

# ACT AS PROFESSIONALS

## TRAINING MODULE FOR THE USE OF PROFESSIONAL PRINCIPLES IN YOUTH WORK



The publication was created within the project  
ACT AS PROFESSIONALS - Improvement of the youth work practice  
with young people with fewer opportunities



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FOR THE USE OF PROFESSIONAL  
PRINCIPLES IN YOUTH WORK



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## Training module for the use of professional principles in youth work

The publication is created by:

CEPORA – Center for Positive Youth Development (Serbia)

Gadeplan Børn og Unge (Denmark)

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ACT AS PROFESSIONALS - Improvement of the youth work practice  
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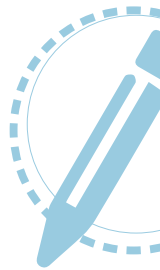
# ABOUT THE PUBLICATION

The community of youth workers and youth work organisations represent a very significant resource for youth development and the social inclusion of youth from different backgrounds, facing different obstacles. Their work can sometimes even be crucial for these topics in communities where public services are underdeveloped and slow. There are a lot of resources, courses and curriculum (formal and non-formal) which are there to help youth workers gain and enhance their professional competences in their direct work with youth. But, unfortunately, most of them are still only knowledge based, and do not provide youth workers with a lot of space to actually test their knowledge in practice. This leaves room for youth workers to not understand completely or misunderstand how something they heard or learned should look in practice in their everyday work with youth.

Because of this, with the best intentions in mind, sometimes youth workers face challenges in practice that they then do not solve in the best possible way, which can actually be unsupportive and can lead to further labeling or exclusion of youth who face different obstacles. The room for this misunderstanding is very wide when it comes to respecting professional principles in practice, since they are not something that can be implemented by only learning what they are. This topic is complex and can present itself in a very wide variety of situations, forms, sometimes more upfront and sometimes very hidden in the concrete context of the concrete situation youth workers face in their practice.

On the other hand, the professionalism is one of the core principles of youth work in general, and it is very important for youth workers to “live” the professionalism whenever they work with youth. In the situations that involve direct work with youth with fewer opportunities, especially when working with those facing social obstacles (such as young people facing discrimination because of gender, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, disability, etc., young people with limited social skills or anti-social or risky sexual behaviours, young people in a precarious situation, (ex)offenders, (ex)drug addicts, young and/or single parents, youth without parental care, young people from broken families, etc.), the testing of the professional principles of youth workers can actually happen on every activity.





In order to support their work with youth and improve the quality of youth work practice when it comes to dealing with issues of youth with fewer opportunities, they need professional guidance that will provide them with opportunities to test their beliefs, attitudes and actions in practice and gain competences that will lead to a higher quality of their work and implementation of professional principles on a daily basis.

ACT AS PROFESSIONALS - Training module for the use of professional principles in youth work represents the central result of the Erasmus+ Innovation Strategic partnership in the field of Youth project „**ACT AS PROFESSIONALS - Improvement of the youth work practice with young people with fewer opportunities**“ (ref. no 2020-1-RS01-KA205-065296). The main idea was to create a new, dynamic training module for youth workers, with the focus of enhancing the quality of the use of professional principles in the youth work practice with youth with fewer opportunities. The objectives of the project involve innovating the non-formal education of youth workers, improving competences of youth workers in implementing professional principles in their practice with youth with fewer opportunities and improving the quality of youth work practice with youth with fewer opportunities. The project is set up by the team of professionals from humanistic sciences from Serbia (from **CEPORA - Center for Positive Youth Development**) and Denmark (from **Gadeplan Børn og Unge**) with the cooperation of the **National association of practitioners of youth work from Serbia - NAPOR**.

The training module for the use of professional principles in youth work is needed both in Serbia and in Denmark because systematic work on this field does not exist in the education of youth workers by now, and this field represents a big risk for youth workers to not manage the challenges in their everyday practice, and to not provide support to all of their participants in the best possible way. The experience is showing that, in practice, youth workers do not have enough understanding of the professional principles and their practical implementation and have misconceptions about how something they learned, read or heard somewhere as a professional principle should be applied in the practice. This is why the main target group for this training module are trainers of youth workers to whom this tool will help create trainings that provide youth workers with space for learning through experience with professional guidance. Second target group are the youth workers that work or want to work with youth from different groups, or want to include different youth groups in their regular activities.

The publication consists of **3 parts**. The first one is introducing the **FRAMEWORK** that guided the creation of the training module, and provides with contemporary overview on the youth work context, characteristics and professionalisation efforts, gives inputs on the local context of participating partners' countries (Serbia and Denmark), and provides with an extensive overview on the principles covered in the training module. Second part is focused around the **CHALLENGES** of youth workers in implementation of these principles, which occur much more often when working with different youth with fewer opportunities. In this part of the publication, practical examples of challenges with **DOS** and **DON'Ts** are presented, to help youth workers and their trainers to think concretely and to reflect more on their practices regarding the implementation of the principles. The third part is focused around the **TRAINING MODULE**, providing trainers of youth workers a comprehensive guide on how to implement the training module for enhancing the skills of youth workers. The training module is based on applied drama as its central learning methodology, providing youth workers with opportunities for testing their skills in practice and learning through experience.







# I – FRAMEWORK FOR THE TRAINING MODULE

# YOUTH WORK

European context, Characteristics,  
Professionalization

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## EUROPEAN CONTEXT

Youth work involves a wide spectrum of activities, ranging from unstructured activities to highly structured programs. In accordance with such an understanding, youth work can include: 1) activity or practice (broader meaning that describes a whole range of different types of work of volunteers and people professionally qualified for various professions and disciplines); 2) occupation (practice performed by qualified or recognized workers in compliance with certain norms); and 3) discipline, ie a recognizable field of study and practice (Banks, 2010).

In early discussions at the European level, youth work was a term that encompassed different approaches and methods of “pedagogical social work” outside the formal education system, with the broad goal of supporting young people (Ord et al., 2018). Discussions on the development of youth work suggest that economic interests, political priorities, governments, the social sector, education and general social awareness of youth work have influenced, and continue to influence, the shaping of youth work. The historical roots of youth work lie in various youth movements. Youth work can often be first identified as an activity organized by adults for young people, based on values or ideology in the fields of religion, politics, sports and youth movements during the 19th and early 20th centuries (European Commission, 2014). Different paths of development of youth movements have been identified, which can be roughly divided into three basic ones: one path is based on youth movements as bearers of social change and innovation; the second trajectory refers to youth work developed under the influence of social work with a strong interest in integration, care and control; while the third path involves youth work oriented towards free time, which has not always managed to be sustained, partly due to lack of evidence of positive outcomes, and partly due to lack of funds (Siurala, 2016).

Depending on the history, culture and tradition of education, pedagogy, social work, political context, etc. definitions and forms of youth work in different European countries also differ. It often seems that the general public and society as a



whole are not sure what youth work really is, and sometimes it seems that youth workers themselves are not completely sure of the basic principles on which their profession is based. As a result, some authors (Williamson, 2015) argue that youth work is routinely defined in terms of what is not, rather than what it precisely is.



## EXAMPLES OF DEFINING YOUTH WORK IN DIFFERENT EU COUNTRIES:

Estonia: youth work implies the creation of conditions for the promotion of youth development through participation in activities outside the family, the system of formal education and work, and on the basis of their free will (Youth Work Act, 2010, according to Tara, 2016).

Finland: youth work refers to providing support and assistance to young people in becoming independent and encouraging youth participation in society (Youth Act, 2016, according to Kiilakoski, 2020).

Germany: youth work means supporting young people in their development, taking into account their interests, fostering self-determination and encouraging social responsibility and participation (Child and Youth Services Act, 1991, according to Klinzing, 2018).

Czech Republic: there is no legal or unique determinant of youth work, but the National Youth Strategy emphasizes that youth work should facilitate the transition of young people to the adult world, focus on the real needs of young people and improve their potential for social development (National Youth Strategy 2014-2020). Today in the Czech Republic there is a difference two types of youth work: youth work based on non-formal education, informal learning and personal development provided by non-governmental organizations, and youth work based on free time, provided by specialized centers for leisure activities, school clubs and so-called institutions for the care of children outside school (Maskova, 2018).

Bulgaria: youth work is defined as a cross-sectoral activity, which connects different structures and sectors that support youth and are involved in youth issues. It empowers young people to grow as independent, responsible, active and critical citizens. The goal of youth work is to support the personal, social and civic development of young people and to create safe spaces for expanding their potential, acquiring competencies and discovering new opportunities "(Georgieva & Valcheva, 2019, p. 6).

At the beginning of the 21st century, it soon became clear that promoting and recognizing youth work is not possible without an established definition or clear description of youth work and a common understanding of national and supra-national policies, and significant efforts have been made at European level in this direction (Ord et al., 2018). This has resulted in the adoption of various documents by the European Commission and the Council of Europe, such as A New Impetus for European Youth (European Commission, 2001), The Socio-Economic Scope of Youth Work in Europe (Bohn, 2008), Declaration of the First Convention on Youth Work (Council of Europe, 2010), The Value of Youth Work (European Commission, 2014), The Second Convention on Youth Work (Council of Europe, 2015), Council of Europe Youth Work Portfolio (Council of Europe, 2015), Recommendation on Youth Work (Council of Europe, 2017) etc. These documents provide certain guidelines, recommendations, determinants and characteristics of youth work in order to improve the practice of youth work in European countries.

## CHARACTERISTICS

Recommendation on Youth Work by Council of Europe (Council of Europe, 2017, p. 3) provides a broader youth work definition, emphasizing that “youth work covers a wide variety of activities of a social, cultural, educational, environmental and/or political nature by, with and for young people, in groups or individually. Youth work is delivered by paid and volunteer youth workers and is based on non-formal and informal learning processes focused on young people and on voluntary participation. Youth work is quintessentially a social practice, working with young people and the societies in which they live, facilitating young people’s active participation and inclusion in their communities and in decision making.” The goal of youth work defined in this way is to encourage personal development of young people and strengthen their participation at all levels of society (Dunne et al., 2014), while its primary function is to motivate and support young people to find and pursue constructive life paths way of their own personal and social development, as well contributing to the society as a whole (Council of Europe, 2017). A significant feature of youth work in practice is that it is implemented with participants who have fewer rights than adults, are often vulnerable or lack power (Banks, 2010).

Although youth work is widely developed and implemented in various forms in many social contexts, it is very poorly documented on theoretical and empirical grounds, and most of the knowledge is based on the experience of youth workers and young people themselves. Although youth work involves a wide range of ac-





tivities that are applied in different social contexts, the basic characteristics that distinguish youth work from other areas of activity are: non-formal and informal learning; focus on youth; personal development and voluntary participation (European Commission, value, 2014).

## FORMAL, NON-FORMAL AND INFORMAL LEARNING

Council of Europe provides with these explanations regarding the relationship between formal, non-formal and informal learning:

Educational systems exist to promote *formal learning*, which follows a syllabus and is intentional in the sense that learning is the goal of all the activities learners engage in. Learning outcomes are measured by tests and other forms of assessment.

*Non-formal* learning usually takes place outside formal learning environments but within some kind of organisational framework. It arises from the learner's conscious decision to master a particular activity, skill or area of knowledge and is thus the result of intentional effort. But it need not follow a formal syllabus or be governed by external accreditation and assessment. Non-formal learning typically takes place in community settings: swimming classes for small children, sports clubs of various kinds for all ages, reading groups, debating societies, amateur choirs and orchestras, and so on.

*Informal learning* takes place outside schools and colleges and arises from the learner's involvement in activities that are not undertaken with a learning purpose in mind. Informal learning is involuntary and an inescapable part of daily life; for that reason, it is sometimes called experiential learning. Learning that is formal or non-formal is partly intentional and partly incidental: when we consciously pursue any learning target we cannot help learning things that are not part of that target. Informal learning, however, is exclusively incidental.

Non-formal learning is highly enriching and builds an individual's skills and capacities. It is often considered more engaging than formal learning, as the learner's interest is a driving force behind their participation. Informal learning involves incidental learning through personal experience and is extremely beneficial to per-

sonal and social development. These two learning forms (compared to formal learning) are „a must“ in a youth work context. Focus on youth implies that youth work should be based on the perspective, experience, dilemmas and goals of the young person (Smith, 2013, according to Metz, 2017). Fostering personal development in youth work implies supporting youth in reaching their potentials, by influencing values, attitudes, experiences and skills of young people. Voluntary participation implies that youth work should always be conducted on the voluntary basis, fostering internal motivation of youth in their active participation.

Some of key values of youth work relate to the orientation towards positive development, social justice and full participation (Metz, 2017). Youth work is also value-oriented, self-reflective and relationship-oriented (Council of Europe, 2015).

Youth work is organized and implemented in different ways (by youth-led organizations, organizations for youth, informal groups or through youth services and public authorities), and is shaped at local, regional, national and European level (Ord et al., 2018). However, regardless of who conducts youth work – paid or volunteer youth workers, the quality of this practice must be high, and in order to achieve this there needs to be a basic framework of quality standards for youth work that suits the national context, including models competence for youth workers and accreditation systems for previous experience and learning, as well as that training programs should provide certain mechanisms for the development of reflective practice (Declaration of the 2nd European Youth Work Convention, 2015).

## SUMMATION OF THE MAIN DEFINING ELEMENTS OF YOUTH WORK

- ✓ work with young people
- ✓ aimed at promoting positive development
- ✓ through the learning process,
- ✓ in order for young people to reach their full potential
- ✓ and be active citizens (to advocate for social justice, actively participate in the community / society).





## YOUTH WORK CONVENTION

The European Youth Work Convention (EYWC) is the biggest event in Europe for discussing the development and recognition in youth work practice and youth policy. The 3rd EYWC was hosted by the German Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth. JUGEND für Europa, the National Agency for the EU programmes Erasmus+ Youth in Action and European Solidarity Corps, was its partner in organising and developing the content of the event.

In December 2020 EYWC gathered youth workers, youth researchers, professionals in the field of youth and youth work to kick off the implementation of the European Youth Work Agenda. After the 3rd Convention Final declaration „Signposts for the future“ Bonn, 10 December 2020 there are some features that should be taken into consideration in youth work. Youth work should be more open and involve young people with fewer opportunities meaning not only inviting young people in the activities but also go there where young people are. On the other side post-pandemic is pushing youth workers to think outside of the box and create new approaches in youth work. This situation is creating new approaches to youth work and making youth work more open to young people with fewer opportunities.

## PROFESSIONALIZATION

Over the last decade, youth work has become a more prominent field at European policy level, with questions about whether or not youth work is a profession still unclear. Although youth work has been recognized, promoted and funded by public authorities in many European countries, in other countries it has only a marginal status, where it is still entirely voluntary. At the European level, there is a trend of professionalization of youth work, although it is not universal.

Professionalization is of increasing importance for youth work at the European level, and one of the main elements that support its professional recognition is training and education (Ord et al., 2018). The European Commission's study on the value of youth work in the European Union (Working with young people: the value of youth work in the European Union; European Commission, 2014) highlights the importance of recognizing youth work as a profession and points to diversity

across European countries, where some have curricula at the university level led by professionally qualified youth workers (such as the UK, Finland and Estonia), while in others (where the work is primarily done by volunteers) there is little or no training.

The importance attached to professionalization is further evidenced by the project of the EU expert group on Quality Youth Work (European Youth Commission; European Commission, 2015), which considered professionalization one of the main ways to develop and improve the quality of work with young people. In 2017, the European Commission also published a handbook on quality systems and frameworks for youth work, which further strengthened their commitment to the professionalization of youth work (EC, 2017a). Professionalization is built into the Competence Model for Youth Workers run by the Salto Resource Center for Training and Cooperation (Salto Youth, 2016). The recent Council of Europe Recommendation on Youth Work (2017) also explicitly favors the establishment of 'frameworks, strategies, programs and pathways for education, training, capacity building and professional development of youth workers based on an agreed set of competencies' (Ord et al 2018).

Reasonable arguments for the professionalization of youth work can be found in the literature, which postulate that professionalization is needed to provide university curricula for youth work, solve the problem of lack of skilled youth workers, and thus prevent harmful and counterproductive interventions for youth development and quality of youth services (Emslie, 2012). Also, the professionalization of youth work contributes to the legitimization of the work performed by youth workers, and can strengthen their voice in the struggle for recognition of their professional status (Lorenz, 2009). On the other hand, there are authors who are against professionalization, arguing that the professionalization of youth work would lead to the establishment of a hegemonic relationship between youth worker and young person (Cooper, 2013), which is in direct conflict with the basic characteristics of youth work. There is also a fear that the professionalization of youth work will suppress creativity and autonomy in working with young people, which is also one of the important characteristics of youth work (Lorenz, 2009).

With the discussions on the professionalization of youth work, and in the scope of efforts in raising and assuring the quality of youth work practice, ethic became an important topic. Different guiding principles emerged that practice has shown







are relevant for the youth work field. There are numerous publications that deal with this subject, and new, quality studies and publications are emerging in the previous few and current years, as ethics in youth work in general is still a „hot“ topic for all EU. Different professional and ethical principles are covered in different national and EU documents. Professional principles are there to help better understand youth work in general and to separate the “profession” of youth work from other professions, as well as to support youth workers in understanding their role, and ethical principles are there to support youth workers in fostering quality, strong, but still safe connections with young people.

The main focus of the training module are professional principles of youth work and how to support youth workers in better understanding and „living“ them through their youth work practice with diverse youth groups and diverse youth settings.

# LOCAL CONTEXT of the training module creation

Serbia, Denmark

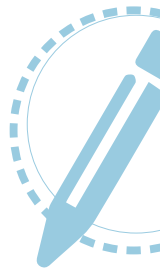
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## SERBIA

In Serbia, young people are defined differently depending on the legislative in question. The Law on Youth, established in 2011 defines young people to be from 15 up to 30 years old. The Law on Family treats all people up to 18 as children. The Law on Social Welfare treats people up to age of 18 as children and people from 18 to 26 as young persons (providing some services for youth up to age of 26). The Criminal Justice system categorizes people as children up to age of 14. From 14 to 16 they are treated as junior minors and already have independent criminal responsibility – are responsible for their own actions in the „eye of the law“. From 16 to 18 they are senior minors, and from 18 to 21 they are minor adults. For these three categories legal norms from the Law on juvenile offenders and criminal protection of juveniles can apply to. When talking about the medical system they offer medical care to young people until 26 years. There are also sectors where youth is considered even for older age than 30, for example in the Ministry of agriculture, forestry and water management young people are perceived all up to 40 years old. The youth sector in Serbia – where youth work happens, is led with the norms from the Law on Youth, thus considering young people from the age of 15 to 30. These are thus the categories that can be considered when discussing young people under different programs and measures for the youth sector, such as the Youth component of the Erasmus+ programme of the European Union.

In response to the lack of systematic care for young people, youth work in Serbia began to develop intensively in the late 1990s by civil society organizations that voluntarily adopted good practice from other European countries (National Association of Youth Work Practitioners – NAPOR, 2010). From the beginning of the establishment of youth work in Serbia until today, significant efforts of civil





society organizations to improve the position of youth have resulted in the establishment of the Ministry of Youth and Sports in 2007, the National Association of Youth Work Practitioners (NAPOR) in 2009, the adoption of the Youth Law in 2011, establishment of the Umbrella Organization of Youth of Serbia in 2011, the Action Plan for the implementation of the National Strategy for Youth for the period 2015-2017 and the National Youth Strategy for the period 2015-2025.

The establishment of NAPOR was initiated in May 2008, as a reaction of civil society to the absence of a national legitimate body in the field of youth work (NAPOR, 2014). NAPOR is a voluntary, non-governmental and non-profit association of organisations founded for an indefinite period of time in order to achieve the following goals in the field of youth work:

- improving the position of young people in society;
- improving systemic care for young people;
- providing and improving a safe environment and opportunities for personal and social development of young people;
- professionalization of youth work;
- identifying new occupations in the field of youth work;
- setting youth work standards and putting them into practice;
- determining the criteria of competencies of youth workers;
- encouraging networking and exchange of knowledge and practice between associations that conduct youth work (Statute of the Association of Associations NAPOR, 2018).

The very term “youth work” is not sufficiently recognized in our country, and is often misinterpreted. It is about professional and pedagogical work with young people, which is performed outside the formal education system, and which can be conducted by trained volunteers and professionals (NAPOR, 2014). The main purpose of youth work is to provide support to young people in the process of independence, ie in personal and social development in order to become active members of society and participants in the decision-making process (NAPOR, 2015)

Two main documents in the legal framework that determine the youth work sector in Serbia are Law on Youth (2011) and National Strategy for Youth (2015-2025).

Law on Youth (2011), Art. 3, paragraph. 4, defines youth work as that part of youth activities organized with and for young people, based on non-formal education, held within the free time of young people and undertaken to improve conditions for personal and social development of young people in accordance with their needs and abilities and their voluntary participation.

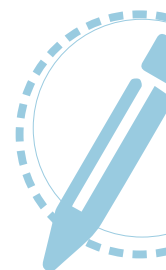
In the Dictionary of Youth Policy, non-formal learning is defined as “any type of education that is conducted outside the formal education system (school or faculty), although it can be a supplement to formal education” (NAPOR, 2015, p. 32). Informal learning is defined here as a learning process that takes place continuously, unplanned, throughout life, where the individual acquires attitudes, values, skills and knowledge whose sources are different influences and resources in their own environment, as well as from everyday experiences (family, peer group, neighbors, meetings, library, mass media, work, play) ”(NAPOR, 2015, p. 33).

The importance of youth work is constantly growing at the national level. During the first years of NAPOR’s activity, there was a need to classify occupations in youth work and define the necessary qualifications, ie to create occupational standards that will serve as an instrument for the advocacy process, but also as a basis for creating a curriculum for educating youth workers. The occupational standard defines 3 levels of qualifications in youth work – youth leader or youth activist, youth worker and youth work expert. For the first two levels, which do not require a degree in higher education, NAPOR has developed 2 mechanisms for acquiring qualifications – training and validation of previously acquired competencies.

Current training for youth workers prepares participants for more complex tasks and enables them to develop and coordinate youth projects through various activities and projects in the community, created based on the social, behavioral, health, developmental and safety needs of young people. The role of the youth workers is seen as to encourage the personal and social development of young people through the development of social skills, values and beliefs. The training consists of 4 compulsory modules, practical implementation of gained knowledge and skills and mentoring/supervision. In order to receive a certificate of completed training, the participants have to successfully go through all modules, practical implementation, as well as mentoring.

Modules:





1. Community youth work and adolescent development
2. Individual and group work
3. Leadership in youth work and conflict transformation
4. Project management and volunteer management

So far, 3 training cycles have been organized for youth workers and 2 cycles for youth leaders by NAPOR and member organizations. Also, NAPOR has so far conducted 4 cycles of validation of previously acquired competencies in youth work. After which 56 youth leaders and 70 youth workers received NAPOR certification. Other who did not finalize their training cycle received confirmation of passed modules and they have possibility to apply in future to finalize their education. It is mapped that it is necessary to revise and expand the curriculum, providing with a module specially focused around ethics and professional principles. Thus, this project aims at supporting the current only educational model of preparation of youth workers for their future role.

