



Authors,

Zoe-Doina Niță, Cătălina Chendea, Iolanda Cătinean, Meda - Ionela Știrbu
Beatrice - Meda Găurean, Adriana Țițeni, Claudia Dincă, Maria Cristina Vlădescu

**BE A
VOLUNTEER
FOR YOUR
COMMUNITY!!**



THE GUIDE OF THE VOLUNTEER



Bucharest
- 2016 -

INTRODUCTION

Motto: Tell me and I will forget, show me and maybe I will remember, involve me and I will understand!

This Guide contains practical and useful information, provides guidance and will be extremely valuable to the volunteers of the Community Action in the educational institutions. Once interested in becoming a volunteer of the Community Action, the first question will probably be: "What do I do now?" The purpose of this guide is to give you answers to this question. More exactly, it represents a support that contains key information about the Community Action, to which reference can be made anytime; it supports you, the volunteer students, offering you guidance and encouragement with regard to your new role; it encourages you to evaluate your work and results for a further development of the Community Action in your school; it allows you to bring additions to the implementation of the Community Action in Romania, adding your own ideas and examples of success.

This guide wants to offer all the volunteers, children, young and adults, the confidence to develop the Community Action in their schools and communities, thus contributing to the formation of some informed, dedicated and ingenious citizens, in the current society and that of the future.

Some years ago (probably more than your age now), a large-hearted English teacher wanted to involve his students, full of energy and positive intentions, in activities that would bring joy both to them and to some less advantaged children. This is how the community action appeared, a concept that brings together people from the same community, but with different resources and needs. By working together to solve certain problems or difficulties, they learn from each other, they discover each other and themselves, they find how easy is to do good and to bring joy to the others.

If you are part of those children / young people who wish to make a change in the world around them and also have the energy for this, but have not found yet a tool to help them put their ideas into practice, this Guide is for you! Read it, keep what suits you, find a team suitable for you and get down working!

If you already are NSCA senior volunteer, the Guide offers you structured information that can help you or can give you ideas for new activities or applications. Even if you will not be totally reflected in this Guide, it can give you a direction and can give you confidence in what you want to do, because a group of adults, as keen to do well, thought to write a book for you and those like you. We gave our best to make a nice and friendly Guide; even if the theory is needed, you will never give an exam from it. This part is there so that you can reread it when you need it. The applications are many, varied and cheerful and we honestly admit that we also like them more than the theory. As in any thing in life, the balance between theory and practice is the one that ensures success. For example, it is good to have project ideas, but without a good planning and project management notions, success comes harder.

However, everything starts from your will. That will, which is in the same family of words with volunteer and volunteering. Nobody can force you to be a volunteer, it is contradiction in terms. So if your mind or heart tells you that you want to do more than you are doing now, become a NSCA volunteer! There are already tens of thousands of young people who did this before you and are doing it right now, bringing hundreds of smiles every day on the faces of many beneficiaries. And if this Guide does not please you or if you want something else, we are happy anyway, as long as you do not give up the idea of doing good. Any young volunteer makes the world we live in more beautiful and fills us with hope. A young man who gives up from complaining and does something concrete is what gives us strength to go further!

Thank you dear children and beautiful young people of Romania, we are proud to be contemporary with you!

CATHARSIS Association for the Development of Social and Educational Services

The activity of CATHARSIS Association is carried out on a project basis. Thus, starting with September 2013, we got involved in the following projects:

"I have a big heart - Self-knowledge and personal development workshops for teenagers"

In December 2013, in partnership with the National Antidrug Agency, through the Antidrug Center for Prevention, Evaluation and Counseling of Sibiu, County Center of Resources and Educational Assistance of Sibiu, High School of Art of Sibiu and "Gheorghe Lazăr" National College of Sibiu, CATHARSIS Association projected a work guide for the professionals who work with adolescents and young people, proposing them, during 10 workshops, to make a journey of discovery of their own identity and of the things that can really make them happy. The condition for participating in the self-knowledge and personal development workshops is the desire of the adolescent to work with himself, to try to do things differently than usual, to be willing to offer himself time to develop as independent person. The results of the workshops will be a consequence of the involvement of the adolescents, of the atmosphere that will be established during the process of self-knowledge, of the themes and exercises proposed by the trainers. The exercises proposed will stimulate the self-knowledge, communication and will explore the family relationships and friendships.

The project "Christmas for everyone"

The main objective of the project was to raise funds for 200 children from the foster care centers "Sf. Macrina" (St. Macrina) and "Cireșarii" from Bucharest. The activities took place during October - December 2013, being organized by the volunteers of Catharsis Association, students of Goethe High School from Bucharest. These have collected clothes, toys and money, through sponsorships and donations received from natural and legal persons, they bought presents and organized a show for the children in the two foster care centers, occasion on which were shared the gifts.

http://asociatiacatharsis.ro/eveniment_detalii.php?id_e=1

Workshops of ARTISANAL THERAPY - creation, socialization, personal development

Designed as a method of psychical and occupational therapy, the workshops of ARTISANAL THERAPY offer an ideal setting for creation, socialization and personal development. The workshop participants thus had the opportunity to turn to advantage their creativity, to craft practical things from recyclable materials and to enjoy the result of their work. The workshops were carried out in the period December-April 2014, in partnership with Handicraft and Creativity Association, being organized 17 workshops attended by over 100 persons passionate about handicraft and preservation of the traditions.

http://asociatiacatharsis.ro/articol_consiliere_grup_detalii.php?id_articol_consiliere=1

The project "Change a future"

In March 2014, at Capital Plaza Hotel in Bucharest, the volunteers of CATHARSIS Association, students of Goethe German High School, organized a charity event for the children in the foster care center "Cireșarii 2". The event was opened by Sebastian Grosu who held a recital of jazz music. The star of the evening was Paula Seling who offered a recital of music. The event ended with an auction of the paintings made by the children from "Cireșarii" Foster Care Center in Bucharest. The amounts obtained from the sale of the tickets, as well as from the donations of the sponsors, were used to improve the conditions of life and study of the children from "Cireșarii 2" Foster Care Center.

http://asociatiacatharsis.ro/eveniment_detalii.php?id_e=5

Terre des hommes Foundation – Switzerland

The vision of Terre des hommes Foundation, ambassador for children's rights, is that of a world where children grow up with dignity and develop in an environment that protects them and participates in fulfilling their needs and rights.

Since its creation in 1960, the mission of Terre des hommes Foundation (Tdh) is to support children in need. Tdh devotes all its efforts to protect the rights of the children experiencing situations of war, natural disasters or in other less publicized vulnerable situations. Today, Tdh is an impressive force among the organizations that support children's rights in Switzerland and worldwide. Terre des hommes is the largest non-governmental organization in Switzerland, which develops projects and programs in more than 30 countries of the world. Those projects can be carried out thanks to the individual and institutional financial support, of which 87% is destined directly to the Terre des hommes programs.

In Romania, Terre des hommes is active as early as 1992. Every year, thousands of children and their families benefit from support within the projects implemented, that have three major axes of intervention:

- (1) Strengthening the child protection system so as to be prevented the situations of abuse, negligence and exploitation
- (2) The protection of children found in situations of traffic and migration
- (3) The inclusion of Roma communities and other minorities

The areas of activity include: the development of the social services quality which prevent risk situations and protection of the rights and wellness of the vulnerable children, school dropout prevention and the development of the global skills of the children, the provision of psychosocial support for vulnerable children and young people, the training and empowerment of the local social service providers in order to improve the management of the case and the quality of the child protection services; not the least, lobby activities, as ambassador of children's rights in the relationships with the governmental and community structures and other important actors in the field of child protection.

Terre des hommes promotes the active participation of young people in society and recognizes the great importance of observing their right to the expression of the opinions and to the decisions that directly affect their lives. A particular attention is dedicated to the sustainability of the services it implements.

For more information, please visit the following web pages: www.tdh.ro / www.tdh.ch / www.hub-icarus.eu / www.childhub.org / <http://www.zefirincomunitate.ro/> www.acumdecid.eu

Children's High Level Group Association

Children's High Level Group Association (CHLGA) is a charitable organization that promotes quality standards in respect of education and the inclusion of the children with special and social needs. The Association seeks, in its activity, the values and principles of the United Nations Convention on the Children's Rights.

Since its registration in 2006, the Association developed the program of "**Community Action**" in Romania and other countries, such as the Republic of Moldova, Georgia and Armenia. The purpose of this program, which carries out also in the present, is to overcome the barriers and to offer opportunities of development, mainly for the children with special and social needs, by facilitating their meeting with the volunteers from schools and high schools within certain activities from the Optional Curriculum of the School (OCS).

The project is addressed to:

- The children with special and social needs from institutions;
- The volunteers who are part of the NSCA program (National Strategy for Community Action);
- The teachers who facilitate the activities of the community action;
- The elder people found in institutions, etc.

Types of services ensured: initializing and coordinating all the N.S.C.A activities, together with the Ministry of Education and Scientific Research or the relevant agencies from Romania, Republic of Moldova, Georgia and Armenia; organizing summer projects for training the volunteers and developing their talents and competences; organizing international conferences for the dissemination of the results of the activities carried out.

Another project carried out by CHLGA was the "**Child abandonment and its prevention**". Partners in this project were: Institute of Work, Health and Organization - Nottingham University UK, as well as other universities and NGOs from Denmark, France, Bulgaria, Hungary, Poland, Slovakia, Czech Republic and Lithuania. The project was financed by the European Commission.

The purpose of the project was the assessment of the child abandonment from certain European Union member countries, the revision of the legislation in the field with a view to a greater awareness of the population in this field and the elaboration of certain recommendations for streamlining the policies in the field.

Types of services ensured: statistical, legislative and political analyses relating to child abandonment in Romania, the development and publication of a book in this regard.

The project "**European parliamentary network for combating trafficking**" was financed by the European Commission and carried out by CHLGA in partnership with two NGOs from Great Britain. The purposes of the project were: creating national centers within the parliaments of the EU member countries, supported by NGOs and the agencies responsible for applying the law for monitoring human trafficking; supporting the creation of a multi-party European network of parliamentarians; awareness campaigns among parliamentarians regarding the nature and extent of the forms of human trafficking, including labor exploitation, criminal exploitation, trafficking of children as well as trafficking for sexual exploitation; promoting the implementation of the main European and international initiatives including the new EU directive against human trafficking; promoting the necessity of national rapporteurs in the EU member countries.

CHLGA has consistently worked in partnership with the government, particularly with the Prime Minister Chancellery, with the Ministry of Education and Scientific Research, and with the National Authority for Children's Rights, which contributed in a great extent to the sustainability of its projects.

At the moment CHLGA has a project which addresses to the children with hearing impairment, in partnership with the Ministry of Education and Scientific Research, "Mary Hare" School from Great Britain and "Sf. Vasile" (St. Basil) Special School from Craiova. The uniqueness of this project consists of a new approach, in the sense of obtaining a "total communication" with these disadvantaged children.

Romanian Foundation for Education and Educators

The Romanian Foundation for Education and Educators (R.F.E.E.) was founded in 1999 and its main activity is the dissemination, by any means, of the new educational theories and methods as alternate embodiment, complementary for the educational system anchored in the valuable Romanian tradition.

The purpose of the "R.F.E.E." foundation is represented by the creation and experimentation, in the forming process of the young people, of an alternative educational system, whose fundamental goal is represented by the promotion of the principle of lifelong learning in the spirit of the ethical and moral values, aiming the attitudinal change to the level of the entire society reported to the educational process from the perspective of the third millennium demands.

The virtual space, e-learning and the non-formal audiovisual communication represented the most commonly used methods for the projects of the Foundation.

Sighişoara Film Festival is a non-competitive event which is organized by the Romanian Foundation for Education and Educators, in partnership with "I.L.Caragiale" National University of Theatre and Cinematography, Sighişoara City Hall and the National Board of Cinematography.

For six years, the project promotes the Romanian film culture, through the films awarded at the major festivals from outside the country (Cannes, Berlin, Locarno, Karlovy Vary, San Sebastian, Venice, Cairo, Mar del Plata, etc.) and through the notable personalities of the field, as well as other personalities from the culture spectrum.

The festival organizers reunited over the years the best short films, documentaries and feature films in order to offer the public an overall view on the internationally recognized autochthonous films. The previous editions have enjoyed a real success, both from the viewing public and from the professionals in the national and international world of cinematography.

The festival has the purpose and all the premises to become in time a European artistic communication platform and a support for the future productions. It offers meeting platforms for the professionals of the field from the country and abroad and an active interactive relationship between the personalities involved and the thousands of Romanian or foreign spectators.

The project "**Be a volunteer for your community!**"

CATHARSIS Association for the Development of Social and Educational Services, in partnership with Terre des hommes Foundation - Switzerland, the Romanian Foundation for Education and Educators and "Children's High Level Group" Association launched the project ***Be a volunteer for your community!***, in response to the need for the volunteer training within the National Strategy for Community Action (N.S.C.A.), the largest voluntary national program for high school students in Romania. The project takes place during the period 01.04.2015 - 31.04.2016.

The project objectives were: making a guide of the NSCA volunteer, training 50 adolescent volunteers from across the country and implementing at least 10 community projects, with at least 500 beneficiaries. The training course included workshops for personal development, advocacy and project management. Once trained, the 50 adolescents will continue to activate in NSCA at least 2 years from now on, for the school and local community benefit. The guide elaborated will be made available to all the volunteers (teachers and students) in the country, in order to help them in implementing community actions, by using interactive methods and strategies.

Be a volunteer for your community! is a project financed through the EEA Grants 2009-2014, within the NGO Fund in Romania.

For official information about the EEA and Norway Grants visit www.eeagrants.org.

For more information visit the websites:

www.fondong.fdsc.ro

www.asociatiacatharsis.ro

or contact us on the email address: voluntar@asociatiacatharsis.ro

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1. DEFINITIONS, PURPOSE, OBJECTIVES, ACTIVITIES	10
1.1. What is the community action?.....	10
1.2. What is not the community action?	10
1.3. The community action in Romania	10
1.4. The purpose of the community action	11
1.5. The objectives of the community action	11
1.6. The activities in the Community Action.....	11
CHAPTER 2. NSCA TEAM IN YOUR SCHOOL.....	12
2.1. How and why to become a NSCA volunteer?	12
2.2. What benefits you will have if you participate in the Community Action programs?	12
2.3. How can I do the activities well, for me and for the others.....	13
2.4. Assessment: how and why?	14
CHAPTER 3. WORK TECHNIQUES WITH THE CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS	15
Exercise no. 1 Safety exercis.....	19
Exercise no. 2 Puzzle	19
Exercise no. 3 Mimicry game	20
Exercise no. 4 The traveling ball	20
Exercise no. 5 The map of the school	20
CHAPTER 4. WORKING WITH CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE	22
Exercise no. 1 The hidden treasure of the personal resources"	22
Exercise no. 2 Name and gesture	24
Exercise no. 3 The island of friendship	25
Exercise no. 4 The ball in five passes.....	26
Exercise no. 5 The mailman.....	27
Exercise no. 6 Where have you been?	28
Exercise no. 7 The tail of the dragon.....	30
Exercise no. 8 The collage "My universe"	31
Exercise no. 9 The personal coat of arms	32
CHAPTER 5. COMMUNICATION AND ACTIVE LISTENING	34
5.1 The communication process.....	36
5.2. Forms of communication.....	37
5.2.1. The verbal communication.....	37
5.2.2. The paraverbal communication.....	38

5.2.3. The nonverbal communication.....	38
5.3. The active listening	39
5.4. Barriers in communication.....	40
5.5. Barriers in listening	40
5.6. Feedback in communication	42
Exercise no. 1 The man that was not transmitting anything.....	44
Exercise no. 2 Role play	44
Exercise no. 3 The opponent.....	45
CHAPTER 6. EXERCISE, GAME AND SPORTS	46
6.1. The characteristics and objectives of the games.....	47
6.2. Setting the objectives.....	48
6.3. Basic principles	49
6.4. Planning the activity.....	50
Exercise no. 1 Extraterrestrial football.....	51
Exercise no. 2 Volleyball championship	53
CHAPTER 7. PROJECT MANAGEMENT.....	57
7.1. Identifying, prioritizing and justifying the problem.....	60
7.2. Identifying the purpose and the objectives of the project	62
7.2.1. The purpose of the project	62
7.2.2. The project objectives	62
7.3. Determining the beneficiaries / The target group	64
7.4. The activity plan	65
7.5. Assessment	66
Exercise no. 1 What kind of coordinator you are?	67
Exercise no. 2 The GANTT of my project	67
Exercise no. 3 My RESOURCES.....	68
CHAPTER 8. COMMUNITY PROJECTS	69
8.1. Key Concepts	70
8.2. Annex 1 - Example of activity plan for community project	72
8.3. Annex 2 - Model of organizing a fundraising campaign	73
CHAPTER 9. METHODS AND TECHNIQUES FROM THE ART OF THE ACTOR	74
Exercise no. 1 Let's build a car	75
Exercise no. 2 10 years from now on	75
Exercise no. 3 Listening to the sounds around us.....	76
Exercise no. 4 Object identification game	76
Exercise no. 5 Action without hands	76
Exercise no. 6 Animal, bird or fish.....	76
Exercise no. 7 When I go on vacation	76
Exercise no. 8 Rhymed words	76

Exercise no. 9	Do not let go of the hand	77
Exercise no. 10	MaMeMiMoMu	77
Exercise no. 11	The statues and the sculptors	77
Exercise no. 12	The mysterious object	77
Exercise no. 13	The trees and the wind	77
Exercise no. 14	The hardening	77
Exercise no. 15	The drawing	78
CHAPTER 10.	COMMUNICATION AND MEDIA	79
Exercise no. 1	Presentation in images/ The presentation card in images	84
Exercise no. 2	Count in group	85
Exercise no. 3	The typewriter	85
Exercise no. 4	Group story	86
Exercise no. 5	Expert in things that do not exist	86
Exercise no. 6	Simultaneous speech	87
Exercise no. 7	Collage-poster or the challenge of creativity	87
CHAPTER 11.	COMMUNITY PROJECTS IMPLEMENTED BY THE YOUNG N.S.C.A	
VOLUNTEERS.....	89
•	The project "By giving you will aquire", MARVAL team of volunteers, "Mircea Scarlat" Pedagogical High School, Alexandria	89
•	The project "Kineto for everyone", Roman - Vodă National College, Roman, Neamț county	91
•	The project "The road to the future starts today", Dolphins LTD team, Decebal Theoretical High School, Constanța	92
•	The project "The friend next to you", Happy Cuza team of volunteers, "Alexandru Ioan Cuza" National College, Alexandria	93
•	The project "Read me a story", Calistraț ii team of volunteers, "Calistrat Hogăș" National College, Piatra Neamț county	94
•	The project "On the realm of the tales", The Believers team, "Lucian Blaga" Technological High School, Reghin, Mureș county	97
•	The project "The school of weekend", Manolache Costache Epureanu Secondary School, Bîrlad, Vaslui county	100
•	The project "The volunteers make their voice heard!", Alpha INFOEL team, Bistrița, INFOEL Technological College, Bistrița- Năsăud county	102
•	The project "Volunteering through art", R.E.L.A.T.I team, "Frații Buzești" National College, Craiova	105
•	The project "The little stars of hope", "Gheorghe Asachi" Technological College, Iași	106

CHAPTER 1. DEFINITIONS, PURPOSE, OBJECTIVES, ACTIVITIES

1.1. What is the Community Action?

The Community Action is a voluntary activity that unites mainstream education units with special schools, nursing homes, foster care centers and other social institutions into a clear, consistent and coordinated program, which comprises regular educational activities and creates a learning partnership between all the participants. In case there are no special schools or social institutions in the locality or these are not open to collaboration, the N.S.C.A volunteers can work with children or adults from disadvantaged groups.

The Community Action involves the students. These shall make regular visits (it is ideal weekly) to a special school or social institutions in order to meet with children and adults and to involve them in an activity program which will facilitate the process of educational development and social integration between volunteers and beneficiaries.

The Community Action is usually offered in the form of a course or extracurricular activity to high school students who wish to become volunteers. The students in secondary schools and even kindergartens can also become volunteers in this program.

The Community Action is organized by a teacher, who has the role of coordinator and who is responsible for recruiting volunteers and organizing this program. Each coordinator supports and sustains a group of volunteers, organizing, together with them, various activities with the beneficiaries.

1.2. What is not the Community Action?

The community action does not refer to singular activities. One of the most important characteristics is the continuity. The CA activities are periodic, for the interaction between volunteers and beneficiaries to be lasting, continuous and constant. Even if every social activity is to be appreciated, it cannot be included in the concept of CA unless it has the above characteristics, thus bringing real, measurable and concrete benefits in the lives of those involved. The singular actions do not change behaviors, do not create abilities, do not develop attitudes, the Community Action does this.

1.3. The Community Action in Romania

In Romania, the Community Action is implemented within a national program, called the National Strategy for Community Action (NSCA). At the moment, the local coordinators reported a total of about 80.000 volunteers and beneficiaries at national level. Initiated and coordinated by the Ministry of Education and Scientific Research, the program is carried out in partnership with the "Children High Level Group" Association and was supported since the beginning by the Baroness Emma Nicholson, British MEP that occupies, starting with 2009, the honorary position of High Representative for the protection and childcare within the General Secretariat of the Romanian Government.

The National Strategy for Community Action was approved by the MECT Order no. 1734/08.08.2007. In 2012 the order was updated (3477/2012). Thus, each student can be part of the volunteer teams constituted at the level of the educational institution in which he is schooled and can organize and carry out activities specific to this strategy. Usually, these activities aim to support the persons found in difficulty, especially the children with special educational needs. The direct beneficiaries of the activities can be: children / young people / adults with disabilities, abandoned or homeless, old people, sick persons and, in general, any person found in difficulty.

Within N.S.C.A, besides the activities with the children, there were organized meetings with the county coordinators, national and international conferences, making and editing materials etc. The National Strategy for Community Action is mentioned as an example of good practice at European level, and countries like the Republic of Moldova, Georgia, Armenia, and Macedonia have implemented or are under implementation of this program, **after the model of our country**.

Starting with 2008, every year takes place the dance contest "*Together for the future*", to which participate teams composed of equal number of volunteers and beneficiaries members. At present are running other three N.S.C.A national competitions, besides the dance contest: The national contest of letters of the volunteer students "*Letter for my friend*", The national contest of drawings of the beneficiaries "*Beyond the spoken words*" and the National Competition "*The N.S.C.A mascot*".

The most successful activity within N.S.C.A is "*The week of the donated fruit and vegetables*" (in the month of November of each year, depending on the structure of the school year). Tens of tons of food supplies are collected every year and reach to social protection institutions or disadvantaged families.

1.4. *The purpose of the community action*

Increasing the life quality of the volunteers and of the beneficiaries.

1.5. *The objectives of the community action*

- ✓ Involving the volunteer students in activities carried out with persons found in difficulty;
- ✓ Improving the life experiences of the volunteers;
- ✓ Increasing the educational and social integration opportunities of the children and young people beneficiaries;
- ✓ Overcoming the barriers related to the learning process;
- ✓ Creating a connection bridge between the mainstream education and the special one, both during and after the school hours;
- ✓ Developing the following qualities to the volunteers: initiative, commitment, ingenuity, responsibility, creativity, flexibility, empathy.
- ✓ The personal involvement in finding and applying solutions to the problems of the local community.

1.6. *The activities in the Community Action*

In order to be considered Community action, the activities will involve volunteers and beneficiaries (do not forget, the N.S.C.A volunteers work with and for beneficiaries, together, not separately). Start from the needs of the beneficiaries and adapt the activities, so that they lead to positive results for everyone involved.

Be careful, empathetic and responsible in choosing the activities, because they are the ones that will make the life of the beneficiaries more beautiful. Do not promise more than you can give, you better start slowly and go far away! You will find below examples of activities that your fellow volunteers are already implementing: socializing, games, stories; greening and planting saplings; confectioning handcrafted objects (cards, trinkets worn in honor of March 1 etc.); exhibitions (with objects confectioned by you, photographs, drawings, collages etc.); sport activities (outdoors, in gyms); excursions, hiking, visits; support in the school learning activities; campaigns meant to support persons found in difficulty; music, dance, theater, drawing, practical abilities workshops; cultural, artistic and community events; activities specific to various events (e.g. Education day, International Day of Tolerance, The day of the persons with disabilities, The Baton day, Winter and Easter holidays etc.); summer camps / projects.

CHAPTER 2. NSCA TEAM IN YOUR SCHOOL

Motto: Involvement is the key of implementing the change and increasing devotion - Stephen Covey, American sociologist and writer

2.1. How and why to become a NSCA volunteer?

Now that we have cleared, somewhat, what means the community action, we go to the next question: ok, I am interested, what shall I do to become a NSCA volunteer or to be a good NSCA volunteer?

Firstly, let's define the situation where you are. Where did you find about this guide and about NSCA?

- A. If you found out from colleagues of yours who are already volunteers and want to expand the team or they want to hand over the baton, it means that there already is a coordinating teacher and the next step is simple: you talk to the teacher, he tells you about what NSCA means in your school and how you can get involved. Further, you meet the old volunteers, integrate into the team or create a new team and get to work. For any project, you can find, in the following chapters, information, tips, tricks and other useful things that can make your life of volunteer easier and can increase the success rate of your activities.
- B. If you found the Guide searching rambling volunteering opportunities on the net, you will have some more work to do, but it worthy anyway.

As one of the NSCA characteristics is that the volunteers work in teams, it is better you find a gang with the same desires and interests and make the plan together.

The methodology also stipulates a coordinating teacher, because good intentions are sometimes insufficient without the maturity of an adult to support you, so this is the next step.

Once passed these steps, set the first meeting of the team and hence everything will be simple, put the good intentions into concrete projects (choose carefully the group and the methods and make the plan of the activities (see Chapter 7 for support and ideas).

The next step: put the activities into practice, observing as much as possible the initial plan, but leaving space to flexibility as well. Remember that what you do, you do it with joy and desire of doing good, not for a prize of popularity or grade 10.

The last step: the assessment. It is not with grade or qualifier, it is just to see if what you are doing is ok for you and for the beneficiaries. And in order to feel even better, we promote the self-assessment and the assessment between the team members.

It seems pretty complicated, so we found, with the help of your colleagues who already are volunteers, a few more **reasons** to remain attracted by the prospect of NSCA volunteering.

2.2. What benefits you will have if you participate in the Community Action programs?

- ✓ You will develop your knowledge and abilities regarding important aspects of education, in a pleasant and interesting way;
- ✓ You will better understand the needs and difficulties other people near you confront with;
- ✓ You will stimulate your intelligence, creativity and ingenuity;
- ✓ You will have the feeling of satisfaction, as a result of the involvement in a useful and challenging mission;
- ✓ You will see the social problems with different eyes;
- ✓ You will manage to overcome the social prejudices and to remove the ignorance;
- ✓ You will improve your patience, commitment and involvement;
- ✓ You will develop personally and professionally;

- ✓ You will develop your ability to work in a team;
- ✓ You will develop your ability to communicate and develop friendships;
- ✓ You will adapt more easily to various problems from the everyday reality;
- ✓ You will develop your entrepreneurial skills and the feeling of responsible citizen;
- ✓ Your self confidence will increase through the feeling of satisfaction which derives from helping the fellowmen;
- ✓ You will know your colleagues in informal contexts, outside the classroom;
- ✓ **You will understand and promote the values of volunteering: mutual support, tolerance, non-discrimination.**
- ✓ You will learn to identify the needs of those in the community and you will discover the joy of offering support to those who need it.

Participating in the Community Action programs will also help **the beneficiaries**:

- ✓ It will help them to get more involved in the local communities and to befriend with the volunteers;
- ✓ It will help them to develop their self confidence and to appreciate their value, and in this way to win also the appreciation of the others;
- ✓ It will stimulate their creative, imaginative and expressive abilities;
- ✓ It will develop their physical abilities, within sports activities;
- ✓ It will help them to become more balanced as individuals, reaching to a feeling of security, self-confidence and emotional stability;
- ✓ It will help them to develop their individual abilities and talents, by following their vocation;
- ✓ It will help them to feel part of the community and not excluded from it.

