

# Using Telepresence Systems in Schools to Prevent Isolation of Sick Children: ABILITI's Training Program for Teachers

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## Abstract

Avatar Based Interaction and Learning in Times of Illness (ABILITI) is a competitive European project that aims to facilitate the emotional well-being and academic continuity of children who are unable to attend school for a certain period due to a chronic or long-term illness. Specifically, the project focuses on investigating how telepresence systems (social robots), through a specific didactic methodology for these cases, can be an appropriate technology to prevent isolation in the educational system of these children. One of the results of the ABILITI project is a training program for schoolteachers to learn about the possibilities of telepresence systems to improve socio-emotional aspects, the feeling of belonging and the academic continuity of children with chronic or long-term illnesses. The training program consists of 3 modules. The first module introduces the problem of chronic illnesses in children and the problems arising from school absenteeism. The second module identifies the differences between conventional methods of connection and a telepresence system. The third focuses on didactics for the application of telepresence systems in lesson planning and classroom management. The training program has been piloted in 5 European countries: Austria, Belgium, Estonia, Denmark, and Spain.

**Keywords:** didactics, ill children, telepresence systems, training program, well-being