In addition to youth leaders and youth workers certified by NAPOR in member organizations, youth work in Serbia is carried out by persons who have other types of certificates in youth work (in Vojvodina it is usually a diploma for A or B level PRONI Institute for Social Education), University certificate by Center for youth work or other profiles (social work, psychology, pedagogy, etc.). Youth workers get their training from different non-formal training opportunities, but they are not formalized and they vary greatly. Thus, there is still not a centralized base that will gather all youth workers in Serbia, and this is something NAPOR is striving for in the future years.

Affordable education for youth workers is one of the basic preconditions for the development of professionalism and ensuring the quality of youth work (NAPOR, 2015). Representatives of NAPOR are in favor of the introduction of formal education, emphasizing that in this way the costs of professional training of staff will be reduced (NAPOR, 2015).

At the moment three pillars are supporting the development of youth policy and youth work in Serbia: the National Association of youth workers (NAPOR), the National youth council of Serbia (KOMS) and the National association of youth offices (NKZM). The work of the structures is in correlation with National Youth Strategy (2015 – 2025) and the action plan. On the local level, there are Youth offices that also support youth with creating local youth plans.

As one more support system, the Youth Council was established in 2014. The structure is gathering representatives of state bodies, representative of the provincial body responsible for youth, joint representative of national councils of national minorities, representatives of the youth office, distinguished expert and youth representatives. The chairman is the minister of youth and sport. The main aim of the Council is to have an overall picture of development in youth policy and to harmonize activities and processes. One-third of members are young people, which ensures that their voice is heard and that young people are perceived as associates not only the target group. Although there are documents, bodies and youth organization there is also a need for improvement as well lobbying for more opportunities and funds for youth policy and youth work.

Currently, youth work in Serbia is practiced in civil society organization. CEPORA – Center for Positive Youth Development is one of them, that is recognized as a high quality youth work program provider, with special expertise in working with youth from different fewer opportunities groups. CEPORA is a full member of the NAPOR association. In the last 10 years NAPOR advocated for professionalization and recognition of youth work and youth workers, developed standards for quality assurance of youth programs and put effort to be recognized on the national and European level as a crucial actor in developing youth work in Serbia. In the last years youth civil society sector strive to promote different cross-sectoral cooperation involving different sectors such as sport, culture, social care, but it is still needed to promote and recognize youth work as an occupation.





NAPOR recognizes different types of youth work:

**Political awareness and active citizenship:** youth participation, rights and equality, development of politics and education, social actions, activism, etc.

**Health education:** promotion of healthy lifestyles, relationships and sexuality, stress management, mental health, HIV / AIDS, first aid, PAS, alcohol, smoking etc.

**Prevention of social exclusion:** Youth work intended for prevention social exclusion, includes education, training and employment opportunities for marginalized groups and individuals. Social integration is supported, transition to adulthood as well as in the labor market.

**Life skills (social education):** Programs are experiential-educational through individual, group work, projects or events that contain aspects of primary prevention but also problem interventions. They are focused on identity development, values, management emotions, leadership, teamwork, planning and decision making, communication, problem solving, initiative and responsibility, professional development and orientation, etc.

**Intercultural and international awareness:** Professionally led activities that enable young people from different countries, different ethnic backgrounds and cultures to expand cultural knowledge, build skills and competencies, develop tolerance and acceptance of diversity.

**Information:** Youth information consists of coordinated services through services or center. The goal is to enable young people to make independent, informed decisions will lead to organizing your own life.

**Environmental protection:** raising the environmental awareness of young people, promoting life in harmony with nature, etc.

**Youth counseling:** Focused on specific youth issues and problems. It provides information and support based on the professional counseling technique of that youth refers to other institutions if necessary.

**Youth work based on free time:** Includes games, sports, cultural and artistic activities with the aim of developing physical, intellectual, etc. potential of young people.

To ensure that youth work practice is ethical and professional, NAPOR developed a Code of Ethics in Youth Work and formed a body for monitoring of its implementation – the Council for Ethical Issues (CEI). Code of Ethics (established in 2009) is a document that defines ethical and professional work principles for youth workers. Each member organization, also every youth worker binds to respect them and act accordingly. Since the training module we developed aims at directly connecting to the education of youth workers in Serbia, the Code of Ethics is being analyzed and incorporated within the principles covered with this publication. Council for Ethical Issues is an independent body in NAPOR which takes care that the Code of Ethics in youth work is respected and improved. It has the mandate to react in cases of violation of the Code of Ethics, through recommendations to member organizations, or opinions that they send to organizations that are not members of NAPOR. Council for Ethical Issues continuously works on the promotion of ethics in youth work, among youth workers, young people, and their parents to ensure ethical practice in youth work in Serbia.

The Code of Ethics (NAPOR, 2009) relates primarily to moral and professional principles that youth workers need to respect and provides the basis for uniformed and standardized principles in working with young people. It recognizes 9 principles, categorizing 4 as ethical and 5 as professional.

#### Ethical principles state that youth workers are obliged to:

##### 1. Treat young people with respect

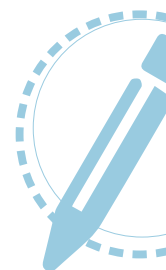
- respect for every young person, avoiding any form of discrimination based on their race, religion, gender affiliation, sexual orientation, nationality, age, education, socioeconomic status, etc.
- a clear explanation of the nature and confidentiality limit, and that information entrusted to one purpose must not be used for other purposes without the permission of a young person - unless there is a visible, clear danger for a young person, a young worker or any other individual.

##### 2. Respect and promote the rights of young people to make their choices and decisions

- informing and conducting discussions with young people about different possibilities and outcomes of certain decisions and choices before making final decisions
- providing opportunities for learning, in order to develop capacities and confidence for active participation in decision-making process
- respecting the choices of young people, pointing to the fact that the consequences of their choices must not jeopardize any segment of human rights







3. Promote and ensure the well-being and safety of young people
  - taking responsibility for assessing the risks and safety of young people in the activities in which they participate
  - taking responsibility for their own expertise and competences, as well as the expertise and competences of other employees and volunteers
  - notifying relevant institutions and taking appropriate measures if there is a particular risk and danger for young people
  - encouraging young people to learn by facing challenges in educational activities while avoiding
    - unnecessary risk
4. Contribute to the promotion of social justice for young people and society as a whole
  - promoting fair behavior and responding to discriminatory actions and attitudes
  - empowering young people to respect diversity, especially in the context of a multicultural society
  - pointing to unfair policies and practices and working on their changes
  - promoting youth participation in youth work, public structures and society
  - encouraging young people to associate, and working on issues of common interest

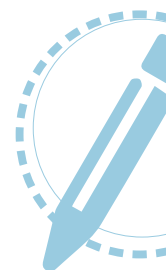
Professional principles state that youth workers are obliged to:

1. Perceive and understand the boundary between personal and professional life.
  - recognizing and understanding the boundary between developing a relationship with young people that provides support and care, and the necessity to maintain a professional relationship
  - lack of personal relationships with young people, especially intimate and sexual relations- in the event of such a relationship, a report must be submitted to a superior who should take appropriate actions
  - not to misuse professional engagement in order to achieve intimate and sexual relations with young people, colleagues, associates.
  - non-participation in work-related activities for personal benefit and the acceptance of gifts and services from young people that could compromise professional integrity
  - ensure that personal behavior in public, outside the working hours does not impair the trust of young people, as well as professional integrity
2. Be responsible to young people, their parents and guardians, colleagues and the wider society

- understanding that accountability to different groups can lead to a conflict of interest, and that such situations demanding counseling, so that the appropriate decision can be made
  - openness and sincerity when working with young people, enable them to access information and support when choosing and making decisions regarding their lives and participation in youth work activities
  - the work of the youth worker must be in accordance with the law
3. Develop the skills and competencies needed for the job
    - taking over only the work and responsibilities for which the youth workers have the necessary knowledge, skills, abilities and necessary support
    - asking for a feedback from young people and colleagues about the quality of work done, as well as constantly improving personal skills, knowledge and abilities
    - recognize when new knowledge, skills and abilities are needed, seek out and take relevant additional education
  4. Encourage and engage in debates on ethics in youth work
    - developing awareness of the personal values of youth workers and their impact on ethical principles of youth work
    - questioning ethical principles, participating in discussions with colleagues in order to develop the organization in which the youth worker works, and the overall development of the profession of youth work
    - develop awareness of potential conflicts between personal and professional values, as well as between the interests and rights of different individuals and ethical principles of youth work
    - recognition of the importance of continuous reflection and debate on ethical principles, and acceptance of this document as a working version that needs to be subjected to discussion
  5. Work with the services and institutions that consider these principles
    - ensure that colleagues, employees, as well as young people are familiar with the ethical principles of youth work
    - willingness to engage in interpretations, clarifications and discussions on ethical principles
    - readiness to object to attitudes and practices of other colleagues or organizations / institutions whose practice is contrary to the specified ethical principles

One of the issues recognized in regards to the Code of Ethics is that it hasn't been revised from its very first establishment (from when the whole NAPOR network was also established), even though one of the principles in the Code recognizes the need for continuous revision and enhancement, stating that the Code should be treated as a working version, subjected to discussion.





## DENMARK

Young people in Denmark face same issues as young people anywhere else. The Danish youth groups differ greatly, as does their circumstances and opportunities. These differences are not only affected by where they live, circumstances in their family, their circle of friends or lack thereof, or their educational level. The differences are also affected by the meaning and importance each young person attributes to abovementioned relations, as well as each young persons relation to other young people.

However, there are some common factors, that connect the youth – which is the circumstance of being on a developmental track, moving from childhood to adulthood. Youth is a period in time, which, in Denmark, is considered to run from the ages 15-25. However, this age range, is also a grey zone, and can vary greatly, dependent on the perspective and context, in which the youth group is placed. If the perspective of the youth group is based on physical development, and sexual maturity, the onset of youth would be between the age of 12-14. In a cultural context, the Danish tradition of being christened at the age of 13-14, would then be the time where a person moves from childhood to youth. In the context of public support and counselling, a person moves from a youth group classification to and adult group classification, at the age of 30. Age in itself, is therefore not a meaningful definition, for describing youth groups, as an understanding of the phase of youth, varies over time. There are no simple answers in defining youth, as it is not relevant to view youth as a „single“ group, defined or characterized by simple common denominators.

The period of youth – independent on how it is defined – is also a period of identity formation. This is not only in relation to occupation or education, but also in relation to, how they perceive themselves and what they can become. However, there are some common denominators and conditions, which are common across the period of youth. Youth Research Center in Denmark, operates with the term “individualization”, which, in recent years, has been a key term, in the understanding of our society and furthermore of the Danish youth. This understanding has been conceptualized through an increased tendency to individualize both success and failure, as well as an increased pressure on the individual young person, to perform in areas such as education, occupation, friendships and leisure. This individualization tendency may possibly be shifting. Current global tendencies such as climate and environmental crises, as well as the global pandemic suggests that the notion of, an individual being held accountable for their successes and

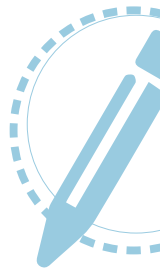
failures, is insufficient as a framework of understanding individuals. This in turn, paved the way for stronger narratives, based on concepts of shared responsibility and community, as alternatives to the individualization narratives.

Another general theme that calls our attention in relation to the youth, concerns the concepts of performance focused culture and society. This is, first and foremost, related to young people and education, where assessment has been an increased focus, in recent years – both in Denmark and globally. In Denmark, this is demonstrated in the different measurements and benchmarks, which recent political ambitions have enforced, in order to raise the academic level amongst Danish students. This is also noticeable internationally, as the use of the annual PISA-measurements has increased. This measurement compares different nations educational systems through set of parameters, and has become a dominating political educational standard for quality of education. The performance focused culture, also has a general effect on the young people, as it sets high standards and expectations on how they can and should perform, in order to have a successful life – both in relation to education, friendships, social life, partners, leisure, family etc. The performance focused culture affects the well-being of todays youth and leaves them in discontent, with headaches, stress related symptoms and heavy moods.

This furthermore, relates to a third tendency, which concerns youth's overall well-being and discontentment. Most research suggests, that the Danish youth generally thrive. However, it also shows that, their well-being is under pressure in certain areas and in certain ways. Firstly, findings have suggested that, many youths experience stress and pressure during their secondary level education and higher level education – as discussed in previous sections. A 2017 Danish National survey on well-being found that, 24% of young women between the ages of 16-24 and approximately 13% of young men in the same age group, experience mental ill-being and 40% of these young women and 23% of these young men, experience elevated stress levels. Thus the well-being of the Danish youth has entered the political agenda in Denmark, and annual national well-being surveys are implemented. Furthermore, many Danish young people experience the transition from middle school to secondary level education, especially the choice of specific secondary level education, to be extremely dramatic and stressful, which in turn leads to drop-outs, discontentment and lack of motivation regarding school and education among youth.

However, certain forms of discontentment in youth are not detected by the formal-





ized discontentment parameters, and thereby exclude accessibility to treatment systems. This excluded, discontented group of youths, are categorized by the Danish Center of Research in Youths as “youth in the grey zone”. These young people silently experience discontent and are often left alone with issues such as loneliness, low self-esteem or bullying, all the while being perceived as living a well-functioning youthful life.

Furthermore, discontented youth’s social groups vary widely, which in turn show, that discontent young people stem from all communities and social groups. Previous research has stated that social heritage affects young person’s educational level, life opportunities and well-being, leaving certain social groups vulnerable. However, recent research suggests that this vulnerability is now also increasingly seen in middleclass youth groups. Structural and institutional demands, burdens the present day’s youth, with constant expectation of them being the best version of themselves, and not falling outside the narrowing norms. The demands have increased across institutional systems, which in turn contributes to pressure on today’s youths to perform – and the youths have nowhere to retreat to and to gather strength, when they experience adversity. They do not have a sanctuary, because they are constantly self-optimizing; pressured to accomplish more and improve, so they can keep up or stay ahead. They balance different arenas of their lives, such as family, friends, leisure, spare time jobs, school and social activities. The terms balance, juggling and prioritizing are used by the youths themselves, when trying to explain how they go about their everyday lives, with so many things they want to do and achieve. This furthermore, increases the risk of the youth experiencing failure and not being able to live up to expectations. This is also applicable to social medias, where youths are constantly showcasing themselves. Social medias call on the attention of the youth and form the basis of interact between their peers. Despite an overall state of well-being among the Danish youth, further attention on discontentment is needed.

The concept of “vulnerable young people” is a widely used phenomenon, with many different expressions, and it includes many different groups of youths. Vulnerability may be understood in relation to different factors, which can be divided into different categories. The following is an attempt to exemplify different vulnerabilities occurring in Denmark. However, many more examples may be found.

- Societal level: poverty, homelessness, marginalized positions (religion, gender and ethnicity), lack of association to education or the labor market.

- Community level: Vulnerable residential areas, criminal behavior, extremism/radicalism.
- Organizational level: Social exclusion (bullying, loneliness), discontentment in relation to education (extended school non-attendance).
- Family level: Neglect, negative social heritage.
- Individual level: Mentally (psychiatric disorders) and physical disabilities, abuse, lack of behavioral regulation.

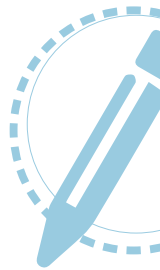
The youth's vulnerability may be affected by one or more of the above mentioned categories. The expression of the vulnerability is also an important factor, in determining proper/appropriate intervention and approach, and how professionals support the youth – in supporting their well-being.

Following the wide range of issues in youth recognized by the government, in Denmark support for youth from vulnerable/marginalized groups (youth with fewer opportunities) is most often left to professionals from different public bodies. Youth policy in Denmark is integrated into other relevant policy areas. Therefore, Denmark does not have a youth law, a youth minister, or a national agency for youth. Instead, youth policy is found in policy areas such as education, employment, health, social affairs, culture, etc. Due to the Danish youth policy approach, there are several strategies that target the youth population, for instance youth in the education system, young people in the health care system, socially marginalised young people, etc.

The term youth work is not widely used in Denmark. Youth work takes place in the public sector in municipal leisure activities such as youth clubs. Furthermore, youth work takes place in the third sector in associations and NGOs. Therefore, in Denmark, describing third sector youth work is almost the same as describing youth associations and voluntary activities. Thus, youth workers are found in the local community organisations. They can vary with their educational background and practical experiences. They should be focusing more efforts in trying to include different struggling youth in their activities, and do need additional support in developing their competences.

There are several ways to qualify to work with children and young people in Denmark. Pedagogical assistant is a vocational youth education, which is a short term education, that in part, qualifies a person to work with children and youths, however it does not qualify a person for the same work related tasks, as does a longer ed-





ucations such as pedagogue certification. The educational training of pedagogues is a 3½ year degree, and admission can be sought through a grade system and/or an experience based system.

A pedagogical degree introduces students to wide and general areas of work, but also to specialized areas of work such as day care, school and after school, as well as social care. If a student wishes to direct their experience to working with vulnerable youths, they can choose between the following areas:

- Adolescent psychiatry.
- Residential institutions and housing associations.
- Retirement homes and hostels.
- After school and youth clubs.
- Street level work/intervention and networking.
- Institutions and services for the intellectually disabled.
- Social pedagogical residences.

There is no set definition of what working with youth involves, due to this wide-ranging scope of areas. A pedagogical student has, on a scholar website, posted his personal definition, with working with youth: "It is very clear to me, that I, in my profession, can make a difference for socially vulnerable children and young people. They may not always be able to see it themselves, but we are helping them in the right direction/back on track. It is indescribable, when they later in life return, and express the difference I have made in their lives. To me, the most important assignment in working with children and young people, is to provide them tools in life...".

The Danish pedagogical society (BUPL) has, however, also described purpose and framework, concerning the tasks surrounding pedagogues, in which a common ethical foundation, for individuals working with people, has been described. This ethical foundation emphasizes on different significant values when working with young people.

The purpose with pedagogical tasks (including youth work), is to provide care, socialization, formation and learning and to further children and youth's well-being and development. These tasks are the most important:

- To secure all children and youth equal opportunities, despite social and material relations, ethnical and/or religious affiliations, and physical or mental disability.

- To support children and youth individually and socially, in order to support their viability.
- To create structures which promote adequate and caring environments through childhood and youth, where all has opportunities to take part in social communities.

The pedagogical values are based upon:

- **Care:** Fundamental in pedagogical tasks. Care includes values such as, empathy, safety, trust and responsibility for the other person.
- **Equality:** Pedagogical practice is based on human equality. Equality in relation to pedagogical practice, is characterized by dialogue, recognition, respect and tolerance.
- **Professional integrity:** Is characterized by values such as, high professionalism, responsibility, credibility and openness.
- **Social justice:** The professional practice, promotes social justice and democratic values. It is characterized by values such as involvement, diversity, communities and inclusiveness.

Following are the most important principles of any pedagogical profession (including youth work):

**1. The pedagogical relation.** The pedagogical foundation is based in communities, as well as individuals and their relation to communities. The pedagogue should therefore:

- Engage in the lives of children, youths and their families with respect.
- Relate to children, youths and their families with empathy and recognition.
- Take responsibility for establishing a good relation to children, youths and their parents.
- Be aware of what is in the best interest of the children and youths, and if necessary, declare and defend their needs and interests.
- Adapt practices, so it serves the individual child, youth or community.
- Act in accordance to social justice and in the communities' best interest.

This includes:

- Acting in the best interest of the child or youth's, in cases of loyalty conflicts between the child/youth and their family
- Avoiding acts, which may be experienced as humiliating or condescending.
- Protection against abusive behavior.
- Treating children, youths and their families with dignity and respect their right to self- and co-determination.







- Protect confidential information.
- Respect privacy.
- Ensure equal treatment, also if it involves discriminating between two seemingly equals.

**2. The pedagogues in the profession.** The profession must strive towards creating an ethical responsible practice. The pedagogue shall therefore:

- Partake in collegial dialogues, concerning ethical issues in personal and collegial tasks.
- Demonstration inclusion and the ability to reflect on personal prejudices and opinions.
- Seek current information and previous knowledge and partake in constructive pedagogical debates.
- Make ethical decisions, based on information and previous knowledge, in an analytical and reflective manner.
- Pass on knowledge about the pedagogical work.
- This further means that the pedagogue:
  - Act in accordance to the child or youth's best interest, in the events of loyalty conflict between work-related conditions and opportunities to deliver ethically responsible work.
  - Utilizes professional and critical judgement, courage and consideration their work.
  - Recognize ethical, professional and personal responsibility for their own assessments and actions.
  - Prioritize professional values above personal values.
  - Collaborate with pedagogical educational institutions to ensure students access to knowledge and ethically sound practices.
  - Make ethical and critical considerations about applied methods.
  - Safeguard the reputation surrounding the pedagogical profession.
  - Interact with other professions with a sense of equality and mutual respect.

**3. The pedagogue in the society.** The pedagogical profession plays an important part and have significant tasks in society. The pedagogue shall therefore:

- Treat all equally regardless of gender, religion, nationality, sexual orientation or cultural background.
- Organize the pedagogical tasks, in line with democratic principles in order to contribute to the upbringing of active citizens of society.
- Discuss pedagogical tasks, in order to advance the profession, for the benefit

of children and youths.

- Strive for a high level of professionalism, for the benefit of society as a whole.
- Utilize professional knowledge in public debates, to promote social justice and conditions for children and youths.
- This means that the pedagogue:
  - Safeguards the child's and youth's best interest, in the event of loyalty conflicts between systemic requirements and the possibility of carrying out ethnically justifiable practices.
  - Challenge laws and instructions if conflict with the profession's ethical values occur.
  - Prioritize and ensure fair and appropriate distribution of resources, and in turn accommodate the group of children and youths with the greatest need for pedagogical support.
  - Help draw attention to consequences of political prioritizing, in the tasks and efforts in the pedagogical field.





# PRINCIPLES included in the training module

Professional principles, Ethical principles,  
Connections of the principles with the “local codes”  
of participating countries

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## PROFESSIONAL PRINCIPLES

Youth working communities in Europe share similarities, but recent research and historical reports on youth work have also shown that there are significant differences in the infrastructure of youth work in Europe. Training and education opportunities, sustainable career paths and the legal basis for youth work vary across Europe. Moreover, the very term “youth work” did not exist until recently in all European countries. Funding for youth work also varies. There are differences in the way youth work relates to a wider system of services. Some countries consider youth work to be related to the social work of young people; some would view youth work as an informal part of the education system; and some countries would like to see youth work independently as an independent agent. In some cases, youth work is viewed from the perspective of civil society and community work, rather than public services. In some countries, youth work has no social recognition at all. Despite the differences, there are similarities within the youth field. Across Europe, there are people who work with young people in their spare time, often in youth clubs or community centers. Informal and creative methodologies are used, the action is based on the voluntary consent of young people, and the content of the work is based on the needs and cultures of the young people themselves. The Council of Europe Recommendation on Youth Work states that “Despite different traditions and definitions, there is a common understanding that the primary function of youth work is to motivate and support young people to find and follow constructive paths in life, thus contributing to their personal and social development and society as a whole” (Council of Europe, 2017) (Kiilakoski, 2020). Although there is no consensus on whether or not youth work should be part of the “system”, or whether it represents a specific profession, job position or “only” methodology, there is some agreement on what constitutes the main determinants of youth work.