2.3. How can I do the activities well, for me and for the others

Once decided, **take with you, in your luggage of volunteer**, also a few things that we have learned along the time, along with your fellow volunteers:

- ✓ Come to each NSCA activity! You will have much to gain and the persons found in difficulty will appreciate you and wait for you!
- ✓ Plan your activities in advance and think of everything you need for the activity!
- ✓ Be flexible! Sometimes you will have to deal with various unexpected situations and to rethink your activity!
- ✓ Do not leave the activity at that! You are in a team and people rely on you! If you want variation, this is possible too; you can change the activity at a certain moment!
- ✓ Create your own NSCA journal! Write down your impressions after each activity!
- ✓ Treat equally all the persons with whom you work! Some will try to get your attention more than others, but it is possible that those who have the greatest need of attention to demand it the least.
- ✓ You are a model of involvement, initiative and responsibility for others, act as such!
- ✓ Contribute to the future NSCA development plans!
- ✓ Act as ambassador of the school to which you belong!
- ✓ Share your experience to the others! We all learn from each other!
- ✓ Ask the coordinator / the teachers / the personnel - they know the beneficiaries well and they can advise and help you!
- ✓ Be prepared for challenges and complications! With patience, understanding and especially perseverance, you will receive joy and fulfillment from the activity as a member of the Community Action Team.

2.4. *Assessment: how and why?*

Every project also has an assessment stage, that does not only measure the results, but it shows you how well you did what you did. Therefore, the assessment is necessary because it helps us to become better. Not champions, we do not measure ourselves with anyone, but it helps you, the volunteer of tomorrow, to be more skilled than the volunteer of today.

Therefore, NSCA also has an assessment component, with triple purpose: it measures the results (achieving the objectives); it measures the satisfaction of the beneficiaries and helps us improve our future activities.

Here are some tips for an effective assessment:

- ✓ Plan in advance the assessment of the NSCA activity! The assessment during the activity helps you do it better further; the assessment from the end measures the success of the activity!
- ✓ Self-assess yourself permanently! Thus, you have the opportunity to measure your knowledge, to assess your own contribution and your own learning process!
- ✓ Discuss with the colleagues in the team about the quality, quantity and impact of the activity that you have carried out!
- ✓ Keep in mind that when working in groups, it is assessed both the individual activity and the activity of the entire group.
- ✓ Get feedback both from the beneficiaries and from the coordinating teacher!

Because the Romanian school does not practice the self assessment or the assessment between the team members frequently, you can find in the Annex some examples of instruments that you can use to assess the NSCA activities of your team. There are examples that can be adapted and modified, so as to help you achieve an accurate picture on the results of your work.

20... - 20...	NSCA events	Term
September	•	•
October	•	•
November	•	•
December	•	•
January	•	•
February	•	•
March	•	•
April	•	•
May	•	•
June	•	•
July	•	•
August	•	•

CHAPTER 3. WORK TECHNIQUES WITH THE CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

There is an advantage for every disadvantage (W. Clement Stone)



KEY CONCEPTS

It is possible, at a certain moment, to appear in your life a person with "special needs". Either she cannot see, cannot hear, she is in wheelchair, she cannot think as fast and well as you or she confronts with another difficulty. Maybe you look at her with concern, fear and compassion. You wish to offer her help, to stand by him, but you do not know how it is best to proceed. If you want to get involved in volunteering

activities with the children with *special educational needs* (SEN), we believe it would help you to know what means *special educational needs* (SEN), which are the characteristics of the children with SEN and what are the recommendations that you can follow in the activities with these children.

You can make the life of a "special" child more beautiful, you can offer him joys, you can contribute to combating discriminations, so that the term "special" is not seen as a negative label! Many times, you have used the term "special" in a positive sense: you have received a "special" gift, you had a "special" party, you have been on a "special" trip; you can make a "special" child to be looked at and treated with dignity and respect - understanding that he is just different than the majority!



START FROM YOURSELF

You arrived home on a cold winter evening. You enter the house, you want to turn the lights on and realize it does not work. It is "power failure" in the neighborhood. You do not have a flashlight, your mobile phone is dead, so you will have to adapt to these conditions.

Can you - in the dark - change your clothes, take a bath, prepare dinner and prepare your backpack for the next day?

Do you think you can handle it by yourself or do you need help?

Imagining this hypothetical situation has the role to sensitize you to the special needs of some of your fellowmen.

The chapter you are going to get through will help you to know better what special needs some children have.

In order to get closer to the message of this chapter, please answer the following questions:

1. What comes first to your mind when you hear the term "disability"?

.....

2. Have you been involved in volunteering activities carried out with disabled people so far?

Yes

No

3. If the answer to question 2 is **Yes**, please describe briefly what activities you have carried out:

.....

4. Mention the advantages of your involvement in volunteering activities carried out with disabled children:

.....

5. If the answer to question 2 is **No**, please tick the reason / reasons for which you have not been involved in activities with disabled children:

- I am interested in other areas of volunteering
- I did not have the chance
- I do not have information about the disabled children
- I'm afraid
- Other reasons, mention which

6. What would you like to know about the disabled children?

.....

.....



THE ESSENCE OF THE ESSENCES

All the children need love, respect, support, understanding, guidance, fairness, time spent with their parents and others. The extent to which adults cover these needs of the children can vary depending on the individual characteristics of each child. There are some children who need more time, more support or even permanent support, more attention. Most often, these children are "special"; the fact that they

were born with certain impairments (they cannot see, cannot hear, cannot think as fast and well as others, they have difficulties of moving, they cannot move at all) or that they remained with impairments as a result of some diseases or accidents makes them "special", that means with "special educational needs".

The term "special" represents something distant from ordinary, from statistical norm. The child with special needs has, along with the general needs, other needs as well, with particular character, which is not common, ordinary. For the social valorization of the characteristics of this type it was used the term **special** with the meaning of occasional, remarkable or rare, particular. It is not necessary to be a defect or a stigma, which marginalizes socially. You can contribute so that the "special" children are understood and perceived correctly by the other members of the society.

The special educational requirements derive from disabilities, impairments, diseases or socio-cultural deprivations.

SEN expresses an obvious necessity, of certain children, of additional attention and educational assistance (affirmative, positive measures, from the need to compensate a / some disadvantage(s)), without which one cannot speak effectively about the equalization of chances, about educational and social access and participation.

The notion of SEN designates „ *the educational needs complementary to the general objectives of school education, needs that require:*

- ✓ *tuition adapted to the individual particularities;*
- ✓ *tuition adapted to the characteristics of an impairment and / or learning disorder;*
- ✓ *specific intervention, through rehabilitation / recovery and adequate compensation*¹.

The syntagm SEN is more relevant in psychological and pedagogical plan than that of impairment, inability / disability or handicap: it directs the attention on the **requirements** and not on the limitations.

To better understand the concept of special educational needs (SEN) it is needed, before all, an approach that would highlight **learning** and not the particularities that differentiate the children in the general process of training and development of the individuality. *"Every child has unique characteristics, interests, abilities and learning needs and this is why, for the right to education to have a meaning, there must be designed educational systems and must be implemented educational programs which take into account the extremely wide diversity of these characteristics and requirements"*³. (The Statement from Salamanca, UNESCO, 1994, p. 8)

"Disability is the result or effect of some complex relationships between the state of health of the individual, the personal factors and external factors which represent the life circumstances of this individual. Because of this relationship, the impact of the different environments on the same individual, with a given health condition, can be very different. "Disability" is the generic term for impairments, activity limitations and participation restrictions.

The concept of special educational needs (SEN) corresponds to an approach that:

- ✓ supports the individualized education approach determined by the individual peculiarities;
- ✓ starts from the premise that every child can learn;
- ✓ turns to advantage the diversity of the children.

SEN designates a „continuum” of the social problems in education, from the serious and profound deficiencies to the mild learning difficulties / disorders.

Their content, as interpreted by UNESCO (1995) comprises:

- ✓ delay in development / mental impairments / difficulties / severe learning disabilities / intellectual disabilities;
- ✓ physical / motor disabilities;
- ✓ visual impairments;
- ✓ hearing impairments;
- ✓ emotional (affective) and behavioral disorders;
- ✓ language disturbances (disorders);
- ✓ learning difficulties / disabilities.

You know the multiplication and division table, you can solve equations, you can recite poems and write essays - even in a foreign language, you can compare objects or phenomena, establishing similarities and differences; you can do literary analyses and argue your own point of view; there are some children who cannot - no matter how hard they try - to carry out such activities. Maybe they have intellectual impairments. In the activities carried out with these children you should better respect the following rules:

- ✓ carry out one activity (not several in the same time) and make sure to finish it;
- ✓ use accessible words, that the children know;
- ✓ use simple sentences when you give instructions;
- ✓ demonstrate the activity yourself and then involve the students with intellectual disabilities in achieving it;
- ✓ use images, concrete, beautiful, attractive objects;
- ✓ encourage children to start with what they already know and only then to move to another work task;
- ✓ keep eye contact while talking with the child;
- ✓ appreciate both the performance obtained and the effort made in carrying out the activities;
- ✓ encourage him as often as possible;
- ✓ have patience as much as possible.

It is important to know that the main objective of the volunteering activities with these children is to involve them in beautiful activities, to spend pleasant moments together, to interact, and not to obtain performances!

You can run, play soccer or volleyball, write, draw, paint. There are children who carry out with difficulty, carry out partially or cannot carry out at all these activities. These are the children with physical and / or locomotor impairments.

If you want to carry out volunteering activities with these children, you should better observe the following recommendations:



- ✓ *use helping educational devices: pencil clamping device, sheets with traced spaces;*
- ✓ *carry out attractive activities;*
- ✓ *start with simple tasks and then introduce activities with higher degree of complexity;*
- ✓ *tell the child about the activity you are going to carry out;*
- ✓ *encourage and praise every achievement of the child individually;*
- ✓ *allow sufficient time for completing the tasks.*

You can see the colors of the sunrise and of the sunset, the colors of nature and of the flowers. There are children who can see partially or cannot see at all of these - the children with visual impairments. These children often learn using the touch, taste, smell, balance; in the volunteering activities carried out with children with visual impairments you can observe the following:

- ✓ *describe, in detail, the space in which the activity is carried out;*
- ✓ *help him to know and explore the environment;*
- ✓ *the tactile sense is very important, remove the sharp objects or the ones that could cause injuries;*
- ✓ *cover with him some simple routes and then encourage him to explore by himself;*
- ✓ *use colors and enlarged font when you draw or write something.*

You can hear the sounds of nature, of the sea waves and the music. There are some children who cannot enjoy these things: the children with hearing impairments. It would be good to observe the following recommendations in the volunteering activities carried out with these children:

- ✓ *touch him gently, in order to attract his attention;*
- ✓ *stay in front of him and make sure that he watches you;*
- ✓ *help yourself by the gestures when you talk;*
- ✓ *communicate at a slow, clear and loud pace, without yelling;*
- ✓ *do not shout and do not whisper; these ways change the movement way of the lips;*
- ✓ *when you talk about something, hold the object close to his face so that the child sees the lips and the object;*
- ✓ *encourage him to express his opinion.*

Even if some children cannot hear, others cannot see, cannot move or have understanding difficulties at cognitive level, these children may be more sensitive than many of your fellows, are affectionate and offer their love unconditionally!

Let me give you a tip! Irrespective of the deficiency type of the child with special educational needs, there are some general recommendations:

- carry out activities in the presence of the coordinating teachers;
- get involved in attractive activities;
- create a positive emotional climate;



- stimulate the development of self-confidence and motivation for the activity;
- encourage the independence of the children with SEN and their autonomy;
- help them in achieving the working tasks when they have difficulties;
- praise and appreciate them for the smallest progress;
- have patience and realistic expectations to their performances;
- appreciate the effort they make in achieving the activity, what is simple for you can be difficult for them!



GET INTO THE GAME! PRACTICE! APPLY

Preparing the volunteer students before getting involved in the activities with children with SEN

You want to do volunteering with children with SEN! How to proceed?

Get informed about the characteristics of the disability, of the children and of their living environment. To better understand the children with SEN, we challenge you to participate in the following exercises:

Exercise no. 1 "Safety exercise"

What are we following? (*the expected results of the exercise*) the awareness of the children with visual and hearing impairments and offering the feeling of safety in the group.

Time needed: 30 minutes.

What do we need? scarves, space/ track of performance that contains small obstacles (boxes, bank, steps for going up and down).

Number and age of the participants: 10-12 children, 10-18 years old.

How is it carried out? The students work in pairs of two; it is recommended, for the students in a pair, to have approximately the same height, because there are created situations in which a student relies on the other. The students, grouped into these pairs, have to go through a certain complex route that implies going through the classroom, the halls, ascending and descending some stairs, overcoming some obstacles, going in the schoolyard etc. In the pairs one of the students is blindfolded with a scarf (he is "blind") and one is not allowed to speak (he is "mute"). In covering the route, the students will rely on each other. After covering the first half of the route the roles of the students change, so the one who was "blind" becomes "mute" and vice versa.

What did we learn? After completing the route, it takes place a discussion with all the students, discussion in which it will be insisted on the following issues:

*How would you feel about these safety / confidence exercises? How would you feel to be blind?
How would you feel to be the one who can see? What did you learn during the exercise?*

Exercise no. 2 Puzzle

What are we following? We follow the development of communication within the group, the increase of the group cohesion, the awareness of the children with SEN and for a better understanding of these children.

Time needed: 30 minutes.

What do we need? 2 scarves, a simple puzzle with maximum 6 very large pieces for each team of students.

Number and age of the participants: 4 children, 8-16 years old.

How is it carried out? Work in groups consisting of 4 students. Two of them are blindfolded and will assemble the pieces of a puzzle with the help of the other two colleagues that guide them; the blindfolded students are not allowed to speak. The other two students are not allowed to touch the pieces of the puzzle, but will give indications to the ones blindfolded, directing them so as to put the pieces in order and to make the puzzle. The commands given by those who are guiding are: *turn, up, down, left, right, still a bit, further, enough*. The time for solving the puzzle is 10 minutes.

What did we learn? after the completion of the work time, there take place discussions with the students on the following aspects:

How did they feel during the development of the activity?

Did they have barriers in communication?

What did they learn from this exercise?

Further on, we present several games that you can carry out with the children with SEN:

Exercise no. 3 Mimicry game

What are we following? Socializing, recognizing the others in the group

Time needed: 30 minutes.

What do we need? Space for carrying out the game: the classroom or the schoolyard

How is it carried out The students stand in a circle; each person says her name in turn, steps into the middle and makes a gesture, a movement. Then, the others repeat as accurately as possible the name and the movement.

What did we learn? To know each other better, to interlink with the other children.

Exercise no. 4 The traveling ball

What are we following? Socializing, knowing each other, developing the general motricity.

Time needed: 30 minutes.

What do we need? A ball and space for carrying out the game: the classroom or the schoolyard.

How is it carried out The volunteers and the beneficiaries stand in a circle and throw a ball from one another. The child who receives the ball says his name and one of his characteristics, then takes a step back and throws the ball to another participant in the group. The game continues until all the participants introduce themselves. The students with disabilities are helped by the volunteers, if they need support.

What did we learn? To know each other better, to interlink with the other children.

Exercise no. 5 The map of the school

What are we following? Knowing the physical and social environment around the child; practicing the independent conduct for the social integration.

Time needed: 30 minutes.

What do we need? Space in the schoolyard in which is drawn, with chalk, the contour of the school and the most important cabinets / areas in the school.

How is it carried out?

Step 1. In the courtyard is drawn the contour of the school - with chalk on the floor. Each student will be seated in the area where he considers he feels best at school: the courtyard, the library, the classroom, the cabinets on specialties, the gym, the medical room, the chancellery. The volunteers and beneficiaries change impressions regarding the space chosen. Subsequently, all of them talk about the favorite area, the activities they carry out there and motivate the choice made.

Step 2. Propose the students to be seated in the spaces that they consider the most unpleasant, most uncomfortable in the school, motivating the choice made. It is discussed about the spaces which they perceive uncomfortable, the causes of these feelings and the modalities of transformation in spaces pleasant to them.

What did we learn? We have identified the areas of interest and the preferred or less preferred activities.

SELECTIVE BIBLIOGRAPHY



1. Gherguț, A., *Psihopedagogia persoanelor cu cerințe educaționale speciale (Psychopedagogy of the persons with special educational needs)*, Polirom Publishing House, 2006
2. Vrânceanu M., Pelivan V., *Incluziunea socio-educatională a copiilor cu dizabilități în grădinița de copii (The social educational inclusion of the children with disabilities in kindergarten)*, Chișinău, 2011
3. OMECTS no. 5.573 /2011 - on the approval of the *Regulation for organization and functioning of the special and special integrated education*

CHAPTER 4. WORKING WITH CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Motto "Each age is a hidden treasure that is worth discovering"



KEY CONCEPTS

- **Build** various games and psychosocial activities, which can meet the different growth **needs** of the children and young people with whom you interact. Each age has its uniqueness and it is important to know which are its specific development characteristics
- **Include** in your activities traditional games as well, that both you and other generations of children have endeared. You can thus harness the community resources, facilitating communication and cooperation between yourselves.
- **Propose** collective creative activities, which develop harmoniously the relationships between children and help them to express their emotions and to know each other better.



START FROM YOURSELF

One of the beautiful and basic principles of life is that its happiness deserves to be shared! What gift can sometimes be greater than to give from what you received as well! As experience of learning, of friendship, of activity which supported you in your development.

Come on! Get into the game and try a small exercise by which you can discover yourself better:

GET INTO THE GAME! PRACTICE! APPLY

Exercise no. 1 The hidden treasure of the personal resources

Materials needed: cardboard paper or simple A4, colored pencils, string, colored sheets, etc.

How to



that

is it carried out? Make an imaginary map of your inner world that will lead you discover your hidden treasure. Full of surprises, of color..... It is the story of each of us... and this is why it is unique.

What do you discover in it? Give yourself enough time and discover the things make your life to be precious as a treasure. Draw on your A4 sheet a trunk that contains all these things.

Describe / draw a path with obstacles and aids that lead you towards finding the treasure from your trunk....

What has supported you over the years? What supports you the most on your way, what needs and what resources you have now at present?

Congratulate yourself for the road covered ☺ until now.

Discover what makes each age to be special and to have different developmental needs. To know them helps you to build then appropriate activities, which would truly support the beneficiaries that you work with.



THE ESSENCE OF THE ESSENCES

The basic characteristics of each age

The toddlers discover with great enthusiasm the possibilities of their body and have an enormous need of movement and play... They need a story, which introduces them so naturally into a fabulous realm, in which they can discover their own "hidden treasures", in which they experience activities that stimulate their imagination and creativity and highlight their possibilities of personal expression.

Therefore, always be creative with the toddlers! Invent stories related to the games and activities proposed! Emphasize mainly short collective activities, with a minimum of rules, in order to observe their mental capacities! Lead them into an imaginary world, with various movements and simple games, in which they can satisfy their immense need of movement.

And when they discover "**the treasure**", leave them time to enjoy!... To completely feel the feeling of victory! **Living successful experiences strengthens their self-confidence!**

The schoolchildren enter slowly into another stage of development, they discover and learn rules easier, are attracted to team sports and have more and more accurate movements, a better balance and a better knowledge of their own body. They are enthusiastic about participating in more complex psychosocial games regarding the rules, cooperation and strategies applied.

The teenagers go through great physical and mental changes and therefore they are a truly special group of age and they need us to treat them as some prospective adults, with attention and respect, by giving them more and more autonomy! It is important to invite them to stimulating games, which would challenge and lay stress on them!

Each age group needs volunteers that would be close to them, to know how to guide them and to strengthen their self-confidence, because they are in search of their own "treasure".

Game and tradition in the family

Involve the parents and other adults in the world of the children through game, creative activities, special moments lived together... there are created occasions of strengthening their bond. Such activities allow adults to see the game and the relationship with the young people in a different way... open, flexible, facilitating a better communication and understanding in the family.

Valuable are also the traditional games, which explore the resources of the community and its cultural riches, contributing to the increase of the self-esteem of the children and to the feeling of belonging to a community. Enriched with psychosocial elements, these games access important themes related to the defense of the children's rights.

Drawing, painting, modeling, music facilitate the process of externalizing the emotions and developing the imagination and creativity for the child.

Beyond all aspects related to achieving the creation, it is extremely valuable primarily because it is a mirror of an inner world that we learn in this way to discover, to give it a shape, to express it.

There are certain differences between the artistic and creative activities. The first ones are more focused on performance and on the successful or unsuccessful result, whereas in the creative activities, the focus is on the process of creation, on pleasure and self-expression.

For a harmonious development of the children, it is very important the guidance of the creative activity, so that there are no criticisms and value judgments, and the focus to be on the process and not on the result. That means that words such as: "it's beautiful!" / "it's ugly!" / "others have done more beautiful / uglier / you do not have talent at all.. it must be in a certain way..!" will not exist.

Instead it is recommended to be created a communication space, in which each participant to the activity is invited, if he wants (optional not mandatory), to share about his creation and about what it expresses for him.

The creative activities invite to freedom of expression in the first place, which is great!

This is how we learn and practice together both the respect for the others and for ourselves. We learn about emotions and ways to communicate them. Not the least, we explore our creative valences!

GET A LOAD OF THIS!



Each age has its beauty and uniqueness! It is important to know the age particularities of the beneficiaries in order to create valuable activities and games, adapted to them, that would offer them as well the opportunity to learn and develop harmoniously.

GET INTO THE GAME! PRACTICE! APPLY

Further, we describe for you some games and activities of psychosocial animation, specific to the methodology "Exercise, Game and Sports" and appropriate to each age category:

Exercise no. 2 Name and gesture



What are we following? Ideal activity in a group whose members do not know each other yet or as ritual of activity beginning, in order to create relationships within the group in a creative manner, through the names and gestures.

In psychosocial plan, it is developed the bodily expression and the **creativity**, in order to express everyone's identity through a specific gesture. Each personality can, thereby, assert itself and differentiate itself from the others. Self-

confidence is an important aspect of the game, because each exposes himself individually. We also develop, through game, the ability of **observation** and imitation from the rest of the group.

Location: We need a space large enough so that we can stand in a circle. The activity can take place inside or outside, in the open air.

Number and age of the participants: 12-12 children of 5-6 years old

How is it carried out? The group is standing, in a circle. You start, by saying your name aloud and intelligible, executing a clear gesture that would identify you. The other children observe him carefully and, after he finished, they all imitate the gesture at the same time, repeating the forename with the same intonation. The next one presents tells his name, in turn, with a gesture different from the first one, and the others imitate him. And so on, until each of them has said his name accompanied by a gesture.



Let me give you a tip!

It is possible that, when playing this game for the first time, children could feel embarrassed to express themselves through body, saying their name aloud. Your role is to encourage them so that they overcome their shyness. Children also have the tendency to imitate the gesture of the previous player. Insist on the unique aspect of each personality and on the fact that each

gesture is important to be unique.

It is often necessary to do a second round, insisting on the creativity of each of them and on the quality of executing the gesture during imitation. This activity can be performed in several rounds, within several sessions, with the same group of children. It is also possible and recommendable to change the criteria of the gestures: animals, jobs, etc.

What did we learn? Each game creates the possibility of learning and communicating, therefore we advise you to have special moments of discussion after the games. Some of the questions you could address to the group are the following:

Is it difficult to find a specific gesture and different from the others? Why?

How did you feel when everyone imitated your gesture, saying your name in unison?

Is it difficult to imitate exactly what the others are doing? Why?

Can you learn new things about your colleagues during this game? How?

Can there be imagined other gestures, other criteria than the personality? Which?

Exercise no. 3 The island of friendship

What are we following? In psychosocial plan, children develop **cooperation** strategies, as well as the **respect** for the others and **confidence** through the physical contact. In this game, important is to have a selfless thinking and not an individualistic one.

In physical plan, the players can strengthen their **balance** and strength, by following the strategy found, as well as the **resistance**, because the game is played by running.

Number and age of the participants: 6-10 children of 5-6 years old.

How is it carried out? This game requires a delimited area and a carpet or any object that can vary in size (ropes, plastic, etc.). If the group is too large, it is divided into two and the game will be carried out in parallel with two (or more) groups comprising 6-10 players. Each group has its own carpet or object. Start with a story like this: Children are at the seaside, they are swimming and having fun in the water (they run imitating swimming). When the (imaginary) sharks appear, the guard of the beach (the volunteer) whistles once (or claps his hands) and everyone takes refuge on the island (carpet or other object), without letting a leg into the water. Then, when the danger has passed, the guard whistles twice and the children can return into the water. But the tide rises and the island becomes increasingly smaller (the volunteer folds the carpet so that the surface becomes increasingly smaller). When the guard whistles again, the children return back on the island, so that no one remains in the sea. If one or more children remain in the water (with one leg exceeding the carpet) and let themselves devoured by the sharks, the entire group will

perform a task: for example, to go three times around the playground by running, or other activities. Therefore, the children will find a strategy to help each other (they can talk to each other) and everyone to remain on the available carpet surface.



Let me give you a tip!

The difficulty depends on the number of players in the group and on the surface of the carpet. Appreciate the abilities of the group and be clear in expressing the rules - no member shall exceed the carpet or touch the ground. It is important to encourage children to speak to each other, to find creative strategies (for example: to hold their elbows, supported on the inner leg, with the outer leg lifted; or to make a human pyramid, etc.). The players will accept to touch and allow to be touched. Respect and self-confidence are important aspects that the animator will emphasize whenever necessary.

What did we learn? Each game creates the possibility of learning and communication, therefore we advise you to have special moments of discussion after the games. Some of the questions you could address to the group are the following:

- Was it difficult the physical contact with the others? Why?*
- What were the attitudes in the group? Mutual aid? Selfishness?*
- Did any of the players refuse to collaborate? Why?*
- How did you manage to remain on the island?*

For the older children

Exercise no. 4 "The ball in five passes"

What are we following? At mental level, there are practiced the observation and the strategic thinking in order to score points faster. At emotional level, the children develop communication, cooperation and respect for the others.

At physical level, there are developed the resistance, speed, orientation, precision and coordination.

Number and age of the participants: 12 children of 10-14 years old.

What do we need? : a ball, an outdoor space, big enough, chalk for marking the playgrounds, etc.

How is it carried out The group is divided into two teams with four to maximum six players. The purpose of each team is to score points by passing the ball five times in a row without dropping it down and without being caught by the other team. The passing of the ball will take place between several players. If the ball falls, the number of passes decreases back to zero and the ball is given to the other team. If team A intercepts the ball, the counting begins for team A. If there are three teams, the third team awaits its turn and replaces the winning team. If there are four teams, there are necessary two game areas and the teams change subsequently.

Rules

- Do not walk and do not run with the ball;
- Do not touch and do not hit the other players: without physical contact;
- Do not pass the ball back to the player from whom it came.

Let me give you a tip! The volunteer starts as referee and then he transfers this role to the players, who will learn to arbitrate by themselves. Thus it is developed the personal responsibility and the notion of "fair-play".

It is important for the volunteer to correct the basic movements for passes, defense, attack, etc. and to insist on the good communication between the players (for example, calling the players by their name before passing the ball, etc.). The volunteer will encourage the teams to establish their strategy of defense and use of space.

To make the game more difficult, the game area can be extended or it can be increased the number of passes necessary to score a point.

In order to improve cooperation between the players, there can be added other rules (for example, a point is valid (or it values double) only if all the players in the team touched the ball; or the players form pairs (hold by their waist, ankles or knees, depending on the preference and safety) and play normally, but in pairs.

What did we learn? Each game creates the possibility of learning and communicating, therefore we advise you to have special moments of discussion after the games. Some of the questions you could address to the group are the following:

How was the game? Easy, difficult, fun, boring, etc.? What was the reason? Which was your strategy to score points and to hinder the other team to score? Were the rules respected by everyone? If not, for what reason? What other rules can be added in order to enhance cooperation? Was it hard to arbitrate by yourselves? What was the reason? Did you learn something new? If yes, what exactly? What other versions of the game can you think of?

