



**Logbook for Day Care and Preschool
with Three- to Six-Year Old Children**

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mieli
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The Let's Talk about Children method

The Let's Talk about Children Discussion © Tytti Solantaus

The Let's Talk about Children Network Meeting © Mika Niemelä and Tytti Solantaus



INTRODUCTION TO THE LET'S TALK ABOUT CHILDREN APPROACH IN DAY CARE¹

Dear Caregiver/s,

You have been invited to discuss your child's wellbeing and the flow of their common day along the lines of the Let's Talk about Children (LT) approach. **Welcome to the discussion!** Here is a brief overview of the approach, starting from its background.

Home, day care/ early education, school and leisure time environments are developmental contexts for a child. They all have an independent as well as synergetic impact on child wellbeing and development. Both things that work out fine in one context as well as those that do not, are reflected on the child's demeanour, mood and behaviour in other contexts. **Understanding the overall situation of the child helps adults understand the child and interact in the best possible way.** It is also known that one developmental context can support the child, when there are problems in another.

LTC was developed to help caregivers and professionals to support children's wellbeing, learning and development in collaboration with each other and the child. **The LTC method involves building a shared understanding around the child at home and in day care, and agreeing on action that is based on that understanding.** The aim is to give the child a day-to day life that supports their wellbeing and development. **Every child is unique and worthy of the discussion.**

The child's day-to-day life is focused upon as everyday interactions and routines are important to children's wellbeing and development. Caregiver/s and day care staff have their own responsibilities for and experiences of the child and the child's common day. **If shared, both parties benefit, as well as the child.** It is hoped that the LTC approach helps **caregiver/s and staff members acknowledge and appreciate even the smallest things they do with the child in the course of the ordinary day.**

Participants

The invitation to the LTC discussion is extended **to the caregiver/s, caregiver/s' possible support person and the child depending on age.** The participation of other people is always subject to agreement with the caregiver/s. This applies also to Let's Talk about Children Network Meeting, which is organized in collaboration with the family members. - 'Caregiver' refers to the child's parents and other caretakers responsible for the child's everyday life irrespective of their biological, social or legal background.

¹ In Finland, a possibility to attend day care is provided for children from age less than one year until seven. Early education and preschool, which starts at age 6, are provided mostly in the day care setting. Therefore, 'day care' applies here also to preschool. Primary school starts in the autumn of the year the child is 7 years old.

The child's participation is decided by parents and also the child has to agree. If the child attends, they must be treated as an equal partner, not a bystander. Therefore, the child is included as a dialogue partner under each theme in the logbook. The child's developmental age must be considered. The discussion must be carried out using expressions that the child is familiar with, and in a manner which keeps the child involved. **Most importantly, the discussion must be constructive and supportive for the child.**



Shared understanding

Shared understanding of the child's situation and co-operation between the child's home and day care are built through the sharing of experiences and discussing from the caregivers', child's and the day care worker's perspectives on the child's life and the flow of ordinary days at home and day care and with peers, and the drawing up of an action plan for home and school. **LTC is intended to be a discussion, not an interview.**

The younger the child, the more its wellbeing and development are dependent on the environment and the people involved. It is common for families with small children to have stressful times making caregiver/s overburdened. Likewise, there might be stressors in day care making day care workers overburdened. These have an impact on the adults' interactions with the child. **It is hoped in LTC that these issues could be mentioned.** Day care workers can support the child if there is distress at home, if they know to do so. Likewise, caregiver/s can support the child, if there is distress in day care. However, it is up to each participant, what they want to share. Their decision is respected.

Caregivers, the child and day care staff often have different views and experiences. These can help with understanding the child from different perspectives. Home and day care are two different developmental contexts and the child and adults will behave differently in each one. A reciprocal respect for the view of the other party is essential for co-operation.

The logbook and its use

The framework and process of the discussion are documented in a logbook. The LTC logbook provides structure and support for the discussion (www.mieli.fi/lt). It is not intended to be a questionnaire to be completed. It has space for family members' notes.