These specifics of youth work – joint characteristics that connect youth work practices from various countries and set youth work apart from other professional fields should be represented in professional principles of youth work – principles that separate the “profession” of youth work from others, and which must be respected during the planning and implementation of youth work activities and programs. Youth workers sometimes have difficulties understanding these principles, leading to challenges in practice.

A review of a number of domestic and foreign publications from the scientific and professional literature, including countries in which youth work is viewed from an institutional perspective, as well as countries in which youth work practitioners organize their activities exclusively outside the formal system, the following PROFESSIONAL PRINCIPLES have been extracted, on whose basis the training module is founded:

## 1. NON-FORMAL AND INFORMAL LEARNING

Non-formal and informal learning are the basic tools through which development is influenced via youth work. The task of those who conduct youth work is to create a multitude of opportunities for non-formal and informal learning.

This principle implies that youth work, no matter in which setting is implemented (so even if implemented in formal educational setting for example) is based on the processes of non-formal and informal learning.

This means that, if we create a program for youth in which they know they are learning something new – such as communication skills program, the program needs to be tailored to the specific needs of our participants, created in a way that raises their motivation to improve their skills and needs to lead to concrete increase in skills, based on individual capacities of each young person involved.

A wide range program that comes from a syllabus meant for “everybody” with previously created targets for outcomes is not something we can put under a non-formal learning process through the eyes of the young people participating in the program.

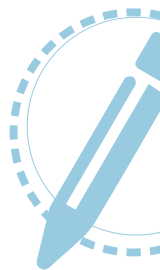
Second, even more valuable for youth work, is the activation of informal learning processes in youth we work with. With informal learning the key for the learn-

ing process to happen is in the young person himself/herself. Whether informal learning will happen or not depends on the reflection capacities of a young person – her/his ability to recognize and to internalize the knowledge or skill gained through a concrete situation. For a simple example, informal learning can happen in a situation when a young person is on his/her way to school and realizes that, when he/she is standing on the sun, his/her skin gets warmer. First, he/she observes the change and then has an AHA moment when he/she realizes that the change comes from the increase of the temperature because of the sun. This AHA moment is crucial for the integration of the new knowledge in the existing knowledge base of that person. If the AHA moment doesn't happen, if the young person just feels the heat and does not think about it/ignores it, the learning opportunity is missed. On a same logical process, informal learning also happens in some much more complex settings. For example, if we fall asleep during a lecture from a teacher, informal learning can happen if we realize that the sleepiness comes from the tone of the teachers' voice and we decide that, when we teach someone, we will not use this tone. Or, even more complex, when we speak up for the first time to our oppressor, and they react in shock, if we have an AHA moment, we will realize that our standing up can make a difference. Informal learning is learning through our own experience, and, therefore is the basis for "learning for life".

The task of youth workers is to create multitude of opportunities for non-formal and informal learning. This means that youth workers will create and implement programs based on non-formal learning (intentional raise of knowledge or skills in any area) but will also implement various activities that provide opportunities for learning through experience and learning by activating the AHA moments in different situations. This is why in youth work practice you don't only have organized, structured non-formal educational programs, but you can find an endless variety of activities – from group painting of public spaces or youth clubs, hanging out with a guitar, creating a theatre play, organizing volunteering activities, helping the elderly, creating a community sports competition... basically "the sky is the limit". But, the important thing here, from the youth workers point of view is to implement these activities with a plan for activating informal learning. So, the role of the youth worker in these activities is to support young people in to reaching their AHA moments. For example, when organizing a sports tournament, if our goal is for our group of youth to learn about responsibility and team work, we can let them do the organization part of the event as well and add some intentional tasks that will "make" them cooperate. Then, after the event, we will discuss with



them how everything went, providing with the opportunity for them to reflect, for AHA moments to emerge and for them to integrate that new information in their “system”. But, since in the informal learning we can’t guarantee that the AHA moments will happen, the task for youth workers remains that we create as many opportunities for informal learning as we can.



## 2. VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION OF YOUNG PEOPLE

Young people voluntarily participate in youth work activities and programs.

Youth workers cannot “make” young people participate. This does not mean that youth workers do not put in efforts to motivate young people to engage in youth work activities – on the contrary. This principle asks of youth workers to understand the motivation of young people and work towards answering that motivation through their activities. The job of youth workers is to make youth work activities attractive to young people and to use the first contacts to motivate them to include in the programs. Even when someone else “brings” a concrete young person to our activity, it is our job for that young person to want to stay and to want to come back. This does not mean we will only have fun on youth work activities. This means that we need to create and “implement” a safe, comfortable environment, where they feel good and welcomed. This often does also include a lot of laughter and relaxing activities, with no judgment. Also, this principle implies that we will create a multitude of opportunities for as many young people as possible to participate in youth work programs, and we will create programs for them and often in locations where they are – thus youth work includes a lot of different outreach and detached youth work activities.

## 3. ACTIVE PARTICIPATION OF YOUNG PEOPLE

Youth work does not exist without the full, active participation of young people – they propose, influence the process and are active participants in their development through youth work.

Youth workers are there to follow the young, not to “pull” them – but to know when to be “beside” them, “in front” or “behind” the youth. This means that young people themselves, in youth work, have the final say on their level of involvement and on the changes that happen. This principle shows that, in youth work, young

people have a “big say” in what is being implemented through youth work. Youth work fosters their active participation and fosters their involvement in proposing, organizing and implementing different activities within the youth work program and with support (if needed) from the youth worker. Youth workers task is to foster their active participation through various means, including organizing those kinds of activities that foster and motivate youth for their active participation. This is why interaction is a must in any type of youth work activity.

## 4. VARIETY OF METHODS

Youth work uses a variety of methods, and their selection depends on the competencies and experiences of those who conduct youth work.

This principle means that a youth worker can use any methodology for the implementation of youth work, as long as he/she respects also all other principles. In order to reach the goals of youth work – to support young people in their positive development and active participation, the youth worker can implement any tool he/she wants, but the condition is that they are good at it. This is important because a youth worker needs to know his/her goal in his/her actions with young people. This means that the youth worker will not implement something he/she does not have an idea how will it influence young people in regards to their personal development. It does not mean that youth worker is necessarily a high-level expert in a concrete field, but that he/she is working with something he/she knows and is aware of her/his competences in the field. This is why youth work practice involves not only social skills and activism actions, but also activities such as yoga programs, applied theatre projects, sports tournaments, art exhibitions, youth clubs, environmental actions, volunteering in the community, peer education programs, etc. There is an endless list of opportunities – anything that provides the youth workers with a tool for fostering informal and non-formal learning process with young people is eligible for use in youth work.

## 5. RELATIONSHIP-CENTERED

Youth work is characterized by a specific relationship between youth workers and young people. This relationship is characterized by friendliness and trust and tendency toward imbalance of power. A youth worker is not an authority who has a mandate to direct the development of a young person.







This principle does not diminish the power balance which eminently exists with having the roles of youth worker and young person in place, but focuses around the acknowledgment of the young person's power of their own life and their power in decisions regarding them. Youth workers do not get to decide anything for the young person (which differs from, for example, experts in the education system or social welfare), they do not have any formal measures that will "make" young people modify their attitudes and behavior, they do not have any sanctions they can use or "threaten" with. This means that, if the young person chooses to continue to involve herself/himself in some risky behavior, we can only "forbid" it happening during youth work activities but we can't make any decisions for him/her or be very angry at the young person for making her/his choices. On the other side of this principle, youth workers have to be aware of the imbalance of power which comes from different roles and be accountable for their "part". It's our job to create new opportunities that will allow the young person to challenge his/her choices and experience alternative, positive ways of satisfying needs that are currently satisfied with risky behavior. Also, the youth workers are there to be a positive example, to lead and motivate youth by their personal choices, and provide information and support when needed. This is why this principle asks of youth workers to focus on the relationships with the youth and to build a friendly, trusting relationship, which will foster positive influences of the youth worker towards youth he/she works with.

Professional principles are there to guide youth workers in their planning and implementation of youth work activities and programs and are the main thing that brings youth work implementation to its positive effects. Youth work is accompanied by other professional principles, but they are not "reserved" for youth work, as is the case with the above. These include, for example, the principle of LEGALITY (that everything done is done in accordance with the law, with a special requirement for knowledge of regulations in the field in which the activities are carried out), HARMLESSNESS (requirement that the one who takes actions affecting the lives and development of others does not inflict conscious damage), INTEGRITY (that the professional should be honest in his conduct and in the best light present his profession in contact with users, colleagues and the community). These principles, but also many others, such as the requirement NOT TO DEVELOP PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS with young people, which is present in all social and humanistic professions, have their clear place in youth work. However, here we focused on those elements of youth work that are "differentia specifica" for this field.

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## ETHICAL PRINCIPLES

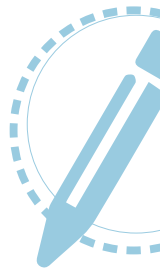
When it comes to ETHICAL PRINCIPLES, the situation is similar: there are many ethical principles that “apply” to the field of youth work. However, there are also certain principles without which, conditionally speaking, there is no youth work, and which form its backbone. Ethical principles in youth work represent the way in which youth workers behave in relation to young people, and by which they represent the values they strive for. They form a certain code of conduct for youth workers which they should follow when in contact with young people – they color the way youth workers treat young people they work with.

### 1. EQUALITY

A youth worker nurtures equality in relation to a young person. He/she does not place himself/herself in a position of power, respects the young person and equally respects his/her opinions and experiences. A youth worker nurtures healthy boundaries in a relationship with a young person.

For example, when voting for some activity, youth worker has an equal vote as other young people, and his/her opinion is equal to those of others. Having in mind that the youth worker does have a different role, and usually has also different experiences and competences than the rest of the youth group and, preferably, a built authority based on expertise and trust, his/her opinion can result in “more power” and that is all ok – the important thing is that the youth worker does not use any power “against” young persons he/she works with. Regarding boundaries, this principle refers to the part of personal boundaries and building quality relationships with young people with respecting those boundaries – respecting theirs and fostering our boundaries. For example, if the young person is, on our first meeting, asking a lot of quite personal questions about our private life, we can feel free to “stop” her/him – because we do not usually share that info with someone we just met. Same goes vice versa – we won’t ask something that is not “natural” to be shared and expect an answer. On the other hand, we will also participate in sharing information about us if this is the topic in question, for example, if we’re conducting an exercise where we ask of young people to share their regrets, we will also, completely honestly share ours. It’s about the personal relationship more than about the professional role and the position of the youth worker.





## 2. RESPECTING DIVERSITY

The youth worker considers and respects each young person with all his / her characteristics and respects that each young person has his / her unique set of personalities, experiences and competencies. The youth worker adapts his/her approach and interventions to each specific young person. In planning and carrying out their interventions, the youth worker follows the needs of the young person and respects their individual pace of development.

Respecting diversity implies lack of discrimination of any sort, implementation of different approaches that allow full participation of all young people included in youth work activities, modifying activities to follow the needs of the concrete young people participating in the program (including slowing down or speeding up), fostering quality atmosphere in which all young people that are on the activity feel welcomed, accepted and safe. It is of high importance that this principle is felt through the actions of the youth worker much more than through his/her words. Youth worker needs to be aware of the diversity of young people, to be aware of his/her prejudice and stereotypes and be open to question them in his/her contact with youth (after all this is something we expect from the young people, so we need to be the “first to lead” and be willing to question our own presumptions through live contact with diversity). Respecting diversity also implies that we implement any inclusive measure needed for full participation of concrete young person we work with. These measures can vary greatly and are recognized the most when talking about disability (thus introducing an assistant, or using sign language, or changing the venue so it is approachable by wheel chair). But diversity means far more than that. It covers all kind of differences, and implies that youth workers are sensitive and are capable of high individualization of their work and connecting to young people from very diverse settings, treating every person as a unique individual. Youth workers should to be aware about the need for addressing this principle through their practice all the time. If respected properly in practice, this principle can foster and support all other processes youth worker strives to.

## 3. ACCOUNTABILITY

The youth worker is accountable for his/her practice and treatment of young people.

He/she is aware of the way in which his/her behavior affects young people, takes responsibility for his/her actions and pays attention to the harmony of his/her

words and actions. Because the youth workers effects on the young people often derive from the relationship of the youth worker with the youth, being aware of the possible strong effects of how we live our lives, how we see the world and what we say and do on the image of us by the youth and subsequently the influence we can have on them, is very important. Youth workers are there to be positive models and to show in their action how an accomplished person and an active citizen lives, or how one strives towards becoming an accomplished person and reaching out to their potentials. This means that youth workers should not only promote positive life styles, but should live them. But it is not realistic to expect that all youth workers do not have “skeletons in their closets” or do not involve themselves ever in some risk behaviors. When this is the case, it is important not to promote those actions to young people, but also not to be dishonest about them. There are even options when youth workers can use their personal examples as a study case for the group, so they can explore negative influences of some actions. But it is important that the youth worker approaches these kinds of topics carefully, having always in mind his/her goal and providing opportunities that can lead to a healthy, thriving lifestyle.

This principle also implies that youth workers continuously practice reflective practice, and independently and with supervisory support review and reflect on their actions, activities with young people and learning outcomes. Reflective practice is one of the most important processes of the youth worker regarding his/her work, allowing him/her to have his/her own AHA moments, understand better himself/herself in some situations, understand better the youth he/she works with, understand why some situation happened in the way it did and learns about how to improve. Accountability also means that the youth worker knows and follows his/her professional boundaries well, does not take those actions for which he/she does not have enough competencies and continuously works on their improvement. This also means that youth workers know how to recognize what are the limits of his/her role, and how to support youth in finding the right address for his/her needs – if they overcome the capacities of the youth worker, actively collaborating with other community services.

The last important issue with accountability is being transparent in terms of respect for confidentiality in relation to young people. Young people youth worker works with need to know which information is confidential and which needs to be forwarded, why and how. It is important to know and understand that there





is a legal obligation of youth workers (as well as any other person) to break confidentiality in certain cases. Depending of the national legislative, information on this can vary, so it is very important that the youth worker knows the legal norms regarding confidentiality and safety – since safety is the main factor that asks for confidentiality to be breached. Youth workers will assess whether the young persons' safety is at risk or if the young person is putting someone else at risk, will assess the level of the risk and will act accordingly, often implying that confidentiality cannot “stand”. This does not mean that the youth workers will do anything behind the back of the young person, or that he/she will “turn her/his back” on the young person. Being open about this question actually strengthens the bonds between youth workers and young people and shows that they are someone you can count on to “do the right thing” even if it’s hard. For this segment to be implemented in the best possible way, youth workers need to know how the systems youth can get involved with work (health care, social welfare, criminal justice), and which is the right address for which problem of the young person.

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## CONNECTIONS OF THE PRINCIPLES WITH THE “LOCAL CODES” OF PARTICIPATING COUNTRIES

The NAPOR Code of Ethics (established in 2009) is based on other codes of ethics in youth work (such as The Ethical Conduct in Youth Work by the National Youth Agency from Leicester, and Youth Work Profession Code of Conduct Manual by the National Youth Agency of Malta – Agenzija Zghazagh), and therefore contains significant similarities with codes present in other associations and other countries, but also significant differences compared to other publications aimed at presenting codes of ethics in youth work (such as: Code of Ethics for Youth Workers in WA by Youth Affairs Council of Western Australia (YACWA) and Western Australian Association of Youth Workers (WAAYW)). The NAPOR Code of Ethics recognizes five professional and four ethical principles, which largely encompass the above specifics of youth work, but also cover principles that overlap with the principles of the social sciences and humanities in general.

The ethical principles of the code are as follows:

1. *Youth workers have an obligation to treat young people with respect.* This principle includes the prohibition of discrimination and respect for the limits of confidentiality in the relationship. Formulated in this way, this principle is partly reflected through Respecting Diversity (in the part of respect for personality and prohibition of discrimination) and Accountability (in the part of respect for the limits of confidentiality), but also includes the principle of Relationship centered with a young person.

2. *Youth workers have an obligation to respect and promote the rights of young people to make their own choices and decisions.* In describing the principles, it focuses on the way in which youth workers organize their practice (through the creation of a variety of learning opportunities) and that youth workers respect youth choices. There is a clear link between this principle and the above professional principle related to non-formal and informal learning, as well as the active participation of young people.

3. *Youth workers have an obligation to promote and ensure the well-being and safety of young people.* In its content, this principle describes the specific actions that the youth worker takes to ensure the safety of young people, then to respect the boundaries of their professional competencies and encourage young people to learn through dealing with risks. In this sense, the content of the principle appears to overlap with the ethical principle focused on accountability, which describes all elements of professional behavior of youth workers, but its last item also covers the part related to non-formal and informal learning and active participation of young people.

4. *Youth workers have an obligation to contribute to the promotion of social justice for young people and society as a whole.* This principle reflects the activist aspiration of youth work itself, and obliges the youth worker to practice activism, both in direct work with young people and in their actions outside the contact with young people. In this sense, in one part it shows respect for the above ethical principles (equality, respecting diversity and accountability) in a broader sense, through their “nurturing” in all areas that are important for young people themselves. In addition, encouraging young people to engage themselves (in this case in the wider social life, and not only in their personal development), is related to the principle of active participation.

The professional principles in the code are:

1. *Youth workers have an obligation to recognize and understand the boundary between personal and professional life.* This principle is a general principle





in all professions that involve direct work with users, and as such, it has found its place in youth work, as well as in the NAPOR code itself. In its content, it includes a ban on developing personal relationships with young people, understanding where the line is between personal and professional in youth work, a ban on corrupt behavior and abuse of young people (which is also a crime). In addition to this, this principle also covers the obligation for youth workers that their personal behavior in public outside working hours does not undermine the trust of young people as well as their professional integrity. This covers certain principles that are universal for all citizens (such as the requirement not to violate the law through one's own actions). The last segment focused on the harmonization of personal and professional life can be viewed as the principle of integrity, which is a universal professional principle. However, due to the special importance due to counting on non-formal and informal learning as the basis of their interventions, this request for youth workers is specially processed, and as such is included in the principle of accountability – through reflective practice. The obligation to maintain the boundary between professional and personal could be understood as an obligation to maintain professional boundaries, and as a challenge for youth workers to clearly set, nurture and maintain that balance with their personal life.

2. *Youth workers have an obligation to be accountable to young people, their parents and guardians, colleagues and the wider society.* This principle includes awareness of potential conflicts of interest, prohibition of breaking the law, and openness and honesty in working with young people. All these elements are in line with the principle of accountability.

3. *Youth workers have an obligation to develop the skills and competencies needed for the job.* This principle includes the requirement for knowledge of one's professional boundaries and continuous reflection, as well as the improvement of one's competencies. Also, the principle coincides with the principle of accountability.

4. *Youth workers have an obligation to encourage and engage in debates on ethics in youth work.* This principle of the Code of Ethics obliges youth workers to reconsider the impact of their personal value systems on their practice, the general impact of values and ethics on youth work, but also the requirement that the Code of Ethics itself be viewed as a “working version” and continuously reviewed and discussed. The part of the principle that is focused at direct work with young people is related to the principle of accountability. As other topics do not concern direct work with young people, they are not covered by sum-

mary principles above.

5. *Youth workers have an obligation to work with services and institutions that consider these principles.* The last principle places a demand on youth workers to inform their stakeholders about their code of ethics, as well as to react to violations of the code of ethics. This principle is less precisely defined in relation to other principles and can also be related to the principle of accountability.

In summary, the principles defined as professional principles within the Code of Ethics in Youth Work of NAPOR, which is also binding for all members of this network, and all youth workers who organize and conduct their activities within these organizations, largely in their description analyze different segments of one principle singled out within the framework of ethical principles in summary practice – the principle of Accountability. A clear connection is seen here, in the sense that the principle of accountability actually covers the ethical obligation of a professional to act in accordance with his or her professional role. The connection of the NAPOR Code of Ethics' professional principles with general humanistic professions can be spotted even easier when connecting it to the Denmark pedagogical principles, where the general principles also apply to youth work as a subcategory.

In the part of ethical principles of the code itself, elements of both professional, ie principles that determine the profession of youth work as such (and separate it from others), as well as ethical principles in summary practice are recognized. Bearing in mind that the Code of Ethics itself is an “authority” document for a large number of organizations conducting youth work in Serbia, the analysis of principles, challenges, as well as the training curriculum for youth workers will reflect specific parts of the Code of Ethics, in order for the prepared material to be fully applicable in Serbia with this form of the Code of Ethics. But in order for the content to be applicable to other contexts that have different systematizations (including Denmark itself) and to be applicable and recognizable in any context in which youth work is conducted (whether it is institutional practice or non-formal educational context), the analysis will be organized according to the summarized principles of youth work practice.

Regarding the Denmark specific pedagogic principles, the selection of professional and ethical principles that will be covered in this publication is in line with their guidelines, as a framework of humanistic principles for direct work with youth.





Thus, the greatest connection is seen in the connection of the ethical principle of Accountability – of acting according to one’s professional role and within the lines of that role. The principles from Denmark can help those who are less familiar with general principles from humanistic fields, as a basis that is always in place when implementing direct work with children and youth – of any form.







# II – CHALLENGES OF YOUTH WORKERS CONNECTED TO PROFESSIONAL PRINCIPLES

# WHERE DO CHALLENGES EMERGE

## Youth with fewer opportunities

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### YOUTH WITH FEWER OPPORTUNITIES

There are a lot of resources, courses and curriculum (formal and non-formal) which are there to help youth workers gain and enhance their professional competences in their direct work with youth. But, unfortunately, most of them are still only knowledge based, and do not provide youth workers with a lot of space to actually test their knowledge in practice. Even when the testing exists, it is still mostly in the form of an online course testing (where youth workers can choose from different responses or describe what they think is the best action) or live discussions with the trainers. This leaves room for youth workers to not understand completely or misunderstand how something they heard or learned should look in practice in their everyday work with youth. Because of this, with the best intentions in mind, sometimes youth workers face challenges in practice that they then do not solve in the best possible way, which can actually be unsupportive and can lead to further labeling or exclusion of youth who face different obstacles.

The room for this misunderstanding is very wide when it comes to respecting professional principles in practice, since they are not something that can be implemented by only learning them. This topic is complex and can present itself in a very wide variety of situations, forms, sometimes more upfront and sometimes very hidden in the concrete context of the concrete situation youth workers face in their practice. On the other hand, the professionalism is one of the core principles of youth work in general, and it is very important for youth workers to “live” the professionalism whenever they work with youth. In the situations that involve direct work with youth with fewer opportunities, especially when working with those facing social obstacles (such as young people facing discrimination because of gender, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, disability, etc., young people with limited social skills or anti-social or risky sexual behaviours, young people in a precarious situation, (ex)offenders, (ex)drug addicts, young and/or single parents, youth without parental care, young people from broken families, etc.), the testing of the professional principles of youth workers can actually happen on every activity.





