

**Gülten Eminovski**

# **Stop Bullying**

**14 Fun Methods to Further  
Well-Being in Preschool**

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*StopBullying - 14 Fun Methods to Further Well-being in Preschool*  
By Gülten Eminovski

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In this edition, the term Stopbullying refers to the StopMob concept (Danish: StopMob), a set of 14 methods developed by Gülten Eminovski.

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# Preface by Gülten Eminovski



*Foto: Lars E. Andreasen*

Through my work, I have developed a strong interest in the well-being of children. Therefore, I developed a program called StopBullying, a practical set of tools and methods to help prevent bullying among children. This toolbox contains methods I have taught twice a week to children in the pre-school year (age 5–6) since 2009. In my everyday work, I have integrated these methods into classroom communication and supported children's emotional development and language skills. Even years later, former pupils still mention these methods when I see them at school.

In 2014, I participated in a competition organized by the global nonprofit organization Reach for Change, where the question was: "Do you have a good idea for improving the daily lives of children in Denmark?"

I submitted my StopBullying project as an entry, and out of 60 applicants, I was one of three social entrepreneurs selected to join Reach for Change's incubator program. It included mentorship and support to help scale up my project so it could benefit even more children in the future.

*"Reach for Change supports social entrepreneurs who tackle critical social challenges affecting children and youths in Denmark. We help them refine their solutions, build sustainable models, and prepare to scale their impact in a meaningful and lasting way for children and youths in need of support. Stop-Bullying was part of our incubator program from 2015–2016. We chose to support Gülten Eminovski and the StopBullying project because we saw an innovative, highly user-focused, and educational approach to improving well-being during the early school years."*

*Regional Director, Reach for Change,  
Marie-Louise Harritsø*

The StopBullying project has now been implemented with over 300 school-children, helping to shape and refine the methods presented in this book. If you would like to try these methods with your own pupils, this book provides a practical starting point. Inside, you will find suggestions for teaching the methods, discussion scenarios for pupils, and a variety of exercises designed to make the techniques easy to understand and apply. Keep in mind that many of the methods overlap, and there can be more than one valid solution to a given scenario. For this reason, each case does not have a single "correct" answer. The scenarios follow each method and are designed to reflect real-life situations – with at least two examples included per method.

## What is StopBullying?

StopBullying is an educational and well-being program designed for children aged 5 to 9. It is primarily aimed at children in the first years of school, but it can also be used with older pupils in primary education.

The program consists of 14 methods that help children build a bridge between thoughts, emotions, behavior, and the body – supporting their ability to understand themselves and others. The goal is to create greater calm and balance in their minds and bodies, and to give them a shared language for expressing the ups and downs of everyday life.

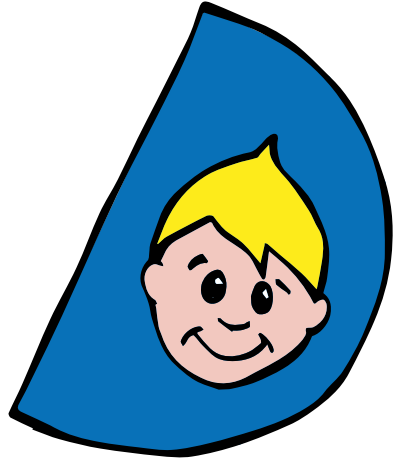
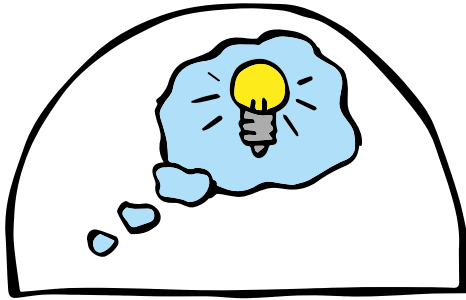
In my work as an educational professional (similar to a social pedagogue), I focus on children's emotional well-being. The inspiration for developing StopBullying came from my studies in psychotherapy and cognitive coaching. There, I learned the importance of self-awareness – understanding your own thoughts, habits, emotions, and behaviors, and learning how to act consciously in your personal and social life.