The parties are asked **to discuss and evaluate the strengths and vulnerabilities** (see below) **in each theme.** The individual that takes the initiative to explore a certain topic depends on the situation. This is not defined by the order that is listed in the logbook.

The logbook includes three annexes. **Annex 1 provides a list of factors that support child wellbeing and development**, Annex 2 a detailed description the method and Annex 3 issues concerning implementation of LTC approach in day care.

Steps in the LTC method



- **LTC in day care** consists of one or two discussion sessions and if needed, LTC Network Meeting. The network meeting includes a gathering of the individuals that are identified by the caregiver/s and worker to explore opportunities to support the child.
- **An overall picture of the child's life is painted** and strengths and vulnerabilities (see below) are identified. This is done looking at different environments: home, day care and leisure time.
 - **Strengths and vulnerabilities are recorded in the logbook** to serve as a reference when the individuals discuss the course of action that is required to support the child.
 - The logbook has examples related to strengths and vulnerabilities. **They are only simplified cues to assist with illustrating the range of options.** What is a strength or a vulnerability and their personal meaning is based on the overall situation of the child, in the specific environment.
 - Situations may arise that require immediate reflection on what needs to be done. Make a note on the action plan section and continue. **The aim is to create an overall picture of the child's situation first, and then to consider possible courses of action.**
- **An action plan is developed** to build up and **nurture the strengths** that are important in the child's life and to look for **solutions for vulnerabilities**. Annex 1 is an aid when planning follow-up action.
- **LTC Network Meeting**
If additional people are required to carry out the action plan, LTC Network Meeting is planned and carried out in collaboration.
- **The maintenance of day care staff's confidentiality** is covered in LTC Discussion and Network Meeting.



Definitions: strengths and vulnerabilities

- **A strength** is a functional area in the child's day-to-day life. Focusing on the strengths supports the flow of the day-to-day life. Strengths are social situations which go well rather than being specific, isolated skills or talents.
- **A vulnerability** is something that already is a problem, plus anything that can become a problem if nothing is done.
- **Strengths and vulnerabilities are expressed in social situations and they stem from the interconnection that exists between the child and the environment.** Adults can make a difference in this area via the use of the action plan.
- **Example.** A sensitive and shy child might become or has already become isolated and lonely in a very active and outgoing playgroup. Therefore, their shyness is marked down as a vulnerability in order to raise adults' awareness: **the child and the playgroup need extra support and attention to help the shy child establish their place in the group and the group to learn to include someone different.** This will be included in the action plan. In another kind of environment, shyness might even be a strength. – Refer also to Annex 2 in the logbook.

Themes in discussing the child in the flow of ordinary days

1. Introductory discussion regarding the child, home and day care
2. The child's mood and emotional wellbeing
3. The child's curiosity, interest in new things and joy of learning
4. The child's engagement and sense of belonging to day care
5. Play and interaction with other children including siblings
6. Sharing emotions and experiences, understanding others
7. Understanding the child in different developmental contexts
8. Daily routines: smoothness and atmosphere
9. Interaction with adults at home and in day care
10. Any concern not yet discussed?
11. Any delight not yet discussed?
12. Goals for the child's upbringing



The discussion proceeds to making an action plan.

It is would be fruitful for caregiver/s to get acquainted with the actual process of the discussion. It is presented in the LTC logbook on the webpage of MIELI Mental Health Finland (<https://mieli.fi/letstalk>). Annex 2 provides a detailed description of the method. Knowledge about LTC is important for caregivers who are deciding on participating in the discussion.

In closing

LTC offers an opportunity and a template for **a dialogue to take place on equal terms between home and day care, the two parties with responsibilities for raising and educating the child.** The aim is to build up a mutually supportive collaboration for the child's wellbeing, learning, and development. **It is hoped that the conversation started in LTC continues as a natural part of home-day care collaboration.**

May the LTC discussion be inspiring and rewarding for all participants.





