

## First advice comes from the teacher



If the child has a problem that cannot be solved within the family, contact the child's **teacher** first. Talk about your observations and conversations with the child. Ask what teachers have noticed at school or kindergarten. **Discuss together** how you can support your child at home, in kindergarten or at school.



## Support specialists help the child, the family, and teachers



If you have come to the conclusion that your child needs professional help, you should first contact the **support specialist** of your kindergarten or school. In the education system, support specialists include speech therapists, psychologists, special educators, and social pedagogues who support children in coping with educational difficulties.

- **A SOCIAL PEDAGOGUE** helps with social problems - for example, bullying or behavioral problems, when the child does not want to go to school, when relationships with parents, peers, or teachers are difficult, when the child needs help to cope with a special need or health problem.
- **SPECIAL EDUCATOR** helps to choose the appropriate teaching methods, materials, and environment for the child who has difficulty in studies.
- **PSYCHOLOGIST** helps with mental health problems, for example, when the child's behaviour, eating or sleeping is rapidly changing; or the child experiences fears, mood problems (anxiety, sadness, anger, numbness, aggression), also in case of absence from school or with conflicts in previous close relationships.
- **SPEECH THERAPIST** supports the development of the child's speech, both oral, and written.

**These services must be provided to the child in need by the local government free of charge.** Usually, each kindergarten and school has its own support specialists. Sometimes they do not work directly in kindergarten or school but in a municipal center, but they still work with children in kindergartens and schools in their area. You can ask the teacher, the head of school, or the municipality how support services are organized for your child's kindergarten or school.



## Health problems will be addressed by the doctor



In order to approach Rajaleidja with a problem related to education, there is no need for doctor's certificate; for example, the child does not need to see a psychiatrist before going to educational counseling. However, if there is a need for a psychiatrist to be consulted, we will refer the family to the doctor.

If the child has a health problem in addition to special educational needs (learning, behavioural and communication difficulties), the primary point of contact is **the family physician**, who will help decide if and what special medical help the child needs.

## Child welfare sees to the best interests of the child



If the adults around the child (for example, parents between themselves, or parents and school) are in need of assistance in communication, feel free to contact the child protection officer of your municipality. The **child protection** officer supports families in difficult times, helps parents coordinate communication with different organizations and specialists, and makes decisions based on the child's interests and needs.

My child is having trouble with studies, behavior and relationships - in kindergarten, in school, or at home.

**FOR PARENTS**

## Where can I find help?

### Further guidance is provided by the Rajaleidja

If parents, school, or the municipality need further advice or neutral assessment of how to act in support of the child, they can turn to the national educational counseling system - the **Rajaleidja Network**. Our educational counselors will find out what is hindering your child's educational progress and will counsel you on how to organize your child's education and upbringing. This service is **free of charge for the family**.

Occasionally, counseling reveals that a formal decision or administrative act is required to organize an education pathway suitable for the child (for example: assigning an adaptation group or a special group in kindergarten, delaying the start of school, implementing a simplified curriculum at school). Such a well-considered decision is made by an extracurricular counseling team of three Rajaleidja counselors.

The decisions of Rajaleidja are recommendations for the parent, but binding to the **the educational institution and the local government**. For example: if the extracurricular counseling team of Rajaleidja has recommended a child to a special class, the municipality must, if the parent so wishes, provide that opportunity.

**An appointment with the counselor** can be **booked** at the Rajaleidja Center by calling 735 0700 or on the website at [www.rajaleidja.ee](http://www.rajaleidja.ee).

Quick and confidential free advice is provided by Rajaleidja e-counselor, who can be contacted on weekdays from 10am to 2pm in the chat window in the bottom right corner of the Rajaleidja website.



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