I saw how powerful it was to think positively, look ahead, and meet both small and large challenges with resilience and openness. I wanted to bring that knowledge to the children I worked with. So the project became, at its core, an effort to translate psychological tools and cognitive strategies into child-friendly language and activities.

*"I am the Director of Pædagogisk Fokus (Pedagogical Focus), an organization that has worked for over 20 years with educational and organizational development in schools and childcare institutions. Over the years, I have trained the staff at Brøndbyøster School – including Gülten Eminovski – in a wide range of pedagogical and psychological approaches. Our primary framework has been systems theory, which is why I was so intrigued and excited when Gülten told me about the Stop-Bullying project. The program focuses on emotional well-being and behavior in pupils and places special emphasis on fostering emotional recognition and respect in the classroom. Introducing these values early in a child's school life helps lay a*

*strong foundation for their future. I wish Gülten and the pupils she meets along the way the very best. This project matters."*

*Steen Kristensen, Pædagogisk Fokus*



In my daily work as a social pedagogue, I have encountered many children whom I believed could benefit from the tools I gained through psychotherapy training and cognitive pedagogical methods.

While the StopBullying program was originally developed for children experiencing social difficulties in their everyday lives, it has since evolved into a broader program designed for all children.

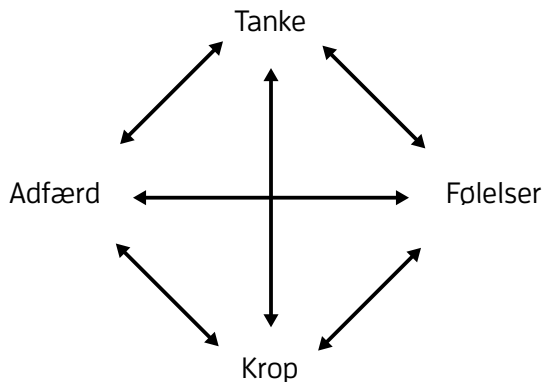
The foundation of the program is the belief that identity is constantly developing, and that learning is a lifelong journey. That is's why it is's so important to help children build awareness of their thoughts, emotions, behaviors, and bodies – and how these elements interact and influence one another. This program was created from a pedagogical perspective to support that process.

# Theoretical Foundations of StopBullying

*By Steen Kristensen, Director of Pædagogisk Fokus*

*What sets Gülten Eminovski's book apart is its ability to take a scientifically grounded and well-documented form of therapy – cognitive therapy, particularly the model known as the cognitive diamond – and apply it to everyday educational settings such as schools, after-school programs, and youth clubs.*

*The cognitive diamond is based on the idea that constant interaction occurs between our thoughts, emotions, behavior, and body.*



For example, when a teacher divides the class into groups, one child may feel anxious or left out. They might think, "I am not good enough. Nobody wants to pick me." This thought can trigger an emotional response, which may lead to a stomachache (body) and a strong urge to leave the classroom (behavior). Alternatively, the child may suppress the feeling altogether.

In this case, the real challenge isn't not group work itself – it's is the child's automatic thoughts about the situation. And these thoughts can undermine both their well-being and their ability to learn.

Gülten Eminovski aims to teach children that their thoughts, feelings, and bodily reactions can be observed and questioned – and that these experiences aren't not always objective or true. By learning to recognize and respond to their internal reactions, children gain tools to better understand themselves and the world around them.

StopBullying offers 14 practical methods to help educators and children develop healthier ways of thinking and relating. These tools encourage reflection, interrupt automatic thought patterns, and offer children a shared language to express themselves – all while supporting their emotional well-being and ability to thrive in everyday educational settings.