LET'S TALK ABOUT CHILDREN DISCUSSION

DISCUSSING THE CHILD IN THE FLOW OF EVERYDAY LIFE

The logbook is for caregiver/s to keep. If an item includes both strengths and vulnerabilities, specify and choose both. Participants are likely to differ in their assessments of strengths and vulnerabilities, discuss and make a note. If an important topic is missing, it can be added. **The aim is that the discussion meets the participants' needs.**

Words of welcome

Date _____

A brief discussion on the aims of and steps in the LTC method

1. Introductory discussion regarding the child, home and day care

- Would you like to share something about your family? How would you describe the child?
- Would you like to share something about the day care setting? How would you describe the child?

2. How is the child? The child's mood and wellbeing at home and in day care

What things could be affecting the child's mood and wellbeing, what have you noticed?

Strength ...*The child smiles/ laughs/ is usually in a good mood ... expresses all kinds of emotions ... is learning to control strong emotions ... looks often serious or sad... is often in low spirits/crying/ fearful/ irritable does not seek consolation when needed ... strong emotions tend to take over, adults' support might not help ...* **Vulnerability**

The child

Strength Vulnerability

The caregiver/s

Strength Vulnerability

The worker

Strength Vulnerability

3. The child's curiosity, imagination and joy of learning

Strength ...*The child is curious of the environment ... wants to know ... asks questions ... is eager to learn ... creates stories, art and play ... is proud of one's new achievements ... does not try out new things ... the child seems to lack initiative ...does not enjoy preschool tasks ... has difficulties in learning ... difficulties in creative activities/ repeats the same troublesome content ...* **Vulnerability**

The child

Strength Vulnerability

The caregiver/s

Strength Vulnerability

The worker

Strength Vulnerability

Notes



4. The child’s engagement in and sense of belonging to day care

Discuss also what the day care setting is like for this particular child. How do they match with each other?

Strength ... the child enjoys coming to day care ... is accepted as they are by adults and children ... the child moves about comfortably in the environment ... wants to be part of what happens ...enjoys also being by oneself ... the child is an important part of the life in day care and day care of the child’s life ...the child is often alone ... does not seem to have a place in the child group ... behaves and seems to feel an outsider... does not enjoy day care ... **Vulnerability**

The child

Strength Vulnerability

The caregiver/s

Strength Vulnerability

The worker

Strength Vulnerability

Notes



5. Play and interaction with other children

Strength ... the child finds joy in playing and goofing around with other children ... enjoys also playing and being alone ... quarrels over toys and temper tantrums occur but can mostly be solved with adults’ help ...the child has difficulties joining in ...is often left alone ... is treated poorly by someone/ other children ... play often ends with anxiety ... anger outbursts ... with a physical attack ... **Vulnerability**

The child

Strength Vulnerability

The caregiver/s

Strength Vulnerability

The worker

Strength Vulnerability

Notes

6. Sharing emotions and experiences, understanding those of others

How does the child express its emotional needs? Does the child share its happiness, excitement, sadness with others? How does the child react to other children's experiences? How do the adults respond?

Strength ... *the child is open with its feelings ... is learning to put them into words ... seeks comfort when needed ... takes delight in other children's success ... tends to help/comfort others in distress ... the child gets very anxious when somebody cries/is very angry ... the child does not express one's own feelings ... tends not to show empathy towards others ... tends to laugh at/ hurt others in distress ...* **Vulnerability**

The child

Strength Vulnerability

The caregiver/s

Strength Vulnerability

The worker

Strength Vulnerability

Notes

7. Understanding the child in different developmental contexts

If the necessary awareness exists, home and day care can support the child when there are problems in the other and in leisure time environment. Understanding the overall situation of the child helps caregiver/s and workers interact with the child in the best possible way. Consider possible supporting action in the action plan.

- a. **Is there something in day care that may be affecting the child's wellbeing and should be considered by the caregiver and day care workers when interacting with the child?** For instance, a restless group, an important peer or adult has left the group, bullying, an atmosphere of tension and exhaustion in day care, etc.

