

2 TO LISTEN TO THE VOICES OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

To listen to the voices of children and young people in order to build together a future of justice, peace, and a dignified life for every person.



IDEAS FOR REFLECTION

This commitment draws attention to the need to adopt a pedagogical paradigm based on attentive and respectful listening and dialogue with the younger generations. The Pope uses three verbs: listen, pass on, and build together. It is always necessary to start by listening to every person, welcoming their questions, their needs, their wounds, their poverty, discovering their talents, knowing their dreams, their ideals, etc. Before “giving instructions”, we need to “e-ducere”, i.e., to educate, to bring out, to bring to light, to prepare the good soil, preparing it to welcome the seed of knowledge. However, as the Pope writes, this can be done by passing on and sharing the values, that is the life, the style of existence; only afterwards is knowledge communicated, which makes it possible to understand and appreciate these values. Moreover, the process is like a construction, a building together, and this highlights the value of the relationship and the community in which we grow together.

VALUES

- Listening to children, adolescents, and young people in order to put them at the centre of educational action, with specific focus on those with special educational needs (“it is not the pupils who have to adapt to the school, but the school that has to adapt to the pupils”).
- Every child, adolescent and young person has the right to the utmost respect and quality education.
- Construction of a participatory educational milieu that involves mind, hands, and heart (“It takes a whole village to educate a child”).



SUGGESTIONS FOR EDUCATORS

- Promote the empowerment of students and young people and their access to education.
- Ensure the participation of students' representatives in the advisory and decision-making bodies of their institution/organisation.
- Create welcoming educational communities with a particular focus on students with special educational needs.
- Condemn all forms of disrespect and exploitation of minors.