In contemporary youth work literature and practice, different groups of youth that are in some way in a disadvantage position (therefore are vulnerable, in the risk of being marginalized or are already marginalized and/or oppressed) are referred under the term 'YOUTH WITH FEWER OPPORTUNITIES'.

The term itself means that one group of young people have fewer opportunities than their peers. On the European level the fewer opportunities groups are defined by challenges/obstacles that they face:

**Social obstacles:** young people facing discrimination (because of gender, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, disability, etc.), young people with limited social skills or anti-social or risky sexual behaviours, young people in a precarious situation, (ex) offenders, (ex) drug addicts, young and/or single parents, orphans, young people from broken families, etc.

**Economic obstacles:** young people with a low standard of living, low income, dependence on social welfare system, long-term unemployed youth, homeless young people, young people in debt or in financial problems, etc.

**Disability:** young people with mental (intellectual, cognitive, learning), physical, sensory or other disabilities.

**Educational difficulties:** young people with learning difficulties, early school-leavers and school dropouts, lowly or non-qualified persons, young people that didn't find their way in the school system, young people with poor school performance because of a different cultural/linguistic background, etc.

**Cultural differences:** young immigrants or refugees or descendants from immigrant or refugee families, young people belonging to a national or ethnic minority, young people with linguistic adaptation and cultural inclusion problems, etc.

**Health problems:** young people with chronic health problems, severe illnesses or psychiatric conditions, young people with mental health problems, etc.

**Geographical obstacles:** young people from remote, rural or hilly areas, young people living on small islands or peripheral regions, young people from urban problem zones, young people from less serviced areas (limited public transport, poor facilities, abandoned villages...), etc.

Often, one person fits in more than one fewer opportunities category (for ex. young gay person coming from rural area, single migrant mother suffering mental illness...). This does not mean we should treat young people just based on these categories, but we need to have in mind that these characteristics still do lead to fewer opportunities in the society.

When you look at the literature about youth work and its main characteristics shown in the first part of this publication, it can be noted that youth work aims at supporting all youth, but especially those who are, for any reason, suppressed, marginalized or vulnerable. But, in the youth work practice of Serbia and Denmark, but also other countries, it is noted that youth workers sometimes do not have enough experiences working with these youth categories, but much more in working with typical youth, or highly motivated youth from different groups that interact with youth workers in youth clubs. This is why, when in contact with youth from different fewer opportunities groups (especially those with social obstacles), youth workers often face different challenges. But the challenges in practice can also occur in their daily work with any youth group, and, since it is very important to foster reflective practice in youth work, this training module can support also those youth workers who already have experience in various youth groups. In the following, we will focus on how these challenges relate to the presented principles of youth work. All examples that follow are directly derived from youth work practices and observed, real challenges of youth workers.

Even though youth with fewer opportunities is a very wide term, covering variety of obstacles and life situations, one useful advice for preparation of youth workers in working with different youth groups (especially those who had little or none experience with some groups) is for them to “leave their pity and shock outside the door”. Normalization of the human experience is one of the most important things when in contact with people who went through a lot. Youth workers should focus on support, thus they need not to act in shock when they learn something about the history of the person or to be shocked if they hear something new that is hard to hear. The same goes for pity, because pity is not supportive. People need empathy and support.





# WHAT ARE THE CHALLENGES

Challenges in professional principles,  
Challenges in ethical principles

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## CHALLENGES IN PROFESSIONAL PRINCIPLES

### 1. NON-FORMAL AND INFORMAL LEARNING

*Trap for youth workers:* Learning is a term usually connected to formal learning settings and can be a trap for youth workers to believe that they have to “teach” young people something concrete and that they are there to be teachers. But learning in the youth work context is happening through the support youth workers provide to young people. If a problem occurs in a young person’s life and the youth worker is just there to listen, he/she could be teaching the young person at that very moment that there are people he/she can confide in and feel better. This is extremely important when working with youth from vulnerable settings, and is very important for youth workers to understand their role in young peoples’ lives.

Also, it is relevant for youth workers to have in mind that they are possibly always “teaching” something – just by “being” they are presenting an example young people can identify with, and young people can learn from through informal learning processes. Thus, not understanding this can lead to not “practicing what they preach” and trying to “teach” youth some positive behaviors that the youth workers do not implement themselves, leading to youth learning that people do not implement what they teach others.

### 2. VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION

*Trap for youth workers:* Even though volunteer participation seems like an “easy” principle, there is a lot of room for youth workers to step into different traps. The

first one involves youth workers that are used to working with “typical”, highly motivated young people in youth clubs. This group of youth workers can sometimes get “too comfortable” in the idea that anyone can come to their activities and thus, they do not need to do anything more to “bring in” new young people. Also, this group of youth workers can even become a bit defensive if a new, problematic young person tries to join the group. Also, youth workers that are used to working with highly motivated young people in youth clubs (or anywhere else, but on the basis of young people coming to them on their own), when they encounter young people from some marginalized or vulnerable groups in the field or in some institution, and when they get dismissed by these young people, they feel that the young people are rude and are rejecting what the youth worker is offering “for no reason”. What they forget, or do not understand is that the young person needs to see what she/he gets from the proposed activity, or even from the mere contact with the youth worker in order to want to engage.

Youth workers sometimes step into a trap of demanding attention of young people and organize their activities in not too engaging matter, resulting in young people not being too interested in what the youth worker has to say. For example, a situation when youth workers is presenting a lecture for 50 young people in an outdoor setting for 3 hours while the participants are just sitting and listening, the “worst thing” a youth worker can do is to be angry at young people when their concentration drops, when they start talking, moving around. If a youth worker in this situation tries to demand from them to “behave” a result can be very counterproductive and can lead to a drop out in their participation. Youth workers should always think about the motivation of young people and to organise his/her actions in a way that enforces their internal motivation to engage and be present in youth work activities.

### 3. ACTIVE PARTICIPATION OF YOUTH

**Trap for youth workers:** If a young person is present at a youth work activity, that still does not mean that he/she is actively participating. Following the last example in the previous principle, if a youth worker organizes a lecture and just talks, he/she is leaving zero room for active participation of young people. Also, asking at the end of a 3-hour lecture if they have something to ask, and they don't ask anything – this still does not mean that there is room for their active participation. This is why youth work always implies numerous interaction opportunities.







Other situation where youth workers can walk into a trap is expecting that, just by willingly participating in a youth work activity automatically means that they will be happy to participate in any proposed activity. This can happen for example when the youth worker proposes some activity or exercise at the beginning of the meeting with the youth just so the room for interaction is presented and knows that it is “good” to introduce an engaging activity at the very beginning. In this case, a youth worker can end up proposing an exercise that is not interesting to the youth group present in the activity. In this situation, youth workers are often surprised why young people do not want to take action when they came to a place when action is implied. This is why youth workers should plan their activities having in mind everything they know about their concrete youth group – developmental phase, characteristics, interest, and combine this with the topic of the planned activity. The better all these elements are connected, the higher are the chances of engaging young people and fostering their active participation. Also, when the youth worker notices that his/her proposal is not being accepted in the group, he/she should have an alternative or engage the young people themselves in proposing and realizing some activities that are interesting for them – without the inclusion of negative emotions towards the young people for “rejecting” the youth workers’ proposals.

Also, a trap in understanding the active participation principle is not coming prepared for the activity because you expect the youth to organise the activity themselves – since their active participation implies their action in this matter. Youth workers should always have some plan. It is completely fine to change the plan according to the situation and the needs of young people that are present in the activity. For example, if the plan was that the young people lead the activity and organize something themselves, but that young person did not come prepared for the activity, the youth worker will foster the process by supporting that young person to derive some suggestions or will step in and provide with a suggestion himself/herself as a “last resort” if needed. The main issue here is to engage and motivate young people to want to participate and take action in youth work activities – thus taking action in their own personal growth through youth work.

## 4. VARIETY OF METHODS

**Trap for youth workers:** This principle can be a tricky one for „fresh“ youth workers with less experience. In this case, they sometimes fall into a trap of using something they do not know because they saw it somewhere or think they have to use

that particular methodology. For example, if a youth worker participated in a forum theatre production one time and he/she decides that he/she will implement a forum theatre creation process with his/her youth group, just based on his/her experience as a participant. This is a risk for any type of activity that the youth worker is not skilled in, but that does not mean that this particular youth worker will never use forum theatre, just that he/she will start with something less demanding. Youth workers have to start somewhere of course, and for this the wide variety of methods offers numerous opportunities. Youth workers here need to be careful not to „go over their head“, because they carry the main part of the responsibility for the activities.

Other issue with the implementation of this principle is using some methodology without a clear goal – without a sense of why they chose what they did and what the methodology will provide youth with – in regards to non-formal and informal learning opportunities. For example, if you just choose to organise a painting job for the youth club and do not think about the goal and learning opportunities, you will probably miss a lot of possibilities for empowering the youth in the process.

Another example implies using any activity as an energizer, just because you „know“ that you should start some activity with an „energizer“. If you connect that starting activity with the rest of the plan for the day – and make of it actually an introduction to the topic, the start of the engagement of your participants or some form of assessment regarding the topic you will work on – you will achieve much more effects of just „energizing“ your group. Other risk with using energizers „just because“ is activating resistance and spite in some participants. This happens for example if you walk into a sleeping group and say: „I am going to energize you now!“ An introductory activity can be a lot more than just an energizer, so we suggest that you think about the beginning of your activity in relation to your whole plan for the day. Sometimes this means following the group and instead of energizing, playing some slow music and lying on the floor with them.

These issues can be seen as minor issues, but they are not. These small things all directly influence the motivation and engagement of youth, as well as your relationship with them – which is a key in their involvement and growth through youth work. These „shades“ make a big difference when working with youth with fewer opportunities, since, not rarely, you need to „prove yourself“ to be worthy of their engagement, or you need to respect their choices and resistances and organize activities in a way that respects this and fosters their involvement even with



all the resistances. This awareness is key for connecting with young people with fewer opportunities and creating quality relationships with them.

## 5. RELATIONSHIP-CENTERED

**Trap for youth workers:** Because youth work implies friendly, trusting, non-formal relationships with young people, youth workers sometimes have trouble in defining how they should react in some situations when young people become „too“ non-formal and implies that „all is allowed“ in youth work activities since we are all being non-formal. This can happen for example when a young person implies that he/she should bring alcohol to the next activity or that you can all use marijuana together. The risk lies in not reacting to an issue, because you feel that the young people will then see you as an authority. Here, the youth worker has an obligation and the authority that comes from his/her role to intervene and explain why this is not an option, no matter how all youth feel about this.

Other part of traps in this example lies in transforming the youth worker to a „parent“ in this situation and reacting too strong and in a judging matter. You do not have any formal means to direct the behavior of the young people, thus you should be very careful of not falling into a trap of acting as one. Sometimes, young people (especially those from different marginalized groups) can actually suggest something they know is not ok, just to see how the youth worker will react and to test whether he/she will meet judgment. It is very important to be aware of these processes and to control one's reaction, but still provide one.

Organizing activities that provided young people with opportunities to explore their values, beliefs, attitudes is a crucial part of youth work and reflects also this principle in practice. Challenges in this area are present when the youth workers want to work on some negative attitudes, prejudices or stereotypes, but does that in an untactical way. For example, if a youth worker starts the activity with words: „Today we will work on the prejudices you have regarding refugees“, he/she will very likely activate resistances and spite, and can even lead to young people feel insulted because you presume that they have prejudices or label their opinions as prejudices.. Also, other example for this is if young people express highly negative attitudes towards some group - we'll keep the example with refugees, and you choose for the next activity to take them to refugee camp without consulting them. They can find this measure to be too invasive. This does not mean that you will not take action in providing opportunities where they can explore and cre-



ate their own positive experiences that will influence their attitudes, but that you will approach these matters with careful planning, thinking and possible reflection with your colleagues if you have any doubts on how to approach a concrete negative value you spotted.

## CHALLENGES IN ETHICAL PRINCIPLES

### 1. EQUALITY

*Trap for youth workers:* When it comes to young people with fewer opportunities, especially those with social obstacles, youth workers often step in to a trap of asking of “new” young people to respect them. This can affect the motivation of newcomers and can result in their dropout from the program. What youth workers forget or do not understand in these situations is that, when working with youth who are, for some of their characteristics, not respected on a daily basis, asking from them to show respect to every person they meet becomes a goal, not a premise we start with. Because then, it is up to us to earn their respect, and then show them, through plenty of informal learning opportunities how good it feels when people are treating each other with respect, we can slowly move to showing respect to be a premise in a contact with new people.

Breaking personal boundaries is a trap here also. For example, if you are not comfortable with physical contact, and a young person you work with continues to touch you by your hair, hands, is hugging you, you can feel “obligated” to allow it, as you feel that you are there for them and not other way around. Youth work implies here equality in connections, and thus should lead to creating those connection based on authentic behavior of the youth worker as well as the young person. Thus, showing personal boundaries and explaining that you are not comfortable with physical contact actually supports this connection and shows the young person that you can still be cared for even when boundaries are in place – it can teach the young person that having boundaries is healthy and good for a relationship.

This also means that, if you do not feel comfortable sharing some personal information because you want to keep a balance between your personal life and your professional role, you are “free” to do so. But you need to be careful not to ask of the young people to share something that you are also not willing to share – if you do this, it will jeopardize this principle in your relationship with your youth group.

### 2. RESPECTING DIVERSITY

*Trap for youth workers:* Talking too much – youth workers sometimes, with a big desire to respect everyone in the group, spend too much time talking about it.





For example, if a youth worker chooses to devote first 15 minutes of a 60 minute activity talking about how all young people who are present should respect one another, that anyone can state their opinion, introducing rules on how to provide active listening, etc. there is a big possibility that the young people will be bored and feel that there is a formal ask from the youth workers for respecting these things, which can trigger spite in some of the participants, or can trigger resistance with the logic „why are you telling me this, I wasn't planning on disrupting anybody“. Other option is to „show“ them respecting this principle in practice by choosing for the start some activity that will provide with the opportunity to learn all this through our „magic“ informal learning – providing the young people the opportunity to feel, to experience how you actually obtain mutual respect, listening, support through the activity itself. This requires youth workers' skills, but this is, by our opinion, one of the most important skills a youth worker should master. How to ACT on this principle, not how to TALK on it.

Other trap implies that the youth worker discriminates someone without intention, by acting on his/her presumptions of the characteristics or competences of a young person based on the information we have on his/her fewer opportunity group. For example, if there is a person with physical disability in the group, and we presume that, because of his/her disability this person cannot actively participate in an activity we planned (for example throwing the ball and our person has a disability with his/her hand) and, preventively, we change the activity, we are maybe fostering the opinion that this particular person cannot do what we planned, even though, in practice maybe he/she could and are not „believing“ in the capacities of our young person. What we should do in this situation is to check with the person whether he/she can participate in what we planned.

The way to do this is also another trap youth workers walk into. And that is the „elephant in the room“ situation, where we are trying to pretend that the diverse characteristic does not exist. We can fall into this trap in a few ways. The first one implies that we do not even ask our person anything, just change the topic, with others noticing that we are doing so. Pretending that something does not exist is the „worst“ thing we can do, because we send a message that this is something not typical, not normal and that it should not be talked about – we're creating a taboo around it. Next thing is if, in our situation, we walk around the topic and we ask the person if he/she can participate like it is a very offensive and a big deal to talk about his/her disability – we are acting as talking about it is something

sensitive that should be barred to a minimum. We need to create an atmosphere where it is normal to ask and discuss diversity, and to normalize different diverse characteristics of young people. In another example, if you have a trans-person in your activity – if you, for example sport that a girl is talking about herself in male gender, it is completely fine to check with her if this is the way she/he would like the rest of the group to address her/him. This does not mean you will be rude in your contact, but means you will not pretend that this process is not present. Normalize the differences and taboo topics among youth. Youth work should be a space safe where youth can learn about those things that are foreign to them, without the fear of exploring and connecting.

One more thing that is tricky in respecting diversity is continually adjusting your activities by following the needs and tempo of your particular participants. This means that a youth worker is in trouble if he/she comes to an activity and sticks to his/her plan from A to Z and is not sensitive to the needs of his/her participants (including various factors such as the mood, issues happening in the activity, physical conditions in which the activity is being held, individual level of knowledge, skills and experiences of each participant etc.). Following the needs can be a continuous challenge, as it implies high competences of the youth worker to balance a lot of factors at once. But this is very important, as effects of the activity are very much dependent on these adjustments. Providing additional support for the full participation is also a challenge under adjusting our activities. This means that we need to assess the needs for additional support for each of our participants and organize our work in a way that allows their needs to be satisfied. This includes all kinds of inclusive measures, but also the adjustment of our behavior, attitude, language according to our specific group.

### 3. ACCOUNTABILITY

*Trap for youth workers:* As the principle goes, this one is the most recognized as the „tricky one“ because it implies all the responsibility coming with our professional role and how we communicate this responsibility to the youth, but also to our co-workers, supervisors and partners in the community. One often made mistake is „saying one, but doing the other“. Sometimes, when youth workers want to „teach“ young people some positive values, he/she can step into a trap of advocating something positive, with not respecting it himself/herself. This is a case for example if we advocate a life without alcohol, but we go out and drink every night – and a young person accidentally bumps into us on our night out – we’re





in trouble. This is why youth workers are encouraged to also question their behaviors, attitudes and beliefs so they can work on as many topics as possible with a positive influence and having a complete authenticity in it, avoiding falling into a trap of being hypocritical. This can happen if a young person asks the youth worker: „what do you think about drinking“, and the youth worker, having his positive model role in mind, replies with a strongly negative response.

Lying on past or current experiences in order to preserve the positive image in the eyes of our youth is another trap. For example, if they ask you do you drink (and you do), saying „no“ is not a good choice. This goes for any topic – regarding your experiences or opinions. It can lead to affecting the trust you built between you and them. Also, showing that you are also human and that you can also make poor choices is an important thing you can show to the young people. Acknowledging your bad choices, but also showing how you reflect and grow on them is a very powerful tool for positive influence on youth and motivating them to grow on their experiences and choices. All this does not mean that you will promote some harmful behavior and put on the table your risky experiences if these topics are not in the focus. You have to be careful that your interventions does not lead to an increased interest of youth to engage in some risky behavior. This is why, if you know you have some prejudices that you should not be proud of, when sharing them, it is important to reflect on why do you feel the prejudices are there and to leave room for a change of your own personal opinion – showing young people that change of opinions, attitudes is all ok with new knowledge and experiences, thus showing them how open mindedness actually looks in practice.

Going over your head is the next trap regarding accountability. When a young person shares some important personal information with the youth worker that involve, for example the existence of suicidal thoughts, youth workers are in the risk of taking responsibility for this information – by thinking that they need to deal with it on their own since the young person confided in them, giving them their trust by opening up. What can happen here is that the youth workers becomes some sort of emergency contact and that the young person calls the youth worker whenever feeling „down“, feeling at risk. This can be very overwhelming and even dangerous. As a youth worker you should always be aware of the limits of your competences and the limits of your role. In these kind of situations your crucial role will be to listen to the young person and to support her and motivating her to find professional support for her issue in the right address. Sometimes, if your personal competences include knowledge, experience and skills in treatment of

psychiatry issues, you can give yourself the privilege of sharing some of them, but only for the goal of motivating the young person to find the right kind of professional issue for the problem in hand – you can share which institutions work better than others, or even recommend a concrete doctor or, if a young person shows interest in this, make a connection with your contacts in order to make it easier for the young person to make the first step in this direction. But, it is also important here not to be too pushy, having in mind that the decision needs to come from the young person herself/himself. Seeking support from your other youth worker colleagues and supervisors is important too – they are there to support you and help you reflect, which is extremely important when we talk about accountable practice of youth workers.

There is a whole set of risks in regards to the question of confidentiality. Youth workers often have dilemmas regarding the limits of their confidentiality „clause“ regarding their relationship with youth. Stepping right into a trap happens when we do not understand the boundaries or the maneuver within the confidentiality between the youth worker and the youth. This is very important when working with youth from different vulnerable or marginalized groups, because they're in higher risk of becoming the victims or perpetrators of behaviors that are relevant for breaching the confidentiality clause. For example, if the young person in our previous example actually shares that he/she had a suicidal attempt that morning, this is an information you cannot keep to yourself. And if you are aware that this is an information you cannot keep to yourself, what you do with it and how you address this with the young person is the key challenge. If you choose to share this information to the young persons' parents without the knowledge of that young person – you're in breach. If you tell the young person „I am very sorry, but this is not a kind of information or problem I can deal with“ and stop the conversation – you're in breach. If you promise to the young person that you won't share this information with anyone – you're in breach. Each of these choices has potentially a very strong negative consequence for the young person. Thus, acknowledging the trust, listening and supporting the young person, but still talking about the quality of the information, acquiring more information about the issue, about who else is already informed (because sometimes you will find out that the psychiatrist and the parents are already informed), and talking about the next steps that you will take is extremely important.

Cooperation with other systems is another thing that a lot of youth workers forget. But here lies the answer in who can you call for consults when youth work





colleagues do not know the answers to your questions, but also who you need to activate as additional support for your young people when you recognize the need for this. This is why knowing how the systems work is extremely important. Often, youth workers fall into a trap of thinking, for example, that the social worker just doesn't care, is not interested and that youth never get their needs fulfilled in the social welfare system. This brings to the lack of motivation of youth workers to make a bridge and connect to the social welfare system and is supporting these negative attitudes of the young people towards the system. Often, youth workers just do not have enough knowledge on the scope of work, procedures and rules that people in the social welfare have to follow, which brings to these misconceptions. It is the same with the health care, education or criminal justice systems. This is why knowing and fostering cooperation with these systems is important, because, if the systems are more closed than open (as they often are in Serbia more than in Denmark), the youth worker can be the bridge and can open the door to support the inclusion of the young person in the system in question. Cooperating with other systems and knowing where your role ends and someone else's start is one of the foundations of accountability in any profession.



# PRACTICAL EXAMPLES

## DOs and DON'Ts for the use of professional and ethical principles

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### DOS AND DON'TS FOR THE USE OF PROFESSIONAL AND ETHICAL PRINCIPLES

Derived from the rich practice of field work of our street workers from Denmark in working with youth with fewer opportunities, in the following we give you some rich practical examples of challenges that can happen to youth workers in practice. Regarding these examples, we gave you dos and don'ts for the situations, that reflect on our principles. But, since we are talking about real, human situations that are always dependent of various factors, there is rarely one single solution that is „always right“. Thus, the suggestions for respecting the principles in practice in these situations are derived from positive practices of partners that created this publication, but are in line with the „science“ behind the principles.

All of the situations described bellow are real situations happened to experienced field workers. Challenging situations never stop happening, and they occur even more often when working with youth with social obstacles. But, the way we handle them depends on our knowledge, skills, capacities, expertise – and gets better with time. This is why working on these issues is a part of the lifelong learning process and continuous reflection is always good for assessing where we are and how can we be better – no matter how many years of experience in the field we have.