Any problem: Vulnerability

- b. **Is there something in the child's life outside of day care that you would like to mention, something that should be considered by the caregiver/s and day care workers when interacting with the child?** For instance, birth of a new baby, parental separation, a serious illness or some other stressful situation in the family, an atmosphere of tension and exhaustion at home ... problems related to peers ... related to a hobby etc.

Any problem: Vulnerability

Notes



8. Daily routines: smoothness and atmosphere

Strength: *the routine is usually fine, the atmosphere pleasant, although days can be different*

Vulnerability: *there are often struggles, the atmosphere tense, although days can be different*

	Home	Day care
	Str/Vul	Str/Vul
Waking up and morning routine	<input type="checkbox"/> Str <input type="checkbox"/> Vul	<input type="checkbox"/> Str <input type="checkbox"/> Vul
Leaving home and coming to day care	<input type="checkbox"/> Str <input type="checkbox"/> Vul	<input type="checkbox"/> Str <input type="checkbox"/> Vul
Eating, mealtimes	<input type="checkbox"/> Str <input type="checkbox"/> Vul	<input type="checkbox"/> Str <input type="checkbox"/> Vul
Getting dressed	<input type="checkbox"/> Str <input type="checkbox"/> Vul	<input type="checkbox"/> Str <input type="checkbox"/> Vul
Nappies and using the potty/toilet	<input type="checkbox"/> Str <input type="checkbox"/> Vul	<input type="checkbox"/> Str <input type="checkbox"/> Vul
Sleep and rest	<input type="checkbox"/> Str <input type="checkbox"/> Vul	<input type="checkbox"/> Str <input type="checkbox"/> Vul
Outdoor activities	<input type="checkbox"/> Str <input type="checkbox"/> Vul	<input type="checkbox"/> Str <input type="checkbox"/> Vul
Screen time	<input type="checkbox"/> Str <input type="checkbox"/> Vul	<input type="checkbox"/> Str <input type="checkbox"/> Vul
Leaving day care and coming home	<input type="checkbox"/> Str <input type="checkbox"/> Vul	<input type="checkbox"/> Str <input type="checkbox"/> Vul
Evening routines	<input type="checkbox"/> Str <input type="checkbox"/> Vul	

Notes

9. Interaction with adults at home and in day care.

What might be affecting the interaction on the child's and adults' part?

Strength ...*the adult and child enjoy interaction ... their discussions ... floor time ... including also other children ... doing chores together ... the child initiates contact easily ... the adult finds it difficult to understand the child ... to soothe and console ... the child clings to the adult, which might feel tiresome to the adult ... the adult finds the child's defiance/ anger difficult to contain ... interaction tends to be coloured by disciplinary issues and alike ...* **Vulnerability**

Also discuss whether an adult has lost their nerve and shouted at or touched the child in a hurtful way. If so, make a note of it on the Action plan page to await solutions.

The child

Strength Vulnerability

The caregiver/s

Strength Vulnerability

The worker

Strength Vulnerability

Notes

10. Any concern not yet discussed? Is help needed?

The child? The caregiver/s? The worker?

Vulnerability: Any concern. If help is needed, it is marked on the Action plan section

11. Any special delight not yet discussed?

Caregivers/s? The worker? The child? The worker?

Strength: Any delight at home and/or in day care

It can be marked on the Action plan section as a strength to be re-enforced.



12. Goals for the child’s upbringing

The goals for child upbringing at home and in day care are likely to be different to a certain extent. Day care, for instance, has the possibility support the child’s socioemotional development by guiding the children in making contact and playing with each other as well as managing conflicts and disagreements. The variety of cultural backgrounds at home and in day care is also an ingredient in this very important conversation.

Strength: The goals are similar and/or complement each other

Vulnerability: The goals, or some of them, conflict with one another

Notes



ACTION PLAN



The participants choose the main strengths and vulnerabilities to be the focus of action.

Then, plan specific and concrete courses of action based on the participants’ possibilities and resources and the worker's job description. **Use Annex 1, the factors that support child development** as a planning aid. Also consider whether additional resources are needed and LTC Network Meeting should be called.