Can you find connections between this game and your daily life? Which are these?

Exercise no. 5 The mailman

An ideal game for a group whose members hardly know each other or a group whose members want to get to know each other better and in a dynamic and fun way.

What are we following? At mental level, the focus is on a creative thinking (identifying the good ideas regarding "the letters" that can be sent), as well as on concentration (listening) and on memorizing the things already said.

At emotional level, the game develops the communication abilities, respect (non-violence) and the fair play.

At physical level, the players develop their reaction capability, the running speed and the agility.

Time needed: 10 minutes

What do we need? If the game is played inside, a chair for each child; if it is played in the open air, a circle for each child, or chalk to draw the circles, or ropes.

Number and age of the participants: 16 children of 10 years old and more.

How is it carried out? The players are seated on chairs in a large circle (or stand in a circle, or in a circle drawn with chalk, etc.). One player, the mailman, stands in the middle. He says aloud: "The mail has come..." The other players ask: "For whom?" The mailman answers: "For all those who...", and invents something: "... have a brother, have traveled in a certain place, are nearsighted, are wearing green, etc.". Those interested by the "letter", will stand up and will change places as fast as possible. During this time, the mailman is trying to find a place for himself. Whoever is left without seat becomes mailman and brings the following letter, for "all those who..."



Rules

It is forbidden to change seats with the neighbors next to them;

The children run when they change the seats (speed - the ability to react);

It is forbidden to be seated if "the mail" has come for them as well (fair play);

A letter cannot be delivered twice (concentration and creative thinking).

Let me give you a tip! The first time, the volunteer can play the role of mailman, so that the children understand how the game works. The mail is adapted to the age of the children. This can be based on superficial criteria, such as the physical appearance for the little ones, or more personal criteria, such as the beliefs, personality, tastes, etc. for the elder ones.



The volunteer will insist on the pace of the game and on respecting the rules. He will make sure that the mailmen are not always the same (a rule can be introduced: not to be a mailman more than three times, for example), and that each child is mailman at least once.

The volunteer will remind the players the security elements: they tend to be very enthusiastic and to rush towards the chairs, without caring about the others (risking overcrowdings and falls).

In order to make the game more difficult, the players can stand (or squatted), in their circle, with the back to the center, etc., which requires a higher concentration and responsiveness.

What did we learn? Each game creates the possibility of learning and communicating, therefore we advise you to have special moments of discussion after the games. Some of the questions you could address to the group are the following:

How did you feel during this activity? Was it easy, difficult, fun etc.? Did you feel at ease? What was the reason?

Did you learn something new about one of the playmates? What exactly?

Did you like the role of mailman? What was the reason?

Was it difficult to find ideas for the letters?

Have you been bothered by some questions? What was the reason?

How did you feel being honest and revealing certain things about you?

How could we vary this game? Did you learn something new? If yes, what exactly?

Can you find connections between this game and the daily life? Which are these??

Exercise no. 6 "Where have you been?"

What are we following? At mental level, children develop their observation abilities, as well as the creative thinking and imagination. Their capacity of analysis is also developed, in order to recognize the situations imitated. At emotional level, the children develop their self-confidence when they try to imitate the gestures. They practice their negotiation and decision skills when they choose what they will imitate, and the cooperation ones, when they are working together. At physical level, there are important the reaction and the speed, as well as the simpleness to express themselves through body language at individual or group level.

Time needed: 60 minutes.

What do we need? Ropes or something similar to mark the central zone of one meter; cones or stones in order to mark the outer limit of the play area.

Number and age of the participants: 12-20 children of 8-12 years old

How is it carried out?? Two teams of six to ten players stand each on one side of the playground, large enough and delimited, separated by a large area of a meter in the middle. Each team can decide the name of the group, for example *the Creatives* and *the Playful*. *The Creatives* mime and *the Playful* guess. The teams gather at the opposite corners of the playground. *The Creatives* decide between them an activity (for example, to play football), an animal (for example, duck) or a profession (for example hairdresser) in order to interpret them. Once they are ready they come to the central area. *The Playful* also approach and say: "Where have you been?" *The Creatives* answer: "Where we have been we will not say, what we have seen we will show" and then they begin to imitate. Each member of the group mimes in his own way or works in small groups. When *the Playful* manage to guess the mime, they say it aloud. If they are right, *the Creatives* will run and take refuge behind their base at the end of the playground, before being caught by *the Playful*. The players caught become members of the other team. Then the teams switch the roles, and the game continues, as long as the players want. At the end of the game, the team with the greater number of players can, for example, interpret a play chosen by the other team (2-3 min. for preparation), thus continuing to practice the corporal expression and the creativity.

Rules: Each team will align along the central area in order to mime; Those who guess are not allowed to cross the line which marks the central area before they find the correct answer; the players touched inside the play area join the other team; the line at the end of the playground indicates "the safe area" of those who are chased.

Let me give you a tip! It is important to underline the safety measures and the need for respect while chasing and touching the other children.

The volunteer will make sure that each group has the chance to decide which activity will be imitated. He will make sure that the role of leader is assumed alternatively and he will facilitate communication within the group.

The volunteer may decide to limit the duration of the game, to limit the number of chases and / or the number of imitations to be identified.

The size of the play area can be adapted to make the game more or less difficult from physical point of view (the length of the race).

The volunteer may initially let the children mime individually, but subsequently, he will encourage the players to work in teams in order to develop cooperation, as well as self confidence and confidence in the others. A specific theme can be approached during this game (the sea, the family, my environment, etc.), in order to determine the group to focus and to achieve a specific objective. This can be useful, for example, for a special session of feedback. There may be taken into account more complex imitations for the older children (a particular event, a short historical fragment, etc.).

At the end, the group can determine to create a mini-theater play on a particular theme, for example.

What did we learn? Each game creates the possibility of learning and communicating, therefore we advise you to have special moments of discussion after the games. Some of the questions you could address to the group are the following:



How did you feel during this activity? Was it easy, difficult, fun etc.? Did you feel at ease or not? What was the reason?

How did you choose what exactly to imitate? Was it easy or hard to find ideas?

Was there a leader in the group or everyone came up with ideas? What interactions took place, how was the participation within the group?

How did you feel by changing the teams, once you were caught? What was the reason?

What other versions of the game can you think of?

Did you learn something new? If yes, what exactly?

Can you find connections between this game and your daily life? Which are these?

Exercise no. 7 The tail of the dragon

What are we following? At mental level, there are developed the concentration and the observation of the movements of the ball, as well as the strategic abilities.

At emotional level, this game develops cooperation between the hunters (not to keep the ball only for themselves), as well as respect and mutual trust between the members of the dragon.

At physical level, this game develops resistance, because its members will learn to move extremely fast and, sometimes, for a relatively long period. Quick reactions are of major importance. The hunters practice the precision of the passes and of the throws.

Time needed: 10 minutes.

What do we need? A space outdoors or in the gym, large enough to mark the playground; one or two balls.

Number and age of the participants: 10-20 children of 8 -14 years old.

How is it carried out? This game is played with at least ten children into two teams: the dragon-children and the hunters-children. The group is seated in a circle, and three to six children (depending on the size of the group, but approximately one third of the total) volunteer to play the role of the dragon. They align one behind the other, holding themselves by the shoulders or by the waist. The first represents the dragon's head, the others the body and the tail. Their purpose is not to be hit by the ball. The dragon's head is the only one that can use his hands in order to stop the ball and to send it back to the hunters. The other children stand in a circle around the dragon, they represent the hunters; their purpose is to eliminate the dragon by touching the tail. Once touched, the child representing the tail becomes hunter. And so on until the whole dragon was touched, the game ends when only the head remained in the middle of the circle. To be more efficient, the hunters quickly pass the ball between them, in order to have a better position to aim the dragon's tail.

Rules: Do not aim the head of the dragon-children, there only matter the hits below the level of the shoulders; The hunters can track and touch only the dragon's tail; the dragon-children will not detach from each other, they will hold together all the time; only the dragon's head can catch and throw the ball back.

Let me give you a tip! Start with a warm up, that will prepare the players for the various situations: catching the ball, passing and / or throwing to a target; staying close in a group and moving quickly. There can be put into practice short games with this purpose.



If the group is large (more than 12 players), it is recommended to start the game in two separate groups - fewer hunters and small dragons - to allow a gradual progress and a better participation, shorter distances and a faster change of the roles.

It is important to encourage the hunters to develop an effective strategy for passing the ball, which would include all of them, not only the best players.

The eliminated dragon-children become hunters, thus they participate all the time to the game. Another possible option could be to move the child from the tail, once he was hit, in the place of the head; after each player had the role of head, another dragon can replace them. Another variant would be that in which, instead of becoming hunters, the dragon-children who were hit become the guardian angels of the dragon and will distract the attention of the hunters, by intercepting the ball (in this case, it is needed a larger space), etc.

If the dragon is very difficult to eliminate, a second ball can be introduced to make the game easier for the hunters.

It is possible to invent a new context for this hunt of dragons, in order to give a fun and psychosocial dimension to the game: a tale (a story) will help the children to forget about the physical aspects.

For the more experienced players, the circle of hunters can move one step sideways, left-right, in order to destabilize the dragon and to make the passing of the ball a lot more difficult.

In order to make the game more complex, the distances can be extended (larger circle), it can be introduced another dragon, etc. The diameter of the circle can vary, and also the distance between the hunters, their position (seated, squatted) or the use of the hand that they do not usually use (for the older children); the size of the ball may vary as well (tennis ball, volley ball, etc.).

What did we learn? Each game creates the possibility of learning and communicating, therefore we advise you to have special moments of discussion after the games. Some of the questions you could address to the group are the following:

How was the game? Easy, difficult, fun, boring?

What was the reason? What role did you prefer? Dragon or hunter? What was the reason?

What were the strategies used in your group? Did you play more individually or rather in team? How exactly?

Certain rules have simplified or rather complicated the game? Which and for what reason?

What other versions of the game can you think of?

Did you learn something new? If yes, what exactly?

Can you find connections between this game and your daily life? Which are these?

There are many supports for creative activities that can be used and adapted depending on what you are following and what materials you have available. For example: the drawings from the stories, the actual drawing, the collages, the modeling, the marionettes, the masks, the music or creations that use elements from the nature (leaves, pebbles, sand, petals etc.). Whatever activity you choose, important is not the performance but the joy and personal involvement of the beneficiaries.

Several models of themes and creative activities that you can propose:

Exercise no. 8 The collage "My universe"

What are we following? Developing the capacity of self-knowledge, of creativity and personal expression of the beneficiaries. The activity facilitates the increase of self-confidence and the confidence in the

group, each participant being encouraged to introduce oneself through the collage and to show it to the group as well.

Time needed: 60 minutes.

What do we need? Cardboard, colored pencils, magazines, newspapers, postcards, photographs, fabrics, colored paper, scissors, glue or Scotch tape, markers, clay or plasticine.

Number and age of the participants: 10-16 participants, 8-16 years old.

How is it carried out? The participants are asked to create each, independently, a collage on the theme of the personal universe, being free to choose any material at hand, colored paper, bootlaces, natural elements, fabrics etc. They are invited to browse newspapers and magazines, to choose images and colors that represent them, that describe passions, friendships, favorite characters, their hopes etc. Children can shape their preference entries or they can glue what they have cut out on different categories of preferences.

The collage can be finished with charcoal for drawing, tempera, wax crayons, toothpaste etc.

Each of them will write his name on the cardboard and he will name his own "Universe" created, then he will be invited to talk about it. This created "Universe" can be built from clay as well. After they have built it, they can color it with watercolors and thus they can personalize it even more.

Let me give you a tip! This creative activity needs sufficient time, which would offer the beneficiary participants the opportunity to reflect on the personal universe, on the passions, relations of friendship and on other important elements of their life, which they decide to include in the collage made. This special time of creation and reflection must be respected. It is also important to remember that each of us is unique and thus will be the creations made. Unique. The description of the collages will be made voluntarily, only by the authors and in an atmosphere of acceptance, respect and appreciation, without any value judgment.

What did we learn? Each game creates the possibility of learning and communicating, therefore we advise you to have special moments of discussion after the games. Some of the questions you could address to the group are the following:

How did you feel during this activity? What did you feel? Did you find out something new about yourself? What about the others?

Exercise no. 9 "The personal coat of arms"

What are we following? To explore the personal resources, to express ourselves personally and to improve our ability to interlink with the others and to listen.

Time needed: 30 minutes.

What do we need? colored paper, white paper, crayons, pencils, markers.

Number and age of the participants: 10-16 children of 10 - 16 years old.

How is it carried out? Each participant creates his own coat of arms, separates it into four separate spaces, in each of them he will present his skills, hobbies, beautiful memories, and an objective he wants to achieve. He will create a shield that would represent him whenever he wants.

What did we learn? Each game or activity creates the possibility of learning and communicating, therefore we advise you to have special moments of discussion after the games/activities. Some of the questions you could address to the group are the following:

What common elements of the coats of arms created were known by the participants, following this activity? What did you like most in this activity? What did you discover new to yourself and to the others?



SELECTIVE BIBLIOGRAPHY

Excerpts and text adaptation from:

"Manual de Competențe psihosociale - Lucrul cu copiii și mediul lor" (Manual of Psychosocial Competences-Working with children and their environment)-Terre des homes Foundation, 2011

Manual " Să râdem, să alergăm, să ne mișcăm, pentru a crește mai bine împreună" (Let's laugh, run, move, in order to grow up better together) Terre des homes Foundation, 2007

Manual " Jocuri tradiționale cu caracter psihosocial" (Traditional games with psychosocial character), Terre des homes Foundation, 2012

"Tehnici creative" (Creative techniques), The International Foundation for the Child and Family, Vanemonde publishing house, 2005

CHAPTER 5. COMMUNICATION AND ACTIVE LISTENING

Motto: Only a tongue and two ears gave you the nature, to listen twice more than you talk - Epictetus



KEY CONCEPTS

When we communicate we do not rely only on the verbal language (speech) in order to transmit a message. Communication means not only sending a message. It is a two-way process, involving a person who transmits a message and another that receives it, reformulating what he has just heard.

Communication involves a verbal communication, a nonverbal communication or body language (gestures, eye contact and voice tone) and an active listening. All these elements are present consciously or not, and it is important to take into consideration the messages sent by our body and the manner in which they are perceived. Nonverbal communication is sometimes stronger and more sincere than the verbal one. The mouth can lie, but the body cannot. This module encourages you to think about the different ways to communicate with the children and how these competences can be improved and developed for the benefit of the children.

An active listening involves the use of the whole body, of the eyes, of the mind, of the mouth and of the heart.

What do we need in order to communicate?

To be = presence, opening

To feel = empathy, trust, respect

To see = observation

To talk = clarity, precision

To listen = attention, concentration

By developing your communication techniques, you can gather more information about the beneficiaries you work with so as to offer them the support they need.

What to do ¹	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sit down face to face with the interlocutor • Choose a quiet place where the person would feel free to speak • Lean slightly towards the interlocutor • Acquiesce by nodding or use expressions that would encourage the person to say more or by which you show him that you understand
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep eye contact (neither too much nor too little) • Notice the other person's posture • Notice his facial expression • Search, in addition to what is being said, what is not being said. • Find the true feelings behind the story and behind the nonverbal language

¹ communication table excerpt from "Manual de Competențe psihosociale - Lucrul cu copiii și i mediul lor" (Manual of Psychosocial Competences-Working with children and their environment) -Terre des homes Foundation, 2011

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listen carefully and try to remember what you are told • Reformulate what it was said in order to show that you understand • Ask for clarifications to better understand the person • Make appropriate comments, give suggestions or encouraging answers
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give your interlocutor your full attention (free your mind of any other thought) • Avoid interruptions or distractions • Show interest to the person • Be kind and respectful • Focus on the person and not on your own problems or on what you would want to say
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be patient, give the person time to formulate the answer • Be worthy of the trust of the one who knows how to keep a secret • Be empathic • Search carefully and you will see that there is something good in every person • Be tolerant and accept the other one without judging him • Avoid to have in mind rumors about your interlocutor that might influence your listening • Have the courage to bear reactions or rejection behaviors (there is a reason for any behavior)
<p>What not to do</p>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to reproach, to accuse • to minimize, to underestimate what the other says • to give advice, solutions (listen to the solutions of the one who speaks) • to immediately tell your own story about a similar experience • to lie or tell half of the truth • to promise things that you cannot guarantee (you will lose the trust of the other) • to impose discipline by force or to use an intimidating voice • to interpret what your interlocutor tells you without clarifying before.

In general we believe that we listen with the ears, but we also listen with the eyes, with the mind, with the body and with the heart. All the qualities of a good listening mentioned above will help the one who speaks to express his true feelings and thoughts, and this is what builds a good relationship.

Communication is an ensemble of actions that share the transmission of information in the form of messages, news, signs or symbolic gestures, written texts and others between two persons, called interlocutors, or more formal, transmitter and receiver.

The body language is a form of mental and physical **non-verbal communication** of the human, consisting of the body position, gestures, the facial expression and the eye movement. Sending and interpreting these signals is made almost entirely in the subconscious.

Human communication is a complicated process and full of difficulties. Whenever we communicate, we risk not to be understood, to arouse emotions that we do not want or not to make others think or act as we want, as a result of the communication that we achieve.

Communication has **four main purposes**:

To be received (heard)

To be understood

To be accepted

To provoke a reaction (to trigger a change of behavior or attitude).

The achievement of these four goals can take place only if the communication process develops properly.

5.1 The communication process

The process of transmitting information from one person to another, or from a group of persons to another is extremely complex and is influenced by numerous factors which can disturb the message.

In order to understand the complexity of the process, the following figure shows all the elements of the communication process, as well as the links created between these elements.

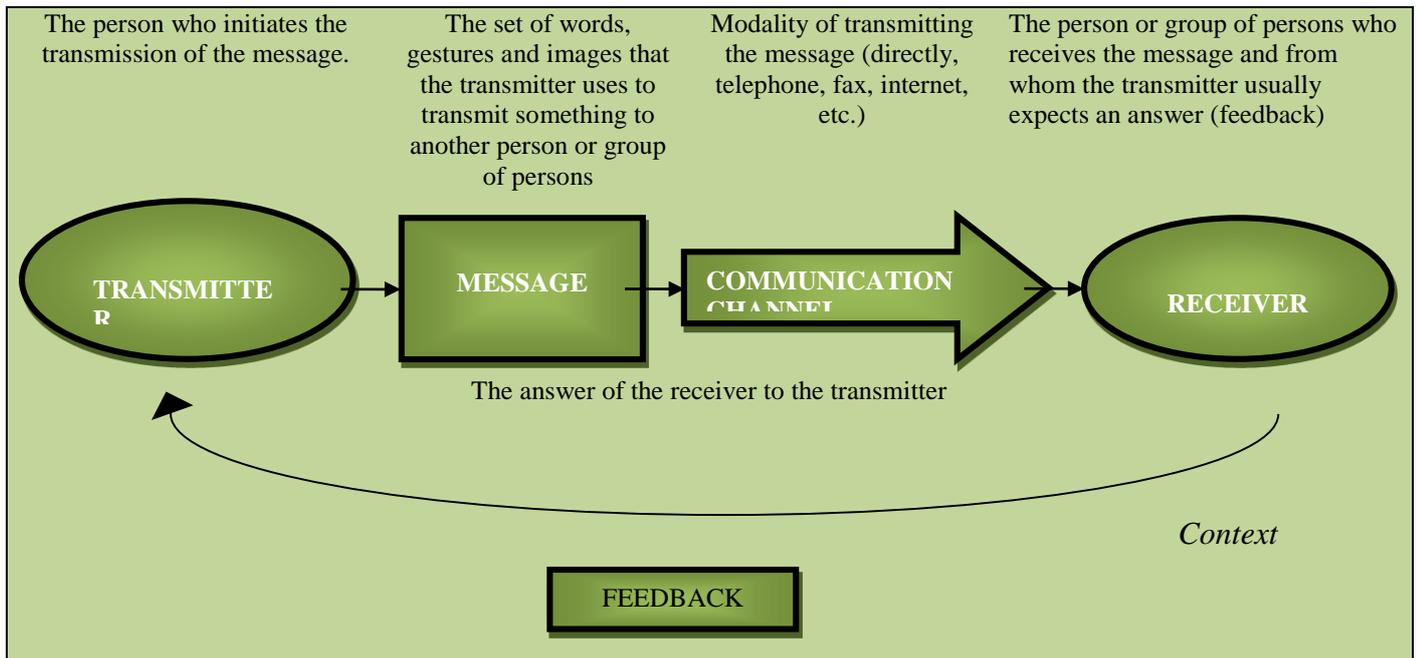


Fig. 1. The communication process

For the communication process to be performed successfully, it is important to understand some of its fundamental aspects. The easiest thing to do - and which is ignored most often - is to ask ourselves a few simple questions.

Keep in mind!



WHY? What is the purpose of our communication? What I want to achieve from this communication I intend to do?

WHO? is the person to whom I want to communicate my message? What kind of person she is, which is her social status, what education she has, what personality she has? Why would she be interested in my message and how she might react to it?

WHERE and WHEN? Where will my interlocutor be when he will receive the message? In what moment does my message arrive?

WHAT? do I want to say exactly? What does the other person want to know? What information should I provide her and how to structure them to be easy for her to understand?

HOW? to convey the message? What tone or what words or what gestures should I use so as to be suitable with the message I want to convey? What way of communication the person to whom I shall address would prefer - verbal, in writing?

5.2. Forms of communication

The communication process is a complex one. More than that, it is important to be aware that when we communicate, within the vocational training programs, the words are very important, but not only them. Communication theories say that when we communicate, our message is transmitted through multiple paths simultaneously.

Thus, 7% are the words that we utter - **the verbal communication**. They are covered by the tone of the voice (38%) - **the paraverbal communication** and by our entire behavioral language (55%) - **the nonverbal communication**. If what we say is not said on an appropriate tone and, even worse, our body does not transmit signals that are consistent with the spoken words and with the tone used on their transmission, the whole process for preparing the communication and the message conveyed are useless.

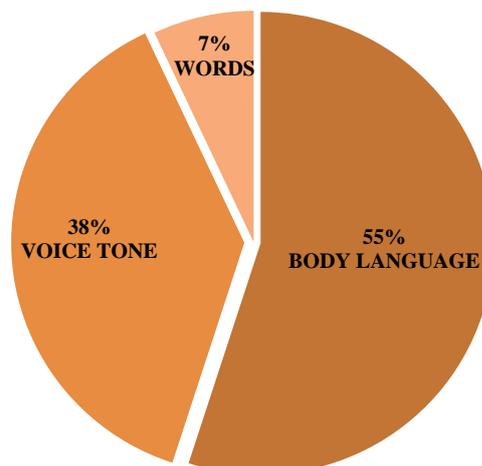


Fig. 2. The balance of the communication ways

5.2.1. The verbal communication

An effective verbal communication has the following features:

The clarity of expression - it is not necessary to try to impress the audience by using long words and complicated sentences. Sometimes it is required a specialized vocabulary, but the terms used can be explained simply and easily without unnecessary complications. A clear thinking and an appropriate expression mean a correct pronunciation of the words so that they can be easily recognized by the interlocutors.

The accuracy of expression - the expressions and words used express exactly what we want to say. The facts to which we refer are real. It is important to make sure that the pieces of information we quote are correct and to avoid, in narrations, the subjects that may be challenged.

Empathy - the ability to understand a person both cognitively and emotionally. Empathy does not involve identifying with another person, taking over her way of thinking, her values and behaviors, but involves

understanding how the person thinks, feels and manifests. The best way to remain friendly and courteous is to put ourselves in the other person's place.

Relaxation - the best way to free ourselves from the speech difficulties is relaxation. When we are stressed and our muscles are tensed, we cannot be natural as well. If we feel tense, we try to breathe deeply. If we breathe naturally or more deeply than usual, then the muscles will be more relaxed, and the effect will be in our favor.

5.2.2. The paraverbal communication

The tone makes the music!

The message behind the words is part of the paraverbal communication. When we talk about paraverbal communication, we refer to:

The height and intensity of the voice - the voice on high tonalities can become sharp, loud or strident. The voice on low tonalities can become thick, strangled, and rough. When we are tense, angry, annoyed, the vocal cords stretch strongly and the voice becomes shrill, becoming strident.

The volume of the voice - is much easier to control than the tonality. A proper breathing is essential. If we manage to control our voice and speech, so as to be clear, without being strident, without screaming or pursiness, we will manage to communicate clearly and the expression of the message will be of good quality.

The speed - the message will be influenced by the speed or rhythm in which we speak. The speed of transmitting the message can produce confusions and difficulties in understanding because we will not succeed to pronounce the words clearly and accurately. On the other hand, a far too slow speech can lead to boredom and to the loss of the logic of the words expressed. A good speaker changes his speed depending on the importance of the message he conveys, alternating also the intensity of the voice and the speed of expression during his speech.

The pauses in speech - the long pauses after each word lead to annoyance, to the irritation of the audience. Used with care, the pauses are however an effective way in conveying a message. A good speaker makes brief pauses only when it is necessary, especially when we want to emphasize something or before outlining an important idea.

The timbre of the voice - the voice inflections or changes influence the mode of transmission of the message. The timbre can betray the emotions that we have and it may indicate whether we are satisfied, happy, angry or sad, frightened, imperious, humble or understanding. In other words, it is important to control our voice tone and timbre so as not to betray our feelings or attitude.

5.2.3. The nonverbal communication

"The one who does not understand a glance will neither understand a long explanation" - Arab proverb

The nonverbal communication means something completely different than the words that we utter when we transmit a message. The way we talk, walk, shrug, the clothes we wear, the gestures we make, the way we look at our interlocutor, say much more than the simple words we utter.

We communicate nonverbally with the help of the gestures, facial expressions, of all the body movements. A movement of the shoulders can say: "Do not ask me, I do not know". Bringing together the hands can mean appreciation, getting out bounce from a room, slamming the door, denotes anger. Avoiding looking into the eyes of the person to which you are addressing can mean that you want to hide something or that what you say is a lie. Although people do not react, most of the times, to such messages, it does not mean that they are not affected by them and that they are not judging our attitude. Most of the times, we are not aware

of the manner in which we transmit these nonverbal signals, we do not realize that we have them, but they are obvious to those around us.

In the last years was paid increased attention to body language. Researchers around the world have striven to establish the exact nature of the relationship between this type of communication and its effect on the receiver. Interpretations differ from one to another. They all agreed, however, that the nonverbal messages disclose information about the speaker such as his attitude, feelings, beliefs, fairness and abilities. Body language instantly transmits an answer to the interlocutor and makes him respond immediately through the same type of nonverbal message. The talent and skill of a facilitator is to perfectly know and master the nonverbal language which to correlate perfectly with the words that he utters.

The orientation and positions we adopt in relation to the others when we communicate are also particularly important. We can influence and signal our attitude by getting closer to the others and by the position we adopt vis-à-vis our interlocutor. Each of us surrounds himself by a "personal space", from the desire to protect ourselves. This space represents the distance at which we accept to interact with each other.

The intimate space is reserved for those very close to us: husband / wife, children. This is comprised between the intimate contact and approx. 50 cm around us. Penetration into this space is equivalent to an attack on the person's privacy and is severely punished.

The personal space is reserved for those who are close to us, more or less distant relatives, close friends. Usually this space is within a radius between 0.5 and 1.2 m around us. Penetration into this area is possible but with great difficulty.

The social space is used for business talks or occasional conversations. It is the distance that imposes a certain type of relationship, usually of domination, of superiority, of power in relation to the other one. The social space usually has a radius of approx. 1.2 to 3.5 m, depending on the context of the discussion between the persons involved.

The public space, the one of over 3.5 m around us, is the one intended for the relationships with the strangers, or with people of different rank (hierarchical and social). It is the space indicated in the relationship with a teacher, with a facilitator.

Keep in mind!