StopBullying also draws on research in mentalization – the ability to see yourself from the outside and others from the inside. In other words, it supports the development of empathy and self-awareness by helping children understand both their own inner experiences and those of others. The aim is for a child, when faced with a situation like being put into groups, to begin thinking: "Actually, this usually turns out fine, so I will wait and see. Maybe I do not need to feel anxious right away. And I am probably not the only one feeling nervous." This kind of inner dialogue reflects growing cognitive awareness, emotional regulation, and mentalization – all of which help the child approach situations more calmly and socially attuned.

## **The Role of Parents**

The StopBullying methods can be used exclusively in the classroom, but their impact is even greater when parents are actively involved. To keep families informed, I send a message via the online Danish school platform Aula whenever we introduce a new method. That way, when children come home and talk about their day, parents understand what they are're referring to. It also gives parents the opportunity to explore the methods themselves if they are're interested and have the time.

I also use parent-teacher meetings to explain how the methods are used in our teaching.

A strong partnership between school and home is essential for creating a safe environment where every child feels included in the classroom community, no matter their background. This sense of safety is reflected in everyday routines – for example, when communication between parents, social pedagogues, and teachers is respectful and constructive.

Positive role models who promote kindness, curiosity, and open communication help children develop a mindset that is empathetic, honest, and engaged. With time, children become more conscious of how language shapes their emotions and relationships – learning to express themselves more openly and to connect with others in meaningful ways.

*I am a great admirer of Gülten and her incredible methods. I saw how not only my son, but the entire class, developed a meaningful shared language that helped them express difficult feelings and situations – even across diverse cultural and social backgrounds. It had a powerful effect on how the children communicated with one another, and it sparked many thoughtful conversations between my son and his friends. Their ability to understand and reflect on each other seemed to have been truly 'switched on.' I am deeply grateful that Gülten was such an important part of my son's first year at school, and I hope her methods – with the care, respect, and quality they embody – become a natural part of every child's early school experience.*

*Signe Find, Mother of a pupil*

## **The StopBullying Methods**

From my experience, developing a shared language in the classroom is key to improving and deepening pupils' understanding – both of themselves and each other.

The 14 StopBullying methods offer a variety of tools designed to encourage communication and reflection among pupils. They give children a common language for expressing their thoughts, feelings, and behaviors.

The methods are built on the understanding that all people experience two kinds of thoughts: positive and negative. Positive thoughts might come with happy feelings – like butterflies in the stomach, smiling, or laughing. Negative thoughts may bring sadness, anger, or physical tension, and might lead to behaviors such as withdrawing, shouting, or even kicking. Pupils are taught that everyone experiences both types of thoughts and that having both is completely normal. They learn how to recognize and respond to these inner experiences, and how the StopBullying methods can help them manage these in healthy ways.

The methods are also useful when resolving conflicts between pupils. When children know the methods well, they can shift their focus from the conflict itself to the tools they have learned. Even if they do not fully agree, the methods help them understand the situation more clearly – and find solutions in a faster, more constructive, and even playful way.

The StopBullying methods are flexible and can be used in different formats: once a week for 15 minutes, as part of a themed week, or even in a full-day workshop. The order in which the methods appear in this book is based on the structure I have developed through my own experience. You are welcome to follow it – or adapt it based on the specific needs of your class.

The methods are easy to introduce to children, as they use familiar visuals, humor, and playful metaphors to help children relate to their emotions.

Teaching should always begin from where the pupils are – emotionally and socially – at that moment. This means that the order of the methods can be adjusted. Some classes might need to start by addressing disruptions; others may need to focus on communication skills or emotional awareness.

Once the children have internalized the methods, they can apply them independently in real-world situations. For example, when classroom disruptions occur, I might ask, “Can anyone remember a method we could use to explain what is happening?” And very often, a sea of hands goes up.