1. In terms of strengths, the parties agree on the following courses of action:

At home and the child’s leisure environment (friends, hobbies, other activities outside home)

In day care

2. In terms of vulnerabilities, the parties agree on the following courses of action:

At home and leisure environment (friends, hobbies and other activities outside home)

In day care

If more people are needed to carry out the action plan, proceed to 3. Planning Network Meeting. If not, proceed to 4. Involving the whole family and day care group in the action plan.



3. Planning the Let's Talk about Children Network Meeting

- a. Explanation of the meeting process
- b. Parties agree on the topics, choose the relevant strengths and vulnerabilities and agree also on which topics the family does not wish to discuss
- c. Parties agree on who is to be invited and by whom

Chosen strengths and vulnerabilities, other topics?

- d. People to be invited and by whom

- e. The date and time of the meeting _____

4. Involving the whole family and day care group in the action plan

Any action planned for home concerns the whole family. It is recommended that caregiver/s talk about the action plan with **the whole family**, listen to what the children of different ages have to say, encourage them to find more ideas and involve them in the planned courses of action. The same applies to day care.

ENDING THE SESSION

How did this discussion go for you?

In any collaboration, there are things that run with little or no difficulty, and things that do not. Some issues are easier to discuss, some harder. How did this discussion feel for the child, caregiver/s and the worker? Do you have any wishes or ideas the future? A successful co-operation is a meaningful and powerful supporting factor for a child's wellbeing and development.

A reminder: the LTC discussion can be repeated at any time, especially if there are changes within the family or in day care which may put the child's wellbeing at risk. The initiative can come from the teacher or caregiver/s, and of course from the child itself.

Thank you everyone!





LET'S TALK ABOUT CHILDREN NETWORK MEETING

Mika Niemelä and Tytti Solantaus

1. The caregiver/s and/or the worker bid the participants **welcome**.
2. The leader of the meeting describes **the outline of the meeting and describes how it has been prepared**.
3. Family members and/or the worker, in agreed order, describe **the reasons for the meeting and the areas of discussion and action**.
4. **Discussion, caregiver/s and invited participants**
 - a. Clarifying questions and points of view
 - b. Ideas on how to proceed on each item
 - c. Turn the ideas into concrete actions and agree on them
5. **Write a memorandum** stating the agreed courses of action (template below). Use a flip chart or project the memorandum on a screen. **All participants should receive a copy of the memorandum** at the end of the meeting, based on caregiver/s' agreement.
 - a. Service workers are usually at the top of the list, followed by the family's social network and the family members. The family can plan their own actions based on the overall effort. If called for, the order can be changed.
6. **Set up a follow-up meeting and agree who will be there**. The follow-up meeting begins with a short outline of the current situation and a look at whether the plans have been realised. Then, discuss what everyone has learned for the future while implementing the plan. If further action is called for, write a new memorandum stating what courses of action should proceed as they are and what else you wish to do. **At least one follow-up meeting is recommended**, to let the involved parties note what has been achieved and whether a new meeting is called for. The time between meetings and the number of meetings depend on the overall situation.
7. The leader of the meeting makes a summary, gives everyone the memorandum, thanks the participants and declares the meeting closed.



Template for memorandum



<p>Date _____</p> <p>Topics (eg. 1-4)</p>	<p>Topic 1:</p> <p>Topic 2:</p> <p>Topic 3:</p> <p>Topic 4:</p>	
<p>Participants</p>	<p>I agree to do the following: What (specific action)/When (e.g. date, time of day)</p>	<p>Follow-up meeting, date</p>