Simple rules for body language

- ✓ Look at the one you are talking to straight into the eyes at most 5 seconds (do not stare)
- ✓ Look at the participants "at the base of the nose" or between the eyes
- ✓ Nod approvingly whenever needed
- ✓ Smile as often as you can and the context allows you
- ✓ Never make repetitive nervous gestures
- ✓ Lean slightly towards the one that you are talking to
- ✓ Adopt an attitude appropriate to the context and to the group you will work with.

5.3. The active listening

Listening is as important as communication because a message which is not received correctly is like a trivial background noise, that we ignore most of the times.

Listening represents, by definition, really paying attention to what the other person says when talking to you.

There are several extremely justified reasons for which it is important to listen to those with whom we interact.

Keep in mind!



- ✓ **Encourage communication.** If those with whom we interact realize that we really listen to them, then they will give up the defensive and they will try, at their turn, to listen to what they are told.
- ✓ **Obtain complete information.** When we really listen to the one next to us, we will be able to collect a lot of information, we will know what and when to ask questions to clarify ourselves and to find out everything that interests us.
- ✓ **Improve the relationships with those around.** Communication and listening improve relationships between people. If we are sufficiently attentive to what is communicated to us, our body language will indicate this and will encourage the interlocutor to calm down and to be able to communicate completely the information and feelings he has.
- ✓ **Solve the problems.** Listening helps to find solutions easier by the easier understanding of the other's point of view. Even if we do not always agree with what the interlocutor says, we can show him that we are listening to him attentively, that we give him the consideration he needs and we accept that he can have a different opinion than ours. This automatically leads to openness from the other and to easier acceptance of a common point of view.

In order to listen attentively and not just to hear that someone is speaking near you, it is important to be aware of the barriers that may arise between the transmitter and receiver.

5.4. Barriers in communication

There are a multitude of factors that can generate barriers in the communication between two or more persons. They can be internal (those related to each person separately) but also external (which are related to the context in which the communication process takes place).

Internal barriers in communication: differences of perception, hasty conclusions, stereotypes, lack of knowledge, lack of interest, difficulties of language and speech, difficulties of expression, emotions, personality;

External barriers in communication: noise, light / darkness, heat / cold, repeated interruptions, lack of reaction of the interlocutor.

5.5. Barriers in listening

The same communication barriers exist also in listening, because by the way you listen, you communicate to the other in your turn (you give him a feedback).

There are, however, several **customs that strongly affect the manner in which you listen.**

The started-stopped listening: this is due to the fact that we usually think much faster than we speak, which means that while the other one communicates, we think about our own problems, concerns or troubles instead of listening and summarizing what is communicated to us. That is why, although we start a conversation listening with interest what is communicated to us, at one point our thoughts "fly" elsewhere and we stop listening, we just hear that the other one speaks to us without being aware of his message.

Listening with "red flag": for some people, words are like a red flag to a bull. When we hear certain words, we get angry, upset and we stop listening. In these situations, we lose contact with the speaker and no longer understand him.

Listening with blocked thinking: sometimes we decide quickly which is the subject of the discussion, we catalog the speaker in a certain category of persons and we decide that there is no use to listen anymore.

Listening with "glass eyes": sometimes we look at the person with whom we are speaking, but we just leave her the feeling that we listen to her, because our thought can be to things of a completely different nature. Usually the look becomes dreamy and we immediately show the other one that we are not listening to him.

Listening from the boat that is sheering: when we are stressed by the bad news circulating around us, we tend to associate any message with the possibility of receiving bad news. Regardless of the message, we wait only those words that confirm our expectations and therefore the rest of the message passes by without understanding it. Moreover, if the speaker also pronounces certain words which conflict with what we think, we instinctively plan a counterattack and enter into polemics with it. Such discussions can degenerate into very unpleasant verbal conflicts for all those involved and not only.

10 tips for a good listening:

1. We **prepare** to listen.
2. We are **interested** in what we are told.
3. We keep our **mind open**, eliminate the prejudices and stereotypes.
4. We follow the **main ideas** of the message transmitted by the other one in order not to lose the essential.
5. We **listen critically** in order to weigh the value and logical structure of the message.
6. We **listen carefully** to understand the message exactly and completely.
7. We **take notes**, especially if the message is important in order to retain all the important details and to ask for further clarifications if necessary.
8. We **help the speaker**. Often, people may have difficulties to convey the message and we need to help them say everything they have to say in order to understand the message as accurately and as completely as possible.
9. We **reproduce the interlocutor what we understood**, in order to settle the message and to confirm both to the interlocutor and to ourselves that we have received correctly the message conveyed.
10. We **do not interrupt the speaker**. The hardest thing is to listen without interrupting the speaker. Even when the speaker pauses, it does not necessarily mean that he finished what he had to say, so it is important to stay calm and wait to finish what he has to say, in order to be able to continue the conversation.



Keep in mind!



What we say has a correspondent in the mind of the one to whom we convey the message (it is important that the expectations of both of them match).

We are authentic and we believe in what we say. If we do not believe, we cannot expect the other to trust what we say.

We convey the message in the simplest possible way. An acronym often used is KISS, meaning "*Keep it Short and Simple*", meaning the message to be "*short and simple*".

We use the acronym **ABC: Accuracy, Brevity and Clarity.**

When we convey the message we make sure that the message is settled, by using the three phases: introduction, content, recapitulation.

We use the acronym **AIDA: draw Attention, stir the Interest and Desire to act and then Act.**

When we convey the message, we first introduce the whole and then we go to details.

We make sure that the most important elements of the message remain settled. The course content has three basic elements: what **IS "MUSAI" (Romanian popular term for NECESSARY)** to be conveyed, what

WOULD BE GOOD to convey, what **WOULD BE DREAMLIKE** for everyone to know after the completion of the course. We make sure that all the students leave the course at least with **"MUSAI"** ticked and understood!

5.6. Feedback in communication

Feedback represents the reverse connection between the recipient and the initiator of the communication and is the last step that normally ends the communication.

An effective feedback:

- ✓ Helps us be aware of what we are doing and the way we act
- ✓ Offers us the opportunity to change our behavior
- ✓ Is important to be offered in a supportive way.

Characteristics of the feedback:

- ✓ Refers to the facts previously described by the speaker, not to the interpretations and expectations of the listener. *Example: "Your statements contain many questionable ideas about the role of women..." and not: "You are a sexist."*
- ✓ *To be descriptive and not evaluative.* If there are made value judgments about a person's behavior it does not mean that the person will want to change her behavior, but will rather become offended and resentful. *Example: "Your opinion is therefore that ..." and not: "You are definitely wrong!"*
- ✓ *To be specific, concrete,* to refer to a particular behavior and not to behavior in general. The indirect or vague references do not help those who receive the feedback, even if they want to change.
- ✓ *To share emotions and thoughts but not to offer advice.* *Example: "I like the way you express your ideas."*
- ✓ *To be focused on the information that the interlocutor might use: relevant, more important information.*
- ✓ *To be offered for those behaviors and attitudes that can be changed easily and that attract greater changes.*
- ✓ *To offer behavioral alternatives,* otherwise the one who receives it will experience a state of conflict and emotional tension.

Attention! Feedback is not used in order to clear your anger on someone.

Feedback does not contain the question *"why?"* but falls within the limits of someone's behavior and someone else's reaction to it. To theorize or ask a person why he does a certain thing means to probe deeply the motivations and perhaps of the subconscious.

Receiving feedback gives us the opportunity to change and modify what we do and the way we act.

**KEEP IN
MIND!**



When we receive feedback:

We listen to what the interlocutor tells us;
We ask the interlocutor what he had said;
We ask the interlocutor to clarify any uncertainty;
We encourage the interlocutor to offer even more feedback;
If it is possible, we compare the feedback received from one person with observations made by others in order to ascertain whether the feedback is objective;
We thank the person who provides feedback.

After we receive feedback:

We think about what the interlocutor said about our behavior;
We think about what we want to change.

We avoid!

The defensive attitude when we receive feedback. The defensive attitude blocks the feedback provision.
Ignoring feedback.

When we offer feedback the most important is to reflect: *"How will it help this person to learn, to make progress, to develop through what I am telling her now?"*

Providing feedback helps people:

- to be more attentive to what they do and the way they act;
- to learn, to develop and to evolve.

When we offer feedback we will take into account:

- what we were told, not the meaning we assign;
- what we observe, not what we think about the person;
- we describe and not evaluate the behavior;
- a specific behavior, not generalizations;
- we offer information about personal ideas and feelings and we do not give advice;
- behaviors that the interlocutor controls;
- we start with positive behaviors which need approval and encouragement.

Golden Rules:

- We praise in public and criticize in private;
- We use the "sandwich" feedback: we start positively, and then we say the less pleasant things and we end positively as well.

GET INTO THE GAME! PRACTICE! APPLY

Exercise no. 1 "The man that was not transmitting anything"



What are we following? Verbal / nonverbal communication

Time needed: 30 minutes

Necessary materials: A4 sheets, ballpoint pens

Participants: 12-16 persons

How is it carried out? **Step 1.** The **facilitator**² chooses a volunteer - or designates a person. In particular, the facilitator gives him indications, for 5', to walk around the room, he can look anywhere, but without any expression, without saying anything, without making any gesture. **Step 2.** The facilitator tells the others that they will observe the "subject" for 5' and to be very attentive to him. **Step 3.** The volunteer is asked to enter the room. After 5' the exercise stops. **Step 4.** Each participant is asked to say what exactly has drawn his attention to the "subject", what he thinks this wanted to convey. At the end, the "subject" explains the task which has been entrusted to him.

What did we learn? *What do you think about the situation created? Have you noticed that despite the fact that the "subject" had the task not to transmit anything, he still transmitted some messages that the others interpreted in a personal way? We are talking about the verbal / nonverbal language.*

Exercise no. 2 Role play

What are we following? Analogical / digital communication

Time needed: 15 minutes

Necessary materials: it is not the case

Participants: 12-16 persons

How is it carried out? **Step 1.** Two volunteers are chosen, a boy and a girl, who are invited outside the room, where they receive the following indications: to play the role of a couple of teenagers who are walking in the park. He holds her hand, looks at her while talking to her. He tells her that he wants to go into town in the evening just with his friends. She answers to him "Okay", without looking at him. He asks her if it is okay. She answers to him "Yes, I do not mind", and then lets his hand go. The two are called back in the room to present the scene described above.

Step 2. The group observes carefully the play which takes place. **Step 3.** At the end of the role play, each participant in the group is invited to say what exactly drew his attention from the manner in which the two have communicated.

What did we learn?

² **The facilitator** is the coordinator of the group of young people. It may be one of them or a person outside the group. The facilitator has the following responsibilities: he elaborates his own facilitation activities; he plans and selects the appropriate instruments for achieving the objectives targeted by the group; he organizes youth activities (workshop, training, outdoor activity, street activity etc.); he participates actively and responsibly to various forms of learning, improvement and optimization of the services and information provided; he ensures a permanent guidance of the group and coordination of its development process by ensuring the following conditions: he actively involves all the participants in the non-formal learning process; he creates a framework accessible to each individual, allowing the free expression of the thoughts and ideas and to each individual is assigned an important role in drafting the conclusions and final decisions; he monitors and evaluates the activities carried out; he ensures the visibility of the activities and the dissemination of the results *together with the target group*, thus ensuring their "valorization".

We emphasize to the participants the discrepancy between the digital and analogical communication (the fact that the girl let his hand go - analogically, although digitally she said it was ok). Thus, for a clear communication, without ambiguities, the digital communication is required to be congruent with the analogical one.

Exercise no. 3 "The opponent"

What are we following? Assertive communication and active listening

Time needed: 45 minutes

Necessary materials: A4 sheets, ballpoint pens

Participants: 12-16 persons

How is it carried out? **Step 1.** Each participant is asked to write on a sheet of paper a thing that he wants, but someone opposes (one of the parents, a friend, a teacher, the partner). **Step 2.** The participants are divided into dyads. Each will imagine, in turn, that the one in front of him is the person who opposes the fulfillment of his desire. He will try to formulate the request in a convincing, argued way. "The opponent" will try to find arguments for which that desire cannot be fulfilled. Each works in dyad 10' for presenting the personal request and other 10' for presenting the arguments through which he opposes to the other one. After those 20', they all gather in the big circle.

What did we learn?

How was, for each of them, to be the one who initiates or the one who opposes the desire? What is the importance of the assertive communication, but also of the active listening, as important part in the communication process?



SELECTIVE BIBLIOGRAPHY

Pease, A., *Body language*, Sheldon Press publishing house, 1984, London, UK.

Prutianu, S., *Antrenamentul abilităților de comunicare (Communication skills training)*, Polirom publishing house, 2004, Iași, Romania.

Course support - Trainer, Schultz Consulting.

Course support '*Metode creative folosite în activitățile de tineret*' (*Creative methods used in the youth activities*). Material made by Life Foundation - Resource and information center for organizations.

Vaughm, R., H., *Manualul formatorului profesionist (Professional Trainer's Manual)*, CODECS publishing house 2008, Bucharest, Romania.

"Manual de Competențe psihosociale - Lucrul cu copiii și mediul lor" (*Psychosocial Skills Manual - Working with children and their environment*) - Terre des hommes Foundation, 2011

CHAPTER 6. EXERCISE, GAME AND SPORTS

We do not stop playing when we grow old but we grow old when we stop playing. - George Bernard Shaw



KEY CONCEPTS

Exercise, play, sports are the basis of a healthy life and have the role to contribute to a harmonious development of the person on physical, mental, emotional, social, cultural level. They are open gate to knowledge and learning, enrich our experience, give color and meaning to our life.

Small or big, we all need to move, to enjoy nature, to relax, thus the games are an excellent opportunity to bring us together, to build relationships and strengthen friendships, to work together for achieving a common purpose. Therefore, the games proposed in this chapter aim at developing skills and abilities in several plans: physical, mental and psychosocial (affective / emotional, social / relational, cultural / traditional).

The games that we can carry out within our activities are focused on **developing the cooperation** and the team spirit in the group of beneficiaries. We have the purpose to create, through game, a friendly space, in which we are ourselves and we learn from each other.

In order to give a psychosocial value to an activity or to a game, we need to make time and to reflect on the following things:

Where do I want to take my group of participants, what I want them to learn?;

*What skills / competences I propose to develop to the participants (in **physical, mental, emotional, social plan**) according to their specific needs?*

What evolution I want to see in my group?

All of these are related to a careful planning and to the settlement of certain objectives.



START FROM YOURSELF

What favorite games do you remember you played with pleasure as a child?... Or maybe you still play?..." *The leaf*", "*Hopscotch*", "*The countries*", "*Squatting*", "*Hide and seek*", "*The ducks and the hunters*", "*Castle*"?... You certainly know many others... they are the so-called traditional games that delight every generation of children. Maybe they are the first that you want to put into practice together with your group of beneficiaries. Practicing certain traditional games exploits the community resources, its identity and

its cultural, spiritual riches, thus contributing to the strengthening of the self-esteem of the participants and of the esteem / respect for the members of this community.... In particular, in an emergency situation (natural disaster, conflict etc.) the traditional game guarantees the continuity of the values of the affected communities and strengthens the resilience. Enriched with psychosocial elements, they will be very useful to you in creating a trusting relationship with the group of beneficiaries you interact with.

THE ESSENCE OF THE ESSENCES



Here you will find elements that will help you to give a psychosocial dimension to an activity or to a game you want to propose to the group that you work with.

For this you need to know and to consider:

- A. **CHARACTERISTICS OF THE GAME**
- B. **SETTING THE OBJECTIVES - the "3 H"**
- C. **BASIC PRINCIPLES**

D. PLANNING THE ACTIVITY

6.1. THE CHARACTERISTICS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE GAMES

As you can see below, every game has four essential elements: purpose, frame, rules and roles.

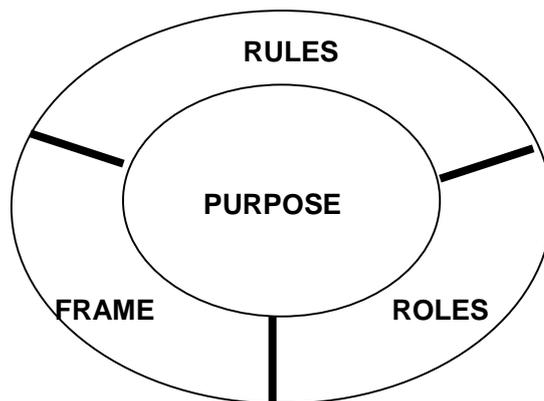


Figure 1. the essential elements of each game

In order to illustrate how we use the characteristics of a traditional game in a psychosocial one we are going to use, as example, the game "The ducks and the hunters".

1. The purpose: stands in the center and is actually the task that the participants will fulfill during the activity / game (in our case, the purpose of the "hunters" is to "shoot" the ducks by using a ball. The purpose of the "ducks" is to shirk from the "bullet", that is the ball launched by the hunters or to catch the ball before it touches the ground, the ball caught representing a "life").

2. The rules: are the ones that facilitate the smooth conduct of the game by establishing certain agreements on what can be done and on the limitations within the game (in our example, in the traditional version, the hunters can run to catch the ball but when they target a duck they stay put. At their turn, the ducks can run in different directions but without exceeding the boundaries of a previously established playground. The ducks that are touched or that get out of the playground leave the game and they can return to the playground only if they receive a "life" from another duck. The duck adds a new life if it manages to catch the ball thrown by the hunter before it touches the ground. The duck can use its life in order to avoid elimination if it is touched or to bring back a duck that was eliminated. To avoid exclusion from the game and to add a psychosocial component to it, we can introduce new rules to facilitate cooperation: for example, a duck touched will become a hunter and in order to avoid downtime for the new

hunters we can also add the rule not to throw the ball towards the ducks until it was passed to all the hunters).

3. The roles: in this game the roles are clear: ducks and hunters. In order to eliminate eventual disputes or frustrations related to the division of the roles, make sure the players change roles. You can do this by changing the rules as we have illustrated above. In this way the game becomes more participatory, we avoid exclusion and challenge the participants to focus rather on creating strategies; on cooperation rather than on individual force.

4. The frame: is represented by the resources that we use: playground, the time they have at their disposal and / or the materials you use during the game (in the traditional version, it is established a playground and it is used a single ball; in order to increase the dynamics of the game and to orient the participants to new strategies you can change the size of the playground, you can introduce obstacles in it or, by applying the rules illustrated above, you can give 2 or 3 balls to the hunters so that the ducks have to create their cooperation strategies, to increase their attention, speed of reaction, etc.).

GET A LOAD OF THIS!



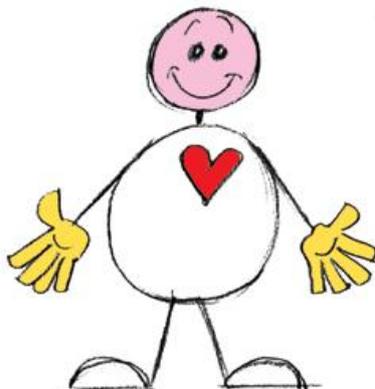
It is sufficient to be modified one or more of these features (purpose, rules, roles and frame) for a game to be different and to facilitate learning in physical, mental, psychosocial plan.

ATTENTION! - Note and distinguish between the **PURPOSE** (what the participants have to do) and the **OBJECTIVES** of the game (the abilities / competences that you want the participants to develop).

6.2. SETTING THE OBJECTIVES - the 3 H

The objectives are actually the abilities / competences that we want the participants to develop **during** the game. They aim to develop the person as a whole by following the 3 plans mentioned above: physical, mental, psychosocial.

A little trick to identify the 3 plans is the association with "*the 3 H*" (the initials in English for: **Head**, **Heart**, **Hands**).



- Head = mental**
- Heart = psychosocial**
- Hands = physical**



Head = I THINK = mental abilities

Examples of mental abilities that you can develop through games / activities:

1. self-knowledge

2. concentration, observation

3. learning, memory

4. analysis, strategic reflection

5. creative thinking, imagination

6. relaxation



Heart = I AM / I FEEL = psychosocial abilities

Examples of psychosocial abilities that you can develop through games / activities:

1. adaptation, flexibility

2. expressing emotions

3. sense of responsibility

4. trust

5. respect

6. fair-play

7. communication

8. affection

9. cooperation

10. managing the problems and conflicts



Hands = I DO = physical abilities

Examples of physical abilities that you can develop through games / activities:

1. coordination, agility

2. speed

3. strength

4. resistance

5. suppleness

6. reaction

7. rhythm

8. balance

9. precision

10. knowing your own body

6.3. BASIC PRINCIPLES

It is important to distinguish between organizing a traditional game, a football game or any other ludic activity and putting into practice a game with psychosocial character. Without saying that the organization of the first one does not bring any benefit to the participants (on the contrary, it is sometimes useful to allow the others to play only for the pleasure of the game and to exercise so that we keep fit), it is important to note that, in order to have a psychosocial character, an activity either creative, physical or ludic, will comply with the following basic principles:

1. **setting the objectives** that aim the development of certain skills to at least two of three levels (mental, psychosocial and physical) - **the 3 H**;
2. using the **three stages of learning**, that is experiencing the game, creating a feedback and resuming the game including elements from the feedback of the participants;
3. implementing certain games focused on **cooperation and integration** more than on competition and exclusion;
4. **the gradual complication of the activity** throughout its course, from easy to more difficult;

5. favoring the **active and constant participation**, in games and at feedbacks;
6. including the **variety and the creativity**.

One suggestion: get used to assess, in mind, your activity based on these principles, by answering the questions:



1. Did I reach **my objectives** and my group has evolved in the assimilation of at least two skills?
2. Did I stop the game for **feedback** and then I **re-experienced** the game by applying the suggestions of the participants?
3. **Was the cooperation** more present than the competition?
4. Did I complicate the activities progressively or the task was difficult from the start?
5. Were the participants **active** or there were long moments without action? Did everyone talk at feedback?
6. Did the proposed activities bring also new, **varied**, motivating elements?

If you can answer yes to the above questions, it means that the activity organized by you was a true success.

6.4. PLANNING THE ACTIVITY

*"In preparing for battle I have always found that plans are useless, but planning is indispensable." – **Dwight D. Eisenhower***

Why planning is an essential moment when we want to organize a game or a psychosocial activity? We will notice that planning helps us to set our objectives and to work for achieving them, to respect some essential stages or steps in conducting an activity, to prepare the framework with everything relating to it (playground, materials, time etc.). Improving the quality of the future activities depends largely also on putting into practice the observations and the lessons learned from the activity that we have just conducted.

The planning sheet is a kind of roadmap which contains essential elements, meaning the objectives of the session, the concrete activities that will help the participants to achieve these objectives, the necessary material and the duration of each activity. (see the Annex)

It is clear that a planning can support adjustments during the implementation. The capacity of the volunteer to adapt, adjust, change depending on what he sees and feels is as important as that to anticipate and plan.

The planning of a psychosocial activity is structured into three main stages:

1. **initiation or entry into the subject**, with a welcome ritual, setting the objectives, short game or small activity, through which is made the **warm-up** for the activity that is to be approached;
2. **the main part** with exercises, games or creative activities, that lead to an accumulation of knowledge or to a reflection; here is where you use mainly the principle of the 3 stages of learning, of the progressive complication of the activity, of the variety and creativity.
3. **return to calmness or relaxation**, with stretches, breaths and for the creative activities - sharing the important elements of the creations in the group. Although it is not numbered at the end of the three stages, an extremely important role is played by the **feedback** of the session, in general. Feedback is always made after returning to calmness or relaxation. It is the essential moment in which the participants have the opportunity to express their emotions or personal feelings they had during the game but also opinions

on the events that took place during the activity, pointing out behaviors or concrete things. Also at this time, the participants can propose changes that would lead to the improvement of the quality of the activity. This is the reason why the feedback always ends the activity. The participants can also share opinions about the moment of relaxation. This is why the feedback is essential for the self-assessment of the volunteer and for the adaptation of the future activities.

GET INTO THE GAME! PRACTICE! APPLY

Exercise no. 1 Extraterrestrial football



What are we following? The sheet for planning a session is an example of described psychosocial activity, with warm-up demonstration, main activity and relaxation. **Time needed:** 45 minutes. **Necessary materials:** 8 balls (1 for 2 children bonded to each other), cones, vests, ribbons, scarves or cloths to tie the hands (**Attention:** wide enough cloth, 5-10 cm, in order not to injure themselves). **Number and age of the participants:** 16 children of 10 years old

and more.

The theme of the session: *Extraterrestrial football* or Football based on cooperation (because, united in pairs, the participants *have 2 heads, 4 legs and 4 hands.*).

Skills to be developed. Underline at least two skills, of which one from the first category: **psychosocial skills:** trust, respect, sense of responsibility, expression of emotions, adaptation, flexibility, management of the problems and conflicts, fair-play, cooperation, communication, affection; **mental skills:** observation, concentration, analysis, strategic reflection, creative thinking, imagination, learning, memorization, relaxation, recreation, self-knowledge; **physical skills:** speed, strength, resistance, suppleness, coordination, agility, reaction, rhythm, balance, precision, knowing your own body.

Objectives (observable behaviors): to be able to come to an agreement on the way to be followed (the participants are not separated, one going to the right and one to the left); to be able to see where are the other partner pairs, in order to give them passes (cooperation); to be able to stay in action by the end of the game, nobody falls to the ground (coordination, agility).

How is it carried out? The young participants are divided into 4 teams of 2 or 3 pairs. Each pair holds by the arms and will function together within the game. The pairs run together and will learn to synchronize themselves, both among themselves and with the teammates. Each team has a goalkeeper whose aim is to defend the gate, so that his team does not receive goals. The playing field is that of a classic football game. And the extraterrestrial football game has the same purpose as the classic one namely for the teams to record goals to the adverse football goal. For this, the participants are moving with a ball in a wide space, by giving passes to each other. The important difference is created by the existence of the pairs and not of the individual players. We present you below, in great detail, how is carried out a psychosocial activity of extraterrestrial football, which includes the three stages of planning, theoretically described in this chapter.

	ACTIVITIES (<i>exercises, games, sports, creativity</i>)	ORGANIZATION (<i>material, settlement etc.</i>)
<p>WARM-UP <i>(presentation, setting the objectives, short games, exercises)</i></p>	<p>1. Receiving circle and transmission of the objectives (5 min.) Activity of coordination, agility (to learn to evolve in pairs, without falling, to handle the ball well) and of cooperation (to agree, to agree on the direction in which they are moving and to be attentive to the other pairs on the playground).</p> <p>2. Putting to the leg in two (10 min.) To move in pairs with a ball into a wide space, by giving each other passes. Three instructions for performing the game: Mars. The players try, for 10 seconds, to take the ball from the other one and vice versa (dribbling). Then the passes are repeated. Venus. The players hold each other by one arm, like during a dance in two, next to each other, looking in the opposite direction. One takes the ball and will keep it for one tour. Then the other one does the same. After this, the passes are resumed Jupiter. Changing the partners.</p>	<p>1 ball for 2 participants. Cones for demarcating the playground.</p>
<p>MAIN PART (activities, games)</p>	<p>3. Extraterrestrial football game (20 min.) Make 4 teams of 2 or 3 pairs (resume the names of the planets) and organized, in parallel, 6 games of 5 min. each, on two small playgrounds (1. A-B, C-D; 2. A-C, B-D; 3. A-D, B-C). Between each game, make a feedback on the things learned, of the successful moments, of the difficulties and failures. Notice how the cooperation functioned and what strategies were used, in order to overcome the constraint of the binding with cloth one to the other. If you have found that the teams get tired, enlarge the playground and regroup the teams by two A - B and C - D, to make a match with more participants.</p>	<p>Fabrics, scarves, vests. 2 playgrounds of approx. 18 x 10 m. (to be adapted according to the space).</p>
<p>RETURN TO CALMNESS <i>(stretching, relaxation, feedback)</i></p>	<p>4. Stretches in pairs (5 min.) a. The stretching of the thighs (quadriceps). Put your left hand on the left shoulder of the partner (face to face), remaining with the back straight. Hold your own leg by folding the knee to maximum. Then the position is changed, to perform a reverse movement on the left leg. b. The stretching of the interior of the leg (adductors). Placed face to face, with the legs apart as far as possible, holding by their hands and slightly pull the partner forward, deeply breathing. Then the situation is reversed. Attention: There will be observed the possibilities of the partner. The positions are maintained approx. 10 sec. Each position is repeated twice. The correction of the position will be made individually.</p> <p>5. Feedback (5 min.) The pairs can exchange opinions about the most constructive / effective behavior and the one that stimulated the least the collaboration / understanding during the matches. Return on the performance of the activities and of the things learned, with questions such as: <i>How did your pair work? How did you communicate? Who had the initiative in making decisions?</i> <i>What changes did you notice regarding your coordination, your strategy?</i> <i>How different did you perceive the team or the game, being tied to another player?</i> <i>What was the most difficult thing?</i> <i>- What did you learn during this game etc.?</i></p>	<p>or individually, where the context does not allow physical contact.</p>
<p>The feedback of the children</p>	<p>The self-assessment of the animator and suggestions for improving the activity</p>	

What did we learn?