## **For the Teacher**

When I begin the StopBullying program with a new class, each child receives a personal folder with their name and “StopBullying” on the front – either handwritten or printed with the official logo. After each method we cover, the children create a drawing that represents what they have learned and place it in their folder. I collect the folders after each session and return them to the children at the end of the program, so they can keep them as a personal reminder of what they have learned.

Each method is supported by an illustration, as the visual and creative element helps children understand and remember the content more effectively. By drawing the methods themselves – alongside clear, simple cases and guided walkthroughs – the children engage with the material in a hands-on, visual way that deepens their learning.

For each session, I print out a visual reference for the method we are covering. I usually hang it on the board and sometimes draw it myself as well. In addition to their drawing, I ask the children to spell out the name of the method on their paper. If possible, I recommend displaying the finished drawings in the classroom. This allows children to revisit the methods and slowly incorporate them into their way of thinking.

Depending on your time and budget, you might choose to laminate the children’s drawings before they are placed in their folders. You could also consider printing extra copies for the children to bring home and share with their parents.

There are many ways to spark and sustain children’s curiosity. Personally, I keep the method illustrations in a special box and treat it like a surprise – revealing only one method at a time. This builds anticipation, and I often find the children are eager to find out what the next method will be. In this way, the core of the work lies in how the methods are introduced and communicated.

I typically dedicate one lesson (class hour) per method. At the end of this book, you will find accompanying visuals for each method, which can be printed and used directly in your teaching.

*As a professional in the field, I find it fascinating how such a simple program like StopBullying can help children understand their emotions and thoughts, put them into words, and relate them to the world around them.*

*Recently, I had the opportunity to observe a preschool class where Gülten was teaching StopBullying. She did not know the children beforehand, and they had never encountered the program before — yet she had their full attention from the very beginning and held it for 35 minutes. I am convinced this is because the methods use age-appropriate language and familiar visuals that speak directly to children.*

*For example, the children were shown a picture of an eye. They discussed what the image showed, what it could mean, what they personally saw, and whether everyone saw the same thing. These were questions every child could engage with — there were no “right” or “wrong” answers, and each response was met with genuine acknowledgment. On several occasions, Gülten ended with the words, “Please applaud each other and yourself.” This was repeated with new pictures, and the children remained engaged and curious throughout.*

*It was remarkable to see how interested the children were in what Gülten shared, and how naturally they were drawn into the conversation. The session was easy for them to follow because everything felt familiar, safe, and emotionally accessible. I am sure Gülten had a plan for the class, but she also showed a strong sense of when to shift direction or wrap up based on the children’s energy and focus.*

*Right now, StopBullying is used in early preschool classes, but I truly believe the program has relevance for children of all ages. That said, for it to have its full impact, we as professionals need to embrace the methods and use them actively. The tools are simple and easy to understand — our role is to raise awareness and integrate them into our everyday work.*

*I can wholeheartedly recommend this program.*

*— Rikke Kristensen, Pedagogue*

# The Sensory Method

Our senses are at the heart of how we experience the world. They form the foundation for everything we perceive and feel. The Sensory Method gives pupils greater awareness of how their bodies function and what their senses can be used for. That is why this is the first method introduced in the program – it serves both as a standalone method and as a framework that supports the other 13.

When I first introduced the methods, I returned to the Sensory Method several times a day. In my experience, children are often surprised by how much the body can do and how it works. This method helps them understand how to use specific parts of their body more intentionally and increases their awareness that every person is different. Over time, this understanding reduces conflicts and deepens each child's sense of self.

The Sensory Method introduces the five traditional senses – taste, hearing, sight, smell, and touch – as well as a sixth: intuition.

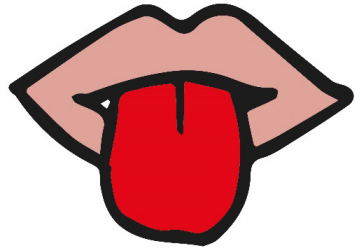
When teaching this method, I explore each sense one at a time. This offers a great opportunity to create interdisciplinary links, particularly with biology, as each sense can be directly connected to body parts and functions. These discussions often lead to broader conversations about anatomy and how our bodies are built.