Logbook for Day Care and Preschool with Three- to Six-Year Old Children

FACTORS AT HOME AND IN DAY CARE THAT SUPPORT CHILD WELLBEING AND DEVELOPMENT

1. The family relationships are warm and functional. **The child is cherished as an important member of the family.** The family has positive relationships also with the extended family, if possible, and activities with a circle of family friends.
2. **The caregiver/s care about and show interest in the child's life in day care.** When fetching the child home, they discuss the child's daily activities with a day care worker and continue discussing them with the child at home.
3. **Likewise,** the day care personnel show interest in and care about the child's life beyond the day care setting. The child has a person whom they can turn to when they need a hug or feel distressed.
4. **Daily routines and interactions** flow as smoothly as possible both at home and in day care.
5. The child has a sense of belonging to day care and to one's own group. **The child is accepted and appreciated as they are, and feels 'one of us'.** The child's peer relationships are supported.
6. **The child's feelings, mood and behaviour are understood.** Home and day care co-operate to support the child through difficult times, while delights and successes are reasons for common celebration. The child is helped to cope with strong emotions like sadness, anxiety, fear, anger.
7. The common day at home and in day care includes experiences for the child of being **loved, valued and special.** These come from the way adults hold and look at the child, their facial expressions, gestures and tone of voice, and the way they stop to listen and interact when the child has something for the adult. **They are also expressed in the way adults speak of the child when the child is not present.**
8. **The child is not branded as a problem child even if they have problems.** The following is understood:
 - any problem that the child may have does not define the child or the child's future
 - negative labels will influence the way the child is treated and affect the child's wellbeing and development
 - possible problems are the result of interplay, which adults can have an effect on
9. The child's caregiver/s and family background are discussed in a respectful and warm manner in day care, and the same respect is shown when talking about day care and its workers at home. **The child feels that any differences in the child itself or in the child's family are understood and respected in day care.** The child feels safe and trustful at home and in day care.
10. Good parent - worker co-operation. **Every child needs to feel that these important adults in their life co-operate and respect one another.** This is especially important for children who are having difficulties.



Logbook for Day Care and Preschool with Three- to Six-Year Old Children

OVERVIEW OF THE LET'S TALK ABOUT CHILDREN APPROACH IN DAY CARE

Background and aims

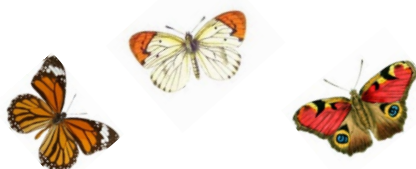
Home, day care, school and leisure-time environments are developmental contexts for the child. They are independently significant for the child's development, and at the same time they act in a strong synergy with one another. Both things that function normally, and things that are a problem in one developmental context will affect the child's demeanour, mood, behaviour and learning in another. **Understanding the overall situation of the child helps adults interact with the child in the best possible way.**

It is known that **one developmental context can support and carry the child when there are problems in another**, if the necessary awareness exists. Parental support is crucial for a child with problems in day care. Likewise, understanding and encouragement in day care might carry the child through tough times, when there are problems at home.

The LTC approach means building a **shared understanding around the child at home and in day care and agreeing on action, based on that understanding.** The aim is to give the child a day-to day life that supports their wellbeing and development both at home and in day care. The child does not need to have problems for the intervention to be set up. **Every child is worthy of the discussion.**

The reason why focus is placed on day-to-day life is that everyday interaction and daily routines are important for a child and their development and, when conditions are difficult, for the child's resilience as well. Caregiver/s and workers each have their own responsibility for the child and the child's everyday life; their own tasks and experiences. **If shared, both parties benefit, and especially the child.** It is also hoped that the LTC method helps **caregiver/s and day care personnel to acknowledge and appreciate the importance of even the smallest things that they do with the child throughout the course of the day.**

The LTC method offers an opportunity and a template for a dialogue to occur on equal terms between the two parties responsible for raising the child. It consists of one or two LTC discussion sessions with family members and if needed, LTC Network Meeting.



Participants

The invitation to the LTC discussion is extended **to the caregiver/s, the caregiver's possible support person and the child depending on age**. The participation of other people is always subject to agreement with the caregiver/s. This applies also to Let's Talk about Children Network Meeting, which is organized in collaboration with the family members.