By experiencing this game, we experience what cooperation means and we discover new communication strategies and teamwork.

Some of the questions you can address to the participants to the game would be the following:

How did your pair work? How did you communicate? Who had the initiative in making decisions?

What changes did you notice regarding your coordination, your strategy?

How different did you perceive the team or the game, being tied to another player?

What was the most difficult thing?

What did you learn during this game etc.?

Exercise no. 2 Volleyball championship

What are we following? Through this activity we propose the participants an exhilarating, funny activity which takes place in a much more agreeable and relaxed setting because the focus will move from the area of competition to the one of cooperation. It is another example through which is highlighted how a classical activity can be adapted and enriched with elements that would lead to the psychosocial development of the participants. **Time needed:** 60 minutes. **Necessary materials:** 8 volley balls, 8 large towels (as the ones for sunbathing), a rope with which to delimit the middle of the playground and that would be used as net, cones for marking the playground. Note that this activity is very appropriate for the hot summer days and the best place for its organization is a space in the open air.

Number and age of the participants: 16 children of 15 years old and more.

The theme of the session: *Volleyball championship* or volleyball based on cooperation (because, throughout the performance of the game the participants will work in pairs and teams, the pairs being able to be changed in certain moments of the game, if the participants want this).

Skills to be developed. Underline at least two skills, of which one from the first category: **psychosocial skills:** trust, respect, sense of responsibility, expression of emotions, adaptation, flexibility, management of the problems and conflicts, fair-play, cooperation, communication, enthusiasm, affection; **mental skills** observation, concentration, analysis, strategic reflection, anticipation, creative thinking, imagination, learning, memorization, relaxation, recreation, self-knowledge; **physical skills:** speed, strength, resistance, suppleness, coordination, agility, reaction, rhythm, balance, precision, knowing your own body.

Objectives (observable behaviors): to be able to coordinate their movements for performing the passes or catching the ball / balloon (cooperation, communication); to be able to create strategies as efficient as possible for launching the balloon in order to score points or to anticipate the movements of the team from the other playground for catching the ball (coordination, agility, strategic reflection, anticipation); to be able to feel good during the game and motivated to maintain the good mood, even if it is a championship and each team will have to score points (enthusiasm).

How is it carried out? After the ritual of "Welcome!" and after announcing the theme and the objectives, performing the warm-ups, the participants are divided into 2 teams of 4 pairs. Each pair will have a towel with which it will catch and launch a balloon filled with water that will keep the place of the ball during the performance of the game. The participants will learn to synchronize, both with the colleagues with which they form a pair and with the colleagues from the team. The playing field can be marked with cones, chalk, adhesive tape (depending on the materials available) and in the middle will be tied a rope which will keep

the place of a net. The game of volleyball has the same purpose as the classic one namely the teams to score points by throwing the balloon filled with water over the net so as to fall into the opponent's playground. The balloon with water will be handled with the towel held by the edges by the members of each pair. In order to facilitate cooperation, it will be imposed, as a rule, a minimum number of passes (2 or 3) within the team before throwing the balloon in the adverse playground and the condition for the same pair not to launch 2 times consecutively the balloon towards the "opponents". If the ball is caught by the "opponents", these will perform the minimum number of passes in the team after which they may launch the ball in the other playground. If the balloon falls outside the playground, the team that launched it will lose a point.

We present you a planning model for a volleyball championship, in which you find basic elements of a psychosocial activity.

	ACTIVITIES (<i>exercises, games, sports, creativity</i>)	ORGANIZATION (<i>material, settlement etc.</i>)
WARM-UP <i>(presentation, setting the objectives, short games, exercises)</i>	<p>1. Receiving circle and transmission of the objectives (10 min.) For announcing the theme and the objectives, the participants are seated in a circle for the animator to be seen and heard by everyone. The warm-up activity will begin with the division of the group in pairs. Each pair will receive a ball and will perform the passes according to the following codes / numbers:</p> <p>1 = there will be performed high passes (above the head by throwing the ball with the fingertips) 2 = there will be performed passes at the level of the shoulders by throwing the ball from the palms 3 = there will be performed passes placing themselves one behind the other and by throwing the ball top down between the legs 4 = changing the partners</p> <p>Thus, the players will practice the skills of coordination, agility and reaction.</p> <p>2. Stretching in pairs (5 min.) <u>The whole body and the joints:</u> A and B (within each pair) lean forward by holding their hands and trying to go down as much as possible in horizontal position. <u>Legs (quadriceps):</u> A and B stand back to back, with the knees bent, and they have to go up at the same time without using their hands as support</p>	<p>8 pairs of players, each pair with 1 ball = 8 balls</p> <p>Insist on good collaboration, nobody has to fall!!!</p>

<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">MAIN PART (activities, games)</p>	<p>3. High passes with the ball and the towel (5 min.) Each pair (A + B) will receive a ball and a towel. By holding the towel by the margins, A and B will try to coordinate each other and to throw the ball as high as possible and then to catch it in the towel as well.</p> <p>4. High passes with the ball and the towel (10 min.) The same thing with the difference that the ball will be replaced with a balloon filled with water. After several minutes, when the first balloons break, the pairs will group by 2 or 3 and will try to pass the ball to each other. As the balloons will break, the pairs will group more together, they will form a sort of little train and will make passes until all the balloons are broken.</p> <p>5. Volleyball championship (20 min.) There are made 2 teams of 4 pairs each. The teams will be seated in the playground and they will score points by throwing the ball over the net in the "adverse" playground. It will be taken into account the minimum number of passes set (<i>see also the description above</i>). In order to achieve the progression, it can be changed the size of the playground.</p>	<p>Practicing the coordination movements between players in pair:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 8 pairs with 1 towel and 1 volley ball each • 8 pairs with 1 towel and 1 balloon filled with water <p>Playground marked with cones and net which to divide it in halves. 4 teams in each half of the playground.</p>
<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">RETURN TO CALMNESS (stretching, relaxation, feedback)</p>	<p>6. Stretching and relaxation (5 min.)</p> <p>a. In pairs, A and B are seated face to face with the legs apart (V) so that the soles of their feet touch. Seated this way, they try to touch their hands and to catch their fingers and lean forward alternatively. (1 min.)</p> <p>b. Also in pairs, A sits on the towel and B makes him a massage as relaxing as possible, by using the ball, on the back, arms, neck, shoulders. After 1 minute the roles change and A will make massage to B. - 2 min.</p> <p>c. The participants are asked to sit down also on the towels, in circle, to close their eyes, to breathe deeply, to listen to the breeze through the trees, the chirping of the birds, to breathe the calmness and harmony that the nature generously emanates (thus will be relieved the muscular tensions, by the hustle of the game) - 2 min.</p> <p>5. Feedback (5 min.) The pairs can exchange opinions about the most constructive / effective behavior and the one that stimulated the least the collaboration / understanding during the game. Return on the performance of the activities and of the things learned, with questions such as: <i>How did your pair/team work? How did you communicate? Who had the initiative in making decisions? What changes did you notice regarding the coordination, the strategies in the game? What was difficult for you? How did you manage to overcome these difficulties? What did you learn during this game etc.?</i></p>	<p>Relaxation will be made in a close place but distinct from the playground used for the game (to distance, literally and figuratively, the participants of the things that took place during the game and to put the things in perspective). The place will be selected so as to be protected from the sunlight and the participants to have the best conditions to feel tranquility and comfort.</p>
<p>The feedback of the children</p>	<p>The self-assessment of the animator and suggestions for improving the activity</p>	

What did we learn?

Through this game we explore strategies of collaboration, coordination, anticipating situations that may appear in the game, reaction and response to various stimuli.

You can explore together with the participants possible links between the skills practiced during the game and their applicability in everyday life.

How do we choose our work partners, according to what criteria?

What are the advantages / disadvantages of the teamwork?

How to manage the relations with the colleagues from your own team and from the "adverse" one so as to keep a motivating and harmonious working framework?



SELECTIVE BIBLIOGRAPHY

Excerpts and text adaptation from: „*Manual de Competențe psihosociale - Lucrul cu copiii și i mediul lor*” - (*Psychosocial Skills Manual - Working with children and their environment*) - Terre des hommes Foundation, 2011

CHAPTER 7. PROJECT MANAGEMENT

Motto: There are no obstacles in the project management, there are only new challenges!!!



KEY CONCEPTS

Every project has great chances of success if it meets certain conditions:

- The people that you think of really need intervention; your motivation is their need, not your needs;
- You have planned very well your activities;
- You have things to work with (people, materials, technology, money - if necessary);
- The project team works;
- You follow your objectives according to a schedule and you keep it;
- You register correctly and realistically the results and correct where it does not work exactly as you want;
- At the end ask people if you have been helpful for them, learn from their answers and do better the next time.



START FROM YOURSELF

It's your brother's birthday, younger than you with one year, and you want to prepare him a surprise party. Write a "project" of the party. Consider the following: do you think he will be happy? Who will you invite? When do you begin the preparations? It would be good also a graphic, so as not to realize that his birthday comes and you have not managed to organize everything. Who is your "ally": parents, friends, his girlfriend, his classmates, other relatives? Perhaps it

would be better to have a "project team", a few friends to help you, each with precise tasks and deadlines as well. What resources do you need: people, gifts, food and drinks, space, music etc.?

It may seem funny but if you also take into account only some elements from the chapter "project management" below, you will see that every activity, seemingly simple, may require a lot of resources to make sure that it will be successful. At a "surprise party" can appear many unpleasant "surprises" if you have not thought of them. You do not know all of your brother's friends; if you do not ask them to make the guest list you might skip some very important persons. Maybe you do not have the same tastes in music, you'd better be sure that the music is for him, not for you. Perhaps it would not be wrong to look a bit also at the weather forecast, if you are planning an outdoor party... and so on, the examples can go on. And do not forget, more minds think better than one, so make a team!

Even if a party organization does not seem to require much effort, however, any small activity can constitute a project, if you propose yourself to practice or, why not, to do everything "by the book". Sometimes you will not have time, mood or energy to observe all the stages or to read this Guide again to remember what and how, but when you plan bigger things that have an effect on many people, which require time, materials, energy, people involved and maybe even financial resources, it would be good to consider why you are here. Thus, you have bigger chances to obtain the desired results and to enjoy them, along with the others.



THE ESSENCE OF THE ESSENCES

The essence is a little more diluted in this chapter, because the project management has already become a true science. As in any science, there are different currents and schools, which, at times, contradict each other atrociously. However, the purely theoretical information on the following pages can be useful for you, in whole or in pieces, in everything you will do from now on. Use it in simple, daily activities to get used to it and then try your skills and luck in larger projects and even in funding requests. Even if sometimes it seems hard, over time things will become easier and you will become more skilled. A final warning before proceeding to reading: writing the project is just the first step, implementation remains the hard work.

Structure and stages of the project

For elaborating the projects, it is important to consider the **definition** of the project, as *investment of resources for a specific period, aiming at achieving an objective or a set of precise objectives*. The objectives will be achieved by a set of **activities** which lead to obtaining certain **results**.

The projects will contain separate sections that would present the motivation, goals and objectives, strategies, ways of achievement, activities, responsibilities, human and financial resources, achievement terms, results and methods of evaluation and monitoring.

GET A LOAD OF THIS!



The projects will contain the following **basic elements**:

- a) *the idea* of the project or the problem that is intended to be solved by the project;
- b) *the motivation* of the project;
- c) *the title* of the project;
- d) *the purpose* of the project;
- e) *the objectives* of the project;
- f) *the resources* required either on objectives or described for each activity individually;
- g) *the target group* of the project and / or who benefits from the results of its implementation;
- h) *the activities* which lead to the achievement of the objectives, with their description and determination of their extent in time and of the dependencies between them;
- i) the basic *results* of the project, which are established for each objective;
- j) *the impact* of the project;
- k) *the budget* of the project, which can be broken down on each activity and on each source individually, on achievement periods of the project and finally for the entire project;
- l) *the indicators* through which the results can be monitored;
- m) *ways of monitoring and evaluating the results* of the project;
- n) describing the ways / methods through which can be *disseminated* the information about the results of the project and how can these be valorized;
- o) *the sustainability* of the project - describing the way in which can be ensured the continuity of the project at the end of the funding period (if necessary for such a project) or *the prognosis* in time of the evolution of the product/ result of the project.

Schematically, the project structure looks like this:

Key-Questions	The components of the proposal
WHAT does this project try to achieve? WHAT will you change or influence through this project?	Goals and objectives
WHY are you the best suited to carry out the project? HOW will you achieve the project?	Justification of the urgency of solving the problem and the capacity of the organization to solve it.
HOW will the project be conducted? WHERE will the project be carried out? WHEN will be carried out the activities of the project?	The planning in time and space of the project and the manner of implementation.
HOW will you control the achievement of the ongoing project? HOW will you measure the efficiency? HOW will you transmit the others what you have done?	Monitoring, assessment and reporting.
HOW much will the project cost? WHAT resources will be required	The project budget.
HOW will the project be continued? WHAT will happen after the initial project will be completed?	Durability / Sustainability
WHAT other materials can you offer in support of the proposal?	Support materials

GET A LOAD OF THIS!



The stages in implementing a project are:

1. *Identifying, prioritizing and justifying the problem (including the setting of the geographical framework and the analysis of the existing demand).*
2. *Choosing the purpose and the objectives.*
3. *Selecting the persons subject to the intervention.*
4. *The implementation of the plan, including the methods and the techniques used.*
5. *Monitoring and assessment.*
6. *Ensuring the continuity and sustainability*
7. *The feedback. Depending on the results obtained, we will introduce changes in each of the previous steps in order to improve the future interventions.*

7.1. IDENTIFYING, PRIORITIZING AND JUSTIFYING THE PROBLEM

Identifying a specific and clearly defined problem is the first critical step towards the successful implementation of a process of solving it. A problem occurs when there is a difference between what "it should be" and what "it is". You can identify a problem by using one of the following techniques:

- a technique of direct observation, such as the surveys of the population;
- a technique of consensus, through which we choose in team which of the problems of the community is the most important and / or urgent;
- a technique of analyzing data

In case there are identified more problems considered important, it is necessary to **prioritize** them.

Why is it important for the problems to be prioritized?

- **The resources and time are limited.** The problems cannot be solved all at the same time and therefore the efforts will be focused, initially, on the most important problem.
- In order to gain experience in the process of solving the problems, the first problem that you will approach will be one that can be **easily studied and solved**. Choose a problem for which more information is available.
- If the resolution of the first problem is successful, that solution **can be reproduced** easily, locally or nationally.

For example, in the community where our high school is, there are needy families, dysfunctional families with many children, school dropout of the poor children, old people who are alone at home and who need care. In order to make sure that the project in which are invested resources will be a successful one, a NSCA team of volunteers will choose the problem that is more urgent and more important and that can be approached by students and by their teachers.

The matrix of the priorities is a method that will help us in establishing that problem that our project is going to approach. We will take all the problems that we have identified and we will prioritize them. The problem with the highest priority will be the one that **occurs most frequently**, it is the **most important** and its approach made by us is the most **feasible** (it lies in our power to solve it with the resources that we have at hand). In a table, we will give each problem a grade from 1 (the smallest one) to x (the number of problems we have), depending on how often it occurs, how important it is and to what extent we are able to approach it, as volunteer students and teachers. At the end we make a total on every problem and primary will be the one with the highest score. Attention: on each criterion each grade can be given only once!

Example:

Problem	Frequency	Importance	Feasibility	Total
Dysfunctional families with many children	2	3	1	6
School dropout	3	2	3	8
Old people who need care	1	1	2	4

Therefore, in our case the primary problem is school dropout.

The justification of a problem always starts from your mission and purpose. The problem will be part of the geographical area and of the field of activity in which you act.

Explain why you are able to approach the problem and to solve it. Examples with the previous successes are welcome, these bringing more credibility. The desire to solve or ameliorate the problem will be the basis of the project construction.

The justified problem will be a real one. That is why the current situation is described in a certain place and period, as well as the group affected by the problem. It is presented the problem or the need that is required to be solved, the reason why it is necessary to resolve it and how it can be improved through your project. It is important to describe the strategy by which is reached, from the current situation (the one in which the problem exists), the desired situation (the one in which the problem is ameliorated or solved).

For the problem to be credible, there are presented proofs, concrete data, easily verifiable: studies, statistical analyses, researches in the field, press articles, the opinions of the experts in that field, other official documents etc. Confidently use any type of evidence in order to convince anyone that the problem is real, important. But if you do not have such evidence, do not invent them and do not make assumptions.

Solving a real problem has the support of the community. Present the problem from the perspective of the beneficiaries and its resolution will also be developed in this direction. Request the support from the local authorities, as representatives of the community, in the form of official letters of support.

Anyway, the form that the justification of the problem will have is important. The person who reads this chapter must have a clear image on the context of the problem. Thus it is important for the justification to be as simple as possible, to be interesting to read, not to contain elements of jargon and to have a reasonable size.

The analysis of the existing interventions and the setting of the geographical framework are also part of the justification. We get informed in case there already are ongoing resolution mechanisms for the problem chosen by us. If such mechanisms exist and they are sufficient, it means that it is not about an emergency and it is necessary a reprioritization of the problems. It is also indispensable to determine the geographical limits that our project will have (country, region, district, school etc.), depending on the size of the problem and the available resources.

7.2. IDENTIFYING THE PURPOSE AND THE OBJECTIVES OF THE PROJECT

7.2.1. The purpose of the project

The purpose of the project is what we want to achieve after its development, meaning the state that we want to reach. When we formulate it we think about the question: *"Where do we want to get?"*

In general, the projects are addressed to a major problem and aim to solve the problem if possible, or to improve the situation created by the existence of the respective problem. **The purpose is the stage where we want the problem to get after implementing the project.**

The purpose of the project is **unique** and is established in accordance with the mission of the team / organization, with its development strategy, but also with the context in which it takes place, with the needs and problems of the community. The purpose is formulated as follows:

To contain	Not to contain
<p>A clear and concise statement</p> <p>An ideal</p> <p>A result monitored in the long term</p> <p>A verb in the conjunctive form: <i>"to achieve..."</i> or a verbal noun: <i>"the achievement..."</i></p>	<p>Measurable elements</p> <p>The conjunction "and" - separates 2 purposes</p> <p>The word "by" - describes the method / activity</p>

Questions for checking the purpose:

Does the long-term change arise from the formulation of the purpose?

Is the purpose clear? Can it be understood by someone who does not know the project?

7.2.2. The project objectives

Imagine that the purpose is the destination where you want to arrive. **The objectives are the way by which you reach the destination.**

The objectives are necessary **steps** for achieving the purpose. A properly formulated objective is **specifically measurable, approachable / achievable, realistic / concrete; it can be achieved within a period of time (SMART)**. The objective is logically related to the problem and purpose. The objective contains the target group, that is the group of the project implementation and from its formulation it appears that the project aims to achieve certain results.

For a proper construction of the objective, I propose you a simple exercise in 7 steps.

a. Establishing the results.

The result is the concrete proof that an objective was achieved. To make sure that the objective can be achieved, we ascertain what results we want to have. The result determines a change, an improvement that the project produced on the beneficiaries.

The question to which we will answer is: *What are the results that we want to achieve at the end of the project?* Example of result: 1 training course achieved, 1 press conference accomplished, a renovated building, 2 cars bought, 16 course participants who received the certificate of project manager.

b. Determining the performance indicator

Performance is the level where we want a result to get. The performance indicator is the measurement unit of the result. It helps us to see how close we got compared to the anticipated results. In order to determine the indicator, we will answer the question: *By what we measure the results that we have established?* Example of indicator of result - piece, kilogram, days (the apples are measured in pieces or per kilogram; the training is measured in days)

c. Determining the performance standard

The standard represents the quantity of the measurement unit. It shows us which would have to be the value of the performance indicators in order to be sure that we have achieved the result. For example: 2 apples, 7 days etc.

d. Determining the beneficiaries

The beneficiary is the person in favor of which the project is carried out. The beneficiary will be clearly described in the objective so that he can be checked. For example, in the program of financing of the Association Joy of Life for a project to prevent juvenile delinquency, the beneficiaries may be persons aged between 12 and 18 years, students at the schools and high schools in the county.

e. Determining the time necessary for achieving the result

Time will be clearly expressed, so as to know in which period of time we will carry out the project. Time can be expressed in hours, days, months. For example, in the program of financing of Oradea City Hall, the project must be completed no later than 31 December of the year in which the project started.

f. Writing the objective

This step involves merging the information resulting from the completion of the previous 5 steps. The statement which expresses the objective will be formulated coherently and clearly.

g. Assessing the objective

In order to verify that the **objective** is properly formulated, we will answer a few checking questions:

What? When? Where? For whom? (Achievement, elaboration, rehabilitation...etc.)	Specific objective	S
What amount of result will I achieve?	Measurable objective	M
Can the result that you proposed to yourself be achieved by your organization with its available resources? (persons, time, money)?	Approachable objective, namely that it can be achieved	A
Is there in reality the possibility to accomplish the result that you proposed to yourself? (E.g. if you propose to travel to the planet Jupiter, even if you have the persons, time and sufficient money, in reality you cannot do this journey).	Realistic objective	R

<i>Does the objective clearly express the time interval (in days or months) necessary for its achievement?</i>	Objective framed in time	T
--	---------------------------------	----------

How many objectives can we have in a project?

It is good to note that a large number of objectives do not mean that the project is good. It is generally recommended writing a number of 3 SMART objectives in a project.

7.3. DETERMINING THE BENEFICIARIES / THE TARGET GROUP

Target group - Direct beneficiaries - Indirect beneficiaries

Defining correctly these categories of persons is important for the sponsor to understand who will carry out the project and to whom will be addressed the activities within it, its results.

- **Target group** - represents the group through which the action achieves its purpose. It will always be represented by a single group of people. When defining the target group, we will specify the following: identification elements of the group, their common characteristic, their number and age, where this is possible.

The group of beneficiaries are the natural or legal persons for the benefit of which is produced the change followed. The category of beneficiaries can be sub-classified in the category of direct beneficiaries and the one of the indirect beneficiaries.

Direct beneficiaries - represents the segment of population, the institutions, the structures that benefit directly, immediately of results / effects. It will always be represented by one or several groups of clearly differentiated natural persons (not to exist direct connection between them of part-integer type) or by legal persons.

When defining the direct beneficiaries, natural persons, we will specify the rounded number of the group members, their age (if possible) and multiple elements of identifying the group, their common features as accurate as possible.

When defining the direct beneficiaries, legal persons, it is important to specify its full name, without abbreviations (for example "Nicolae Iorga" Theoretical High School) and a short description of the way in which these will benefit from the project.

We can also specify the real rounded number of the direct beneficiaries. The exaggerations will be marked down by the financier, in addition, from the final report will arise the real number of the beneficiaries, so it would be good to make a realistic calculation of the beneficiaries of your project from the very beginning. If the number of the beneficiaries will be bigger than the number initially scheduled, in the written project, this is not necessarily a negative point, but if the number will be much smaller than the one scheduled, this shows your lack of realism or of organizational capacity.

Indirect beneficiaries - represents the segment of population who benefit indirectly from results / effects, due to the multiplier effect. It will always be represented by one or several groups of clearly differentiated natural persons (not to exist direct connection between them of part-integer type) or by legal persons.

When defining the indirect beneficiaries, natural persons, we will specify the rounded number of the group members, their age (if possible), multiple elements of identifying the group, their common features as accurate as possible and a short description of the way in which they will benefit from the project.

When defining the indirect beneficiaries, legal person, it will be specified its full name, without abbreviations and a short description of the way in which they will benefit from the project.

Since you do not have direct control over this category of beneficiaries, the degree of approximation may be higher in their case. Specifying as many identification elements of the group as possible, as well as the description of the way in which the group will benefit from the project, show however that you know exactly to whom you want to address, who you want to benefit from your project.

7.4. THE ACTIVITY PLAN

The plan refers to the manner in which the project will be carried out and will solve the problem.

Describe the activities, provide information on the objectives of the project, on the number of activities that you will do in a period of time, how many meetings with how many members of the target group etc. Make sure you do not undertake things that cannot be fulfilled. The activities can be divided into subtasks, for simplifying the process and for the clarity of the project.

Clearly define the activities, so that they result from objectives and lead to their achievement. The activities will include the effective implementation, the venue, the necessary resources, the work methodology, the persons responsible for the activity and the manner of assessment of the activity.

WHAT	What will be the main activities within the project?
HOW	The work methods and techniques. When choosing the methods, it is important to rely on a set of principles, such as: <i>Achieving a maximum coverage of the target population.</i> <i>Obtaining a maximum efficiency regarding the objectives chosen.</i> <i>Their achievement with the smallest possible relative cost.</i> <i>Revising the alternatives having regard to the ethical principles that will guide the interventions.</i> <i>Planning the intervention, analyzing the human and material resources which are available.</i>
WHERE	The venue of each activity
WHEN	The achievement period of the project and the main key deadlines
WITH WHAT	Human, material, logistic resources
HOW WELL	Assessment

7 steps in writing the activities

Step 1: Identify the results that you have at each objective. Be careful because these may be more, both at individual and organization level.

Step 2: Identify at least one **measurable indicator** for each result. The indicators make the results observable. They describe the results in measurable terms and often include numbers and / or percentages.

Step 3: Write the expected **results**, in a table, comprising also the indicators identified.

Step 4: Identify the activity / the activities which lead to the achievement of the result. Specify clearly the process or the series of events which lead to its achievement.

Step 5: Identify the **resources** you need in order to fulfill the activity.

Step 6: Identify how much **time** you need, who is responsible for each activity.

Step 7: Revise the action plan. Will the activities lead to the achievement of the results? Do the activities and results lead to the achievement of the objectives?

Emphasize the innovative features which may be considered distinct from the others. Whenever possible, use annexes to give details or additional information. If included in the plan, these types of information can make it difficult to read. The Annexes provide the reader immediate access to details if or when the

clarification of an idea or conclusion is necessary. Schedules, work plans, activities, methodologies, legal acts, autobiographical data, letters of recommendation and approvals are examples of annexes.

7.5. ASSESSMENT

The assessment has two parts: of the product and of the process.

The assessment of the product offers results that can be attributed to the project and the extent to which the project achieved its goals.

The assessment of the process shows how the project was conducted, in connection with the action plan established and with the effectiveness of the various activities in the plan.

The assessments can be conducted by a member within the organization, by a company of assessment or by both. It will be specified the duration necessary for the assessment, how it will be distributed the feedback within the target group, and a program to review and comment on this type of communication. The assessment plans can be made at the beginning, middle or end of the project.

Why is it needed an assessment process?

How will you know if you have achieved the desired impact? If you did a good job, all you need to do is to describe the information gathered to see how much you have accomplished your purpose. Will you keep track of the incoming calls? Will you ask the volunteers to keep a diary of the hours worked? Will you still advise the beneficiaries six months after they left the program to see how they are doing?

8. THE BUDGET

What is a budget? A budget is the financial plan of the project, which includes an estimate of the expenditures and of the incomes related to the project. It is a document whose feasibility depends on the support from a financier or from a partner.

What does a budget contain?