Some of the suggestions will depend on the youth workers skills, capacities and level of expertise and experiences. While preparing the material for the publication our teams from 2 countries, 3 organisations (total over 15 experienced experts in humanistic sciences) and with over 30 years of practical experiences also discussed on each one, and sometimes gave different opinions on the best possible choice for the solution of the challenging situation. When reading the practical situations you can reflect (on your own or with your colleagues) how would you react and how are these situations related to the principles.





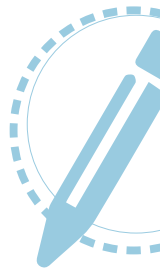
## CASE #1: KNOWLEDGE ABOUT FATHER PHYSICALLY ABUSING MOTHER

Actors	A youth worker and a girl.
Case	In connection to activities, set up by a youth worker, the youth worker meets a young girl. The youth worker becomes aware of the young girl displaying distrustful behaviour towards adults. She furthermore, shows signs of discontentment. With support and encouragement, the young girl starts to open up to and trusting the youth worker. She reveals worrying conditions in her home; among other things, that her father beats her mother. She asks the youth worker to keep this between the two of them, and not to discuss it with anyone.
Dilemma /Dilemmas	The youth workers position – including limitations. The relation to the young girl: Should the youth worker act on this disturbing information, and in doing so, risking breaking the young girls trust and thereby confirming the young girls' mistrust towards authorities/adults?
Don'ts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Asking the girl about the issue in front of other young people.</li> <li>• Telling her that everything will be ok and end the conversation there.</li> <li>• Telling her that she needs to report this to the social welfare workers and not the youth worker – that the youth worker cannot help her.</li> <li>• Telling her that you will take care of it.</li> <li>• Ignoring the issue and pretending it didn't happen.</li> </ul>
Do's	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A trusting relation must be established between the young girl and the youth worker.</li> <li>• Once a trusting relation is established, the youth worker should ask the girl about her father; for example, if he hits her.</li> <li>• It is important to inform the girl of the youth workers duty of notification others of this information. Their relation is not a friendship – even though it has a friendship like quality. Afterwards a possible family-oriented treatment may be considered by other professionals. Notification is only given on the grounds of information given by the girl.</li> <li>• The girl should be offered to speak to other professionals about the issues at home, such as a psychologist.</li> <li>• The youth worker, should furthermore consult other professionals and receive supervision during further procedures.</li> </ul>
Primary principle(s) at stake	Accountability

## CASE #2: YOUTH DISRUPTING AN ACTIVITY

Actors	A youth worker and eight young people.
Case	A youth worker is engaging eight young people in an activity involving drama exercises. One of the youths is incomprehensible about what they are expected to do. The youth does not express this verbally, but reacts to the activity by ridiculing and disrupting the activity. This affects the other participants, and creates unease and a lack of focus on the activity at hand.
Dilemma /Dilemmas	<p>It can be difficult to maintain a sense of perspective, when attempting to carry out a specific activity, whilst trying to figure out, why a young person is acting disruptive.</p> <p>How should the youth worker administer/carry out the activity – without further excluding the “disruptive youth”?</p> <p>How can the youth worker include the “disruptive youth” in the activity?</p>
Don'ts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pretend that the disruption is not happening and hoping it will stop on its own.</li> <li>• Scolding the young person and demanding that he/she stops and respects the rest of the group.</li> <li>• Stopping the activity completely until the disruption stops.</li> <li>• Separating with that young person and leaving the rest of the group to be bored while waiting for you.</li> </ul>
Dos	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Including the disruptive activity somehow in the activity itself – incorporating it and using it for the joint goal.</li> <li>• Acknowledging the disruption and engaging everybody by focusing the attention of the whole group to the actions of the individual, with telling everybody to do the same and making a game out of it.</li> <li>• If the activity is disrupting in a big way and is not stopping with less visible interventions, the activity is paused. The youth worker investigates the surrounding issues to the problem at hand.</li> <li>• A conversation is set up with careful engagement of the whole group, with the young person who is unable to participate appropriately in the activity. Clarification on why the young person is not able to participate in the activity, as well as clarification on the group dynamics and the young person's options for participation, is important.</li> <li>• Afterwards, a decision is made about the young person further participate in the activity, as well as a possible different role for the young person in the activity if needed, or whether the young person should be diverted to another activity, which may be more encouraging.</li> <li>• Then the activity is commenced.</li> </ul>
Primary principle(s) at stake	Accountability





## CASE #3: FIFA-TOURNAMENT – VIOLENCE AND THREATS AGAINST THE YOUTH WORKER

Actors	Two young people (Mo and Abdi) and a youth worker.
Case	<p>Mo and Abdi are playing FIFA. Mo suddenly becomes very upset, at starts to throw his PS4 controller. The youth worker tells him, that it is not ok to throw the controller, despite him being angry over losing the game.</p> <p>Mo and Abdi play another match; which Mo also loses. He starts yelling and swearing; he is really angry.</p> <p>They play a third match, during which another young person informs the youth worker, that Mo is not only playing for fun, but also for money, and Mo has lost 200 DKK the last to matches. When learning about this, the youth worker chooses to turn of the PlayStation. The youth worker reminds the two youths of what they already know – that they are not allowed to gamble, whilst being in the youth facilities.</p> <p>Mo becomes very angry. He starts yelling and saying insults towards the youth worker, such as “fuck you, you pig!”. The youth worker calls Mo into an office and tells him, that it is not right to play for money, and it is definitely not right to address others with insults. Mo replies very angrily and uses his father as a threat to the youth worker. Mo starts to shove and intents to strike the youth worker.</p>
Dilemma /Dilemmas	<p>What do you do now?</p> <p>What would you do in a similar situation?</p> <p>Could this conflict have been avoided? If so, how?</p>
Don'ts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Get into a physical fight with the young person (if possible to avoid)</li> <li>• Scream back with insults</li> <li>• Run away from the youth facility</li> <li>• Include more young people who are present in the conflict</li> <li>• Hide what happened from your colleagues</li> </ul>
Dos	<p><b>A.</b> The young person is given the opportunity to finish the match. A conversation with him is held, at another given time, where he has calmed down and may include participation of his parents.</p> <p><b>B.</b> The situation is interrupted and the young person is sent home, with informing him that you need to notify others of this behavior. The young person's parents are contacted immediately, in order to inform the parents about the situation, and in order for them to be able to talk with their child about the situation, when he arrives at home.</p> <p><b>C.</b> A colleague brings the young person to the employees' office, in order to investigate the situation further. The youth worker should not handle this situation single-handedly. Assistance should be sought from an experiences colleague, before confronting the</p>

	<p>young person. There must always be two professionals present to handle situations like these. Documentation of legitimate self-defence or possible use of force, requires two people being present in the situation. The youth worker should consult other professionals during further procedures.</p> <p><b>D.</b> Organize a mediation session with the youth worker and the young person after everybody calmed down.</p> <p><b>Points of attention:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· A focus on the youth worker who is exposed to threats is needed. The youth worker in question must receive support.</li> <li>· An untrained youth worker should never handle similar situations single-handedly.</li> <li>· Protect the young person who brings the situation to the attention of the youth workers. Not inform about this young person to the other young people.</li> </ul>
Primary principle(s) at stake	Accountability

## CASE #4: LACK OF ACTIVITY WITH 15 FRUSTRATED YOUNG PEOPLE

Actors	15 young people and youth workers
Case	<p>A youth worker is waiting for a group of young people to arrive at an activity. Only about half of the expected group show up. Four girls arrive (group A), who are very upset and are discussing loudly. They approach the youth worker, and all eagerly talk about a conflict, that has taken place the day before, between the three girls (group A) and three other girls (group B). The conflict is concerning one of the girls from group B, who has spoken badly about a sister to one of the girls in group A.</p> <p>While the girls from group A are telling the youth worker about the incident, the three other girls from group B arrive. They see that the girls from group A are talking to the youth worker. They immediately storm over, telling the youth worker, that the girls from group A are lying, and that the group A-girls, has been pursued them all day. The phone rings, and a college, who was supposed to be present, calls in sick.</p> <p>Now the last of the expected young people arrive, making a total of 15 young people gathered for the activity.</p>
Dilemma /Dilemmas	You are on your own with 15 young people, who expect an activity to take place. 7 of the 15 young people are very upset and angry. The atmosphere is very chaotic. The remaining young people are becoming impatient and upset about the commencement of the activity being dragged out. An unease is spreading.





	<p>What do you do?</p> <p>What should your focus be on?</p> <p>Should you handle the issues, in a certain order?</p>
Don'ts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cancel the activity by explaining that it is being cancelled because your other colleague did not come – respect their willingness to participate and the time they put into by coming to the activity and use the potential of the conflict for informal learning</li> <li>• Ignore the conflict and start the activity as planned.</li> <li>• Focus on the realization of the activity (since you're one man short) and not on the relations between your participants.</li> <li>• Try to be the "judge" in the conflict and take side of the one group of girls.</li> </ul>
Dos	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inform others about the conflict. The conflict must be resolved before anything else can be done. In this way, the girls may experience responsibility – as well as experience that the decision of whether or not the activity should still take place, is not only depending on the youth workers will and responsibility. Talk to the two girl groups.</li> <li>• Use the groups for resolving the conflict, don't try to be the only one "responsible" for the conflict resolution. You can possibly use the help of one of the girls, who should have participated in the activity and who knows the girls from group A and group B.</li> <li>• The conflict should not be allowed to spread further.</li> <li>• After the conflict is resolved, you can use the group in defining how the activity will take place since you're with one less youth worker – so they can help you, or they will propose a new activity, or you will brainstorm something new for which you do not need an extra youth worker.</li> <li>• Plan future activities to support the group cohesion or fostering closer connections for this group.</li> <li>• Reflect on your steps with your colleagues.</li> </ul>
Primary principle(s) at stake	Non-formal and informal learning, Active participation

## CASE #5: YOUTH WORKER AND ALCOHOL HABITS AT DEMONSTRATIONS

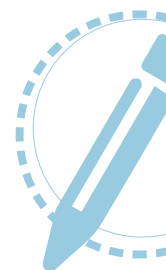
Actors	Spare time youth worker and vulnerable young people
Case	You are, in your spare time, part of a grassroots movement, that is concerned about environmental preservation. You are taking part in a big demonstration, which is to be held in the main town square. The town square is located next to the place where you volunteer as a youth worker.

	<p>The demonstration has begun, when you arrive. There are a lot of on-lookers present. Among them, a group of young people, who you affiliate with, when you are working as a volunteer youth worker. These young people come from families, with parents who have an alcohol or marijuana abuse problem.</p>
Dilemma /Dilemmas	<p>You are offered several beers and other alcoholic beverages by your friends, during the demonstration. Marijuana is also passed between your friends. You are known, between friends, to enjoy alcohol during demonstrations, and your friends keep passing you a bottle. You are off work and are used to drinking, whilst at demonstrations.</p> <p>The young people observing you, all have traumas, relating to alcohol and marijuana misuse due to experiences with their parents.</p> <p>What do you do?          What are your options to act upon?          What do you prioritize?</p>
Don'ts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Try to hide from the youth group or ignore them if you think they already saw you</li> <li>· Be all nervous about seeing them there</li> <li>· Say hi then leave, pretending you were going to leave anyways</li> <li>· Pretend you didn't see them and "go nuts" in drinking alcohol with your friends.</li> </ul>
Dos	<p><b>A.</b> What you do in your spare time, is private and a choice of your own. If you want to drink beer, you should be allowed to do so, even if your work involves working with young people who come from families with alcohol issues. You should "act normal" and normalize the situation of meeting the youth in that setting.</p> <p>If the young people you work with, see you drinking alcohol, it may create opportunities for dialogues concerning alcohol, drugs, amount of alcohol intake, limits and so on. It is not the drinking of alcohol in itself, that causes an issue. It is the amount of alcohol consumed, that creates problems. Young people must be helped to gain an understanding, awareness and appropriate health related relationship with alcohol.</p> <p><b>B.</b> You can also choose not to drink in the presence of the young people you work with – or not at all during that day. It is up to you, your own limits and in accordance to the values you want to show your surroundings. But in this case, you need to be careful for young people to not notice that you are refusing only because they are there – because that could lead to a breach of their trust in you.</p> <p>No matter what you do, conversations about consumption and limits is extremely important after a situation like this. Use it for learning/reflection purposes.</p>
Primary principle(s) at stake	<p>Non-formal and informal learning, Equality, Accountability</p>





## CASE #6: FOOTBALL ON SUNDAYS – WITH LOCAL YOUNG PEOPLE AS ROLE MODELS



Actors	<p>Based on Football on Sundays – an activity for children and young people, created in corporation with local youth/youth worker between the ages of 17-22.</p> <p>The activity is for all young people between the ages of 11-18.</p> <p>The estimated number of participants: 20 from the local area.</p>
Case	<p><b>Part 1:</b> 20 young people are gathered for Football on Sundays. The young people are excited for the games to begin, and a positive atmosphere fills the indoor court. After a short period of waiting, the young people are all gathered in the middle of the indoor court. The youth worker takes initiative, and divides the group into smaller teams. The games begin, and the positive atmosphere continues – without any indication of something being on its way.</p> <p>However, during one of the matches, a tackle develops into an argument between the two involved. Shortly after, another two boys take part in the argument. At this point, the argument is turning into a physical fight, making several young people uncomfortable, who then seek outside the indoor court. The youth worker witnesses the argument.</p> <p><b>Part 2:</b> The situation is very chaotic, and one of the boys now hits the other, who ends up with a bloody nose. The other two boys involved, now become a part of this tense situation and they engage in the physical fight. The youth worker runs to the fight that is taking place, and tries to separate the involved parties. He succeeds, but the involved parties do not want to talk and leave the indoor court through different exits.</p>
Dilemma /Dilemmas	<p><b>Part 1:</b> How would you feel about the situation? What do you do? Could the situation have been avoided? Who has the responsibility? Could the situation have been stopped?</p> <p><b>Part 2:</b> What do you do now? Who should be included in the follow-up on the situation: - The young people involved? - Onlookers? - Colleagues? - Parents?</p> <p><b>What would you imagine would happen, without any follow-up?</b> - The young people involved? - The onlookers? - Colleagues? - Parents? - Future number of participants and future culture in the activity?</p> <p><b>What challenges has the youth workers experienced?</b> <b>How did we solve the dilemmas?</b></p>

Don'ts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not reacting to the first fight</li> <li>• Try to resolve the conflict just talking individually with one person involved in the fight</li> <li>• Stop the whole tournament and tell everyone that the activity is being cancelled because the boys had a fight</li> <li>• Stand aside while the young people are physically fighting</li> <li>• Do not address this situation after the situation is over</li> </ul>
Dos	<p>In relation to preventing problems, the most important thing, is to start by articulating the boundaries, rulesets and consequences. The young people need clarity and transparency.</p> <p>It is furthermore important to select some of the resourceful young people from the group as assistants. They can assist as referees in matches, hand out sportswear for the matches and so on. Youth involvement provides co-responsibility. It may contribute to the two youth workers, being able to focus on other things during the activity. By the time of the first hard tackle, the game should be stopped, and the intolerance of such behaviour should be emphasized. Hard tackles may cause injuries, conflicts and create tension and so on. It is about creating clear boundaries – and thereby creating settings for enjoyment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If some young people continue the dispute, this may be dealt with by removing the people involved from the match and talking to them individually, where they receive a warning due to their behaviour. The youth worker must simultaneously be aware of what goes on in on-going matches.</li> <li>• If the young people start a physical fight, they must be separated as quickly as possible, and taken away from the rest of the group. The people not involved, should be able to continue their matches, as they should not be punished, due to two young people's inappropriate behaviour.</li> </ul> <p>Attempts to solve the conflict between the young people, should be made:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It is at times, best to talk to the young people involved separately, before handling it collectively. At other times, it is possible to speak with and solve the issue collectively.</li> <li>• If one of the young people involved leaves, you should make sure to follow up on the situation with the young person, once they have calmed down.</li> <li>• How such situations are handled, always depends on the assessment of the level of conflict between the young people.</li> </ul>
Primary principle(s) at stake	Accountability, Relationship-centered



## CASE #7: PRIVATE, PERSONAL OR PROFESSIONAL



Actors	A volunteer youth worker and two young people.
Case	<p>A prominent figure within the right-wing affiliation, describing himself as a political activist, regularly announces dates for his political appearances. These appearances are often live streamed and take place in local areas with many of its residents having another ethnic background than Danish. This political activism usually consists of hateful statements and comments about the ethnic groups represented in the local area. During these appearances, the presence of supporting role models for the young people, are often needed.</p> <p>A youth worker is present in the local are on the day, the activist shows up to express hateful opinions on slam. Many of the local young people are present. They are deeply affected by the situation. They shout at the activist and the situation escalates with the young people starting to threat, spit on and throw objects on the activist. The situation is heightened by the presence of the police, and the activists insisting on the right to freely express his opinions.</p> <p>The youth worker, who on a daily basis work with the local young people, feels affected personally, as he himself is a Muslim. After the demonstration, he yells to the activist, to pack up his things and piss off. A local young person comes over to the youth worker, acknowledges him by padding him on the shoulder, and they continue on.</p>
Dilemma /Dilemmas	<p>How are situations handled when private and personal opinions are challenged, and you also have to act on the basis of the set values of your profession?</p> <p>Freedom of religion Freedom of speech Law and order</p>
Don'ts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engage in physical conflict with the police or any other person on the demonstrations</li> <li>• Engage further in the conflicts</li> <li>• Celebrate afterwards with your youth group on how you handled the situation</li> <li>• Say something like “fuck, sorry” to your youth group and carry on as nothing happened</li> <li>• Encourage further their negative talk towards the activist</li> </ul>
Dos	<p><b>A.</b> If you sense that the situation becomes too extreme, you should leave, before you start reaction inappropriately. Do not show up, if you are worried about reacting unprofessionally. You should be able to express disagreements with your colleagues; make your colleague aware of you having to leave, as it is affecting you personally.</p> <p>If you have unintentionally shouted at the person in question, it is important to be able to acknowledge your mistakes and to show the young people, that your behaviour was not appropriate.</p>

It is important to reach out to the young people, who witnessed you shouting, and have a conversation with them about, how you could have handled the situation more appropriately. In this way, you are able to initiate reflections about, how people may handle similar situations differently.

In situations involving emotions, it is easy to get caught up and lose your common sense. In these situations, it is important to emphasize the acceptance of people's different ways of thinking, which may lead to conversations with the young people about freedom of speech, freedom of religion, democracy and so on.

Subsequently, you can talk to your superior and possibly your colleagues, about how to avoid similar demonstrations, as they affect you emotionally, and that you find it difficult to behave professionally.

**B.** Tell the young people to avoid similar situations, as their presence contributes to the activist his desired outcome; namely, to provoke other people with his attitude and utterances. Conversation with the young people afterwards concerning:

- The emotions at play. It is important to be able to understand the young people's frustrations and to help them vent their frustration and reflect.
- Emphasize that their actions (throwing stones, spitting on the activist and so on) is inappropriate and punishable by law.
- Tell them, that the best thing they can do, at those types of demonstrations, is to not show up at all. The activist seeks to provoke them and bring forth a provoked reaction.

Primary principle(s) at stake

Respecting diversity, Equality, Accountability

## CASE #8: OPINIONS ON SOCIAL MEDIAS

Actors	A volunteer youth worker, a pedagogue (professional) and a group of young people
Case	<p>A volunteer youth worker (Dan) sits, alongside a pedagogue and a group of young people, in a local youth facility. They are discussing the current societal circumstance concerning COVID-19 and the actualized restrictions in relation to the number of people allowed in the evening gatherings in the youth facilities.</p> <p>One of the young people tells Dan, that he has watched a video Dan has shared on Facebook the day before. The young person tells him, that his video has made an impression on him, as has many of the other videos, Dan often shares. The Pedagogue ask them about the videos. The young person explains, that the video explains how the new vaccine is dangerous, as it is part of a bigger plan to create a total surveillance of society, where every citizen fundamentally is viewed as sick, until the opposite is proven. Restrictions are, accord-</p>



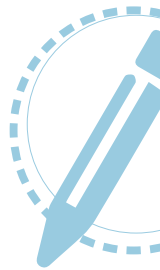


	<p>ing to the young person, simply a means for the state, to enforce total control over every citizen. The young person goes on to say, that he actually fears for his own future freedom. He finds the videos, which Dan are sharing, to have been enlightening in to a degree, that he will no longer let himself be tested – and perhaps neither vaccinated. Dan contributes with further facts to the story, and reveals that he will be attending a demonstration, which is to be held in five days' time, as a rebellion against the current restrictions, that he finds to be based on a fabricated pandemic.</p>
Dilemma /Dilemmas	<p>How can you, whilst working with young people, act on social media in such a way, that your personal opinions are not affecting the conscious or subconscious minds of the young people you are working with.</p>
Don'ts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage behaviour that can put youth at risk</li> <li>• Promote publicly opinions that are not based on science</li> <li>• Present your personal opinions from an authority standpoint to the young people</li> <li>• Support opinions based on not enough gathered knowledge and information</li> </ul>
Dos	<p>Since the youth workers is supposed to nurture the non-formal, friendly relationship with the youth, it is up to ones' personal boundaries whether or not you will "allow" the connection with young people you work with via social media. If you do, you have to become aware of this and filter through your youth workers' role whenever you post something publicly. If you choose to allow the access to your personal posts to young people, it is important to inform the young person about different opinions concerning the specific topic.</p> <p>The youth worker should furthermore curiously inquire about the young person's opinions, and discuss what knowledge they base these opinions on. It is important to unfold different perspectives on the matter. It is fine for the professional to express personal opinions, but it is important to emphasize that it is the professional's own opinion.</p> <p>Sharing controversial information that, you know, is not science-based and that you yourself did not explore enough is a very slippery slope and can breach the values you're trying to teach the young people. You can organize a new activity around this, fostering the development of critical thinking in the youth group.</p>
Primary principle(s) at stake	<p>Relationship-centered, Equality, Accountability</p>

## CASE #9: FREE TRIPS AND ACTIVITIES DURING THE SUMMER HOLIDAYS

Actors	<p>Parents affiliated with the local housing association.          Youth facility personnel.          Children and young people from the local area.          Parents to the children and young people from the local area.</p>
Case	<p>The local housing association are working closely together with a group of parents in the local area, in supporting and creating activities for the young people in the local area. The parental group applied for and received funding, in order to create activities for the local youth in the summer holidays.</p> <p>A three-day trip to Copenhagen is arranged in the beginning of the holidays. On the trip are a large group of young people between the ages of 12 to 14. They are all staying at a hotel, eating at restaurants and take a trip to the fun park Tivoli. The young people have an amazing trip. The trip does not cost them anything, as the money from the funding covers all expenses.</p> <p>A few weeks after returning from the trip, the local youth association, advertise other activities that are occurring during the summer holidays. Among other activities, is a trip to an activity and water park. The trip includes one overnight stay, where the young people are going to cook their dinner in their holiday housings. The cost of the trip is 200 Danish Kroner per person. The youth association wonders why no young person has signed up for the trip, as previous trips have been very popular. The young people and their parents argue, that they are not prepared to pay money for arranged trips, when the local housing association are offering more exciting trips for free.</p> <p>The youth workers in the youth association learn why children and young people do not want to go on their trips. The youth workers, are frustrated by the fact that the parents, who are connected to the local housing association, are offering free trips. It is not possible for the youth association to do the same. The youth workers also believe, that valuable lessons can be made, when families contribute with a small payment.</p> <p>During the summer holidays, the children and the young people choose the free activities, offered by the parents who are connected to the local housing association. The youth association also experience less and less children and young people turning up at their youth facilities, despite many of these children may benefit from being around professional pedagogues/youth workers.</p>





