



## Brief

# The Staff's Influence when Exclusion Occurs in the Kindergarten's Play Community

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The aim of this article is to provide new knowledge about the actions of kindergarten staff. The findings of this article will contribute to a better understanding of what these actions mean as part of the kindergarten play community. The article focuses particularly on situations where children are being excluded. The term exclusion is used to characterize what happens when an individual is not allowed to be part of a group; this term focuses on being rejected, disliked, and avoided by others.

The study of exclusion is important because kindergartens in Norway are committed to developing children's well-being, happiness, attainment and feelings of self-worth. The framework plan of Norwegian kindergartens also highlights that the staff shall prevent, stop, and follow up on discrimination, exclusion, bullying, harassment and unhealthy patterns of interaction; they shall also combat harassment and bullying.

The analysis included 28 observations where exclusion happened, and staff intervened. These observations are coded and subsequently categorized. The analysis shows that the distinct approaches of the staff to the exclusion situation are significant. To study the approaches in detail and to obtain an overview, the observations are divided into four sections. The four sections consist of an approach part (the start of the intervention), a middle part, a closing part and finally, an outcome part. The analysis shows that the approach part is the key to understanding the development of the situations. The four distinct approaches used by the staff towards the play community where the exclusion occurred are as follows: *an explorative approach, a rejective approach, an incorporative approach and a corrective approach.*

These approaches have different effects on the development of the initial situation and thereby on the following interaction. They also offer different spaces for action to both staff and children. The current study shows not only how critical the staff's choice of action can be for children when situations of exclusion arise but also how complex such situations are. This study also shows that the staff's approach in an exclusion situation decides what space is used for professional agency, which may be significant with regard to how the process develops and what the result of the intervention will be.

**Keywords:** *exclusion; inclusion; interaction; professional agency*