- the financial plan for the entire duration of the project, including the in-kind contributions, the contributions of the beneficiaries and of the organization, the funds requested / provided by the donors.
- a short description of the manner in which the funds will be managed within the organization, the bank used, the financial reporting system, the person responsible for the accountancy within the organization
- what amount is needed and how this amount will be allocated.

Because, most likely, your projects will not develop this component too much, we will not insist on it. If you submit a request for funding, the chapter "Budget" is one of the most important ones, therefore all the specifications from the "Applicant Guide" and other supporting documents will be read very carefully.

9. CONTINUATION / SUSTAINABILITY

The questions to which we will answer in this chapter are:

- *What will happen with the project after the completion of the proposed activities?*
- *How will the impact of the project manifest after this is completed?*
- *Were there created or are there possibilities of identifying other resources for continuing the project??*
- *How will the project be administered after the activities funded are completed (where applicable)?*
- *How will the persons involved continue the activity?*

From a financial perspective, the financiers want to know how you will ensure the financing of the project after the funds received from them finish. They want to know whether to invest in your project. In order

not to give them the impression that their money will be thrown out of the window, it is important to offer them palpable prospects for the future. Therefore it is necessary to think of a strategy for long-term financing.

From institutional point of view, it is important to show whether the organizations involved in the project will still have the disposition and the (human, material) resources to continue the project. Do not leave the impression that you do not care too much about what will happen in time with the problem that you are trying to solve, what will happen with the needs of the target group. Your interest towards the problem approached is with long shot, longer than the duration of this punctual project.

Show which will be the **long term effects** of your project, **the impact** it will have also beyond the development period / for which you have signed the financing contract. **The change** that your project brings will hold out in time, it is not ephemeral. If, subsequently to the course of the project, the previous problematic situation will be reverted, the project has not truly reached its purpose.

GET INTO THE GAME! PRACTICE! APPLY

In order to easier put into practice all the above information, we propose you some more serious or funnier exercises, which would familiarize you with the project idea.



Exercise no. 1 What kind of coordinator you are?

What are we following? The application has two objectives: to identify together what leadership styles exist in your team and which is the difference between your image about yourselves and the image of the others about you.

Time needed: 60 min.

Necessary materials: a space for your team (it can be also outdoors), chairs for all the team members, A4 sheets, already printed with the animals from the application or white, scissors.

Participants: 6 - 12 participants, 14 - 18 years old.

How is it carried out? Gather your gang of friends (or, better, NSCA group of volunteers) and do an experiment together. Cut pieces of paper on which you draw (or, if you are not great at this, simply write, even if it is not as funny) the following creatures: shark, owl, woodpecker, dolphin, rabbit. Make several copies of each card and share them among yourselves. Each will then place one card next to the others and next to him, upside down, depending on what kind of coordinator he / she thinks each of them is. The shark = the authoritarian boss, that everyone is afraid of, obsessed by control; the owl = the authoritarian coordinator, know-all, respected for his knowledge, sits perched on its branch and only gives indications; the woodpecker = the annoying boss, forever critical, his favorite expression is "*you are not doing anything properly, I have to do everything by myself!*"; the dolphin - the democratic, sociable, cheerful boss, who works alongside the team; the rabbit = the fearful boss, who is not able to make decisions, he runs when problems occur, he always blames the others.

What did we learn? Analyze what arises from the exercise, check if your image about yourselves is common with the image of the others about you. Identify the qualities of each of you and try to imagine what role each could have in a project team.

Exercise no. 2 The GANTT of my project

What are we following? The application challenges you to documentation and aims to exemplify the importance that the planning plays in the success of a project.

Time needed: 90 min.

Necessary materials: several A3 sheets, pencils, markers, chairs, a working table.

Participants: 6 - 12 participants, 14 - 18 years old

How is it carried out? Search on the internet what is a Gantt diagram. Fill out such a diagram, for a 3-day trip to Paris / Rome / London / Istanbul. Do not forget to divide the day per hours and try to touch as many sights as possible and to also feel the city life. You can include in the diagram inclusively the preparatory activity of the trip and the subsequent sharing of the impressions. Be creative, it is an imaginary trip, you can do anything you want!

What did we learn? Analyze together the result of your work. Try to discover the advantages of a schematic planning, to assign yourselves roles and tasks for each activity from your diagram (according to the preferences and abilities of each of you) and imagine also other fields where you can apply the new knowledge.

Exercise no. 3 My RESOURCES

What are we following? The application refers to one of the essential components of the project: the resources. Their correct and realistic identification makes a project feasible. The volunteers tend to make two mistakes: they either underestimate themselves (we cannot do this, it's too much), or they overestimate themselves (we can do anything). By working together, you can properly assess what you can and cannot do at a given moment, with the available resources inside the team and outside it.

Time needed: 120 min.

Necessary materials: several A4 sheets, pencils, markers, chairs, working table.

Participants: 6 - 12 participants, 14 - 18 years old

How is it carried out? At a meeting of your team of volunteers, identify problems in your community (not necessarily related to the beneficiaries that you work with). Make a list, choose one or two problems considered of priority and identify resources from the community that could contribute to their resolution. Include people, institutions, environment, local characteristics, sources of financing, media etc. Justify each resource, discussing how it can help you. One of the best resources is you, so make a list of your qualities and defects and how they can be best used in a project. Do not be scared of defects, they are often the strengths of a team, especially if they have their correspondent in qualities present in the team. For example, the one that criticizes all the time can identify problems early, while the eternal happy does not see why we should make a project, since everything is fine. Each of you will perfectly find his place in the team, if you make an honest inventory of the qualities and defects, so as to use effectively and with pleasure everything that each has to offer. If the artist of the team receives difficult tasks and which require responsibility, he will be unhappy, but if he has the task to do all the promotional materials, he will be in his element. If you choose the hardworking to be responsible of achieving the results, he will motivate each team member and he will maintain the pace high. If you choose a nice girl and who has oratorical talent to be the spokesman to the manager and to eventual sponsors, the chances of success increase. If the girl is pretty but also shy, the matter is not the same.

What did we learn? The projects are implemented in the team, where everyone has his role well established. If everyone does the things he likes and is good at doing them, the morale of the team is high and you are on the right track. Nothing is perfect, you will change roles, there will exit and enter new members in the team, but the recipe is the same.

SELECTIVE BIBLIOGRAPHY



Project Management T-kit - Council of Europe DG IV and European Commission 2000

Development of the NGO skills - The project management - The Regional Environmental Center for Central and Eastern Europe, 2002

http://www.referat.ro/teste_online/Testare_din_Managementul_proiectelor_13.html

<http://www.managementul-proiectelor.ro/Knowledge-Base/Tips-Tricks/Cele-6-palarii-de-gandire-pentru-managerii-de-proiect.html>

<http://www.cdm.ro/proiecte/?lang=en>

CHAPTER 8. COMMUNITY PROJECTS

Be the change you want to see in the world! -Mahatma Gandhi



KEY CONCEPTS

You are young, full of hopes and you want to make the world where you live a more beautiful place. You want a spiritually, morally "*more beautiful place*", in which mutual aid, altruism, empathy to be normal characteristics manifested in the human relationships.

There are many children and adults who need support and encouragement in your community!

- In what kind of projects you could get involved to help them?
- What are the characteristics of these projects?
- What are the main problems that a community project can approach?

These are a few questions to which we will help you to answer further.



START FROM YOURSELF

There certainly are people in your community for whom the mere fact of going to school constitutes a very big effort, both financially and physically. Did you know that there are many children that do not attend school in winter because they do not have suitable shoes? Have you heard of children who are not allowed to go to school in order to help their parents with the household chores? Have you heard about the cases of certain children with disabilities who are discriminated? Or maybe about the elders who live alone? Examples of this kind can continue.

Do you think you could do something for them and for the community that you belong to?



THE ESSENCE OF THE ESSENCES

The community project is an instrument - built by a team or by a person - intended to contribute to solving certain problems faced by a certain community or by a group in the community.

In the figure below, you will notice the directions by which the education is achieved on you:

- you are the main actor of your education!
- those around you (family, school, friends, media and others) intervene in achieving your education!
- the community you live in intervenes in your education through its mentalities and actions!



You - as a student - want the school to offer you more than theoretical and practical knowledge, you want it to offer you the opportunity to develop your **ability to live with the others** in a united and solidary community.

On this new direction fall also the community projects.

Each community has its own needs. These can be emotional, social, material, financial, spiritual etc. Like the community, each individual has his own needs. Some are the same for each person, others are different and special.

A community action involves sharing what one person or more can do for those in need. This can be achieved in the form of a community project.

The beneficiaries of the community actions can be children with disabilities, children with learning difficulties, abandoned children, old people, sick people etc. You, as a volunteer, can share a little of your free time with the beneficiaries and you can set off the talents and experience that you have.

Any community project can be organized by you, alone or together with a team, coordinated by an adult / teacher.

A community project is an experience capable of forming your character and is a mutual benefit for everyone involved. This also relies on the experience that you have acquired in school or outside it.

GET A LOAD OF THIS!



When you want to write a community project it is important to consider the following aspects regarding the project beneficiaries:

- you can help the beneficiaries (children and adults with disabilities, persons from socially disadvantaged groups, elderly persons and others) to better integrate into the local community;
- the beneficiaries can gain their confidence in their own forces; you can help them to become balanced individuals by the fact that they will gain trust and personal and emotional confidence;
- some of them may develop their creative and expressive skills (music, theater, dance, painting, sports and others) by stimulating various mental and physical activities.

In building up a community project you can consider the following types of activities: sportive, musical, of socialization (birthdays, holidays, celebrations, name days, visits, trips), fine arts, theater, dance, manual activities, socialization activities, learning activities.

Often, children and adults in need lack "the partner" with whom to talk from time to time, that would help them with homework or at various house chores, that would offer them the little they need, from material or spiritual point of view, in order to continue their lives in a decent way.

Activities that may be carried out in this regard:

- Identifying the local resources
- Identifying the children that are not attending school or with school dropout
- Identifying the children with special or precarious financial situations
- Identifying the persons in crisis situations

The activities carried out within the community activities with the help of the students are very important for students because they learn many new things, useful for them to become adults and which they do not encounter in textbooks:

- they learn to communicate and to interlink with the people in the community, children and adults, with natural persons and with institutions;
- they learn that, although all people are equal before the law and before God, not all the people are born equal from physical, intellectual and social point of view;
- they learn to involve in the community life, to discover what are the problems of the people and which may be the solutions to solve these problems;
- they take responsibilities to the people with whom they interact;
- they learn to respect the people and the social values;
- they give of their time, affection and attention to those who need support.

Involving students in community action programs represents a valuable part of the educational experience and may lead to the formation of some moral values of great significance for the life of the students, as future people of the society.

By the participation of the student to the activities related to the community where he lives, the student can integrate more easily into the local community, gain self-confidence, appreciate and be appreciated, develop creative and expressive skills and perhaps the most important, become balanced individuals by the fact that they will gain confidence and personal and emotional trust.

Example of activity plan for community project:

Date	Activity	10-10.50am	11.15-12.15	12.30-1.30	2-5pm	5-6 pm	Evening
Tuesday, July 8	Art	Work on workshops		A	Analysis of the activity Free time	B	Program at will
	Dance / Theatre			B		C	
	Handicraft / Drawing			C		D	
	Sports			D		E	
	Music			E		A	

Annex 1 Activity planning model

Title: My friends

Date:

Collaborators / Partners: mass education unit and the special school

The venue: the special school

Duration: 2 hours

Purpose of the activity: improving the understanding and the awareness of the needs faced by the students in the special school

Objectives: - to manufacture together their favorite animals;
 - to learn animal names that they do not know.

Preparation for the activity: they learn to manufacture animals from colored paper.

Materials used: cartoon film (domestic / wild animals), colored paper, pencils, scissors, marker

Carrying out of the activity:

- watching the movie;
- naming the animals;
- the students will be divided into working groups;
- choosing the group leader;
- presenting the materials that will be used;
- the group leader demonstrates the manufacturing manner;
- manufacturing the animals;
- exhibiting the products obtained;
- rewards.

Planning the next meeting by common agreement.

Annex 2 Model of organizing a fundraising campaign

The campaign "A kidney for Alina" (fictional)

Class / group of students initiating the campaign

The campaign slogan: "A kidney for Alina"

Stages	Actions
Purpose of the action	Fundraising for Alina's surgery
Estimated budget	100 lei
Period	One week
Funding opportunities	- selling the objects manufactured in school; - sponsors; - parents.
Target group	Students and adults

Promotion	Posters, flyers, mass media
Plan of the action on days	Monday - sale of the products in front of the school, 2-5 PM Tuesday - sale of the products in front of the store 2-5 PM Wednesday - sale of the products in front of the City Hall, 2-5 PM Thursday - sale of the products in front of the school, 2-5 PM Friday - manufacturing other products Saturday - sale of the products in front of the central square, 2-5 PM
Financial results / achievements / assessment	



SELECTIVE BIBLIOGRAPHY

Bârzea, C., *Arta și știința educației (Education art and science)*, Didactical and Pedagogical Publishing House, Bucharest, 1995

Bunescu, V., *Educația morală și formarea personalității (Moral education and the formation of personality)*, Didactical and Pedagogical Publishing House, Bucharest, 1991

Chiș V., *Provocările Pedagogiei Contemporane (Contemporary Pedagogy Challenges)*, Cluj University Press, 2002.

Chiș, V., Ionescu, M., *Fundamentări teoretice și abordări praxiologice în științele educației (Theoretical foundations and praxiological approaches in the education sciences)*, Erikon Publishing House, 2009

Cucoș, C., *Pedagogie (Pedagogy)*, Polirom Publishing House, Iași, 1996, 1998

Debesse, M., *Etapele educației (Stages of education)*, Didactical and Pedagogical Publishing House, Bucharest, 1981

Geissler, E., *Mijloace de educație (Means of education)*, Didactical and Pedagogical Publishing House, Bucharest, 1997

Grigoraș, I., *Personalitatea morală (Moral personality)*, Scientific and Encyclopedic Publishing House, Bucharest, 1982

Huszar, T., *Morală și societate (Morals and society)*, Didactical and Pedagogical Publishing House, Bucharest, 1967

Morin, L., *Philosophie de l' education*, Les presses de L' universite Laval De Boeck Universite, 1996

Piaget, J., *Judecata morală la copii (Moral judgment in children)*, Didactical and Pedagogical Publishing House, Bucharest, 1968

CHAPTER 9. METHODS AND TECHNIQUES FROM THE ART OF THE ACTOR



KEY CONCEPTS

Children like to play theater. They do this spontaneously. Together, in their play, they embody different roles: mother, father, child, witch, robber or princess. For hundreds of years, children's theater play takes place also under pedagogical guidance. The teacher and headmaster Christian Gryphius lived from 1649 to 1706, was the son of the poet Andreas Gryphius (1616 - 1664) and is considered

the first playwright of School Theater.



THE ESSENCE OF THE ESSENCES

Theater with children means offering them an opportunity to develop, thus going well beyond the mere memorization of a given text. In order to play theater, children and young people not only learn texts by heart. They also learn many other things: to focus, to interact with the others and to express themselves clearly, articulately. Besides these, they learn, on one hand, to integrate into a group and, on the other hand, to impose to it through a solo. They develop their sense of language and of social situations. They experiment the emotional behavior, they practice movements and develop their self-awareness, creativity and fantasy and a differentiated feeling of the body perception. They focus their attention on longer periods of time and to lead a project to completion, with seriousness. Adults who are doing theater with young people thus, always had the confirmation that, in principle, there is nothing better for the healthy development of the body, soul or human spirit than the theater play. In brief: the theater play has a beneficial effect on the intellectual, emotional and social components of the child's personality.

Following a study conducted in 2008 in Austria there were obtained the following results:

THE RESULTS OBTAINED demonstrated a significant improvement of up to 50% in what concerns: The increase of the verbal memory, improvement of the body perception, improvement of the capacity of perceiving the episodes (premise of the anticipatory and systematic thinking), high level of attention in general, reduction of distracting the attention, increase of the attention flexibility, increase of the stability of the concentration power, reduction of the number of mistakes in the concentration test.

Other improvements: improvement of the capacity to make the connection between the perceptions from different sensory areas (22%), increase of the precision of the auditory and visual perceptions (sight: 25%, hearing: 10%), improvement of the bi-dimensional spatial perception (10%), increase of the feeling of self worth inside the family (12%).



START FROM YOURSELF

Considering what was said above, I hope I have not bored you too much ... I have a proposal: start from yourself!! Come on, try a first exercise ... but first let me explain you why!!!

Learning to learn is one of the key competences in today's society, which is a knowledge-based society. At present, the field of knowledge is huge, the technological evolution happens very quickly and the social needs are continuously changing. In order to adapt to such a society, for persons is necessary to know how to learn. The traditional model of education, based on the transmission of knowledge from the old generation to the new one, is outdated, whereas information is continuously changing and not valid for a long time. Consequently, for persons is important to acquire skills of permanent learning, that would allow them to adapt to a changing society. And what helps them to do that is THE GAME. Are you ok with that???

The game is a natural collective form which ensures the involvement and, at the same time, the personal freedom necessary for experimentation. The games develop personal skills and techniques necessary to each game individually, by means of practicing it. The skills develop exactly when a person tastes the whole pleasure and enthusiasm that a game can offer - this is exactly the moment when the person is truly open to receive them.

Enough with the theory!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

GET INTO THE GAME! PRACTICE! APPLY

Exercise no. 1 "Let's build a car"³



How is it carried out? For this exercise of rhythm and improvisation, a child comes in front and starts to make a movement accompanied by a sound in continuous repetition. Then comes the next child, with another movement, and another sound and, the same, repeats this movement at his own pace. In this way, by coming child after child, arises a car. It is successful when the rhythms are correlated consecutively or in counter time.

What did we learn?

"Let's build a car" is one of the most creative rhythm exercises. Children learn to listen to each other and to come up with creative ideas in order to create a common sound and image. Each child will find his place, both in space, which is in the "mechanics" of the car, and in the rhythmic structure: both require a certain capacity to cultivate consciously a new movement in an existing rhythm.

Exercise no. 2: 10 years from now on

How is it carried out? Tell the participants that today you will make an imaginary journey into the future. Ask them to imagine they are 10 years older and they are talking about their lives of this moment (over 10 years).

If 10 years seems to you a too long a period of time, change the situation in "5 years from now on". Invite them to think in silence, for a few minutes, to this situation. Encourage them to be optimistic and to write

³ this exercise is proposed by Sylvia Rotter in her book "Sus Cortina pentru viață!" (Curtain up for life!)

about their dreams, interests and desires. Invite the participants to share their ideas. Ask the participants what they think they can do to fulfill their dreams.

Exercise no. 3 Listening to the sounds around us

Concentration point: on hearing the sounds around us. All sit quietly for one minute and listen to the sounds in the close proximity. Then they compare the sounds heard: birds, street traffic, the creak of the chairs etc. Give this exercise for homework every day for a few minutes.

Exercise no. 4 Object identification game

Concentration point: touching the object.

The players stand in a circle. A player is called in the center, where he stands with his hands behind his back. The teacher gently puts an object in his hands. Using his sense of touch, he will guess what kind of object it is. It is advisable to choose easily recognizable objects, however not those that they do not use every day (a game card, a pencil sharpener, a holster of comb, a stamp). Indications along the game: What color does it have? What shape does it have? What dimension? What is it used for?

Exercise no. 5 Action without hands

Concentration point: on the physicalization and manipulation of the object without using the hands. Two or more players decide on an animate or inanimate object between them, which they will set in motion without using their hands. Examples: pushing a rock, pushing a car, moving a slide, climbing a mountain, etc.

Exercise no. 6 Animal, bird or fish

The players sit on chairs placed in a circle. One is in the center. The one in the center indicates one of the partners and says: "*Animal, bird or fish?*" and then repeats one of the three categories - for example "*Fish*" - and counts to 10. The player indicated denotes a species of fish until the other player counts to 10. If he fails or repeats something that was said before, he goes in the center, and the one in the center takes his place.

Exercise no. 7 When I go on vacation ...

Teams of 4-6 players stand in a circle.

Part I The first player says: "When I go on vacation, I will take my kite" (or any other object). The second player says: „ When I go on vacation, I will take my kite and my hat." The third one takes his kite, his hat and adds a new object. The player who makes a mistake gets out of the game and the game continues until only one remains.

Part II It is played in the same way, but with a new series of objects, that are no longer named, but are physicalized: instead for the player to say "I will take my shoes", he puts on his shoes (invisible). The next one repeats his action and adds a new object - he plays a flute. And the game continues the same way, nonverbally.

Exercise no. 8 Rhymed words

The players are seated in a circle and one stands in the center. He says a word consisting of one syllable and points to a colleague who, until he counts to ten, says a word that rhymes with his word. If the player fails to say a word in time, he takes the place of the one in the center. If he succeeds, the game continues. It is considered a mistake also using a word that was already said.

Exercise no. 9 Do not let go of the hand

The players form a line by holding their hands. The child at the end of the line starts to go through space, leading the line after him. He takes curves, makes serpentines, and goes over other sections of the line until the line becomes a node that cannot move anymore. Now, the one at the other end of the line begins to unfold the skein until the line is unraveled. (the game called by us "the tangled guts".)

Exercise no. 10 MaMeMiMoMu

For this game with rhythm and clap of hands, the children stand in a circle setting their faces towards the middle of the circle. The game guide utters "Ma-Me-Mi-Mo-Mu", and the children repeat. In order to practice, they repeat the sequence of syllables approximately 3 times. The game guide starts the game by uttering the syllable "Ma", looks at the child who is in the circle to his right and, in the same moment, he claps his hands in his direction. Uttering the syllable, clapping the hands and twisting the upper body to the neighbor in the right take place simultaneously, very energetic and strenuously. The next child will react quite quickly and with great tension, utters the syllable „Me", claps his hands and looks at his neighbor in the right. Thus, the syllables "Ma", "Me", "Mi", "Mo", "Mu" go through the circle one after the other, being addressed directly to the neighbor in the right. When the circle works in a direction, the direction can be changed.

Exercise no. 11 The statues and the sculptors ⁴

The group is divided into two: „the statues" and „the sculptors". The statues are placed in a set space, and the sculptors, moving from one statue to another, will change their shapes. After a while, the roles will be changed, the one who was the statue will become a sculptor and vice versa.

Exercise no. 12 The mysterious object

Hold an object in your hand. Give the object in turn to the children involved in the game. Children have to use it as if it is something else. By miming the actions involved by that object, children have to make the others understand what the object is, according to their interpretation. The one who guesses goes and mimes in his turn.

Exercise no. 13 The trees and the wind

Form pairs. Some persons are the wind, others are trees. The trees take a comfortable, stable position, sitting down for example. The wind will try to move them by any means, and the trees will do everything possible in order not to capitulate. Gradually the trees start to put less resistance, capitulate to the push of the wind, but still return to the start position. The trees allow to be moved by the wind and start a dance in which the trees will not be able to move their roots from the soil.

Exercise no. 14 The hardening⁵

A child is chosen to be "the one who catches". When "the one who catches" touches a child, he must stay hardened in place, with the legs wide apart. Free children can release the hardened ones, by passing between their legs.

⁴ This exercise is proposed in the Writing Theatre Guide

⁵ this exercise is proposed by Sylvia Rotter in her book "Sus Cortina pentru viață!" (Curtain up for life!)

Exercise no. 15 The drawing

Children are disposed on rows of equal size in number, one behind the other. The volunteer shows the last of each row a simple drawing (a triangle, a house, etc.) and then asks him, by using a finger, to draw the drawing presented on the back of the participant in front of him. This, in turn, draws what he felt, on the back of the person in front and so on until is touched the first in the row, who will draw on a piece of paper what he thinks he understood.

"Anyone can play. Anyone can improvise. Anyone who wants can play theater and can learn to become 'apt for the stage'. We learn from experience and through experimentation, and nobody teaches anything to anybody. This is true both for the child who moves from disordered movements to walking on all fours and then to the first steps, and for the scientist with his equations."-Viola Spolin.

Let me give you a tip! Children instinctively feel if they get along or not with a game, a task, in relation to themselves. It is important for the feedback received to support them to get to know themselves. They accept the direct criticism when they are confirmed they can do something even better. Constructive feedback means „ I believe in you. I know what you are capable of“, and strengthens the self-consciousness and the feeling of his own value.



Because the different exercises and games are accepted differently by each child or group, the work program will be elaborated, as much as possible, variously. If an exercise is not working well, it is preferable that this is stopped in order to be able to start, motivated as much as possible, another exercise.



SELECTIVE BIBLIOGRAPHY

Sources for exercises:

Sylvia Rotter, Viola Spolin, E. Boyd and personal.

Writing Theatre Guide, Methods and techniques of theatrical writing,
coordinator: Federica D'Armini

CHAPTER 10. COMMUNICATION AND MEDIA

Motto: Communication is the road to community, which is towards understanding, interpersonal warmth and the appreciation of our common values.

Rollo May⁶



KEY CONCEPTS

The century in which we live is, undoubtedly, one dedicated to communication. With the emergence of mass media, this seemingly simple act of communication has reached a variety of possibilities, benefiting from new meanings and new channels of expression. In the past, the term communication was used as a synonym for information. At the present however, communication is much more than the simple transmission of information. It has become an emblem of the personality of the communicator, whether being a person or an institution. More than that, this communicator is no longer just a privileged journalist or the expert from the public relations department. In the contemporary world, due to the access to the new media, he may be any of us.

Beyond representing a means by which we convey something, communication in the 21st century is a way of being, of telling a story, of transmitting enthusiasm and of inspiring the others through our actions and messages. An efficient communication really becomes the premise of the community, only when it inspires the society.

The volunteering work for which you have chosen to dedicate your energy is one of the most beautiful ways to participate to the community life. By the help of the tools of communication you will be able to make the most from the extraordinary potential of all your projects. Remember a few essential things and you will have the key to communication:

- **Communication is inevitable** - this is the first axiom formulated by the representatives of the School from Palo Alto⁷. Communication is therefore an act which we carry out permanently and that is impossible to be stopped. The apparent silence or blocking of the communication is also a message that we convey. Therefore, remember that everything you do or not do is a bearing of meaning;
- **The medium is the message** - the expression used by Marshall McLuhan⁸ has revolutionized the understanding of the relationship between the instruments used and the act of communication itself. Everything we do conveys meaning and is an important part of communication. Whether we use the internet or a promotional poster, from the words chosen to colors or pictures, each aspect of the communication channel chosen is assimilated as being part of the message. The means of communication is as important as the message, therefore choose the medium depending on what you want to convey;
- **Tell a story** - the communication channel is as important as the context. People do not like simple and dry information. Find a framework through which to make it attractive, give it life and personality. Today everyone is overwhelmed with information so do in such a way that your message

⁶ Rollo May was a famous American psychologist, one of the promoters of the existentialist current in psychotherapy.

⁷ Brings together the first group of researchers in the field of communication.

⁸ Canadian philosopher, specialist in communication theory. One of the most important authors in media and communication.

receives attention. The information is addressed to the brain and the story is addressed to the heart. For your message to be successful, it is important to touch hearts:

- ***Conceive the message taking into account your audience*** - do not transmit a general message, but one that is written and conceived so as to be understood by the target audience. When you communicate, never forget *what you transmit, why and especially to whom*;
- ***Believe in what you transmit! Be creative, positive and enthusiastic*** - in order to have impact, communication will be a permanent explosion of confidence and joy;
- ***Be memorable!*** - now that you have the medium, the context, the motivation and especially the perfect message, do not forget that it is important to make it last. For the message to get to the target audience, make it attractive (by medium, context, story, etc.), but in order to remain in his memory, formulate it so as to be the answer to one of its important needs. Here, the work of a volunteer is the perfect context! You address exactly to the needs of the community, you try to fulfill them, make people happy and you are in permanent contact with them. The experts in advertising sometimes form false needs exactly to have an impact on the public. You have the chance to answer to the real needs of the society. Do not forget to fructify this wonderful purpose!