The child is invited to participate depending on their developmental age. This refers to both the LTC discussion sessions and Network Meeting and extends especially to the pre-schoolers (Pupil and Student Welfare Act, 2014). If the child attends, they must be treated as partners in the discussion, not bystanders. The discussion must be carried out using expressions that the child is familiar with, and in a manner which keeps the child involved. **Most importantly, the discussion must be constructive and supportive for the child.**

If the child is old enough, but does not participate, the adults should discuss relevant themes in the logbook with them beforehand in order to bring **their viewpoints to the meeting**. The course of action that was planned for home and day care are to be discussed with the child and the child's opinions taken into consideration.

The Let's Talk about Children process

1. **Materials given to caregiver/s before the LTC discussion.** Caregiver/s are given the first six pages of the logbook and the LTC website (<https://mieli.fi/letstalk>). The log book includes the discussion themes and the Annexes 1-3. Getting acquainted with the material helps the family members decide whether to participate and makes the discussion more fluent.
2. **Discussing the child's situation.** The child's day-to-day life at home and in day care is discussed, and strengths and vulnerabilities (see below) are identified. **Each theme is discussed from the point of view of the caregiver/s and the worker and the child if present.** The aim is to get an overall picture of the child's situation and a comprehensive understanding of the child's situation is created. If there is a need to discuss something in more detail, this can be included in the action plan. If this is known in advance, it is recommended to schedule two sessions.
3. **An action plan for home and day care.** The caregiver/s and the worker reflect on how they can build up and nurture strengths that are important in the child's life. They also examine the main vulnerabilities and look for solutions. Specific things that can be done to support the child's ordinary day and wellbeing are planned. These should match the resources and possibilities of the person involved, and, in the case of the worker, also their job description.
4. **LTC Network Meeting.** If more people are needed to carry out the plan, LTC Network Meeting is called. People in the family's network, workers from other services and people involved in other activities may be called to the meeting, as appropriate and agreed with caregiver/s.

Definitions: Strengths and vulnerabilities



1. **Strength.** In the LTC about Children approach, strength means something that functions well in the child's day-to-day life. When discussing what the child's day looks like, the answer "It's okay, I guess" reveals a strength. Situations that increase joy also count as strengths. Increasing the occasions of success and joy at home and at day care can be truly empowering for the child. **Focusing on strengths, i.e. functional aspects of everyday life, is important for everyone, but more-so for anyone facing challenges. In such cases, activities supporting strengths are acts of resilience.**
2. **Vulnerability.** In the LTC about Children approach, a vulnerability is a situation that contains problems or can lead to problems if nothing is done. Vulnerabilities often arise when a change in the child's environment touches a particularly sensitive area in the child.

Example 1. In a child with a strong and quick temperament, a restless playgroup can lead to increased conflict and behavioural difficulties, which can also manifest as irritability at home. If a child is timid, a home environment that has become isolated due to caregiver/s' depression, can make the child even more reserved in day care. **Situations like these are vulnerabilities.** It is important to identify them and to take them into account in the action plan to prevent possible problems develop in the child.

3. **Strengths and vulnerabilities are not inherent to the child itself.** They stem from the interplay between the child and the environment. Children's temperaments and behaviours differ without children intending problems in themselves. However, a temperamental characteristic might lead to problems depending on the environment. **It usually concerns a problem in the match between the child and the environment.** Therefore, it is important to understand that 'vulnerability' does not mean a problem in the child itself and that adults can have an impact upon them.

Example 2. A sensitive and shy child might become or has already become isolated and lonely in a very active and outgoing playgroup. Therefore, their shyness is marked down as a vulnerability in order to raise adults' awareness: **the child and the playgroup need extra attention to help the shy child establish their place in the group and the group to learn to include someone different.** This should be included in the action plan. In another kind of environment, shyness might even be a strength.

The Let's Talk about Children logbook and how to use it

The logbook lays down the framework for the discussion. During the discussion, it serves as a reference and support to ensure everyone is involved, and that the essential contents are included. It is of great use for caregiver/s to read the logbook before the LTC discussion takes place. It is important to remember that **the logbook is not an evaluation questionnaire and it is not meant to be filled out in advance.**

Caregiver/s are invited **to bring the logbook to the discussion.** The logbook contains spaces for notes. It is for the caregiver/s to keep and family members can reflect on the discussion at home. Logbooks are not stored in the day care archives (see Annex 3).