I explain to the children how the senses help strengthen the body and support learning. To begin, I typically dedicate a full class session to talking about the body: what it can do, what it is made of, and how we often use our senses without even realizing it. We talk about how becoming more aware of our senses – like actively using hearing and sight in the classroom – can help us learn better.

I spend around one hour on each sense. First, I explain it in a way that is relevant to their daily life, then we do exercises tailored to that specific sense. If time allows, we also create drawings related to what we have learned.

## The Sense of Taste

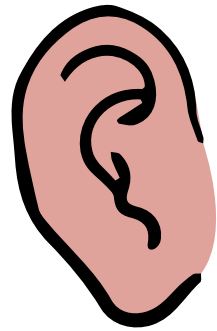
The sense of taste is located in the mouth, especially on the tongue. I start by talking with the pupils about what the mouth is used for – eating, tasting, speaking, breathing, and more. We also discuss where the mouth is positioned on the face and go over the five basic tastes: sweet, sour, salty, bitter, and umami.



As part of the lesson, we do a fun exercise where the pupils close their eyes and try tasting different foods. After each taste, they guess what it is. I introduce them to small samples representing each of the five basic taste categories, encouraging them to describe the flavors and share their reactions.

## The Sense of Hearing

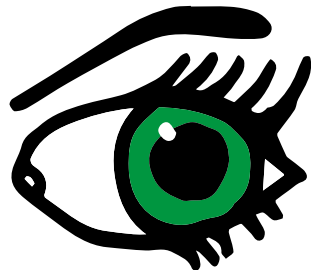
The sense of hearing is connected to our ears. I begin by talking with the class about what our ears are used for – hearing and listening. We also discuss where the ears are located on the head.



As an exercise, the pupils listen to different sounds and try to guess what they are. You can find inspiration for sound clips on platforms like YouTube. For example, I often use recordings of airplanes, trains, ocean waves, and the wind.

## The Sense of Sight

The sense of sight is connected to our eyes. I talk with the pupils about how many eyes we have, where they are located on the face, and what we use them for – seeing, observing, and understanding the world around us.



To help the pupils understand how important our eyesight is, we do an exercise where they close their eyes and pretend to be blind. This gives them a small sense of how challenging it can be to navigate without vision.

Another exercise involves observation and memory: I choose five familiar objects – for example, a pair of scissors, a pencil, a phone, a LEGO brick, and an eraser. The children are given time to look at all five. Then they close their eyes, and while their eyes are shut, I quietly remove one of the objects (such as the scissors). When they open their eyes again, they try to figure out which object is missing.

### **The Sense of Smell**

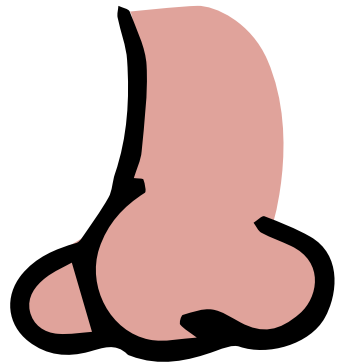
The sense of smell is connected to our nose. I talk with the pupils about what the nose is used for – smelling and breathing – and where it is located on the face.

We discuss how the sense of smell works by detecting scents and odors. These are sensory experiences that happen when the inside of the nose reacts to different smells in the air.

When the experience is pleasant, we call it a scent – for example, the smell of perfume or flowers. When the experience is unpleasant, we call it an odor – like bad breath, smelly feet, or vomit.

For this sense, I guide the pupils through a blindfolded smell test. I present them with a variety of scents – such as perfume, flowers, or cake – and they try to guess what each one is.

I also include a few unpleasant smells, like smelly socks or a sour-smelling dishcloth, to help them experience the difference between scents and odors. This exercise often leads to laughter and strong reactions, making it both memorable and educational.