<p>Dilemma /Dilemmas</p>	<p>Many families in the area have many children. They do not have the economical means to pay for summer holiday activities for their children.</p> <p>How can the families be supported, if they have to contribute economically to all the trips and activities offered by the youth association?</p> <p>How can the parents have connected to the local housing association and the youth association work together on summer holiday activities?</p> <p>What possible issues surround the local housing associations free trips?</p> <p>How to you select which children and young people, have the greatest need for going on trips, if the amount of people going is limited?</p>
<p>Don'ts</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be angry with the youth for not showing up and confronting them about it</li> <li>• Close up the youth facility</li> <li>• Create a rivalry with the housing association.</li> </ul>
<p>Responses</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Try to understand the motivation of the youth and to respond to this motivation with your offer of activities.</li> <li>• In the vast majority of cases, it makes sense to charge a symbolic amount from the young people participating, as it reflects the real circumstances of society. It furthermore teaches them, that many things are not for free. If it is still preferred, that the trip is cost free, it may be formed as a reward for good effort, that the young people have made. Is it, however, a case of the young people, not being able to afford to participate, due to financial circumstances, they may instead contribute in other ways, such as assisting with different tasks.</li> <li>• If you can, also apply for funds that will allow you to take them on a free trip, but always include them in whichever way you can in organizing and implementing the activities on the trip - so they will take responsibility and learn from the opportunity.</li> <li>• Collaboration between the youth association and the local housing association is always important. Youth workers should always collaborate and coordinate with different associations, concerning different activities, in order to reduce competition.</li> </ul>
<p>Primary principle(s) at stake</p>	<p>Voluntary participation, Variety of methods</p>

## CASE #10: IS IT SPLITTING?

Actors	<p>Volunteer youth worker Pedagogue/youth worker 2 girls at the age of 12</p>
Case	<p>A volunteer youth worker (Peter) and two girls at the age of 12, are playing games in a youth facility. A permanent pedagogue employee (Lise) has left the facilities, to go shopping. The two girls tell Peter, that they do not like Lise, as she always seems angry. She does not have a sense of humor, and does not seem interested in doing anything with them. They tell Peter, that they wish for him, to be at the facilities more often, and that they know that other children and young people also like it better in the facilities, when he is around.</p>
Dilemma /Dilemmas	<p>What should Peter tell the girls? Should Peter mention the conversation to Lise? How should Peter handle this situation?</p>
Don'ts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Agree with the youth and gossip on Lise's behavior</li> <li>· Discuss with the girls and not tell Lise that there is an issue</li> <li>· Ignore what they're saying and move on as nothing happened</li> </ul>
Dos	<p>Peter should act professionally and defend Lise – even if he feels the young people are right. He should argue why he thinks Lise might be angry. At the same time, Peter needs to listen to the young people, and curiously ask about their experience. It should not be disregarded.</p> <p>If he agrees with the young people, he may discuss possible reasons for Lise's anger, and how they might handle similar situations in the future, by expressing their experience to Lise instead of him. He thereby, shows support for his colleague. He should furthermore discuss individual differences in people, which can cause different reactions. Therefore, Lise's way of reacting, may not be an indication of anger.</p> <p>Peter should discuss the incident with Lise afterwards. They should discuss reasons behind the young people's experience and expressions. Peter may take the young people's point of view, if he agrees with them, and discuss the incident with Lise, based on this point of view. Peter should also emphasize the importance of him and Lise sharing information about what the young people share with them, as in not doing so, may cause the young people to take advantage of the situation.</p> <p>Points of attention:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Reduce splitting behaviour.</li> <li>· How is the group dynamic among the staff?</li> <li>· Get the superior involved, if disagreements occur between colleagues (Lise and Peter), as professionals may easily overrule volunteer worker.</li> <li>· It is often seen that new employees are favored over older ones, who have been there for a longer period of time. A new employee is more prone to say yes than no.</li> </ul>
Primary principle(s) at stake	<p>Relationship-centered, Respecting diversity</p>







As you can notice for sure – the situations are not always “clearly” pointing to a concrete principle. This is because the social interactions are, as a rule, complex, and often intervene more than one issue when a challenge emerges. Also, what is noticeable is that over half of the cases and focus (among others) on accountability, showing that the awareness on ones’ role as a youth worker and everything that goes in line with that particular professional role is a must in each contact with youth. This puts the youth workers in a position that they need to balance a high number of factors when choosing their reaction in a concrete situation. Also, this asks of them to have enough self-control and a clear mind so they are actually capable to choose their reaction. This is important because we step into the youth worker role with different personal experiences.

If we do not train ourselves enough in various challenges and different situations, when a crisis emerges, we will often act instinctively – which will not necessary be according to our training or according to our youth workers’ role. This is why including experience-based training is a very important thing in training youth workers, because this kind of approach provides them with room to practice in crisis situations, but in a safe space, where they can make mistakes and can test different solutions. Our training module tries to answer to this particular need and provide youth work trainers with a tool for organizing this kind of experiential learning opportunities.





# III – THE TRAINING MODULE

# EDUCATIONAL FRAMEWORK

**Training module name:** ACT IT OUT – FROM PRINCIPLES TO PRACTICE

**Duration of the full training module:** 30 working hours, 5 days per 6h (20 – 24 participants) + an individual exiting interview

**Overall goal:** Development of capacity of youth workers to implement professional principles in their work with different groups of young people, with encouraging social inclusion, solidarity and cohesion.

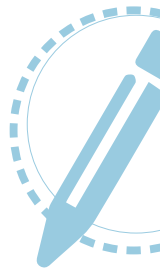
## Specific objectives of the training:

- Raising understanding of professional and ethical principles of youth work in practice with different and mixed youth groups
- Raising competences of youth workers in creating and maintaining relationships with young people from different groups with fewer opportunities
- Raising skills of youth workers in addressing challenging situations, including individual, group and system reactions

## Structure of the training module:

Day	Competence component	Session	Purpose
1	Awareness	First feeling – Introduction	To show the participants through their own experience how the principles „look“ in practice;
		Building the group – fostering trust and openness	To explore their views, attitudes, knowledge and experiences regarding the roles relevant for youth work.
		Exploration – Me, young people, youth work, other systems	





2	Awareness and Knowledge	Position of the youth worker	To confront the participants with their pre-susptions and possible prejudices in a safe space; To explore their level of knowledge and skills regarding the use of the principles in practice; To raise their knowledge of professional and ethical principles.
		First contact	
		Introduction of the principles	
3	Skills	Play, perform, test, reflect	Enhancing their skills through applied drama techniques – entering the challenging scenes and trying to solve them by respecting the principles; Fostering reflective practices through group and individual reflection on each „test“.
4	Skills	Play, perform, test, reflect	Enhancing their skills through applied drama techniques – entering the challenging scenes and trying to solve them by respecting the principles; Fostering reflective practices through group and individual reflection on each „test“.
5	Skills	Play, perform, test, reflect	Enhancing their skills through applied drama techniques – entering the challenging scenes and trying to solve them by respecting the principles; Fostering reflective practices through self-reflective evaluation, group evaluation and exiting interviews with participants.
		Reflections & conclusions	
6	Awareness	Individual exiting interviews	Integration of gained knowledge and skills on the individual level.

### Learning outcomes:

- Greater understanding of professional and ethical principles in youth work
- Improved skills in implementation of professional principles in youth work practice
- Greater understanding of the roles and partnership between youth work and other systems
- Greater awareness of the specifics of youth with fewer opportunities
- Raised skills in adjusting youth work approaches to different fewer opportunities groups
- Improved skills in maintaining relationships with different fewer opportunities groups of young people
- Improved skills in recognizing, analysing and solving challaging practice situations

### Training effects:

- Youth workers are more sensitive to youth with fewer opportunities and are more motivated and prepared to create tailored programs and foster their inclusion in those programs
- Youth workers are more self-analytic/introspective in their work
- Youth workers are more sensitive to recognize and respond to different ethical dilemmas
- Youth workers are more reflective on their work in contact with their colleagues and supervisors
- Youth workers are more motivated to collaborate with other systems

### Long-term effects:

- Youth workers better understand the needs and challenges of different fewer opportunities groups
- Youth workers maintain professional relations with young people and implement more quality youth work
- Youth workers successfully involve more young people with fewer opportunities in youth work activities
- Youth workers contribute to better understanding of principles of youth work, and actively promote the principles of YW
- Youth workers collaborate with other systems in their work, fostering multi-system care of young people

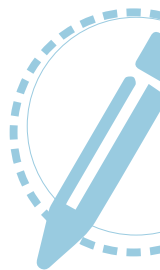
#### TESTING OF THE TRAINING MODULE

As a part of the project, testing of the training session was realized in Vršac, with 12 participants from three countries, providing a diverse pilot group. Based on the evaluation of the training module and the piloting process, the final form of the training module was created.

**Specifics of the training module methodology:** The main used methodology is applied drama. This implies that the training module is delivered through a combined set of exercises that provide participants to learn through their experiences, reflections and to test their reactions in a realistic, yet safe setting, by using different applied drama tools. Each training session is described in detail, providing the trainers with instructions and explanations, allowing them to implement the sessions with their youth workers.

**Preparation of participants:** Because the training is based on applied drama, participants often think that the training sessions will consist of a series of role plays. Even though role play is a natural connection to the term “drama”, it is only one of the techniques that can be used for simulations of different realistic situa-





tions. It is important to be ready to explain to participants that they do not need to prepare for the training in any way, and that the experience will be different than classical role play exercises they may have encountered through their previous training experiences. You can also support them by explaining that they are training for direct work with different youth groups. The best way to practice our skills of working with others is actually working with others. Applied drama provides us with a “perfect frame” for this, giving us room for testing our reactions and behaviors in a safe space, through different improv-based interventions, without the risk of doing something “wrong” – the risk we would have if we actually practiced with real youth groups. The only information that is relevant for their preparation involves wearing comfortable clothes.

### **Technical instructions for the delivery of the training module:**

- ✓ The working space needs to be quite free of furniture. You need the same number of chairs and participants and one or two tables that will help you with the materials, music etc. You do not need a projector, laptop or any other technical equipment except speakers – for music. You need a large open space in which over 25 people can walk around freely and sit on the floor.
- ✓ Instructions for each exercise are given with all participants and the trainer standing in a circle, unless otherwise stated in the exercise description, thus ensuring that all participants see each other and clearly hear the instructions.
- ✓ In every exercise in which the participants are instructed to walk in the room, it is necessary to always remind them to take care of the balance of the space, i.e. to move so that each part of the space is filled with participants. In addition, it is necessary to remind them to look in front of them and not to talk to each other. These instructions are valid until otherwise instructed.
- ✓ Most of the exercises include some form of Side coaching. Side coaching implies a strategy in which the drama leader offers suggestions and encouraging comments from the sidelines in order to enhance the dramatic playing or help participants stay on task. For example, the trainer might focus participants by saying things such as, “Use your whole body to explore the space around you.” or “Remember who your character is.” Those exercises that have specific Side coaching instructions are marked under the Notes section of the exercise.
- ✓ Basically each exercise ends with a group clap. This is a way of supporting the participants and celebrating group effort/ success/ mistakes.
- ✓ Since all sessions are based on the content that is derived from the participants themselves, be prepared and have in mind all the time to use all relevant examples that are specially significant for addressing issues of youth with fewer opportunities.

# TRAINING SESSIONS

## DAY 1: INTRODUCING THE METHODOLOGY

Structure: 3 sessions

**Purpose:** To show the participants through their own experience how the principles „look“ in practice; To explore their views, attitudes, knowledge and experiences regarding the roles relevant for youth work.

**Rationale for the 1st day:** For the first day, our aim is for the participants to, through their own personal experience during this day, feel how youth „should feel“ in our youth work activities. It is there to show them how the first activity with a group can be used as a „gathering point“ for all participants and as a show-case of what are they getting into when getting involved in youth work activities. Through it we will also expose the participants to what it feels like when all the principles, that will be in the focus during the training, are respected in practice.

**Notes:** The choices of concrete exercises are „our own“ and can be changed in the implementation of the training module. But, we do not suggest this for trainers that have less experience in applied drama, since each exercise was selected specifically for that particular moment of working with the group for its effects and dynamics. But, as the methodology itself is quite dynamics, and for the purposes of respecting all the principles when working with the group, the main rule is to LISTEN AND FOLLOW THE GROUP, to feel their needs and respond to them through youth exercises choices. Thus, more experienced trainers will more freely mix these exercises with providing with the same effect to the group.





## SESSION 1: FIRST FEELING

duration: 1.5 hours



**Rationale for the 1st session:** In the first session we want a couple of things. We want everybody to feel comfortable, welcome and accepted, we want to raise their motivation for their future involvement in this training (in any activity we conduct) and we want to build positive group processes by allowing the group to get to know each other on a personal level and to have basic trust in the group. This is why for this session we are choosing engaging, fun, interesting and wierd exercises that will provide the participants with a „new“ experience. Starting from the characteristics of the methodology of applied drama, which are reflected in interactivity, free verbal and bodily expression and improvisation, an important part of the preparation of the group should be dedicated to getting to know the participants. In order to put this segment in the function of educating youth workers about the principles of youth work, the exercises are designed and organized in a way that develops awareness and information about the important characteristics of the approach in working with young people through the experience of their own participation. The process of getting to know the group needs to be structured so that the participants gradually open up to each other. Starting from the assumption that, for successful group work, it is necessary that all participants feel comfortable and safe, but are also ready to talk about themselves within the group, a set of „getting to know each other“ exercises is designed to move from general to specific acquaintance and relaxation. First, the group works on relaxation and/or awakening of the body, non-invasive presentation (through name, movement, signal) is respected, and finally the group deals with the general and specific characteristics of each individual.

**Work materials:** two balls of different colors, papers and pens for each participant, sequence of numbers for the trainer for the stories of numbers exercise, flip-chart paper for the reflection board, stickers.

## 1. INTRODUCTORY PRESENTATION OF THE TRAINING GOAL AND PLAN AND MANNER OF WORK

Why: Although it seems like a segment that is a „must“ at every training, it should not be forgotten that through an introductory presentation of the training goal and manner of work, participants are given the opportunity to resolve doubts about training goals and purposes, expected outcomes and their role. In this way, work begins with recognizing and mapping the needs (expectations, dilemmas) of the group, which is the basic starting point for the preparation and motivation of each individual to take an active part in training.

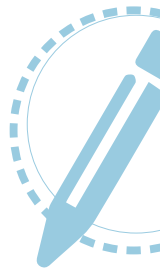
How: This part should be short and clear and done through a talk with the participants while they're all standing or sitting in a circle. The participants should hear that:  
the training focuses on the professional and ethical principles of youth work with the focus on working with different youth with fewer opportunities  
the training methodology involves them playing and doing a lot and that the first day focuses just around that - introductory to the working methodology, so they should just relax and enjoy, and that all will be „in it's place“ when the training ends.

## 2. ASSESSMENT OF THE NEEDS OF THE GROUP – EXERCISE MAXIMUM AND MINIMUM BODY POSITION

Why: Starting from the assumption that the group is made up of individuals who differ in their temperaments, characters, habits, it is important to determine the needs of each individual in terms of the way the training will be realized (hours, breaks, important calls, etc.).

How: Instruct the participants to try to make the largest (widest) position in the space with their body, encourage them to spread their legs, arms, but also their eyes and mouth. After that, give instructions to make the smallest position in space, by gathering the body, legs and arms, fingers, but also eyes and mouth. Give alternate instructions for the largest and smallest positions several times. When the group has rehearsed its positions, explain to them that you will tell them certain statements and ask them that all those to whom the statements





refer to take the widest position in space, or those to whom the statements do not refer take the smallest position in space.

Suggestions for statements:

- I like to sleep longer in the morning
- I like to drink coffee first thing in the morning
- I am a smoker and I need occasional breaks from work
- I like to rest after lunch
- It bothers me when I stand for a long time
- I can't jump for health reasons

The statements should be fun, relaxing but also informative for the trainer. Add more, including anything relevant for the working conditions of your training. For example, some statements regarding epidemiological conditions and contacts can also be included.

Notes: For each statement, it is possible to request an additional explanation from the participants. Take care not to invade privacy too much (it's too early for that). From these information, you will form some guidelines for the technical parts of your training, but you will also know if you need to make some adjustments to the planned exercises regarding the restrictions. Do not spend too much time on this exercise.

### 3. SIGNATURES IN THE AIR

Why: physical warm-up and relaxation of participants

How: Explain to the participants that before serious work on the training, everyone needs to introduce themselves to each other, and then tell them that the easiest way to do it is for everyone to write their name and surname in the air. Ask them all to write their name in large letters in the air in front of them at the same time with the index finger of their right hand. When everyone is done, ask them to do the same with the index finger of their left hand. Continue signing by changing the instructions: sign with your nose, shoulder, knee, foot and finally your butt.

Notes: It is important to encourage participants to relax when performing the exercise, by setting your own example. This exercise makes the participants laugh.

## 4. WALK GREETINGS

Why: Spontaneous first contacts with other participants in the group

How: Ask participants to walk around the space in silence and to look ahead. After some time, instruct the participants to look into the eyes of each person they pass. After that, tell them to nod in greeting to each person they pass.

Gradually introduce new instructions:

- Smile at the person you're passing
- High five
- Shake hands
- Say hi with your shoulder touching
- Bow down
- Say hello with your elbow
- Say hello with your knee
- Hug the person
- Say hello with your butt

Notes: Remind participants to move in space by looking in front of them, with their hands next to their bodies and without talking to each other. Also, encourage them to take care of the balance of space, ie to try to be evenly distributed throughout the space. Remind them to maintain eye contact with other participants during the exercise. Do not forget to introduce the last „hello“ with the butts. It is super fun and makes everyone laugh.

## 5. NAMES WITH THE BALL – JUGGLING

Why: This exercise is introduced for new groups, so everyone can learn each other names. Even if the group already knows each other (if this is not the first training module they're participating together in), maybe the trainers are new to the group, so this exercise should still be realized. It provides learning names without „normal“ introductions or duck tapes on clothes.

How: Explain to the participants that the person who has the ball with him/her should say his/her name out loud, and then throw the ball to some other participant. The trainer starts the game. During the game, ask the participants to always throw the ball to a new participant, and not to the one who has already intro-





duced himself. When the presentation round is over, the trainer starts the presentation again and instructs the group to repeat the identical order. When the group learns the order of presentation, put down the first ball and take a new one. Start a new round in which the participants have the task to call up the person to whom they will throw the ball (this time have one of the participants start the series). The order needs to be different from the previous one. Repeat the round until the group remembers the order. After that, return the first ball to the game and start group juggling, with two balls at the same time.

Notes: Encourage participants to help each other with the order of presentation and encourage them to ask each others' names if they have not memorized the names of all participants. Point out the importance of saying the names clearly and loudly, that it is necessary to wait for the person to whom the ball is thrown to establish eye contact with them. The implementation of this exercise can be frustrating and hard for some groups. And also for the trainer. So, it is important that you don't give up and that you, with your example, encourage the group that they can do it. If the group is very good at this game (which is more rarely the case), make them do it faster and faster.

## 6. SOCIOGRAM AND SYNCHRONIZATION

Why: This exercise allows the participants to observe each other, connect non-verbally based on their characteristics, to share their interests and experiences and to create something together for the first time.

How (PART 1): Give the participants the task to arrange themselves, in complete silence, in one line according to their height (from the lowest to the highest). When they finish, „inspect“ whether they did a good job. After that, give the following instructions: sort by the size of shoes (from the smallest to the largest), by eye color (from lightest to darkest), by hair length (from shortest to longest), by age (from youngest to longest) by arm length, by skin color (from the lightest to the darkest). At the very end, ask the participants to rank according to their experience of working with young people (self-assessment).

Notes (PART 1): Remind them that they should perform the tasks without talking and each time inspect whether they did a good job. If they made a mistake (if you spotted that during your inspection) correct it by telling the participant to go to his/her place in the line.

How (PART 2): Tell the participants to arrange themselves in the space according to the season they like best, and then mark each corner of the room as one. When the participants sorted themselves, explain to them that they need to agree on a certain movement and sound (a short performance of five seconds) in their group, which will best present why they love that season. Each group should present what they made, ending their performance with the sentence: „We love the name of the season“. Then ask participants to arrange according to their favorite food or color groups (choose one).

Notes (PART 2): Do not leave the groups with too much time for preparation. When one group is presenting others are the audience.

How (PART 3): Ask participants to imagine the space in which they're standing is the map of the world. They should find where their country or city is located (depending on how diverse the group you work with is) and instruct them to mark the city/state where they were born in that space. Define where the north/south of the map is. Participants should do the task in complete silence. When they're finished, approach each participant or group of participants and ask them to say where they are from.

Notes (PART 3): Let participants correct their location when they hear where the others are standing.

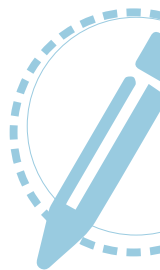
How (PART 4): If your participants are from different teams initially (as they are in international training) tell them to group according to those teams. If not, tell them to group back to the last grouping criteria (food/color). Ask them to think of a name for their team and a signature movement and sound that will represent them. Each team should perform their movement, sound and say their team name. After all presentations, tell them that, during the entire training, you will, from time to time, call a name of some of the teams and that, when that happens, they need to gather together and do their little performance. Test it a couple of times at the spot.

Notes (PART 4): Do not forget to actually do this for the rest of the training from time to time.

## 7. STORY OF NUMBERS

Why: In this phase of training and the segment of getting to know each other, the participants get to know each other more personally. However, this exercise is de-





signed so that participants can control what information about themselves they will share with the group. It is important for the trainer to assess, on the basis of this information, what the participants single out as interesting about themselves, ie to what extent the process of getting to know so far has influenced them to be more open within the group.

How: The trainer gives the introduction to the next exercise by showing through a personal example what the task of the participants will be. The trainer shows the group a previously prepared sheet of paper on which a sequence of 3 numbers is written (even up to 5 numbers is ok if you have a smaller group of participants). The group is explained that each number entered refers to a specific thing in the trainers' life. The task of the group is to guess what the numbers represent, and the trainer confirms when they guessed it. The numbers can refer to age, the number of apartments in which they live, the number of children, the number of years of work experience or any other significant number. After the explanation, distribute papers and pens to the participants and give them some time for each of them to design their own personal numbers sheet. When everyone is done, each participant displays their own string as the group tries to guess what the numbers represent.

Notes: If for some number the group is having too much trouble in guessing, try to ask the participant to give the group some tips.

## 8. REFLECTION BOARD

Why: At the end of the session, we want to foster reflective processes in our participants.