In closing

LTC is a tool that can be used and shared in homes and day care. It is structured, but also flexible to meet the varying needs of different families and professional settings. **It is hoped that the discussions started in LTC continue as a natural part of home-day care collaboration.**





Logbook for Day Care and Preschool with Three- to Six-Year Old Children

Annex 3

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE LET'S TALK ABOUT CHILDREN APPROACH IN DAY CARE

The **Let's Talk about Children (LT) method in day care** involves one LTC discussion session, and if needed, an LTC Network Meeting. If needed, the discussion session can be extended into two. Indeed, if a longer discussion is to be expected, it is recommended to schedule two sessions. LTC is voluntary for family members. The organisation responsible for day care, mainly municipalities in Finland, is in charge of how LTC is used in day care.

Training the Let's Talk about Children method in day care and school

The training of the LTC method follows the guidelines of MIELI Mental Health Finland (<https://mieli.fi/letstalk>). Any worker carrying out LTC with clients must have proficiency in the method. The training for day care personnel is two full days and field work with families. The primary training extends over three days if the trainee intends to proceed to become a trainer. The trainer program itself consists of additional five to six days including carrying out a method training under supervision. Regarding training in Finland, contact Bitta Söderblom
Regarding training in other countries, contact Tytti Solantaus
email firstname.lastname@mieli.fi

Implementing options

The LTC method can be implemented in several ways. Each organisation can choose the options best suited to its needs. All options involve giving caregiver/s the first six pages of the logbook and the LTC website (www.mieli.fi/ltc)

1. **In the first option**, LTC is universally offered to all children and their caregiver/s in order to promote the learning and wellbeing of the children. The method can function as a unified tool in traditional home-day care interactions. In many municipalities, LTC is offered to all children in certain ages, to the caregiver/s of all new children and also in situations described in Options 2 and 3.
2. **In the second option**, the LTC discussion is convened to deal with situations or changes at home or in day care which put the caregiver/s, personnel or the child under extra pressure. This alternative contributes to the prevention of problems, when a risk has been identified.
3. **In the third option**, the LTC discussion is convened when the child already has problems. The purpose is to help steer the child back to their own developmental trajectory and to support possible care, treatment and rehabilitation.



Informing caregiver/s

1. **Caregiver/s are encouraged to know what the LTC method entails.** Transparency is one of the principles of the method itself. LTC is not imposed onto family members however it provides an option for collaboration with the child's day care personnel. Knowledge about LTC is important for caregiver/s who are deciding on participating as it helps them to understand the focus of the discussion. **Caregiver/s are encouraged to discuss LTC with their children.**
2. **Ways to inform caregiver/s** depend upon day care setting, its practices and resources. Usually, all caregiver/s are informed about LTC via an internet channel that is available at home and day care and in so called parent evenings. LTC leaflets can also be distributed to homes. **In all of these options,** caregiver/s are provided with the website (www.mieli.fi/lt) that describes LT, and encouraged to acquaint themselves with the logbook.
3. **Individual information and the first six pages of the logbook** are given to caregiver/s when inviting them to the discussion. In case of face-to-face discussions, caregivers are also asked to print out pages 7-16 (discussion on the given themes and Annex 1) from the website and to bring them to the session. These pages are needed to follow the flow of the discussion themes and and encouraged to acquaint themselves with the logbook.

Documentation

1. LTC Discussion

Documentation follows the guidelines concerning the Early Education Plan. In many day care settings, the worker makes a note of the LTC discussion in the internet channel shared between home and day care, listing the participants and the plans that the worker made to support the child.

A completed LT, without identifying details, can be logged in the appropriate municipal data system for **the purpose of monitoring the use of the method and keeping statistics.**

2. LTC Network Meeting

The agreed action plan concerning the day care personnel is documented in the child's records according to the respective regulations.

3. **The LTC method** does not require the collection of individual data for registration purposes. The logbooks are not stored in day care archives, but are for caregivers to keep.

