1

Instructions

WELCOME TO DISCUSS!

These discussion cards support the Let's Talk about Children ® (LTC) discussion. You can review these instructions together with the participants. More detailed information about LTC discussions, functional family routines, and favorable child development can be found in the Let's Talk about Children® logbooks.

These cards can be used in discussions with the child's parents or when the child/youth is present. The themed cards have two sides: one side with illustrations aimed at children and a simplified side for youth and adults. Participants can choose which side to use.

2

WHAT IS THE LET'S TALK ABOUT CHILDREN® (LTC) DISCUSSION?

The LTC discussions are guided by an LTC practitioner trained in the Let's Talk about Children® method. The first goal of this work is to create **an equal discussion**, ensuring that every participant is heard on every theme. All participants' knowledge and experience of the child's and family's daily life are valuable. Different perspectives help highlight a child's strengths and assist in facing potential vulnerabilities.

The second goal is to **plan functional daily routines** in a **collaborative action plan**, utilizing strengths. Actions that support everyday life are planned for all developmental contexts the child interacts with. Besides parents, other important adults in the child's life can also join the discussion.

3

HOW DOES THE PROCESS WORK?

EQUAL DISCUSSION:
Each card presents a discussion topic. Participants discuss it broadly, considering everyone's experience and all of the child's developmental contexts (e.g., home, school, leisure time). The aim is not to assess the child individually but to explore how people, developmental context, and circumstances affect the topic.

Additionally, participants reflect on whether the topic represents a strength or vulnerability in the given context. Everyone's perspectives should be heard.

According to Solantaus (2019) in the Let's Talk about Children® logbook, concepts are defined as follows:

Strength: Something that functions normally. By focusing on strengths, everyday life is supported across all developmental contexts. Strengths are not limited to exceptional talents or successes.

Vulnerability: A factor that is already a problem or could become one if not addressed. Acting in these situations helps prevent problems before they arise.

4

STRENGTH OR VULNERABILITY?
After discussing a topic, the card is placed on a table on a board in sections reserved for strengths and vulnerabilities. These sections separate the cards into two categories: strengths and vulnerabilities. For each card, participants choose which category it belongs to and place it in the corresponding section. Differences in opinion are valuable and should be expressed and discussed!

CREATING AN ACTION PLAN
At the end of the discussion, the strengths and vulnerabilities are reviewed. From both categories, specific small, concrete actions are planned to support everyday life. Agree on when these actions will take place and when they will be reassessed.

A printable action plan template can be found in the Let's talk about Children® logbooks.

HOW TO FIND THE RIGHT CARDS?

ICONS:
Some cards and themes are designed for specific developmental context, such as schools, early childhood education, or services. These contexts are coded with icons. Use the icons to collect the cards relevant to your environment into a separate deck.

Early childhood education

Elementary school

Secondary school

Services

INTRODUCTORY AND FEELING-DISCUSSION CARDS?
Every discussion starts with an introductory card and ends with a conclusion card. If the LTC discussion takes place in two sessions, these cards are used in both meetings.

THEMES AND COLORS:
The discussion consists of themed sections, each marked by a different color. There are a total of six themes: emotions and mood, friends and important adults, daily routines, school, learning, and well-being, leisure time and parenting and home life.

Discussions follow these themes in order or as guided by the logbook. The logbook provides themes specific to each developmental context.

THEME CARDS:
Theme cards display the discussion structure visibly. This helps participants track the progress of the discussion and see how many themes remain. Using theme cards is optional.

Always remember to create an action plan!

Introductory Discussion

- How are you feeling as you come into this meeting? (All participants, including the facilitator)
- Would you like to share something about your family?
- Would you like to talk about your developmental context? (For example, your classroom or daycare?)
- Is there something positive you would like to share about the child/youth?
- What would the child/youth like to share?

Feeling discussion at the end

- Is there anything else (at school, daycare, home, or during leisure time) that might be important for the child's daily life or interactions? The topic could be a strength, a vulnerability, or something in between.
- Any questions?
- How do you feel after this discussion?

Would you like to talk about anything else?

Action Plan

Plan actions for both selected strengths and vulnerabilities. Record whether help is needed, from whom, and in what area. Guidance for further work can be found in the Let's Talk about Children® logbooks (Solantaus, Niemelä 2019).