How: Each participant should take a sticker and write one word or syntagm that „catches“ their main feeling during the first session – describing their emotions or the atmosphere – whatever is their main impression for the first part of the first day. They should stick it to a previously prepared Reflection board.

Notes: While they are sticking their stickers, the trainer should not be standing next to the reflection board, providing them with space to keep the reflections anonymous. When they are finished, during the break, the trainer should analyse the stickers to check which impressions are present. Expected results include feeling good and having fun. The trainer will not return to the results of the reflection board before the end of the first day, when a group discussion will happen.

## SESSION 2: BUILDING THE GROUP

duration: 2 hours

**Rationale for the 2nd session:** In the second session we want to dig deeper into the personal processes of our participants, we want to engage them and make them ready to open up to us and get involved on a personal level – to move the barriers that naturally stand in these kinds of social situations. We are focused on choosing exercises that foster trust, exploration and moving of our personal boundaries, without too much talking – without too many conscious processes while the exercises are being introduced and while they are being implemented.

**Work materials:** papers and pens for each participant, flip-chart paper for the reflection board, stickers.

### 1. X AND OX

Why: At the beginning of each session, it is necessary to realize an exercise that will return the focus of the participants to group work. An exercise is always chosen that will gather the energy in the group in a certain way.

How: Ask participants to write an X with the index finger of their right hand in the air, and then draw a circle (OX) with the index finger of their left hand in the air. After that, ask the participants to try to write both signs in the air at the same time.

Notes: The trainer is also participating in the exercise.

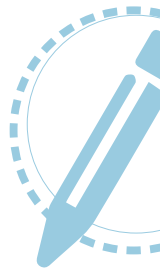
### 2. SHIELD AND MONSTER

Why: After gathering the focus of the participants to the joint work in the group, we want to raise the energy level of the whole group through a physical activity, but also start some group processes.

How: Ask participants to walk around the space. After a certain time, stop the group (shout STOP) and instruct them to choose one person in the group to focus on later in the game. It is important that no one finds out which person they have chosen. Allow the participants to continue the walk, and after a short period of time, stop them again and tell them that the person they have chosen has become their monster and that their task is to be as far away from that person as







possible. When the group continues to walk, the movement will have a different dynamic. After a short time, stop the group once more and ask them to choose another person in the group, and if everyone confirms that they have chosen their other person, explain to them that this person will be their shield. In order for the participants to be protected from their monsters, it is necessary that their shield is always between them and the monster. Allow participants to continue the walk and observe the dynamics. During the walk, tell the participants that you will count from 10 to 0 and that when you come to 0 everyone must stop. Start with a slow countdown, then speed up occasionally. When the group stops, ask each participant if he/she is safe and ask him/her to say who his/her monster and shield were.

### 3. TRIANGLES

Why: This exercise leans onto the last one and fosters further a group dynamics in which participants need to be aware (and they become aware with the reflections after the exercises) of the co-dependence on others in the group and their mutual connections.

How: Ask participants to now choose two persons from the group (also without telling anyone who they chose). When you give them the signal to start moving, their task is to create an equilateral triangle in the space – with each person representing an angle of the triangle. After some time shout STOP and check the participants to see whether they were successful in keeping their triangles. After the exercise, discuss with the participants how they felt during the game.

### 4. PORTRAYING

Why: The following activity provides the group with an opportunity to share their personal information without much pressure and in an interesting way.

How: Participants are divided into two groups with equal numbers. One group forms the inner circle, sitting on the floor facing outwards (or on chairs), the other group represents the outer circle and they sit opposite the participants of the inner circle. Give each participant a piece of paper and a pencil (felt-tip pen). The first task for the participants is to draw a portrait of the person sitting across them. Also, they should write the name of the person in the picture on the top of the paper. They should not use the whole paper for this, as they will have new tasks. When they are finished, they will do a rotation. A rotation is done in the following way: the outer circle leaves the paper they had in their hand on the spot they were

sitting and they move one place to their right. The inner circle do not move from their spots, but they do give the paper from their hands to the person on their left (person next to them in the inner circle). As a result of the rotation, new couples will be formed, and the portrait of a person will be in the hands of his/her couple. The next task is for the couples to find out how their partners got their name and to write it down in the paper containing their portrait. So, if the couple consists of persons A and B, person A has B's portrait and is writing the information he/she found out from person B to B's paper. After that, another rotation is done, creating new couples. You will repeat a few more rotations with the group, each time giving them a new task. Tasks are as followed:

- When was the last time they laughed so hard they cried?
- When was the last time they cried (from sadness)?
- If there were no moral norms or any kind of rules, sanctions in the world (social or personal), what would they do?

Notes: When everyone is done, the trainer gathers the portraits and puts them on a wall during the next break, creating a group portrait. The time for rotations should not be too long, so the exercise can be experienced as an interesting and dynamic one.

## 5. COLOMBIAN HYPNOSIS

Why: The following exercise provides touching topics such as trust, co-dependence, (in)balance of power, action and reaction, and fosters powerful trust and connections processes in the group.

How (PART 1): Keep the participants in the last pairs. Ask for one person in the pair to raise their hand. That person will be the leader and will place his/her hand in front of the face (approx. 25cm away) of their partner. He/she will start moving his/her hand slowly and the other person needs to follow it, keeping the same distance between the face and the hand – like if he/she was hypnotized and cannot see anything else but the hand. Encourage them to follow the hand with their whole body, responding to the guidance of their partner. Tell them to start slowly, with easy movement so that both partners feel comfortable to lead and follow. Those who lead are responsible for the safety of their partners.

Notes (PART 1): You give the instructions by demonstrating the exercise with your co-trainer or one of the participants. Play some relaxing music in the background (our favorite is „Levon Minassian - Bab'aziz“). Do not rush this exercise. Encourage





the participants to test different positions, heights, speeds, but always having in mind the safety of their partner.

How (PART 2): After some time, stop the group and tell them to switch roles. Let them work a little bit then start creating two bigger connecting moving sculptures. You will do this step by step, parallel while everybody is working on the task and with as few words as possible, not letting anybody know what are you assigning each person to do. First, you will select two pairs to be central pairs for their groups – for easier explanation, we will call them A and B pair and C and D pair. Next, you will approach some other pair (that is not any of those central ones), disform them and give them new assignments to follow. For example, one of the persons will follow the left elbow of person A, and the other one will follow the right shoulder of person B. You will disform new couples, asking them to follow some other body parts of persons A or B, or persons now attached to them, creating one big moving sculpture. Then do the same for the C and D pair and the rest of the participants. Now, you will have two big sculptures and two central persons (B and D) who are basically in charge for everyone. In the first run, let them lead however they want. Pause the C/D sculpture and let them observe for a little while how the A/B sculpture moves. Then pause A/B and let them observe the C/D sculpture. After that pause both groups and discuss how they feel, is it hard for them to follow their tasks in the large groups or not.

Notes (PART 2): Do not prolongate the discussion since you have another part of the exercise coming right up and since the big reflections will come after part 3. What is expected to come up will be that it is very hard to follow any fast changes and movements and that is hard to fulfill their task because the person they're following is following their own task and therefore is not observant of where his/her body parts are.

How (PART 3): Tell both sculptures to go back to their formations and tell each other who is following what. Their task now is to try to lead in a way that allows everyone to follow – the B and D persons to be careful and aware of everyone they're in charge of and each person in the sculpture to be aware of persons that are following him/her. And then give them time to move around. Then again pause one sculpture so they can watch the other and other way around.

Notes (PART 3): What will happen is that in this segment the groups will move more in sync, and it will genuinely feel like watching a beautiful choreographed dance.

How (PART 4): After the exercise let everyone sit in a circle. Ask the group how they felt during the exercise, covering some of the following points: what was easier – to lead or to be led; which role asks for more responsibility and how do they handle it; what happened when they became a large group; how did the participants feel and how did the leading B and D persons feel. During the discussions, link their processes to working with youth in different systems, where there is a hierarchy and different roles and responsibilities. Note that, when everyone is just focused on his/her own tasks, we stay oblivious of our impact on others. But, if we are knowledgeable of the tasks of those around us, and are aware of our impacts, we can move in a much more beautiful and in sync'd way.

Notes (PART 4): In any discussion – this as well, pay attention that you are there to introduce questions that will start reflections of your participants, your task is to guide them and sort our conclusions. But try to make it their process – let them brainstorm, support them and follow their process during the discussion.

## 6. LISTING OF STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES – PAIRS

Why: The previous exercise will start up a lot of reflective and introspective processes. Now, we step into more personal, introspective sharing and we are starting connecting the personal with our work through youth work.

How: Participants stay in the same pairs as at the beginning of the columbian hypnosis. They should find a comfortable place where they can sit and have room to themselves. Their task is to discuss with their partners about their main strengths that help them work with youth. This task focuses around our self-image, so the strength list should be proposed by each person for himself/herself. Each participant should point at least 3 and write them down in their notebook. The partners should share how they see that this particular characteristic helps them in their work with youth. After they finish, the topic becomes discussing their weaknesses – main things they feel they need improving of things they feel vulnerable with.

Notes: Play some relaxing music and give them about 10 minutes for the realization of this exercise. The information they shared stays with them and serves for their own introspection.





## 7. COUNTING FROM 1 TO 10

Why: This is a rounding-up activity for the end of session 2. It involves listening to each other, following the group and „feeling“ the group. It celebrates group collaboration.

How: All participants stand in a circle. Their task is to count from 1 to 10, as a group. The counting will happen as one person from the group will say 1, someone else will say 2 and so on until they reach 10. One person cannot say 2 numbers in a row (for example cannot say 2 and then say 3), and two persons cannot say the same number. Thus, if you hear two 2s' for example, the counting starts from the beginning. There cannot be any consultations in the group on how the counting will happen or agreements on who will say which number.

Notes: Sometimes this exercise takes for ages. It really depends on numerous factors, but the most important one is how much the groups are ready to be patient, listen to each other and collaborate. Its sort of a test for the group cohesion. It is important to encourage the group to not give up, and to follow through the frustration. If the group reaches 10 easily, you can try with 15 or even 20.

## 8. REFLECTION BOARD

Why: At the end of the session, we want to foster reflective processes in our participants.

How: Each participant should take a sticker and write one word or syntagm that „catches“ their main feeling during the second session – describing their emotions or the atmosphere – whatever is their main impression for the second session. They should stick it to a previously prepared Reflection board.

Notes: While they are sticking their stickers, the trainer should not be standing next to the reflection board, providing them with space to keep the reflections anonymous. When they are finished, during the break, the trainer should analyse the stickers to check which impressions are present. Expected results include notes like personal, connections, trust, safe, intimate or leaving the comfort zone. The trainer will not return to the results of the reflection board before the end of the first day, when a group discussion will happen.

## SESSION 3: EXPLORATION

duration: 2.5 hours (1.5 + 1)

**Rationale for the 3rd session:** In the third session we want to see what our participants think, feel and know regarding the topics that are relevant for the training. This is why the exercises we choose evoke their experiences and attitudes in a „natural“ way, providing us with the ground basis for the rest of the training.

**Work materials:** 2 flip chart sheets for voices in the head exercise, list of statements for polarities.

### 1. GROUP WALK HARMONIZATION

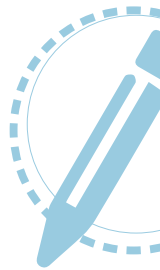
Why: In this phase of the work, when the participants are partially acquainted with the methodology of work, but also with each other, the session begins with an exercise that simultaneously serves to harmonize the energies of participants (after a break), but also to gain insight into their own readiness, and willingness of others to conform to the majority (follow the group) for a common goal. The exercise itself will help the trainer to assess the level of energy of the whole group, but also to assess the individuals in the group.

How (PART 1): Ask the participants to walk around the space and, at the very beginning of their walk, tell them that each of them can walk at a speed that suits them – in accordance with how they feel at that moment. Someone who has more energy will walk faster, and someone who feels calm or tired will walk slower. Allow participants to walk at their own pace for a while. After that, while the group is walking, tell them to try to harmonize in speeds, but that the harmonization should be gradual. Allow the group to walk until they agree on speed. When they harmonized, ask them to now, gradually, together as a group, speed up to their maximum walking speed (no running) and, when they feel they reached their maximum, to gradually, again together as a group, slow down all the way to a total stop.

Notes (PART 1): Wait for everyone to come to a complete stop and let them feel the silence and the calm for a bit before clapping and starting the discussion that follows.

How (PART 2): After the exercise, it is necessary to talk to the group about how each of them felt in the first or second part of the exercise. Was it difficult for them to reconcile? Does the top speed suit their personal needs? Has their need to walk as fast as





they did in the beginning changed over time and why? Do they feel that the exercise was successful?

Notes (PART 2): This discussion will raise questions of group needs vs. individual needs, leadership, conforming, freedom and boundaries, group effects and group influences, but also group support.

## 2. I HA

Why: When the energy of the group is harmonized, as it was done in the previous exercise, it is possible to continue working with the group, to have some fun with the group and to raise the energy and concentration to a higher level. This exercise is designed so that the participants will face mistakes in its implementation, and that will lead to laughter and relaxation in the group itself (trust us it will). In this way, we teach the group that mistakes are allowed, that they are ok, and thus prepare them for the work that follows, where it will be necessary to deal more with the topic of youth, where everyone needs to be free to show what they think and know, without contemplating whether it matters if something they say is correct or not.

How: Participants are standing in a circle. Their task is to pass a movement and a sound from one participant to another. The first movement and sound that is introduced is „I HA“. The movement for I HA is creating one big wave with your right arm and sending that wave to the person on your left. While you're „sending“ the wave, you say I HA loudly (kinda like a cowboy). When you do that, the person on your left has the wave and is sending it further on to the person on his/her left with the same movement and sound. Repeat the I HA for two circles to make sure that everyone got the movement and the sound and when is it their turn to pass on the wave. After that you are gradually introduced new instructions, one by one, always letting the group get a hang of the new instruction. When including a new rule, all the old ones are still in play. Important thing with all the new commands that come is that you cannot have two new instructions one next to another, at least one I HA always have to happen in between.

- RAISE: raise your both hands up, like you're creating a wall to which the wave bounces off and needs to return to the other side. If a person A chooses to yell RAISE and raises his/her hands in the air, the person B (who sent I HA to person A in the first place) now has the task to send the wave back – the I HA is changing direction. Pay attention that that means that I HA is now performed with the left hand to the right side.
- WEESE: you place your hand in front of your eyes like you have some funny glass-

es and move them forward by saying loudly WEEEEEESEEE. This means that you are skipping the next person in line to transfer the wave. So, if a person A does the WEESE, the person B is skipped and C needs to do the I HA movement to the next person.

- THROW/CATCH: a person can choose not to send the I HA to the next person in line but to throw it in the center of the circle. He/she yells TROW and literally throws the I HA in the center. Anyone can choose to take the I HA by yelling TAKE and simulating a take movement from the center, followed really fast by sending I HA to the left or right (which ever side the person chooses). It can very well happen that more than one person „takes“ at the same time. In these cases, that I HA that „takes better“ – I HA that is spontaneously excepted by the group and that continues to travel around the circle is the one that everybody should follow.

- FIESTA: a person can choose to yell FIESTA. This means that everyone needs to put their hands up, wave and yell fiesta while going into the center of the circle and going back to their place (like a party is happening).

Notes: The exercise should be dynamic. So encourage participants to be fast, loud, and not to „hold“ I HA but to send it further on. Have fun and goof around when performing the tasks, so you can be a role model for those participants who are more closed up and shy.

### 3. STATUES IN A CIRCLE: RECOLLECTION

Why: Now, we're slowly shifting from our fun, just experiencing parts to our topic-focused parts of the training. We are making this switch gradually, first by supporting the recalling of their own experiences and feelings of them in the teenager years. With this, we're „reviving“, connecting them with the specific developmental phase of youth they work with.

How: Ask participants to turn to the outside of the circle and have everyone think for themselves how they were as a kid. To recall some general feeling, memory, situation that describes in a way how they were as a kid. When they thought about it for a short bit, tell them that their task is to create a statue that will show this. On your mark, they will turn to the inside of the circle and stand in their sculpture. When they do so, they can glance around the circle, to see others and their sculptures. You should walk around the circle and comment on the sculptures a bit. When you touch some sculpture on the shoulder they need to say something, or create some sound from their position. Just „do“ a couple and then ask them to turn around again. The next task is to recall themselves as teenagers. How they felt, what they did, how was their mood,





whatever is specific for their teenage years. The same procedure goes for the rest of the exercise as for the kid sculptures, but now try to touch most of the participants to hear their teenager's expressions.



## 4. SCULPTURING IN PAIRS: YOUNG PEOPLE THEY WORK WITH

Why: Sculpturing helps us see how the participants see the young people they work with. They will show anything they want – allowing us to have a view into the specifics, differences and majority of profiles of young people our particular youth workers encountered in their work so far, but also to show us if they have some prejudices towards some youth groups. This will be the basis for our further work on the training.

How (PART 1): Participants are divided into pairs. One of the persons from the pair should put his/her hand up. That person becomes the sculptor and his/her partner becomes the clay. The sculptor should sculpt clay in a way that the clay shows the sculpture of a typical young person the youth worker – the sculptor works with. The rule is that there are no conversations during the sculpting – it should be done in complete silence. Point out to participants to be considerate, and to slowly physically move and shape their clay, without sudden and unpleasant movements. Shaping is done by sculptors physically moving their clays until they are in position which they want to present. During this time, the clays have the task of indulging in the sculpting of their partner and to accept the setting in the sculpture. Sculptors can also show (with their bodies) how to set the clay (eg how to place a certain part of the body, facial expression, etc.). When they are finished, the sculptures remain in a furnished position and do not move, and the sculptors should join the trainer in one part of the room.

Notes (PART 1): Give the instructions by demonstrating the exercise with your co-trainer or a participant volunteer. If necessary, remind them not to talk to their clay.

How (PART 2): When all the sculptors are done and are around the trainer, the trainer welcomes all the sculptures as tourists in a museum and tells them that they will now visit the museum and explore the „youth“ exhibition. The trainer acts as the curator of the exhibition and leads a discussion with participants next to each sculpture about what they see in it (how it seems, why do they think so, what led them to conclude it, what are the main characteristics and feelings of this particular young person). The group can also suggest a sentence that the sculpture can say, that responds to their views of the sculpture. The trainer will then touch the sculpture, thus „reviving

it“ so it can say the sentence from its position. After the discussion, the group gives a name to the sculpture, and then it is checked with the sculptor how much they hit/missed in their analysis. As a sculpture is “processed”, it emerges from the role of clay and moves with other participants on a further tour of the exhibition. When the first round is over, the couples change their roles and the sculpting process are repeated. The sculpting technique can be realized with additional ones

Notes (PART 2): From the sculptures, you can see with which kind of young people your participants are used working with. Depending on how diverse your youth workers’ group is, you can have more or less similar representation of youth. Remember the most important sculptures (some happy and some problematic ones), so you can recall them in the future work on the training.

## 5. COMPLETE THE PICTURE

Why: We are continuing with exploring of the views and experiences of our participants regarding youth they work with, but also youth work and their roles as youth workers. This exercise allows us to gradually „walk“ into these topics, with opening up the minds of our participants and, since it’s based on free associations, going around possible resistances our participants might have if we approached these topics just through discussions.

How: All participants sit on one side of the room, in a semi circle. The trainer stands in the middle of the other part of the room (like on a stage). You will tell everyone that the place you’re standing on is a magical place which allows you to be anything you want to be. All you have to do is just stand in a pose of what you want to be, do not move, and say what you are. You demonstrate this to all participants by standing in a pose (choose something simple, like a tree). Make a pose and say „I am a ...“. When you do so, someone from the „audience“ needs to step in and make a sculpture that will complete the picture somehow – that will, in any way, relate to your pose. For example, if you’re a tree, the person can be a flower, or a branch, or a bird, or anything else – there are no rules or limitations, or wrong answers. Now you have two persons in the picture. You need one more so the picture would be complete. When the third person fills in the picture and says what he/she is, everybody claps and that means that that picture is complete. The last person that came into the picture stays on the stage and starts a new picture by being something new. Let the participants do a series of random pictures. Then, if they did not do this spontaneously, introduce also some abstract elements (like posing as freedom or sorrow, or death). After a couple



of pictures, if they did not introduce it themselves by now, introduce elements like young person, youth worker, system, trouble, effort and so on. Let the group develop the pictures and follow their „flow“. For the last picture, let everyone join in on stage before the image is complete.



Notes: This exercise awakens associations of your participants and allows you to see their implicit and explicit associations to important elements for your further work. Pay attention to their pictures, because you can possibly extract also some sentences from this exercise that you will use in the exercise Polarities that will come in a little bit. Do not rush the exercise, let them derive different free associations on their own.

## 6. VOICES IN THE HEAD, WHAT THE SYSTEM SAYS, AND WHAT YOUTH WORK SAYS

Why: Here, we're exploring how our participants see the systems that regulate youth positions in the society and how they see their youth work positions.

How (PART 1): Participants are divided in two groups. One represents „the system“ and the other represents „youth work“. Groups should imagine that the system/youth work is a person. Their task is to „be“ the thoughts of that person and to discuss between themselves what does the system/youth work think of young people, how it sees them, how it feels about them. After that, they should write down on their flip chart paper a number of statements that the system/youth work „says“ to youth.

Notes (PART 1): The groups will work parallelly. Check each group to be sure whether they understood their task, but leave them to discuss freely among themselves. While they're discussing you will, without disrupting them, prepare the room for the next part of the exercise by putting chairs in two rows, facing each other, so that each participant has a chair.

How (PART 2): The system group will sit on one the chairs on one row, and the youth work group will sit on the chairs on the other row. Tell the system group that they will now imagine that people across them are those young people they discussed and that they should now tell them the statements they derived. They can do it by any order – one by one/ on a random stream / just saying them or reading them from their paper. It is important that every participant pronounces at least one statement. After that, they need to repeat randomly the most important statements to the young persons. Next,

the youth group will do the same – the system group becomes young people and they pronounce their statements.

Notes (PART 2): From this exercise you can hear a lot of powerful data on how your participants perceive „the system“ and youth work. You can expect the system to be more cold, formal, sometimes very closed and not interested (depends on your country), and the youth work to be friendly, warm, supportive. Also, from this exercise you can derive some statements for the Polarities exercise that will follow soon, and give you inputs on possible prejudices youth workers have regarding the views of the system.

How (PART 3): Everyone should sit in a circle and discuss the exercise. Discuss on their feelings from the „young persons“ role – how it felt to hear those statements. Then discuss on the general conclusions on how the system and youth work are perceived.

## 7. REFLECTION BOARD

Why: At this part of the session, it is important to do another reflection board exercise, to gather the impressions that you will use at the end of day 1.

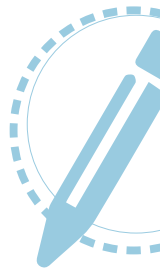
How: Each participant should take a sticker and write one word or syntagm that „catches“ their main feeling during the third session – describing their emotions or thoughts or general feeling – whatever is their main impression for the third session. They should stick it to a previously prepared Reflection board. After the reflection board a short break should be made.