START FROM YOURSELF

The most beautiful stories are the sincere ones. Start from yourself when you communicate. This way you will quickly and easily determine the relationship with the target audience which will read the message, or with the audience which is right in front of you. You will gain their confidence, you will receive admiration for your sincerity and you will be able to transmit them a state of relaxation.

I invite you to do a test right now!

Imagine that you have the power to make the whole world to stop for 5 minutes in order to listen to you. Think about what you want to transmit? What do you think it is important for them to know? Choose not only one thing which to communicate, but also the most appropriate method in order to do that. Maybe you want to tell them something about you, maybe you want them to find out something about a project that you thought of or a beautiful thing that you saw or read. Put down some ideas. Then imagine what would be the best formula for transmitting the message. Assess your strong points and rely on them. Maybe you are not feeling comfortable to speak in public, more so before the whole world, but maybe you like very much to sing or draw. How do you think your message would look like in an image? Leave your creativity free. Imagine all the details: which day would be more appropriate, where would you want everything to happen, how could your message have the best impact. Once you are satisfied with all the things you have established, act. Of course it will not be possible to make everyone stop, but you can gather a group of friends and to begin by communicating your message to them. Then challenge them as well to prepare such a moment.

In essence, any communication, whether written, verbal or nonverbal, is a small variation of this exercise. Think that you talk to the whole world, that you want to convey something important, that would motivate the others and to have a positive impact and most importantly: *start from yourself!* This means: start from something that you believe in, from something that is important for you, from something you know and you think is important the others to know as well. Put in the message a part of yourself, something from your personality, and do so that the final formula to arouse emotion.

Start from yourself but do not forget that *the final message is always for the others*. Keep in mind that what leaves from you will have a general impact. Therefore identify the part of your message that the others could identify with and focus on it.

Another important reason to *start from you* is trust. You will always have fewer emotions and more success when you talk about something you know and love!

On the following pages, you will find the theoretical arguments for the things presented so far and many other things that will help you. That's how it is, it follows a little theory, but when it comes to communication, you will convince yourself that even the theoretical part is attractive and friendly!

THE ESSENCE OF THE ESSENCES

Efficient communication is 20% what you know and 80% what you feel about what you know.

Jim Rhon



Conceptual delimitations and clarifications

Definition. The universe of communication is far too complex to be contained in one generally valid definition, but, in the most general sense, when we talk about communication we refer to two elements (transmitter and receiver) between which there is a message flow. These can be extremely varied, from written or spoken language up to images, nonverbal elements or simple signals. "One talks about communication whenever a system, respectively a source, influences other system, in this case a recipient, through the intercession of certain alternative signals that can be transmitted through the channel that links them" (Charles E. Osgood in *A Vocabulary for Talking about Communication*). Unlike communication, **information** is what is transmitted through the communication process. It is assimilated with the message or news.

Within communication, there can be delimited more of its facets from the perspective of the aim pursued: **advertising communication** or **advertising** - represents "the process of placing certain identifiable advertisements, in media, well defined, in exchange of certain known costs of the spaces or time used for this" (Baker, 1998); **promotion** or **publicity** - is the unpaid publicity by which an organization or a person offers to the media various information with the character of news. If they are of interest they will be published without being paid anymore; **public communication** - is a type of social communication that aims to promote certain "ideal" behaviors of the citizens. It has as objectives the prevention actions for health and safety, promoting the patrimonial resources, etc.; **PR or public relations** - represent "the planned and sustained effort to establish and maintain a state of sympathy and understanding between an organization and its environment" (Jefkins, 1994). It is therefore about the corporate communication.

Another important clarification refers to **the new media**. Their emergence has transformed the universe of communication by two major aspects: 1. If we understand communication as being the transmission of information, the new media have redefined this activity by the game with the image. It is about the transition from the predominantly written communication to the predominantly visual communication; 2. The new media represents, once with the emergence of the Internet, universal access to mass communication platforms. Once with this stage, communication changed again the face of the world. It is important to remember that the new media do not refer only to the Internet and neither only to the contemporary media. Examples are also the press, another revolutionary element of its time, the radio or television.

➤ **Elements of communication**

As you probably already understood, in the communication process is needed a transmitter and a receiver, but these two are not the only elements. The specialty literature presents the scheme of H.D. Lasswell as **standard model** for the analysis of communication. It presents the connection between the communication elements and their functions. It is also an extremely useful instrument every time we conceive a message, because it offers us the list of questions by which we check the clarity of our communication:

TRANSMITTER	MESSAGE	MEDIUM	RECEIVER	IMPACT
<i>Who?</i>	<i>What does it say?</i>	<i>By what means?</i>	<i>To whom?</i>	<i>With what effect?</i>

➤ **Forms of communication**

These forms can be classified according to the participation of the individuals to the communication process, to the context of the messages, to the communication tools or objectives. Here is a list of the main forms of communication:

ANALOGICAL	It includes any form of prelinguistic, paralinguistic and nonlinguistic communication and is based on the principle of resemblance or analogy: gestural language, pantomime, posture, intonation, look, sound effects, visual images, drawings, diagrams, color, position, shape, etc.
DIGITAL	Uses the conventional language: the linguistic sign - the word or the logical-mathematical languages (the numerical and binary languages),
INTRAPERSONAL	It refers to the inner universe of each individual - thoughts, emotions, feelings and the way we define ourselves. In this type of communication we are both the transmitter and the receiver. Another possible name would be <i>the inner voice</i> .
INTERPERSONAL	It is the communication that is taking place between at least two persons. It represents a connection between us and those around us. It is perhaps the most common form of communication.
NONVERBAL	It is achieved through the nonverbal means (movements of the body, positioning in space, image). Following the studies, it seems that the act of communication is made up of 55% nonverbal elements, 38% paraverbal elements and only 7% verbal elements. The nonverbal means with the greatest impact are: the smile and making eye contact. Do not forget to use them as often as possible in order to establish an efficient communication! In terms of body position, the most important signals come for the openness to dialogue or to its rejection. Notice if the speaker has a closed posture (hands and legs crossed) or open (he is relaxed). Because the interpretation of nonverbal communication is mainly based on associations, in most cases, you can trust the emotions transmitted by the body language of the interlocutor. Pay attention to changes or gestures that are repeated.
PARAVERBAL	It supports the verbal communication and it is defined by characteristics accompanying the word: rhythm, intensity, speech flow, intonation, etc. The most important thing you will take into account is the alternation! In this way, the audience will not get bored, you will arouse interest and you will keep the attention awake.

➤ **Communication styles**

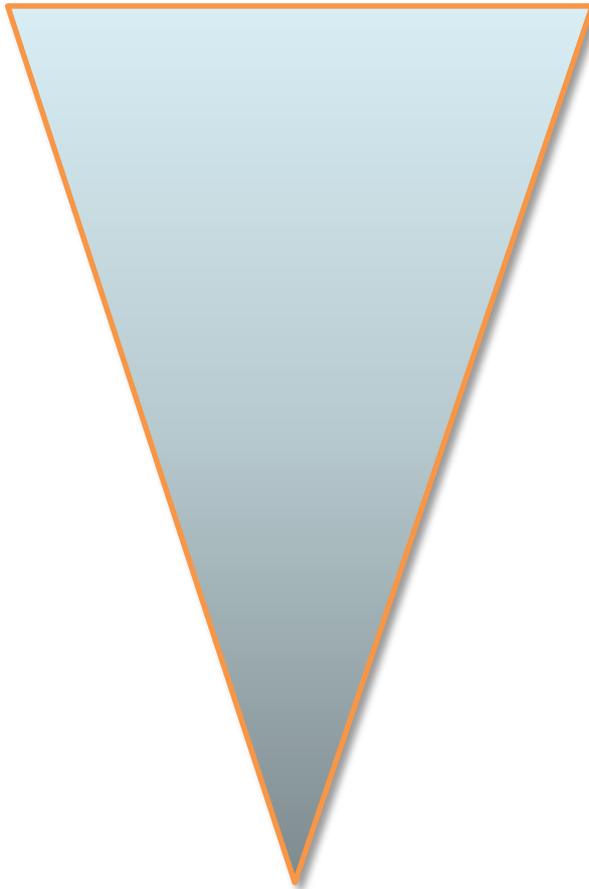
1. **Neutral** - it is independent of the spiritual states and it is present mainly in official relations;
2. **Solemn** - it is based on a ceremonial specific to the context and it is present in special moments;
3. **Belletristic** - rich in meanings, it favors the imagination. We find it in literal, narrative works,;
4. **Scientific** - it is predominant the specialized language specific to the area approached. It predominates the style of rational, deductive judgment;
5. **Administrative** - based on institutional requirements;

6. **Publicist** - information is the center of communication;
7. **Managerial** - focused on managing and solving problems.

Regardless of the style approached, keep in mind **the qualities that any communication needs to have:** clarity, fairness, adequacy, purity, conciseness and precision!

➤ *How do I write... a press release, a piece of news, an announcement?*

The most important rule in conceiving a written communication is **the reverse pyramid**. This refers to the distribution of information in the body of the text and mainly aims to capture the reader's attention. The reverse pyramid shows us that the information has a certain settlement in order to have the best impact. It is about a descending order regarding its importance:



- **the first sentence / the introduction** ⇒ contains the essence of the message (it usually answers to the questions *when? where? what?*), its role is to arouse the reader's interest;
- **the first paragraph** ⇒ is a concentrated summary of the news and contains the keywords;
- **the supporting paragraphs** ⇒ develop more details about each element of the news, support the introduction, establish the context for the elements already presented, offer secondary information, here we can also introduce a short presentation of the organization which gives the press release, a description of the previous editions of an announced event, etc.;
- **the conclusion** ⇒ it is as important as the introduction. Make it memorable and anchor the information in the memory of the reader through a short formulation and of impact!;
- **contact data** ⇒ if we write a press release, we will write at the end the contact data (we can write "*For further information :....*"). There will be mentioned the contact data of a person who can provide more information on the press release, phone number, e-mail, web address, etc.

Another useful indication refers to **content**. Never write a press release or an article by which you try to cover 2 or more subjects. Each piece of news will have its own communication space. Otherwise, you risk giving birth to confusion among the readers and the information will be distorted. Also, remember that **strong messages are found in short press releases!** In general, a good press release rarely exceeds one page.

Also be attentive to **words and formulations!** Regardless of the communication channel, even if it is about the internet or about social media, the words represent the success or the failure of a communication. If you address to the community of friends on Facebook, you can change a little the introduction or even the entire structure of the message in order to make it friendlier. The Internet allows us to play with different approaches, but the choice of the words is essential! Do not use superlatives (prefer to be objective in the news and let the readers give the wow verdict!); watch out the incorrect, unverified or controversial

information and better renounce to them if you are not sure of their truth or of their positive message; maintain the news clean, without unnecessary information; reread, reread, reread and do not let anything miss of what you did not want to convey (grammatical errors, unclear wording, missing information, etc.). Eventually you can ask another person to read the news before publication in order to check the feedback.

Even if we are at the written chapter, do not forget about the **visual**! This means, first of all, the visual impact of the press release or of the article. If it is about a press release, make sure you wrote on the top of the page: the title of the press release, date and place, essential information about who issues the press release (it is best to use an official letterhead or the logo of the organization). Also, pay attention to the layout. Make sure that the sentences or paragraphs are not too long, and their placement not to tire the look. Secondly, the visual means attachments. Accompany the press release or the article by images! You can send a poster of the event / project, photos of the people mentioned in the news or images from an event that has already taken place. Thus, the information will become more attractive.

➤ ***Before you start on the road!***

Be positive, honest and enthusiastic! - to communicate represents a responsibility to all those who receive your message. Especially in this era where we are daily overwhelmed by lots of news, make sure the information sent by you is full of joy, sincerity, energy and positive things;

Be simple! - the most memorable messages, brands or products from the last decades represent short words or abbreviations. Just think how many times you said Mac instead of Macintosh. The short, clear messages have the strongest impact, whether it is about interpersonal communication or about promotion;

Be a harmonious part of the orchestra! - another model proposed by the School from Palo Alto is the one of the orchestra. This metaphor translates communication through a complex network of interactions between various instruments (the communicators). It depends on all the participants for this invisible score to be in harmony and not in dissonance;

Inspire! - by any act of communication, offer new ideas, creative solutions and as many smiles as possible!

GET INTO THE GAME! PRACTICE! APPLY



Exercise no. 1 Presentation in images/ The presentation card in images

What are we following? The "presentation in images" facilitates the acquaintance among the participants, by using the specifics of the nonverbal communication. This exercise is very suitable in a newly formed group, for introducing the other participants, for encouraging communication and an open atmosphere.

Time needed: 10-15 min, depending on the number of participants

What do we need? Sheets of paper, colored pencils or markers

Number and age of the participants: 15-25 participants more than 10 years old

How is it carried out? Give each participant a sheet of paper. Place the colored pencils or markers so that anyone who wants can use them. Ask each participant to draw on the paper something that represents him or something he would want to convey to the others. It may be even an abstract drawing or a written message. Encourage them to be as creative as possible and as dedicated as possible to the task. It is like he would manufacture a different kind of presentation card, friendlier and more attractive. Then he invites each participant to go to every colleague in turn in order to present his "presentation card". The rule is

that no one is allowed to speak. The one who presents his drawing will slowly pass by each colleague, holding the sheet so that everyone sees the drawing. Once the "introductions" have been completed, ask the participants to say how they felt in each hypostasis, how it was when they passed by their colleagues and also what they understood about the other colleagues from the drawings presented. Encourage the involvement of everyone.

What did we learn? How many things a picture can tell; how important are our messages even when we do not use words; how easy is the communication when I have the message prepared.

Exercise no. 2 Count in group

What are we following? This game is useful at the beginning of a workshop, whatever this would be. It aims the concentration of the attention and the establishment of the cohesion of the group. It can also be used even during a workshop, when you notice that the group is bored or the level of concentration has decreased. In this case, you can start by some energizing exercises. Then, in order to restore the concentration, use the "counting in group".

Time needed: 10-15 minutes

What do we need? A fairly large and airy space in order to form a circle from all the participants.

Number and age of the participants: 15-20 participants more than 10 years old

How is it carried out? Ask the participants to the exercise to form a circle so as to have a generous distance between them and to be able to look at each other. Then they can sit down, with the legs crossed. The rule is that they start to count aloud, by turn, aiming to reach a digit as big as possible. They will not count, however, in the order they are seated. One person at random, will say aloud a digit. The participants will agree, without communicating verbally, who will say the next digit. After the group manages to count at least up to 20-25 or, on the contrary, if the group has repeated failures, you can proceed to the next stage of the exercise in which the participants will try the same training but this time with the eyes closed.

What did we learn? Initially, the participants will try to hurry in order to be as efficient as possible, but the key of the exercise is patience, attention to the other, concession and cooperation. They will learn how important it is the non-verbal communication and the attention in a team.

Exercise no. 3 The typewriter

What are we following? Similar to the previous exercise, the "Typewriter" brings attention and focus in the group and also facilitates the practice of the nonverbal communication.

Time needed: 15-20 minutes.

What do we need? An airy and generous space.

Number and age of the participants: 15-25 participants more than 12 years old.

How is it carried out? The participants form a circle, by sitting in a comfortable position. Designate a person from whom the alphabet will start. Going clockwise, each person will be one letter of the alphabet (including "ă", "â", "ș", "ț"). When the letters end, continue with punctuation marks. Designate a sign for the next persons in the circle, by turn. Depending on the number of participants, it may happen for a person to have a letter and a punctuation mark for which she is responsible. The group is now a typewriter. Start with a word that the group will write, and then you can move to a sentence. The writing will be punctuated by pronouncing aloud the letter by the person responsible for that sign of the alphabet and by raising both hands above the head. We aim to have a constant writing pace, without pauses between letters and without

mistakes (for example, the superposition of several letters). The one who makes mistakes will raise a hand up and say "Me", then the writing resumes from the beginning.

What did we learn? Caring for the harmony of the whole group; the attention directed to the others, the efficient communication in the team, and the importance of the nonverbal communication.

Exercise no. 4 Group story

What are we following? This exercise aims to train the participants in order to develop a story from a few existing elements. Most often, the communication that we do does not start from scratch. It will be built on some information which is fixed and from which we can not deviate. From here on, the work of promotion / communication means to contribute with imagination and creativity in order to convey the message as effectively as possible, but following the same purpose.

Time needed: 20-30 minutes.

What do we need? Seats for participants.

Number and age of the participants: 15-20 participants more than 12 years old

How is it carried out? The participants are seated in a circle. One of them will begin to say freely a story, an event. This is not necessary to be real and may also have fantastic elements. It is good to give him a subject from which to start or a word imposed for the first sentence. In turn, each participant will develop the story for 2-3 minutes. The next person takes over the last sentence and then continues the story by adding other elements, developing the storyline and the characters anyway he wishes. After ending a round of circle in this way and each contributed with a piece of narration to the story, we will impose each one a style of communication that he would observe when his turn comes (neutral, solemn, belletristic, scientific, etc.). Encourage the participants to assume as much as possible this style. You can ask them to stand up, to walk around the room, to do whatever they think is in accordance with that style. We follow the creativity, but at the same time also the consistency of the story. Coordinate the participants so as to take into account the basic structure of any story (introduction, body, and conclusion).

What did we learn? To develop a communication starting from several given elements; we practiced the communication styles and we developed imagination. We also followed the attention to the group (how to pay attention to the story of the others so I can continue mine), the coordination of the ideas according to the main narration, but also the stimulation of the creativity and generating new ideas.

Exercise no. 5 Expert in things that do not exist

What are we following? The development of spontaneity, imagination and verbal expression, but also of the communication skills and the promotion of an object / product / service which does not exist

Time needed: 20-30 minutes.

What do we need? Seats for participants, a bowl or a hat, paper and pencils.

Number and age of the participants: 15-20 participants more than 10 years old.

How is it carried out? Give each participant two pieces of paper. Ask them to write on these one object or occupation invented by them. The rule is for that object / product / service /etc., to be something absolutely original, something that does not exist. Then gather all the papers and put them in the bowl. From here on, the participants can work individually or in teams of two, three persons. The first person or team designated will pass by the group and will become the Expert. This will extract from the bowl a note with the object or occupation in which he will become omniscient Expert. For example, we can have an Expert in fruit that grow on the shelf, Expert in the car that works alone, Expert in the beings on the

planet Mars, Expert in the medicine that cures any disease, Expert in the history of the ants, etc. You can use your imagination as much as possible. Then, the Expert will make a speech, in front of the group, in which to present his "*knowledge*". It is about an exercise of imagination. The expert will provide as many details as possible, so that the other participants understand very well the object presented. The participants will ask the Expert various questions related to any aspect they did not understand. This part is, of course, a challenge of creativity also for the Expert, who will answer promptly and as detailed as possible.

What did we learn? To adapt our speech for any type of communication, to have confidence in what we present and to convince the audience. This exercise is a workout of public speech, spontaneity and imagination. If we are able to become convincing when we talk about things that do not exist, the easier will be for us when we communicate in the sphere of the things that are real.

Exercise no. 6 Simultaneous speech

What are we following? Training the concentration, creativity and communication skills in public.

Time needed: 30 min.

What do we need? Seats for participants

Number and age of the participants: 10-15 participants more than 15 years old

How is it carried out? Ask two persons to come in front of the group. They shall stand, at a distance of about 1-2 meters from each other. The rest of the group sits on chairs in front of them. The two have the task to say a speech simultaneously with the other colleague, each trying to keep the coherence and pace of the story, but also to capture the attention of the public. The speech may be a memory or something invented. Then invite all the participants, in pairs of two persons, to go through this experience. At the end, ask for feedback from each person: how he felt during the exercise; what was complicated; what was helpful; how much he remembers from the speech of the partner, if possible ask him to reproduce something. At the end, request also the opinion of the public in order to vote which speech was more convincing, but especially ask them to argue and thus to highlight a few golden rules for speaking in public.

What did we learn? When we are talking in front of the people in order to convey a message or to make a presentation, we encounter a lot of factors which disturb our attention, from emotions to contingencies. This exercise stimulates us to find the best solutions in order to break the deadlock and shows us how important is the creativity and self confidence for our message to capture the attention of the public.

Exercise no. 7 Collage-poster or the challenge of creativity

What are we following? Developing creativity by communicating in images.

Time needed: 30-40 minutes.

What do we need? Five tables, large sheets of paper (minimum A3), various images cut out of magazines, colored pencils and markers, scissors, glue.

Number and age of the participants: 15-25 participants more than 12 years old

How is it carried out? Divide the participants into groups of 5 persons. Each team will receive a theme or event for which it will manufacture a collage-poster for presenting the theme / event. Place on each table one sheet of paper, glue and scissors. In a corner of the space place the pieces cut out of magazines. After receiving the theme, each team will have 5 minutes to think about an idea for the poster, 30 seconds to choose then the most appropriate images in order to create the collage (each team will use at least 5 images, and the rest can be written / drawn with pencils) and 10 min for making the poster. Each team will then choose 2 representatives who will present the creation in front of the colleagues, talking about the idea chosen and about how went the making of the poster. Encourage the colleagues to involve as much as possible and to offer feedback.

What did we learn? Most of the times, creativity is stimulated when we have limited resources (the available images or the time). Looking permanently for solutions and adapting to the existing resources is very important in any communication.



SELECTIVE BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. Tran, Vasile and Stanciugelu, Irina - *Teoria comunicării (Theory of Communication)*, Triton Publishing House , Bucharest, 2015
2. Georgiu, Grigore - *Cultură și comunicare (Culture and Communication)*, SNSPA, Bucharest, 2008-2009
3. Spolin, Viola - *Improvizație pentru teatru (Improvisation for theater)*-

UNATC Pres, Bucharest, 2008

CHAPTER 11. COMMUNITY PROJECTS IMPLEMENTED BY THE YOUNG N.S.C.A VOLUNTEERS - EXAMPLES OF GOOD PRACTICE

1. Community project “By giving you will acquire!”



MARVAL Group team. Coordinating teacher, Peșu Violeta

Marval Group is a young organization of volunteers from “Mircea Scarlat” Pedagogical High School, Alexandria who involve in activities carried out within NSCA. The name of the group comes from the initials of the forming members: Mădălina, Andreea, Ruxandra, Violeta, Ancuța and Lavinia.

The team consists of 30 volunteers, eager to get actively involved in the volunteering activities. They initiated the project “By giving you will acquire!” whose aim was to reduce the negative effects of the experience of hospitalization on the hospitalized children. The hospital atmosphere, which has a particular influence on the manner in which the child lives the experience of hospitalization, determined the MARVAL Group organization of volunteers to take the initiative to redecorate a space inside the health institute, in order to transform the environment into a warm and welcoming one and to carry out certain interactive activities of animation, so as to form to the child a positive representation about this place, diminishing the state of anguish.

The activities carried out under this project are:

1. Promoting volunteering in high school through posters, leaflets, arranging, in the hallway of the high school, a panel with the volunteering activities, novelties, announcements, but also through mass media.
2. Selecting the high school students willing to get involved in volunteering activities based on a questionnaire which highlighted the readiness to get involved in the volunteering activities;
3. Training the volunteers accepted in the team. In the first stage was made a portal of online course for all those who want to learn working methods with the persons with special educational needs. <http://liceul-pedagogic-mircea-scarlat.ro/marval/>, and in the second stage each founding member of the Marval group held a training course.
4. Carrying out interactive activities, of animation with patients hospitalized in the Pediatric ward of the Emergency County Hospital of Alexandria. The activities were carried out from November until January, so that each month around 94 children have benefited.
5. Fundraising to implement the project. We organized the following events: The week of the donated vegetables and fruit, Charity show "By giving you will acquire!" Book fair with sale, Movie Week;
6. Redecorating the treatment room inside the hospital and the acquisition of electrical and home appliance devices, story books, coloring books, colored pencils;
7. Ceremony of the project completion. There were present the project partners: the Emergency County Hospital of Alexandria, Alexandria City Hall, Conciato restaurant, Teleorman TV, Media Sud, Radio România Regional and Gazeta de Teleorman (Gazette of Teleorman).

Results of the project: 50 students accessed the online platform of the volunteer training, around 1034 children benefited from the activities carried out within the hospital, it was gathered the amount of 5.084,4 lei or the equivalent so that it was arranged the treatment room, there were bought the necessary things for the ward.

2. The community project “Kineto for everyone”



The project proposed to contribute to the health improvement of the children in Roman and surroundings. The statistics in the last years demonstrate an increased incidence of the cases of locomotor, neuromotor diseases and others, generated by sedentariness, incorrect position in front of the computer, during sleep and others. Children and adolescents are particularly affected by these conditions, and the means and resources to fight against them are limited in a town affected by poverty and depopulation. For these reasons, we have undertaken a series of prevention and information actions, which are extremely important in fighting against the risk factors. At the end, we aimed to equip a kinetotherapy cabinet that would treat for free the children from disadvantaged social environments.

The team made up of Ana-Maria Tihon, Nicoleta Andrieș, Ioana Covataru, Maria Buciumanu and coordinating teacher Ovidiu Albert (“Roman Vodă” National College in Roman, Neamț county) has identified a kinetotherapy cabinet interested in the free treatment of the children coming from disadvantaged social environments after its equipping with resources obtained by the volunteers through fundraising campaigns (October 2015).

Promoting an active lifestyle represented an important component of our project. On October 3, 2015, we have organized an outdoor movement activity entitled “The joy of movement”. The event was organized in collaboration with the Association “Eleven” in Cluj-Napoca, in “Roman-Muşat” Square in Roman and has trained about 300 children and adolescents in Roman and surroundings.

During the project we carried out several fundraising campaigns. Together with the NSCA volunteers: we prepared and sold muffins and donuts; we have organized a contest at the primary school level from “Roman Vodă” National College for making handicrafts for Christmas (November 2015); we participated to the Social Solidarity Fair from Piatra Neamţ, where we sold handicrafts previously produced (December 2015); we organized a meeting in the gym of the RVNC with the professor of physical education and sport, Marcel Şerban, within which 100 children and adolescents were informed on the risks generated by sedentariness and they performed some exercises of prevention of the appearance of certain conditions.

In February we will purchase equipment necessary to the kinetotherapy cabinet for children and adolescents coming from disadvantaged social environments. The official opening of the cabinet is expected to take place on February 20, 2016, The International Day of Social Equity. Also in this month we will disseminate the project within a meeting of the Muşatini and NSCA volunteers within “Roman Vodă” National College. On this occasion, we will publish number 30 of the magazine “Muşatini” in which will be described the project “Kineto for you!” in the presence of the teaching staff and of the representatives of mass media.

3. The community project “The road to the future begins today” was carried out by the volunteer students that form *the Dolphins LTD team (“Decebal” Theoretical High School).*

The project proved to be useful representing an extracurricular alternative for the children from “Dimitrie Ştiubei” Secondary School no. 36 in Constanţa. Some of the beneficiaries are children coming from families with social and economical difficulties, that cannot ensure an adequate school support, with a precarious level of education; another part are the students coming from the Foster Care Center “Micul Rotterdam” (Little Rotterdam). The risk of early school leaving for these children is high: many of them did not attend kindergarten and, although they are enrolled in school, they have integration difficulties in the collective of students, as well as learning problems.



The project aimed to facilitate the school integration of the beneficiary children, by means of certain extracurricular activities, organized by the high school volunteer students. The thematical activities harnessed the abilities of the children and constituted an educational alternative of spending free time. For the beneficiary children, these activities helped to the improvement of the self-esteem, communication and interlink. For the volunteer students, they were an opportunity to develop their social, emotional and civic

competences, to make their own contribution to solving certain problems from the level of the community.

We are young, animated by the strong desire to succeed, as well as by perseverance. We decided to form this team that allows us to harness our skills and availabilities.

Our interest is doubled by the strong desire of involvement and success within a dynamic team.

We have acquired useful knowledge and skills that we have put into practice, we have developed and perfected them, so that in the end we managed to achieve the objectives proposed in the project.

Also, we believe that the accumulated experience and the competences acquired by the active participation and by initiating many activities will be an important factor in the personal development of the beneficiaries.

