








## The Finnish Approach to Children with Special Needs: Promoting Learning and Growth

By Mari Tähjänjoki

### Course details

-  One week course
-  Starting from 480€ (Cultural activities included)\*
-  Min. 4 - max. 14 participants
-  Certificate of attendance included (80% of attendance required)
-  Available in Florence, and Oulu

\* A 60 € late registration fee will be applied if you register less than 8 weeks before the course start date.

### Course description

Children with learning difficulties and mental or neuropsychiatric disorders may pose particular challenges to teachers who are not familiar with their special needs. This course will introduce you to the 3-staged model that the Finnish primary schools have specifically developed to promote the learning and personal growth of these children.

Designed and delivered by a Finnish teacher, the course clarifies how the best learning and growth in children with special needs is promoted by the close cooperation among the teacher, the school system and administration, and other partners outside the school (such as parents, and bio-, psycho-, and social institutions).

The course will provide you with a practical understanding of the difficulties and challenges that a child with special needs may have upon entering your classroom. By the end of it, you will know concrete, hands-on methodologies for teaching to students with special needs and concentrate on their learning.



## Learning outcomes

The course will help the participants to:

- Identify the most common difficulties/challenges that a child with disabilities may have upon entering a classroom;
- Reflect on the role of the teacher a part of the system that helps every single children;
- Understand the function of social institutions, partners outside the school, and the teacher in working with children with special needs;
- Master concrete, hands-on methodologies to promote the learning and growth of children with special needs.

## Tentative schedule

### Day 1 – Course introduction & identifying disabilities

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Course introduction

- Introduction to the course, the school, and the external week activities;
- Icebreaker activities using drama for trust and ensemble building;
- Identification of needs and goals for each participant and relevant populations.

Identifying disabilities

- Lessons about identifying neuropsychiatric challenges (ADD, ADHD, autism, Asperger, dysfasy, tourette);
- Example cases and class discussion of participants personal cases;
- Presentations of the participants' schools.

### Day 2 – Identifying difficulties

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- Lessons about identifying language difficulties, physical problems and mental disorders (anxiety, depression, emotional and behavioral disorders);
- Example cases and class discussion of participants personal cases.



### Day 3 – How to effectively support students

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- Lessons about the factors that are essential in helping the child to cope with his/her challenges: school/institution/administration, partners outside the school and the teacher;
- Understanding the role and the necessity of the factors mentioned in order to help the child in the best possible way;
- Self-reflection exercises of one self as a teacher and as an active member of the system helping the child;
- An example of a well-working support system from Finland.

### Day 4 – Helping the child

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- Helping the child in concrete ways;
- Lessons and hands-on examples concerning: learning environment, visibility, interaction, communication, structure, anticipation, motivation and perceiving the time.

### Day 5 – Emotional and behavioral support

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- Helping the child in concrete ways. Lessons and hands-on examples concerning: controlling activity, managing behavior, managing emotions, supporting understanding, social interaction;
- Round up of what the participants have learned;
- Brainstorming of possible changes that the participants will do when they return home.

### Day 6 – Course closure & cultural activities

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- Course evaluation: round up of acquired competences, feedback, and discussion;
- Awarding of the course Certificate of Attendance;
- Excursion and other external cultural activities.

\*The schedule describes likely activities but may differ significantly based on the requests of the participants, and the trainer delivering the specific session. Course modifications are subject to the trainer's discretion. If you would like to discuss a specific topic, please indicate it at least 4 weeks in advance.

Our courses usually include two cultural activities. Further information is available on the webpage of each course location.





## About the provider

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