionals (social workers, educators, psychologists) who play a specific role in mediating the relations between parents and fostered children.

The proposed course was carried out in a blended modality, alternating face-to-face sessions with on-line activities, supported by the MOODLE e-learning platform.

The face-to-face lessons focused on the acquisition of the method: trainees practiced the interview technique in its different phases, from the storytelling of the actions occurred in a concrete situation, to the identification and analysis of the decisions made. It is in fact through the analysis of the actions that the decision-making process, underlying the intervention, can be discovered. The TRIADE software was intended to support the learning through the graphical representation of the educational process, creating schematizations for each specific case.

The on-line activities proposed exercises with real cases and included peer tutoring (group and couple working among the trainees) and trainers tutoring. On-line rubrics were also proposed to the trainees for the self-evaluation of the competences acquired during the training process.

## Some preliminary results

 The method received a positive feedback from the trainees: it was defined a useful tool “to see one’s own actions from outside”, able to raise awareness about one’s own actions and educational choices.

 The TRIADE software appeared too anchored to the French context and hardly adaptable to complex relations at the current state of development. Nonetheless, the idea of supporting the critical reasoning with a software able to objectify the relational situations was appreciated.

 The Moodle platform was appreciated for its usability and user-friendliness. E-learning was perceived as a modality facilitating peer interactions and learning

## Conclusions

The potential transfer of the method to different contexts seems to be correct; it is necessary to overcome some perceived rigidities in the TRIADE software, which in the current state is suitable for the representation of basic relations