We want to go beyond our boundaries and to become promoters of change in the school environment!

4. The community project “The friend next to you”

The team of volunteers Happy Cuza, coordinated by prof. Florina Vasilescu, is made up of students from the 11th grades from *Al. I. Cuza National College*, Alexandria, who began the volunteering activities within NSCA two years ago, alongside beneficiaries from the School Center for Inclusive Education of Alexandria. Participating in the National Dance Contest *Together for the Future* represented, for these hearted and serious students, the awareness of the need of active involvement where it is needed a helping hand.

As a result of participating in the training camp *Be a volunteer for your community!*, the team Happy Cuza carried out, during September 2015-February 2016, the project *The friend next to you*, by which was aimed the formation of a group of 30 volunteers within *Al. I. Cuza National College*, Alexandria, as well as the organization of recreational workshops for 40 students from the 1st to the 4th grade from two secondary schools from the city of Alexandria who have parents working abroad, for the personal development of the students and for reducing, as much as possible, the emotional stress caused by the parents who leave their children. Thus, at the college level, at present, is constituted a unitary and homogeneous group of volunteers from the 9th and 10th grade, who are carrying out, besides the activities included in the project *The friend next to you*, also other humanitarian activities, mainly helping children who come from poor families.

In equal measure, the activities with students from the 1st to the 4th grade from the Secondary School No. 6 of Alexandria and *Al. Colfescu Secondary School* of Alexandria took place starting with November 2015 and have materialized in meetings of the groups of high school volunteers with these, for 2 hours, once a month. Socializing was the key element of these meetings organized as recreational workshops: *A pumpkin... with style!*, *Magic and joy on a sheet of paper*, *The winter fairy from tales* and *The party of friendship*, the atmosphere being relaxed, with special emotional load, due to the fact that also the parents of some of the volunteers left a long time ago to work abroad, they themselves knowing this lack.

At the end of each workshop were arranged exhibitions with the works made during the workshops: painted pumpkins, boards colored by children, various cut out objects, Christmas cards for

parents and ornaments for the Christmas tree. Other results of the project are the diary of friendship filled in by the beneficiary students, the Facebook page of the project, information materials made: leaflets, newsletters.

“Volunteering gives us the possibility to help people who hardly find a reason to smile. Through the volunteering actions, we are facing various problems that open our eyes and we truly see how life is. We manage to help other persons, but at the same time we help ourselves, by developing our solidarity.” Mardale Bianca, A 9th grade

“Why I have chosen volunteering? Because I like to offer, but at the same time I like to receive. I like to receive smiles, I like to see people happy, I like to see the joy in their eyes when we offer them the little we can, but also how happy they are when they have someone to talk to and with how many emotions they tell you what they are doing.” Burcea Sorina, G 9th grade.

“In my 17 years I have not yet had a sufficiently intense and profound experience that would significantly change me. Volunteering made me realize how important the solidarity between people and the social responsibility is.” Sfeatcu Nicoleta, B 11th grade

“When I come to the meetings organized at the high school I feel very good seeing my colleagues that they have the same desire as mine and they come full of energy and enthusiasm, and when I see the children involved in the project, those for whom was made the project I am part of, that they are happy, they make me feel better, and my soul is filled with joy and I feel fulfilled.” Simion Alexandra, G 10th grade

5. The community project “Read me a story!”

CALISTRAȚII TEAM

CALISTRAT HOGAȘ National College, Piatra-Neamț

“Read me a story!”, our project - urge for the volunteers of Calistrat and for the mini-volunteers from ELENA DOAMNA Services Complex, Piatra-Neamț, is the fruit of the training experience within the NSCA camp “Be a volunteer for your community!”. By its implementation, we wanted to join to the activities (given to our great family of ... little ones from the foster care center) that plus which would make children more sure of themselves in the school environment and proud to be responsible and useful in the community space. We wanted to arouse their interest for reading by becoming obedient and, gradually, readers of the stories, which to animate after an interactive workout, sustained with the support of the high school volunteers and of the specialists in the field, at the “G.T. Kirileanu” county library – children department. Everything in order to be volunteers within the community later on, motivating other children to read stories in the space of the library!

The activities carried out in the camp from Cozia triggered, for each member of our team, student or teacher, a starting point: we learned how to treat the little ones, what activities to carry out with them, how to get what we want from the potential financiers or sponsors, but, the most important, how to make a NSCA project.

We returned home with the impatience to meet again the children from the foster care center, but also to launch the idea of the project in our high school. It was amazing to see the freshmen interested, to co-opt volunteers that proved to be good readers, hearted volunteers for training the mini-team of volunteers. The high school volunteers and the mini-volunteers, children from CSED, we formed the best team. In our help came Ms. Inspector Meda Știrbu, and Mrs. Librarian of CCD Neamț, Ana Macovei, with whom we had working meetings, where we have been presented the methods by which we must work with the little beneficiaries and the activities specific to their age, to the level of closeness to the text of the stories. Accumulating all these elements, our project has blossomed, to our

efforts were added the gestures of those who wanted to help by giving volumes for the Collection of books, among them enrolling also a group of teachers and students from Rethel (France).

Due to the optimism and determination, “Calistrații” team extended, to the six initiating ... members were added over thirty others, as we had proposed, we became a strong, homogeneous NSCA team, the ideas of each of us have merged, the opinions were directed towards the same target. We divided the tasks according to the skills of each of us and this was, apparently, the recipe of a successful project which today is coming to an end.

Each Saturday, the workshops have become more challenging; the selection was done with the help of the little ones, who chose every time the best readers. The 10 mini-volunteers were discovered with each story read. We had the opportunity to discover the importance of choosing the storybooks, many of them are only variants of foreign editions and do not account for a linearity of the story times, for the harmonization of the language. Games made us more open, animated our energies, we tried to add also elements of interaction to the stories read. Once with the winning candidacy submitted to the Local Council for the grant of the activities, we managed to accomplish the activity which rewarded the involvement of each of us, high school volunteers or children: we organized the trip to Humulești, at the house of the author Ion Creangă, where the stories came to life and the world described in the fairy tale “Ursul păcălit de vulpe” (The bear fooled by the fox) was animated by the characters located near the memorial museum, in the *Courtyard of the stories*. Enthusiasm was amplifying every time we saw a new phase passed, the beneficiaries of our project (over 30 high school students and 40 children) were more determined with each new meeting, and us - more involved. Initially, the promotion team could offer the press only blurred images, the intervention to the General Directorate of Social Assistance and Child Protection finally authorized us to make public images of the children in the project and to be able to have Daniela with us, during the show “Emphasis on education”, in the plateau of the EstTV regional channel, the mini-volunteer who outclassed all our interventions through her smile and, especially, through the confessed belief that each of us can help! It followed the invitation to EȘTI MATINAL! (YOU ARE A MORNING PERSON!), the interview requested by Radio Iași, the apparitions in the local press...

It now separates us one week from the launch of the *Story Hour* at the county library, a new project, a new adventure, that will not separate us from “Read me a story!”. And the story continues for each of the volunteers, children or adolescents!

“The initiation in the project ‘Read me a story!’ meant to me the beginning of training as a volunteer. Along the time, I learned, first of all, how to communicate more easily with those around me, especially with the children in the foster care center. I interacted with them, not just by reading, but by enjoying reading and everything transformed into a play. Our project offers children, daily, the possibility to become aware about the value of the important things in life through the stories!” **(Maria Darie, volunteer, D 9th grade)**

“I am an NSCA volunteer ever since this project started. I have never volunteered before. Perhaps in the past I did not have a lot of information about this, but, gradually, I realized that, in essence, volunteering is not based on any hidden science: Volunteering comes from there, from the left side of your chest, and you have to feel the call to good and beautiful. You have to want to save and, by saving others, to save yourself as well from a society far too distant of what is profoundly human. The project ‘Read me a story!’ carried out together with the mini-volunteers from *Elena Doamna Services Complex*, truly opened my eyes and made me see life. We read stories, we play, we constantly learn new things by smiling together, and this may not seem to be something serious. However, the participation in this project represents most certainly our chance to truly become people.

I am proud and excited now, by writing these things and thinking of the children involved in the project. They are beautiful, intelligent and put soul into everything they do. I also see this project as being the opportunity of outlining a future society in which reading will not be subordinated to the other activities. We determine the children from the Centre to read. At the County Library, we will read with and for children. Because they are the future. And children love to read and I think they understood that they are not reading to become smarter, but they are reading to become better and better, until they reach their best version.

‘Read me a story!’ is a project that reached to my soul; being a convinced reader, I love to share this passion with some wonderful and talented children. The child who reads today will become the adult that will make the stories about good and beautiful to survive.

I sincerely hope for the ‘Story hour’ to last as much as possible and to be a project that will bring smiles in the children’s souls, not just on their faces!” **(Arianna Lavinia Suduc, volunteer, F 9th grade)**

“By participating as a volunteer in ‘Read me a story!’ I learned to get close to the others, to make new friends, to communicate with each child who needs our help. I understood the value of volunteering every time I had the opportunity to transmit the children the feeling of love for reading, motivating them to read!” **(Cosmin Mihai, volunteer, D 9th grade)**

“In our project, children learned reading in an interactive way, outside the school hours, precisely for this reason we all know how important it is to continue. Now, children already love to read, when we, the volunteers, help them to understand the texts and sometimes explain them less known words. Once with the approach to reading, our little ones – now volunteers like us! – want to find out new things, are eager to learn, listen to them, the books arouse their appetite for further reading books from other fields, although I am sure that each of us returns fondly to the world of the fairy tales!” **(Nicoleta Rîbu, volunteer, B 11th grade)**

“I think the project ‘Read me a story!’ is a successful initiative by encouraging reading among the little ones, befriending them with fantastic characters from tales. I noticed, during the project, the involvement and the increasing interest of the children both for reading, and especially for the educational games, but fun, to which they take part every time, together with the volunteers.” **(Narcisa Panaite, volunteer, A 10th grade)**

“The project of CALISTRAȚII team is a method of attracting children to reading, to books in general, even if they use the texts of certain tales. Through their involvement as volunteers, children with adaptation problems, with learning problems, will take courage, they will learn that the world of the books is wonderful and that they can discover it only with little effort and involvement. I congratulate you and we hope we can be with you in other projects of this kind!” **(Ana Macovei, librarian, CCD Neamț)**



6. The community project “On the realm of the tales”



“Lucian Blaga” Technological High School carried out, through the team THE BELIEVERS, the community project of Reghin “On the realm of the tales”.

The team THE BELIEVERS is a team composed of four girl volunteers and one boy volunteer: Măcelaru Mihaela, Șagău Camelia, Duda Alisa Anamaria, Baroti Maria-Noemy and Gliga Laurențiu. As the name of their team suggests, they strongly believe in the fundamental values of life: love, respect, honesty, dedication, justice, humanity, responsibility and they believe that this is the only way you can truly devote yourself to the achievement of a noble goal: the support offered to our fellows. The magnificent five have co-opted in their team another 15 students and 12 teachers, all being volunteers.

Due to the increasingly wide spread phenomenon among the contemporary society, to consider the book, and implicitly reading, something less useful, it was imposed the necessity of seeding the love for reading since the earliest ages, through the most appropriate modality, the story.

The project “On the realm of the tales” aims to develop the personality of the preschool child through the tales, a fundamental premise of the human evolution.

From the project took part the following activities:

1. September 2015 - “Once upon a time...” – training the volunteer students and teachers;
2. October 2015 - “Let's narrate together!”- carrying out thematic instructional and educational activities by the volunteer students, teachers and collaborators of the project;
3. November 2015 - “Stories in images”- organizing an exhibition of paintings with the works of the beneficiaries at “Petru Maior” Municipal Library in Reghin;

4. November 2015 - **“Stories at the fireside”**- activities organized in collaboration with “Petru Maior” Municipal Library in Reghin for the beneficiaries of the project;
5. December 2015 - **“The Christmas Fair”**- sale of objects donated by the volunteers of the high school in order to obtain funds for the “sweet gifts” of the 184 beneficiaries;
6. December 2015 - **“Christmas story”**- charity show organized by the volunteers on the occasion of the winter holidays in collaboration with “George Enescu” Youth Cultural House in Reghin. Santa Claus brings gifts to the groups of beneficiaries with the support of the City Hall and the Local Council of Reghin Municipality. The entrance ticket to the show is a book;
7. February 2016 - **“The festivity of the life stories”**- gala show organized on the occasion of rewarding the beneficiaries, partners, sponsors, members of the community and volunteers

The results of the project “On the realm of the tales” are : training the 12 teachers and 15 volunteer students; carrying out the 8 instructional and educational activities and reading with the 81 preschool children from the Kindergarten with P.P. no. 5; carrying out the 10 instructional and educational activities and reading with the 98 preschool children from the Kindergarten with N.P. no.3; carrying out the 2 instructional and educational activities and reading with the 5 students of small school age from “Casa Maria II” Social Establishment; organizing an exhibition of paintings from the 184 works of the beneficiaries; carrying out the 3 meetings at “Petru Maior” Municipal Library; organizing a Christmas charity show and making the 184 packages for children, 10 for the kindergarten teachers of the groups and 2 for the directresses; organizing the festivity of the awarded students and rewarding the 10 groups but also the volunteers and the partners; participating in two shows of start-promotion of the project; participating in two shows in order to monitor the conduct of the activities of the project; participating in two shows in order to conclude the activities of the project; writing a promotion article and one for concluding the project in the newspaper “The voice of the Valleys”; writing and publishing the monthly articles on the project activities in “High School Oscar”; making a general poster of a book called “The Magic Book”, a roll-up and a letter of thanks, as well as a poster of the Christmas Fair; at the same time making the invitations for the fair, Christmas show and festivity show in necessary number for the promotion of these activities (20-50 pieces)

Impressions of the beneficiaries:

“I went through two seasons alongside the volunteers: the students, teachers and directors of “Lucian Blaga” Technological High School in Reghin, who had the goodwill to enter into the fantastic world of the childhood and of the stories.

Through games, stories, dramatizations and paintings, the children identified themselves with the characters, they sighed, they saddened, they rejoiced by always applauding the triumph of good.

The volunteers staged stories, costumed themselves, had attractive decors and traveled with the magic wand in the mirage of magic. The little ones have been anything they wanted: billy goats, piglets, witches, wolves or hunter, and the big ones transmitted strong emotions.

Thank you for choosing our kindergarten for this project and we are waiting for you also in other kindergartens. Thank you Kinga Bojte for the involvement, for the respite that you found to enter in the

groups, for the soul of child and the explosive joy you met the children every time ... on the realm of the tales !"

(Director of the P.P.K No.5, Reghin: prof. Moldovan Violeta)

"On the realm of the tales", this is the motto under which was carried out the project initiated by the troupe The Believers from "Lucian Blaga" Technological High School in Reghin. Where can this realm be more wonderful than in the wonderful world of children, at the kindergarten!

Our story began once by a visit of Kinga to our kindergarten, with the proposal of the volunteers to carry out a project together with the little ones from the kindergarten. Then followed the meetings of the volunteers with the clever humpty-dumpties, with the hard-working bees, the stars in the making, the happy hearts, the colored butterflies led with dedication by the kindergarten teachers, Bumbu Mihaela ,Oltean Alina ,Huza Cristina, Huniade Alina, Ordog Ildiko, Gliga Cosmina, listening to stories read by these, watching dramatizations of some known stories, guided by hearted teachers, meetings, at the library, with authors of books for children, an exhibition of children's works with beloved characters from stories at "Petru Maior" Municipal Library in Reghin, The Christmas Fair at "Lucian Blaga" Technological High School, the meeting with Father Nicholas at "George Enescu" Youth Cultural House in Reghin.

But as every story has an end and this always has to be a happy one, so it was. We thank the volunteers, teachers and students alike, the promoter of this project Kinga Bojte and the director prof. Ababei Costel Lucian

"And I straddled on a saddle / And told you the story so"

"And I straddled on a short spoon / Long live who is listening to."

(Director of the N.P.K Nro.3 Reghin: prof. Petruț Maria-Marian

The group of the "True friends" from Casa Maria II in Reghin found out from their friends from "Lucian Blaga" Technological High School that they are not alone and that the stories can come true for those who had a different destiny. The surprises prepared for them were special, each child discovered that the most precious gift is friendship and they will continue, alongside their new bigger friends, to write their life story much more beautiful from now on.

(Responsible: Psychologist Cota Cristina Anca)

7. The community project “The School of Weekend”



Motto: “Treat people as they would like to be and you will help them to become what they are able to be” - Goethe

The project “The School of Weekend” was intended to be a remedial education project that would come in the support of 70 children with various psychosocial and psycho-emotional problems from the primary and secondary education from “Manolache Costache Epureanu” Secondary school and “Iorgu Radu” Secondary school, Bârlad, with poor results in school or families in need.

There are comprised a series of educational activities and of development in which the young volunteers offer students in the target group services of: homework help, tutoring, educational programs, psycho-pedagogical assistance, recreational activities, consultations, personal development activities.

Failing to achieve the school objectives is a real and complex problem which affects many children. Noticing their need for help, of communication with someone who can identify with their problems, we proposed this project in the idea that the *little trainers* understand differently than adults the problems encountered by their colleagues.

Often, these children face the non-acceptance of the others. They are ignored, marginalized, humiliated. As a result, these feel only anger, shame, helplessness, pain, sadness, forgetting that the school makes you equal.

The project 'The School of Weekend' promotes and supports, by appropriate means and materials, the formal and non-formal education of the children included in the program in a manner appropriate to the age of each beneficiary and to their development potential.

The volunteers have proven to be a real support both at the help with homework and emotionally for the beneficiaries, these getting attached very easy and quick to the volunteers.

The volunteers are the ones who helped the beneficiaries with their homework every Saturday.

The educational activities carried out by the volunteers were:

- tutoring and consultations, given by the young volunteers, to the school subjects considered to be difficult;
- facilitating the interpersonal relationships between children;

The volunteers carried out with children: activities to develop the life skills, socializing activities, activities and psycho-emotional support. The activities carried out under this project aimed their integration in the mainstream education and society. There existed goodwill, openness, availability to a more delicate work, as well as perseverance in organizing such activities. We hope these examples of good practice would encourage other colleagues as well. In a "self-centered" society, man forgets that he lives in communion with other fellows and that along his side there are fellows who need his understanding and support. Today, more than ever, we must learn to accept each other, to learn to respect the principles of the authentic democracy, because only together we will manage to coexist in a democratic European society. Giving students, regardless of the environment they come from, (social, cultural, ethnic, with disabilities or not), the opportunity to discover and develop their different talents, skills and abilities.

We carried out a project about generosity, cultivation of creativity, love for beautiful and fellows.

8. The community project “The volunteers make their voice heard!”

September 15, 2015 – February 28, 2016

***Motto:** “Volunteering gets people closer and breaks the boundaries. It also makes us rediscover the human side inside each of us.”*

ALPHA INFOEL team, Bistrița (ALPHA – beginnings).

From the beginning of the project we have concretized in a team. We formed the management team of the CT INFOEL volunteer students, of the five students who participated in the training program in the training camp of the NSCA volunteers, organized in the period 31.08.2015-06.09.2015, at Cozia Recreational Centre.



The members of the management team of the CT INFOEL volunteer students, Bistrița, by knowledge, skills, energy, positivism, competences, full of confidence, we gave name to the project that we implemented at educational institution level, we set the goal, the objectives, we set the tasks, the responsibilities of each of us, as follows: Hordoaan Flavius Vasile – coordinator, trainer and implementer, Marc Ancuța Andreea – monitor, assessor, Bîz Ioan Alexandru – implementer, expert, teammate; Lup Vasile – investigator of resources, innovator, teammate and Sas Florin Darius – finisher, trainer, teammate (students from the 10th grades, mathematics-computer science profile /services profile), coordinated by prof. Someșan Laura –NSCA CT INFOEL responsible, Bistrița.

Name of the project: **“The volunteers make their voice heard!”** – a name that resounds throughout the community from Bistrița managed to make its “voice heard” by our deeds, attracting the community alongside us, we wanted to change the world around us, to want to get involved alongside us.... and we can say..... **that we succeeded.**

We organized the awareness raising campaigns of the teachers, of the students from educational institutions involved in the project, such as: Secondary School No.1 - Bistrița, “Grigore Moisil” Technical

College - Bistrița, alongside the direct beneficiaries from the School Center of Inclusive Education No.2 – Bistrița, we made the launching of the project, awakening and arousing the students' interest and the desire to get involved in the volunteering activity, we encouraged the community from Bistrița to participate alongside us, by organizing charity shows, coming in the support of the persons who need help and financial support for different cases of illness, we involved artists of Bistrița-Năsăud county, through the national project "The week of the donated fruit and vegetables!", we ensured the food of 30 children from Benita Association, in Bistrița, we ensured the "Pantry" – of the St. Pachomius Cultural Association, from Gledin – being so necessary for them in order to provide food for children coming from Moldavia across the Prut, we came in the support of the needy families by donation of clothing and food. We were in the place we were needed by bringing a smile.

To St. Pachomius Cultural Association, from Gledin was made a donation of books – 300 different volumes – donation made by the volunteer students enrolled in the project, according to the volunteering contracts – period September-October 2015, which resulted in the achievement of some partnerships by the management team of the NSCA volunteers.

PARTNER INSTITUTIONS: Secondary School No.1, Bistrița; Museum Complex of Bistrița-Năsăud; SC Centru Privat de Afaceri SRL, Bistrița; ISJ, BN; St. Pachomius Cultural Association, Gledin; School Center of Inclusive Education, No. 2, Bistrița; Impact Association, Bistrița, County Cultural Center BN, Benita Association, Bistrița, Grigore Moisil Technical College, Bistrița, respectively German Centre, Bistrița.

Purpose of the project: Encouraging the students in the sense of involving in the work & support with disadvantaged children in order to support this process of social integration and educational development.

Project objectives: raising the awareness of the students and teachers by the involvement in volunteering activities; developing the personality of the students through moral actions in school and outside it; promoting volunteering; organizing certain activities for children that would challenge them, captivate them and be useful for them; mental stimulation, physical challenge, social integration and fuller development of the abilities of the children through creative, imaginative and therapeutical activities such as fine arts, theater, dance, sports, computer science, music and handicrafts, or simply by spending time with the children in the target group; encouraging students in the sense of acquiring and developing certain qualities such as initiative, involvement and inventiveness, by participating in the project; preparing the VOLUNTEERS, through training courses, in order to support the activities through a program of visits throughout the performance of the project; raising the awareness of the students to the problems of the children found in the care of the monastery in Gledin, respectively children in the care of the father from the Monastery from Podul Coșnei.

Target group (the beneficiaries):

- **70 students** - School Centre of Inclusive Education No.2, Bistrița, - direct beneficiaries
- **30 students** in the care of the St. Pachomius Cultural Association, from Gledin
- **NSCA INFOEL volunteers, Bistrița & the NSCA volunteers Secondary School No.1, Bistrița – indirect beneficiaries**

In conclusion, the project responded to an internal requirement: the desire of the students to offer the children in the School Centre of Inclusive Education No.2, Bistrița respectively to the children in the care of St. Pachomius Cultural Association, from Gledin, Bistrița-Năsăud county and to the children in

the care of the priest from Podul Coșnei Monastery, pleasant moments, by spending a periodical period of time alongside them, together with them, by transmitting them from soul to soul “we are children, let's live the childhood” through creative games, workshops (sports, theater, dance, music, painting, communication – personal development, literary creation, to tell stories), respectively helping these children deprived of material conditions, to ensure them a decent life, we can say that it is a problem that is addressed to all people and that must concern everyone: adults and children alike.

.... as we were saying, “Each has something to offer” – The winter holidays, being a volunteer, through the activity carried out it was aimed creating an atmosphere of HOLIDAY with the beneficiaries,..... for the children from the three institutions mentioned above.

The project aimed to achieve its objectives by the involvement, collaboration of the team “ALPHA” volunteer (&), of the NSCA INFOEL volunteers, Bistrița, alongside all the project partners.

Together we can make a better world around us – “THE VOLUNTEERS make their voice heard!”

The experience of this partnership, of this connection demonstrated the students that, although they live in different places, they speak the same Romanian language, have similar desires, but especially, they have common goals for the future – a modern life in a united democratic Europe – the message being that of MAKING THEIR VOICE HEARD!.

9. The community project “Volunteering through art”



Following the training camp in the NSCA, it was established the R.E.L.A.T.I. group, made up of 5 student girls from “Frații Buzești” (Buzești Brothers) NC and a coordinating lady teacher, Călin Tina Tina. The project entitled “Volunteering through ART” aimed the integration of the children with autism from ANCAAR center Craiova branch.

This was carried out over a period of 6 months, time during which joined another 40 volunteers, divided on workshops. This project has had involvement in all the activities but also enthusiasm and initiative from all the participating volunteers.

The main activities of the project were: creating and maintaining a work program with beneficiaries and volunteers within the day care center, show of raising awareness on the occasion of the tolerance day, the socialization of the children and youngsters through a day trip to Cosești, an exhibition with sale around the winter holidays, as well as the involvement in the activities of the center.

Since the end of the camp until this moment, R.E.L.A.T.I. team was characterized by respect, understanding, communication and especially, this led to the implanting of a close friendship. The limits imposed as well as the obstacles on the road offered them experience and strength to carry out the project “Volunteering through ART”.



10. The community project “The little stars of hope”



“Gheorghe Asachi” Technical College, Iași

Argument: The idea of the project came following the fact that we notice discriminatory attitudes in students in connection with various infirmities of the students as a result of certain accidents. We also want to **develop life skills among students**, transforming them into agents of change, through their active involvement in actions of social entrepreneurship.

Project objectives: O 1 - Developing the civic spirit and observing the human rights among the 20 NSCA Asachi volunteers, throughout the project

O 2 - involving the 20 NSCA Asachi volunteers in actions of social entrepreneurship - December 2015

O 3 - developing the skills of the 20 students to harness the theatrical art, January 2016

Activities:

A1 – Promoting the project in school, community - November 2015

A2 - Organizing 3 workshops for confectioning decorative items for Christmas by the members of the club together with the children with disabilities, November-December 2015

A3 – Organizing the fundraising event – December 10, 2015

A4 – Presenting a theater play by the members of Impact club on the topic “Spect-actors for non-discrimination”, to which will be invited the students in the Impact clubs from Iași – January 2016

A5- Applying some sheets for offering feedback by the participants – January 2016

A6 – Disseminating the project results in the press, on the school website, on the group of the deputy directors and of the educational counselors – February 2016

The project team 20 NSCA volunteer students coordinated by professor Mujdei Mariana and the four students participating in the team participating to the camp from Cozia: Pascal Adelina Ioana, Musteata Alexandra, Avădănei Amalia, Moroșanu Robert, Bambu Andreea Mădălina

The target group: the young people with disabilities from Star of Hope Foundation who are facing material hardship, with the age comprised between 5 and 15 years old.

- 30 children with disabilities from the Star of Hope Foundation.

Partners: Lumina newspaper – will promote the event

Star of Hope Foundation – will contribute with materials for the fir tree ornaments that the students will sell within the event to raise funds

Save the Children Organization, Iași – awards for students who evolve in the stage play.

Results: - increasing the degree of involvement of the students in volunteering activities

- 3 workshops of the NSCA Asachi volunteers, Iași, together with the young people with disabilities from Star of Hope Foundation.

Impressions: “I enjoyed participating in this project because I went to the foundation and I did beautiful activities with children with disabilities”. (Cătălina, D 9th grade).

“I think more young people should get involved in volunteering activities because in this way they can help their fellows that need this”. (Mădălina, C 10th grade).





Get involved!

Be a volunteer for your community!

The content of this material does not necessarily represent the official position of the EEA grants 2009-2014.

The title of the project *Be a volunteer for your community!*, project financed through the EEA grants 2009 - 2014, within the Program NGO Fund in Romania - Component 1 Involvement / Subcomponent 1.2 Volunteering (reference number 2014/ C1.2_34(1231))

Editor of the material:

The date of publishing (month, year):

www.eeagrants.org and www.fondong.fdsc.ro

ISBN

978-973-0-21474-1.