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FIDS for Kids: Empowering Children through Design

A workshop on Design for Change's take on design thinking in education

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This workshop is designed as a theoretical-practical tool for educators and parents to understand how to take the Design for Change methodology to the classroom and beyond. Chosen by the United Nations as one of the 10 initiatives around the world that will allow humanity to reach the global development goals, Design for Change offers a simple, flexible, practical, and meaningful tool inspired by design thinking in the classroom setting with children of any age from 7 to 18. The presenters will offer attendees a theoretical approach to the mindset and spirit behind the Design for Change methodology (<https://www.dfcworld.org/SITE>), as well as a hands-on experience of this tool that allows for children to become empowered *with* their communities, solving real-world problems with concrete solutions while developing their I CAN mindset.

Keywords: design for change, student empowerment

FIDS for KIDS: a theoretical-practical workshop for educators

Often, educators want to bring innovative tools into their classroom but don't know how. Some educators have come to understand that design is a valuable tool for education (Carroll et al., 2010; Goldman & Kabayadondo, 2017; Koh et al., 2015) but feel overwhelmed by the challenge of adapting their practices to a tool that seems too far ahead of current standard practice (Henriksen et al., 2017; Jordan, 2016). Parents also want to offer experiences to their children that will help them to engage with their surroundings from an active and civic-minded standpoint. *FIDS for KIDS: Empowering Children through Design* is a workshop designed to help educators and parents understand and apply a simple methodology, inspired by design thinking that will allow them to introduce design to children in order to empower them to become agents of change in their own community (Bravo, 2016). The FIDS methodology by Design for Change allows parents and educators, who may or may not have experience in design thinking or similar methodologies, to bring their students/children into the design mindset with a methodology that is simple, direct, agile, empowering and impactful (Allende, 2016 a, 2016 b; Sobel, 2016).

Through the FIDS methodology (figure 1), comprised of four simple steps that the acronym stands for: Feel, Imagine, Do and Share, children have the opportunity to identify situations in their own environment that bother them or that they believe should be taken to a better state. By gaining in understanding of the situation and the motivations and experiences of all involved, they will be capable of designing attractive, sustainable, simple, and effective solutions to take this situation to a better place, maintaining the beneficiary or user at the center of their solutions. This extremely adaptable methodology develops skills and values as important as empathy, collaboration, critical thinking, effective communication, and creative problem solving.



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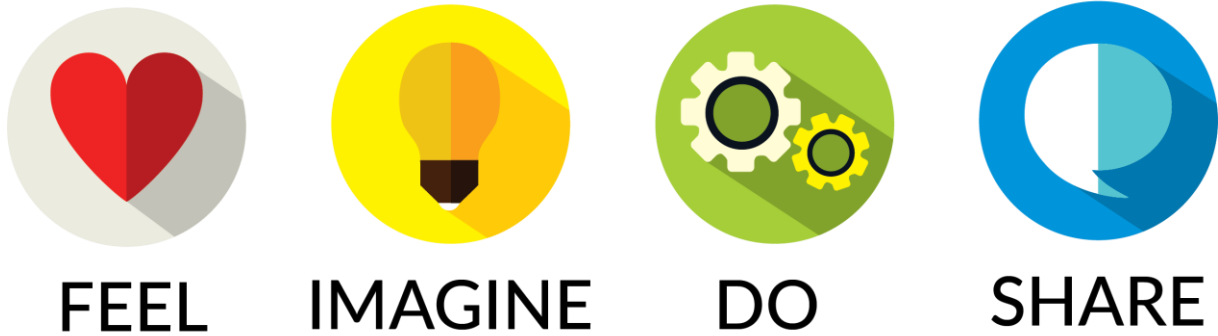


Figure 1: The FIDS process:

Intended audience and general flow of the workshop

This 60-minute workshop will be held 100% online for a minimum of 8 participants, ideally 12 participants minimum, and a maximum of 25 due to the interactive nature of some of the activities. The intended audience for this workshop is any adult that works or would like to work with children, such as schoolteachers with little or no experience in design, designers working with children who would like to introduce a simple and more accessible method for students, or even parents who would like to offer their children a way to approach the world from a creative and engaged manner.

Broadly speaking, the activities will alternate between theory and practice, allowing participants to understand the methodology and the mindset behind it, as well as experiencing parts of the process that will allow the educator to make a smooth transfer of the methodology to the classroom setting, regardless of whether this is online or in-person. Through the interactive workshop activities, the participants will interact with each other as they experience some of the FIDS methodology by going through each step or observing experiences by groups of children. By the end of this workshop, educators will have a better understanding of the mindset and process of the FIDS methodology and how its application in the context of school and beyond will empower children through the experience of creative problem-solving in the face of their own reality, always fostering the skills and values mentioned above.

Why is this workshop valuable to educators and adults who work with children?

Design for Change's FIDS methodology is considered one of the most innovative in education as it is highly accessible for school teachers of any field. Its simple methodology makes it approachable because, as we always say in Design for Change, it's not rocket science! FIDS is a methodology for every child, developing multiple social-emotional skills while also instilling what we call the I CAN mindset in students. Though a demanding process, it is fun and helps students become positive and active members of their community, in school and beyond. It also serves as a direct gateway to understanding and engaging with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

General Plan

Activity	Description	Activity	Duration
Ice-breaker	Getting to know you.	Make a name tag decorated in a way that tells us a bit about yourself	5 mins
Intro to FIDS for KIDS	Presentation of what is at the core of the Design for Change methodology and how it can impact the learning process. Results of the initial research exercise performed by Harvard's The Good Project. General information here: https://www.dfcworld.org/file2015/research_2.pdf	What is DFC: Movement/Method/Mindset	10 mins
FEEL practical exercise and critical analysis	Presentation of the main elements and actions that make the Feel stage of the FIDS process effective and meaningful.	WE the People STGs Out of the 17 global goals which one would you most like to address? Write on a piece of paper and hold it up to the screen. The one chosen by most will be the one we address.	10 mins
IMAGINE practical exercise and critical analysis	Exercise applying the main characteristics of the brainstorming process from the design methodology and how to take it to the classroom.	Define: What about this problem is most challenging? (Facilitator will make a list on a common board (Lino/padlet or Jamboard) The participants will be asked to come up with 4 solutions that use their: Hands/Feet/Hearts/Minds	10 mins
DO practical exercise and comments	Presentation on how to plan an effective action plan and practical exercise.	Now qualify each solution with one practical action you could take to execute your solution	5 mins
SHARE foundations for good video story-telling. Theory and practical exercise	Observation of some stories of change carried out by children from around the world. Focus on the effectiveness of the message and elements implied in the digital production of the story.	Show DFC environmental intervention stories. Some good/ some poorly done and have the group discuss the impact of a story well told as to one that is not	10 mins
Reflection	Feedback and group reflection	Write on common board: Something that moved you An insight Next steps	5 min
Conclusions and closing remarks	General closing comments and questions and evaluation.	FIDS for KIDS: An algorithm for empowerment.	5 mins

Materials needed:

- paper
- pen/pencil
- colored pencils or markers.

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