## The Sense of Touch

The sense of touch is all about what we feel. I start by asking the pupils to place their right hand on their left hand. We talk about the sensations they feel when their hands touch, as well as the feeling we get when we scratch ourselves or are tickled.

This simple activity often leads to a conversation about how physical touch can feel different from person to person. It helps children become more aware of how their sensory experiences may differ from those of their classmates – and reminds them to respect each other’s boundaries.

One exercise for this sense involves pairing the pupils and having them sit facing each other. They take turns lightly tickling each other’s palms, paying attention to how it feels and how their partner reacts.

Another popular activity involves two pupils sitting barefoot across from each other at a table. The teacher places two objects – for example, a roll of tape and a Swiss roll – under the table. Using only their feet, the pupils must try to identify the objects by touch alone.

A third exercise has the pupils stand back-to-back in pairs. The activity can be repeated in various physical positions: side-by-side with their arms or shoulders touching or standing palm-to-palm. These exercises help children explore how it feels to be in physical contact in different ways, while practicing gentle, respectful touch.



## Intuition – The Sixth Sense

The final part of the Sensory Method I introduce to the children is our intuition. I explain that intuition is often felt in the stomach – that we all have an “inner voice” that speaks to us, especially when something does not feel right. This feeling, often called a gut feeling, can help us sense whether something is good or bad, right or wrong.

To help the pupils understand how intuition and gut feelings work, I give them an exercise where they describe both a pleasant and an unpleasant thought. As they reflect, they are asked to focus on how each thought feels in their body – especially in the stomach. Sometimes I ask them directly: “Where in your body do you feel that emotion?”

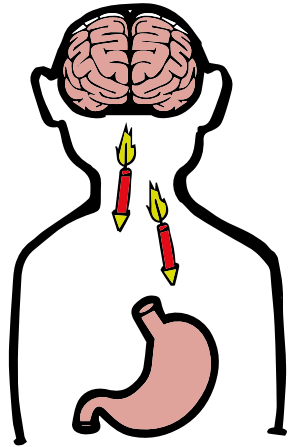
To deepen their understanding of intuition and personal awareness, I also introduce what I call “social practice.” These exercises are designed to help pupils recognize and respect their own boundaries – and the boundaries of others – so they do not accidentally cross them.

The pupils work in pairs. For example, if Alberte and Noah are standing facing each other, Alberte is instructed to slowly walk toward Noah. When Noah starts to feel uncomfortable, he must say “stop.” Alberte must stop immediately – that is where Noah’s boundary has been set. Then they switch roles to find Alberte’s boundary.

These exercises help children become more aware of body language, emotional signals, and the importance of listening to their own instincts as well as respecting others.

A similar exercise for exploring personal boundaries involves pupils standing in pairs and looking at each other. They must hold eye contact until it becomes uncomfortable for one of them – at that point, they stop.

Exercises like this help create a safe space where pupils can feel secure – whether they are in class, during playtime, or spending time together outside of school.



For example, imagine Alberte squeezing herself into a game by pushing Noah, who does not enjoy physical contact. Noah gets upset and reacts by hitting. If Alberte becomes more aware of Noah's boundaries, she will understand not pushing him next time. In the same way, if Noah learns to recognize and communicate his discomfort, he can say "no" instead of reacting physically.

These situations help pupils understand how respecting boundaries – both their own and others – builds more peaceful and respectful interactions.

### **Exercises to Support Discussion of the Sensory Method**

The following cases present everyday situations that relate to the Sensory Method. You can use them as a basis for class discussions or give them to pupils to talk about in small groups.

#### **Case I**

Alberte and Noah are playing dodgeball in the gym with the rest of the class. Alberte throws the ball, and it hits Noah on the arm – but he keeps running. Alberte calls out to him that he is out, but when Noah does not stop, she goes to the teacher. The teacher asks why she is yelling at Noah. Alberte explains that she hit him with the ball and that he is breaking the rules by continuing to play after being hit.

