



ITLS INTERNATIONAL TEACHERS FOR TOMORROW'S SCHOOL

SYSTEM CHANGE AS AN OPPORTUNITY FOR INTERCULTURAL
SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT AND MUTUAL LEARNING

Veronica Sherborne Developmental Movement as an inclusive approach to teaching and working with movement

Veronica Sherborne, a British movement educator and therapist, has developed an inclusive approach to teaching and working with movement. In this material will be described how her approach can be used in workshops and seminars.

The SDM approach has been widely used in educational and therapeutic settings. It has been found to enhance physical coordination, spatial awareness, social skills, communication, and emotional well-being. By focusing on inclusivity and individualized support, it provides a framework for engaging and empowering individuals of all abilities through movement.

By Maria Aleksandrovich, Pomeranian University in Słupsk, Poland

To cite this material: Aleksandrovich, M. (2023): Veronica Sherborne Developmental Movement as an inclusive approach to teaching and working with movement. <https://doi.org/10.4119/unibi/2981503>

Type of Document:

concept of a
movement
workshop

Target Group:

children and adults
from 3 till 99

Goals:

to promote two
basic needs of
children: need to
feel at home in
their own bodies
and gain mastery
to be able to form
relationships

Keywords:

development,
movement
analysis, inclusivity,
body awareness,
awareness of
others, play.

Background

Veronica Sherborne Developmental Movement (SDM) is an inclusive approach to teaching and working with movement. It was developed by Veronica Sherborne, a British movement educator and therapist, in the 1970s. The SDM is rooted in the philosophy and theory of movement analysis created by Rudolf Laban, as well as in the belief that movement is essential for human development and learning. It is based on the principles of developmental psychology and emphasizes the importance of movement in promoting physical, cognitive, emotional, and social development. This approach can be applied in various settings, including schools, therapeutic environments, and community programs. It is particularly beneficial for individuals with diverse needs, including those with physical disabilities, learning difficulties, and social and emotional challenges.¹

Below you will find a scenario of the SDM workshop, which should be organized with use of the next core principles:

- Non-judgmental and non-competitive environment.
- Movement as a means of communication.
- Partnership and shared movement experiences.
- Developmental progression.
- Adaptability and individualization.²

¹ Sherborne Developmental Movement. From <https://www.sherbornemovementuk.org/> (accessed 20/06/2023)

² Sherborne, V. (2001). *Developmental Movement for Children. Mainstream, special needs and pre-school*. Duffield: Worth Publishing.

Duration

1 hour

Space

Find a suitable space that can accommodate the number of 12-14 participants (6-7 pairs) comfortably. The venue should have natural light and provide a space for free and save movement for all the participants of the group.

Resources

Gather a variety of art materials such as balls, scarves, ribbons, hoops, and soft objects are often utilized to facilitate movement exploration and creative expression during the workshop.

Preparation

To conduct the SDM workshop organizer should take care about appropriate space and resources mentioned above, as well as should determine the ideal group size based on the available resources, the space, and the therapeutic goals. Preparing for a Veronica Sherborne Developmental Movement workshop involves a solid understanding of the philosophy, principles, and techniques of SDM. The organizer should be a certified facilitator. Next the organizer must gather necessary materials and plan the workshop content. The organizer must determine the goals, objectives, and structure of the workshop, as well as identify specific activities, exercises, and topics that organizer wants to cover, ensuring a balance between theoretical understanding and practical application. After that the organizer must arrange the workshop space and must communicate with participants, giving them clear instructions and expectations for the workshop. By following these preparation steps, the organizer can ensure a well-organized and engaging Veronica Sherborne Developmental Movement workshop that effectively introduces participants to the approach and fosters their learning and growth.

Activities

Welcome and Introduction (5 minutes)

An organizer gathers the participants in a circle and warmly welcomes them. Explains the theme of the session, emphasizing the importance of inclusion, body exploration, and spatial awareness. Sets the tone for a safe and non-judgmental environment where everyone's unique abilities and contributions are valued.

Sensory Awareness Warm-up (10 minutes)

An organizer begins with a sensory warm-up activity, such as passing around different textured objects for participants to feel and describe. Encourages participants to share their observations and discuss how their bodies respond to different sensory stimuli.

Body Exploration and Body Parts (15 minutes)

An organizer guides participants through body exploration exercises, encouraging them to explore different body parts individually and in pairs. Uses verbal cues and demonstrations to guide participants in movements like bending, stretching, rotating body parts, and touching different body areas. Emphasizes the importance of body awareness and accepting and celebrating the uniqueness of everyone's body.

Partner and Group Activities (15 minutes)

An organizer divides participants into pairs or small groups, ensuring inclusive partnerships. Introduces partner/group activities that focus on body mirroring, imitation, and collaboration. Encourages participants to take turns leading and following each other's movements, promoting cooperation and inclusive communication.

Spatial Awareness Exploration (10 minutes)

An organizer creates a safe movement space with clear boundaries. Guides participants in exploring the space individually and in groups. Encourages them to move at diverse levels (high, low, crawling) and in various directions (forward, backward, sideways), while maintaining awareness of their bodies in relation to others and the environment. Provides group activity with animation scarf.

Creative Movement and Expression (10 minutes)

An organizer plays music that allows for creative expression, combining calming and upbeat rhythms. Encourages participants to express themselves freely through movement, emphasizing inclusivity and individuality. Provides scarves or ribbons to enhance movement exploration and expression.

Reflection and Sharing (5 minutes)

An organizer gathers participants in a circle. Provides an opportunity for participants to share their experiences, feelings, or insights from the session. Encourages active listening and supportive responses from the group.

Closure and Farewell (5 minutes)

An organizer leads a brief cool-down activity, such as deep breathing or gentle stretching. Expresses gratitude to the participants for their engagement and contributions. Offers a final word of encouragement, emphasizing the importance of inclusion and body awareness in daily life.

Important: An organizer should remember to adapt the activities, duration, and materials as needed to suit the specific needs, age, and abilities of the participants. The key is to create a supportive and inclusive environment where all individuals can actively engage in movement exploration and express themselves comfortably.

Further readings

Website of Sherborne Association. <https://www.sherbornemovementuk.org/>

Aleksandrovich M., Zoglowek H. (2011). Sherborne meets Vygotsky - reflections and practical implications about combination of two theories of human development. In: *Beitrage zum "Internationalen Jahr der Jugend"*, Matjaz Duh, Renate Seebauer (Hg), Lit Verlag, Wien, p. 16-24.

Aleksandrovich, M., Zoglowek, H. (2017). Motor Learning in the "Zone of Proximal Development. In: *Contributions to the Development of the Contemporary Paradigm of the Institutional Childhood*, Lidija Vujicic, Oliver Holz, Matjaz Duh, Melissa Michielsen (Eds.). LIT Verlag, Berlin-Münster-Wien-Zürich-London, p. 353-364.

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