1. Why do you think Noah kept running?
2. How can the Sensory Method help us understand what happened?

**Commentary:** One possible reason Noah kept running is that he did not feel the ball hit his arm. The Sensory Method helps us understand this by focusing on the body's senses – in this case, the sense of touch. If a child is deeply focused on a task – like escaping the ball – they may not register certain physical sensations. The method encourages awareness of how our body and senses work together. By becoming more conscious of the signals their bodies send, pupils can better understand both their own reactions and those of others. In this situation, it is possible Noah's thoughts were so focused on running that he did not consciously register being hit.

## Case 2

After recess, Mia returns to her seat for math class. She feels tired. After about half an hour, she starts moving restlessly in her chair – tipping it back and forth, sliding around, and struggling to sit still.

Discussion Questions:

1. Why do you think Mia is sitting restlessly?
2. How might the Sensory Method help us understand this behavior?

**Commentary:** The Sensory Method – specifically the sense of touch – can help explain Mia’s restlessness. She might be seeking physical stimulation in order to stay focused. In this situation, it is helpful to ask Mia herself why she is having trouble sitting still. Mia is an academically gifted pupil who may need extra challenges to stay engaged. Without sufficient stimulation, she becomes bored – which can lead to physical restlessness. To support her needs, the teacher provides Mia with a ball cushion (a round, slightly inflatable seat used to help children stay balanced and focused). The subtle movement of the cushion gives her the sensory input she is craving, which helps her focus on the math task and reduces the need to move around or distract others.

## Case 3

After recess, Emil returns to class. The teacher asks the pupils to write their names on a folder that will be used for their Danish lessons. Emil sits with his pencil but seems unsure of how to hold it. He grips the pencil using his index finger and ring finger, and the writing on his folder is difficult to read.

1. Why do you think Emil’s writing is hard to read?
2. How might the Sensory Method help us understand this situation?

**Commentary:** The Sensory Method – especially the sense of touch – can help us understand why Emil struggles to hold the pencil correctly. He may not yet have developed the fine motor skills or finger strength needed for a stable grip. Rather than focusing on the outcome (the messy writing), it is important to support Emil in exploring how his body feels when he writes.

A practical tool, like a rubber pencil grip, can help guide his fingers into a more natural position and make it easier for him to focus on forming letters. Through this lens, the Sensory Method encourages awareness of the connection between body and learning – reminding us that developing physical control is part of the learning process, not a sign of failure.

#### **Case 4**

Jesper is in preschool. He is sitting at the back of the class with his seatmate, Claus. The teacher is giving a lesson on letters and words, and both boys are following along. Suddenly, they hear the sound of an aircraft flying overhead. Jesper notices it and turns his attention to the window to look at the sky.

1. Why do you think Jesper turned his attention to the aircraft?
2. How can the Sensory Method help us understand and respond to this situation?

**Commentary:** The Sensory Method – especially the senses of hearing and sight – can help explain Jesper’s shift in focus. The sound of the aircraft caught his attention first, and once he saw it, his focus was drawn fully to the visual stimulus. Rather than correcting Jesper immediately, the teacher can engage his attention by gently asking what he sees. Jesper might say, “An aircraft!” – and from there, the teacher has an opportunity to bring the moment into the lesson. For example, they might write the word aircraft on the board and ask how many syllables it has, or how the word begins. This approach helps Jesper feel seen and valued while also reinforcing the idea that our eyes play an important role in learning to read. The teacher can explain that the eyes help us focus, and that we can usually only focus on one thing at a time – which is why it is important to return our gaze to the board when we are ready to learn again. In this way, the Sensory Method turns a moment of distraction into a moment of connection and learning.

#### **Case 5**

Lise and Susan are sitting in class during lunch break. The teacher explains that they should focus on the sense of taste today – paying