Notes: While they are sticking their stickers, the trainer should not be standing next to the reflection board, providing them with space to keep the reflections anonymous. When they are finished, during the break, the trainer should analyse the stickers to check which impressions are present. Expected results include notes like reflections, thinking, learning, exploring. The trainer will not return to the results of the reflection board before the end of the first day, when a group discussion will happen.

## 8. DURACELL BUNNIES

Why: After a short break, we are using an energizing exercise that allows us not only to gather the energy of the group and have some fun, but also to talk about our youth worker's role in the reflection – ie discussion part after the exercise.





How (PART 1): Divide all participants in groups of 3. Two of them are duracell bunnies. So, each group has 2 bunnies and 1 person on charge of those 2 bunnies. The bunnies move like the bunnies from the commercials – in a robotic way and they move only forward, never stop moving. If they ran into an obstacle they get stuck, they move in one place as long as they are stuck. The third person can move the bunny by holding his/her shoulders and pointing the bunny in the direction he/she wants the bunny to move in. But you cannot take your time with directing the bunny, the navigation has to happen fast: you just grab the shoulders point and let go (and the bunny will continue moving forward), you cannot hold the bunny. The goal of the person navigating the bunnies is to get them to hug – that is the only way the bunnies will stop moving. The bunny only responds to the other bunny from his pair, you cannot make them hug with some other bunny. The starting position of bunnies is back to back. When the navigator touches their shoulders simultaneously, they start moving. Instruction for the bunnies is to walk in any pace they see fit. Some bunnies will walk faster, some slower, they should just keep their pace of choice. Demonstrate the procedure with your co-trainer and some participants or with two participants. The exercise is done three times, so each person gets to be the navigator of the bunnies.

Notes (PART 1): Do not stop the exercise if some of the participants is taking a long time to get his/her bunnies to hug. Let it last as long as necessary.

How (PART 2): After the exercises, have a discussion with the group – how they felt when navigating the bunnies. Then ask them does this associate somehow to their role as youth workers and how. Topics that will be touched are: responsibility of youth workers, following the needs of youth, needing to synchronize with them, young people not going where we want, sometimes feeling alone in the field etc.

## 9. POLARITIES: STATEMENTS

Why: We are now focusing on opinions of our participants regarding issues of youth work, principles that are covered in the training, young people, relations of youth work and other systems. The chosen exercise allows a debate to be opened on chosen topics and fosters great introspective processes as well as horizontal exchange between participants.

How: All participants should stand on one side of the room. The trainer will read some statements. If a participant agrees with the statement, he/she will walk to the

other side of the room. If not, he/she will stay put. When participants „choose their side“, both sides will share why they choose yes or no. After this short discussion, participants are allowed to change their minds and join the other group if their arguments agreed with them more. Then, the smaller group will join the larger one, so all participants are once again on one side of the room, then next statement is read and the procedure is repeated. The trainer does not participate in the discussion, just reads the statements and, if needed, moderates the discussion between the groups. Following are some statements that should be covered. But, the list can be modified or expanded, following all the processes that happened in the group before this exercise is implemented:

- Youth work always implies learning something.
- The system that regulates the position of youth is very closed.
- Youth workers are there to be friends to young people.
- We need to design special programs for youth with fewer opportunities.
- Anyone can be a youth worker.

## 10. SYNCHRONIZED CLAP

Why: The previous exercise can sometimes take quite some time, depending on the number of statements and the participants' diversity of opinions. So, this exercise is being introduced to wake up the energy of the participants and prepare them for the final discussion of the day that will happen right after. It serves as a small break for our thoughts.

How: All participants stand in a circle. The task is to pass the clap through the circle in the following manner: the trainer starts by clapping at the same time with the person on his/her right side, facing each other. Then the person on his/her right side does the same with the next person on the right. The clap needs to happen at the exact same time. If they do not make it, they should try again. As the clap is being passed along the circle it will spontaneously create a rhythm – it will dictate a tempo in which the claps are happening. Try to speed it up with each circle. End the exercise with a group applause.

## 11. GRAND REFLECTION

Why: At the end of the day a group discussion (around 30 minutes long) is being held to sum up the experiences of the day and reflect on the feelings, processes and raised questions and topics. It serves for integrating the whole intensive experience for the participants.





How: All participants sit in a circle. The discussion is opened by the trainer, asking them to share their thoughts on their first day and to reflect to the role of that day – to introduce them to the methodology, topic and show the the feeling of the principles in practice. Now the trainer shows them the results of the reflection board, showing them that their feelings reflect the process we want also our young people to have with us, and reflect the main things relevant for activation when talking about youth work. We started with fun, relaxation, interesting, then went into personal, deep, pushing a little bit out sometimes outside of our comfort zone (which is where growth happens), but still being safe and supportive and then went into learning, exploring, discussing. Ask them can they now reflect back on this intensive process and add some more impressions and thoughts on it. Expected reflections include feeling like the group is working together much longer than it actually is, that they know each other much longer than they actually do, and that they activated a lot of processes relevant for their work. Conclude the discussion by telling them that on the second day they will work more on these topics, but also directly on the principles relevant for their quality practice with youth, especially with youth from diverse, fewer opportunities backgrounds.

## 12. JUMP

Why: This is something we, in CEPORA, always use as a rounding up „final touch of reflection“ at the end of our every activity – with the youth or with youth workers on training such as this. It allows summing up all the impressions of the day and helps catch the most important ones. It also helps ending the day in a super positive atmosphere.

How: All participants stand in a circle, holding hands. The trainer asks of the group to choose one word that sums up their main impression of the day. Participants can make some suggestions and the group chooses one. When the word is chosen, a group jump needs to happen by the following: the group will pronounce the first vowel from the word (for example, if the chosen word is fun the vowel will be the voice A) continually from the quietest to the loudest. As they are becoming louder and louder, they are going from the standing position to a squatting position. When they are the lowest, they are squatting all the way down and should jump at the same time, yelling the word they choose.

Notes: The trainers are also a part of the jump. Demonstrate shortly the movement while explaining the exercise to the group. End the jump with group applause (it will come naturally).

## DAY 2: PRACTICE AND PRINCIPLES

Structure: 3 sessions

**Purpose:** To confront the participants with their presumptions and possible prejudices in a safe space; To explore their level of knowledge and skills regarding the use of the principles in practice.

**Rationale for the 2nd day:** For the second day, our aim is to find out about our participants' experiences, knowledge and skills regarding their position as a youth worker and their contact with young people. In the last part of the day the principles will be introduced formally. But, the first part of the day will be used to assess also how participants use different principles in practice. It is valuable that this happens before they are aware of which particular things they should pay attention to in practice, so they would have more spontaneous reactions during the first day – during first contact simulations.

**Notes:** In this phase of the training, we are combining approaches that allow us to find out more about the views, knowledge and experiences of our participants, but are also working on enhancing their knowledge and provoking new insights. Because of this, the trainer needs to be very attentive to all processes in the group, as he/she will use the material gathered from the participants as key points for conclusions or as materials for upcoming exercises. Thus, pay attention and take notes.

### SESSION 1: POSITION OF THE YOUTH WORKER

duration: 1.5 hours

**Rationale for the 1st session:** In the first session of the second day we are focusing on the position of the youth worker on several levels. We are analyzing the position of the youth worker in a young persons' life, the position of the youth worker in the system and in relation with the formal system, the position of power youth worker has and how he/she handles it, and the position that youth worker actually physically takes when approaching young people, knowing everything he/she stands for.

**Work materials:** No special work materials are needed for this session.





## 9. ORDER: YOUNG PERSON IN THE CENTER



Why: Using this exercise provokes a lot of important topics spontaneously. It is very powerful, yet completely non-verbal. No „easy going“ exercise is being done before this one, so participants would not have any feelings during the exercises that are residues from previous activities.

How (PART 1): Ask for one person to volunteer. That person is now becoming a young person. He/she has the task to just positioning himself/herself in the space any way he/she wants. Then ask for a new volunteer. The second person becomes the young persons' mother (or parent number 1), and needs to stand somewhere in the space where he/she feels fit, relating to the young person. Next participant will take the role of the other parent, and position himself/herself. Next one is the young persons' peer – a friend. Next one who steps in is the teacher of the young person. Next one is the principal of the high school. Next one is the youth worker. Next one is the case manager from the center for social welfare (explain that our person stole something and got caught, so social services got involved). And the last volunteering participant represents the system.

Notes (PART 1): The exercise is done in complete silence, without any explanations from the participants why they choose the position they did. When they take their position they just stand there, they do not change anything until you give them the instruction to do so.

How (PART 2): When everybody took their position, tell the young person that now he/she gets a chance to change his/her position – to find a place and position where he/she feels comfortable. The young person can observe where everybody is standing and to choose his/her new position accordingly. When the young person is satisfied with his/her choice, other figures, one by one, get to position themselves accordingly, wherever they feel fit. Repeat the whole process around four times (follow the flow of the group and the dynamics of the exercise).

Notes (PART 2): Make sure that the participants do not rush their movement. Let them feel the process. Keep the silence and just feel the energy. Pay attention to everything that is happening in the transitions, as you will need it for the discussion with the group.

How (PART 3): Aks everybody to sit in the circle and, one by one, let them share their feelings and processes. First one that should share is the young person. Then goes the 2 parents, the teacher and principal, the friend, the case manager and the system. Keep the youth worker to be the last to share. Participants will share how they felt, but they will also feel the need to explain their choices, dilemmas and relations they felt. The trainer just moderates their sharing process and reflects from time to time to what they said. The youth worker goes last because actually the role of the youth worker is the one we want to focus on. So the topics for the end of the discussion parts are: are youth workers usually aware that each young person has this kind of micro/macro system around them and that the youth worker is just one of the roles that exist; that he/she needs to find a position in the system which will allow for positive interventions, but will not replace or block other roles in the young persons' life; how does the youth worker position himself/herself regarding the system and other adults in the young persons' life.

Notes (PART 3): Follow the thoughts of the participants and use them in the conclusions as arguments for making your key points.

## 10. GO

Why: Going off the flow of the previous exercise, the next one continues with the topics of connections, roles, but through an exercise which seems just like a game for concentration, allowing the brain to take a break from serious processes and to relax, enjoy and provide spontaneous reactions and feelings during the exercise.

How (PART 1): All participants stand in a circle. The task of the participant whos' turn is on is to find himself/herself a new place in the circle – to take somebody elses' place. But, in order to do so, he/she needs to ask for permission. If person A wants to stand in the place of person B, person A will reach out with his/her hand in the direction of person B and will make eye contact with person B. Person B will then give person A permission to come to his/her place by saying „Go“. Then, person A starts walking towards persons' B place. But, before person A reaches persons' B place, person B needs to find himself/herself a new place. He/she will do this by the same principle – by reaching their hand in the direction of person he/she wants to go to, and making eye contact with him/her. When person B receives the permission (when his/her chosen person says „Go“) person B can move from his/her place and person A can stand on it. So, the goal is to find your place and receive the permission to move to it before the previous person walks over.





Notes (PART 1): This exercise is very confusing to participants when they're doing it for the first time. Even though the rules are quite simple – ask for permission, get the permission, move to the next place, the participants get confused really easily and it is very hard for them to separate these actions – to just put their hand out and not speak, to just give permission to others without moving and to stay put until someone else gives them permission to start walking. When the group messes up, stop them and start again. The exercise should last until the group has it all figured out and you can do the exercise quite fast with no mistakes.

How (PART 2): Lead a discussion after the exercise on how the participants felt and ask them can they relate this experience to the things that came up in the order discussions regarding the connections of youth work with other systems. Point out that, when the youth workers „work in the dark“ without knowing how the systems work, we often get confused, and easily lost and frustrated. But, when we listen, learn and collaborate, the things go much more smoothly and the results are better and more effective.

Notes (PART 2): Do not make this discussion a long one. It can be done with everybody just standing in the circle after the exercise is finished. What can happen during the exercise is that someone from the circle does not give permission – just does not say „go“ or even says „no“. Do not correct them but just let the game continue and follow what happens next. Usually two things happen: the person asking permission will ask someone else who will answer positively, and the person who said no will say „go“ next time. This experience is also very valuable for the discussion – what happens when someone in the cycle says no? How do we handle those situations, and how do we even get that person to change his/her mind (by seeing how good it can work if you just say yes).

## 11. POWER RELATIONSHIP

Why: Next exercise is focused around the topic of power and different forms power can take. We use it to help youth workers reflect on different power forms and their power position regarding young people, but also regarding other relevant roles in a young persons' life.

How (PART 1): All participants stand in a circle. The trainer stands in the center and creates a sculpture but a neutral one – just standing there. The task of the participants is to, when they have an idea how, to step into the circle and put themselves

in a position of power in regards to the trainer – so that their statue has more power. Only one person can step in, so the first one that has the idea is that one person. The position should be more powerful by using physical positioning or context positioning (for example they can stand so they are physically bigger and wider, or they can tickle the trainer and become more powerful like that). When that person steps in and makes his statue, the rest of the group assesses whether the new position actually has more power than the previous one. If the answer is yes, the trainer will leave the center of the circle and will join the rest of the participants in the circle. The participant that created the more powerful statue will continue to stand in his/her statue and a new participant (whoever has an idea) can step in and try to be more powerful. When exiting the center of the circle, the person who is exiting should say „Thank you“ to the person that joined their picture and then leave.

Notes (PART 1): If some of the participants step in and become more powerful by pretending to have a gun, encourage them to try to think outside of the box of connecting power with violence, to think wider. You can support this by also participating in the exercise and unblocking the process if some blockage emerges – like for example laughing at someone, being abstract and just using your body to be more powerful etc. But mostly participants figure out themselves different options and they start playing with them. It is ok if the group says sometimes that the suggestion is not more powerful. Then, the initial statue stays and waits for a new suggestion.

How (PART 2): After the exercise, have a short discussion with the participants on their feelings, their views on power that youth worker has in regards to the young person, and how does the youth worker handles his power position in regards to creating relationships with young people. Also, reflect on how is the youth workers' power in regards to other formal experts in the young persons' life – does he have any power and what kind of power, and how can it be used for more quality support of the young person.

Notes (PART 2): Try to keep the discussion focused and not too long.

## 12. ZIP-ZAP PHOTO + POSITIONING IN THE GROUP

Why: This exercise is being used for its possibilities to extract spontaneous associations while being fun, that are the foundation for more complex tasks for the youth workers.





How (PART 1): All participants should walk around the space. The trainer will give them a topic on which they all should, without previous agreements, on his sign create a big photo. When the trainers gives a topic, the participants keep on walking until the trainer says „ZIP ZAP PHOTO!“ When that happens, all participants must stand in a statue, creating one big photo. Then, the trainer will approach each one and ask what they are. Then the process is repeated. Topics should be diverse such as the beach, a familly dinner, a wedding, a funeral.

Notes (PART 1): The exercise should be dynamic, so be fast and up with your energy while checking who is what in the photos.

How (PART 2): After the light intro, give them the topic of youth in a youth club. When thay make a photo, and you find out who is (doing) what in the photo, tell everyone to remeber exactly where they ar estanding and what are they doing. Then, choose a group of participants that make like a micro picture in the big one and keep them on stage, but tell everybody else to stand aside. Then ask the first person from those observers from the side that he/she is a youth worker and this is a group of young people he/she needs to make contact with, and his/her task is to position himself/herself in the space in regards to the youth group. That person will position himself/herself as he/she wants, stand still for a moment, than leave the stage, so a new one can try the positioning. Let a couple of participants that are observing to try to position themselves (one by one), and then make a switch – tell everyone to go back to their original positions in the photo and select a new youth group to stay on the stage. Repeat the positioning process with other participants (with the new youth group on the stage). Then repeat the whole process one more time, choosing the third group of participants to be on stage as a third youth group. Then ask the participants to start walking again and give them the task to prepare a photo of young people hanging out in the hood. Repeat the whole process.

Notes (PART 2): Try to make sure that all participants positioned themselves at least once during the exercise, but keep the positioning spontaneous and dynamic, they shouldn't think too much, but try to observe and act.

## SESSION 2: FIRST CONTACT

duration: 3 hours

**Rationale for the 2nd session:** In the second session of the second day we are focusing on the skills of youth workers for creating the first contact with young people. Thus, we will put them in various situations where they should make their first contact, and follow how are they implementing the principles in their practice.

**Work materials:** Forms or papers for notes.

### 1. FROZEN IMAGES:

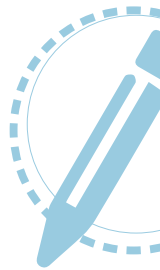
#### WHERE DO WE MEET YOUNG PEOPLE

Why: We are now preparing the setting for the first round of improvisation and testing the skills of our youth workers. This exercise allows that the setting we create is realistic and supports the preparation of participants of what follows afterwards. Frozen images are maybe the most often used applied theatre technique and is very valuable for a numerous of things, allowing group creation, group analysis and a lot more.

How (PART 1): Participants are divided in 4 or 5 groups (so that each group has minimum a 3 and maximum 5 participants). You will tell the participants that their task is to present where they usually have their first contact with some young people. It can be anywhere, there are no rules, but they should discuss between their group about their experiences and choose which „scenario“ they want to present. They need to present where are the young people and what are they doing when they meet them for the first time. They will present this by using three frozen images. Demonstrate the technique on a simple example with your co-trainer or a volunteer (for example on a situation where one person is late to a meeting because he/she slept in and the other one gets mad). It is important that participants do not move at all while they are “in the image”, in order to the effect of photography is achieved. Give the participants some time (five to ten minutes) to discuss and prepare their images.

Notes (PART 1): Approach each group and tell them that they should also try the images – so they would talk less and test their positioning to see if all is clear in their story.





How (PART 2): Group by group displays the frozen images they created. While one group is presenting, everyone else represents the audience and then their task is to carefully follow the displayed content and not comment on anything until the show is complete. In order to achieve the effect of actual images for the audience, participants who are watching should keep their eyes closed while those “on stage” set up in their images. The trainer monitors the preparation and gives a signal to the audience when to open their eyes. After the third picture, that is, when the group finishes its presentation, the trainer starts a discussion with the participants in the audience about what they saw and what the images represent – where are the young people, who is doing what and, possibly who is „who“ in the peer group – do they know each other or not, etc. Then the participants in the audience, based on the interpretation of the pictures, explain the context, content, roles and relationships between actors. The group that presented their frozen images is not participating in this discussion, the trainer draws their attention to the fact that they should not reveal whether the audience is interpreting images in the right way or not. The trainer is the moderator in this discussion, but he/she can also share his/her view of the situation (since he/she also did not participate in the preparation of the pictures, he/she does not know the background of the story). What can happen is that participants see completely different stories in the same images. It is not necessary to correct the participants then, but to encourage them to give all possible views of the presented situation, with a somewhat longer stay on the “most probable” scenario, ie the one on which the largest number of participants agree upon. When the discussion is over, the floor is given to the group which showed the images and then they explain whether the audience guessed what was shown or not and provide additional information about the displayed if necessary. For the story of each group it is necessary to apply the same procedure of analysis and discussion.

Notes (PART 2): Take notes after the groups so you have written down all shown contexts. If the contexts are very similar, during the discussions support those elements that provide some variety in the settings.

## 2. FIRST CONTACT IMPROV

Why: Here is when we start with the simulations of realistic situations for our participants. The first one is focuses on creating the first contact with young people. This is extremely important for the trainer to see his/her group in practice, and to

check where are their strengths and weaknesses in practice. This context is chosen because the first contact needs to be a hook for the creation of the connection between the youth worker and the young people and is crucial for voluntary participation of young people.

How (PART 1): In the previous exercise you created with the groups 4 or 5 settings for meeting young people. We'll call them by numbers for easier explanation but you can name them according to the context they were showing (for example the youth club, park, school, youth festival, institution for young people, etc.). Group 1 needs to create their context again. Participants from group 2 have the task to be the youth workers that will enter the scene and try to make the first contact with the youth group. One by one will try – being the only youth worker on the stage. This will be done through improvisation – so no previous agreements on who will do or say what is being done. The people on the stage – the youth group have their instructions on who they are, what they are doing and where they are from the previous exercise, and these are the guidelines for their actions. The youth worker has a minute to consolidate and possibly create a tactic on how he/she will approach the youth group. Then the scene starts. You will feel when the scene is done and then you will award the youth worker and the actors with an applause. The youth worker can then shortly explain his/her tactics and whether he/she feels that he/she successfully created the contact with young people. Then the scene rewinds to the beginning and the next youth worker steps in. Repeat the process until all participants from group 2 participated as youth workers. Everybody else is just observer.

Notes (PART 1): If the „actors“ of young people start to act too much, this is a very important moment for your intervention. Let them finish the first scene, the first take and then have a short discussion with everybody on whether their actions were realistic. Usually the audience, but also the youth worker or even the young people themselves recognize that they were not realistic, that they were or too hard or too easy on the youth worker. This is because they were acting. So the most important instruction for them is that they are not acting. They know their characteristics, their context, something that is specific for their role, but their role is not to make it hell for the youth worker, but to provide with a realistic setting. So, if they feel that the approach of the youth worker was too mild and not effective or too pushy, they should not be open to him/her right away. On the other hand, if the youth worker is interesting and actually catches your attention, you stay caught, do not look away just intentionally so you will make it harder for the







youth worker. We are practicing for reality and need realistic, natural reactions. So, they should just relax and follow the flow. Pay attention to behavior and approach of every participant and take notes. In the following discussion, you will also give them your feedback on what you noticed, and you should be ready to point out at least one positive and one negative thing for each participant that acted as a youth worker in the exercise. Also, take notes on anything you see that is relevant for the discussion on principles that will come in the next session.

How (PART 2): After the first round of improv, have everybody to sit in a circle and discuss (not for too long) on several topics: how they felt during the exercise, was it hard? whose approach was the most effective and why, and who had the most trouble to create the contact and why? Then give a short feedback to each youth worker – pointing out something they did good and something they can do better (at least one strength and one thing to improve).

Notes (PART 2): Try to keep the discussion focused and short. There will be more discussions after each round and more time in the later sessions to talk more.

How (PART 3): Then, the group 2 becomes the youth group (from their setting created in the previous exercise) and group 3 enters the scene as youth workers. After that, group 3 are the young people, and group 4 are the youth workers, and so on, until group 1 acts as youth workers in the last group of young people. After each round a short discussion should be made with the same topics.

Notes (PART 3): Feel free to take a break between groups, and you should keep them in the process so no need for any additional exercises before the improv continues.

## **SESSION 3: INTRODUCTION OF THE PRINCIPLES**

**duration: 1.5 hours**

**Rationale for the 3rd session:** This is where we officially introduce the principles, so we can foster further educational processes of our youth workers. After this session, youth workers will approach each new simulation session during the next three days knowing on which elements they should pay attention to and will get to connect challenging situations and their concrete behavior with the principles.

**Work materials:** Papers with the name and explanation of each principle.

## 1. BREAK THE RECORD

Why: For the start of this session, and after the intensive introspectional processes that happened in the last session, we are choosing a fun, dynamic, physical exercise, and are using it for the introductory activity for the ones that will follow.

How: Before the exercise prepare the papers with the principles on a table in the working room, with them facing down, so that no one sees what is on them. All participants should walk around the room, and stop on the instruction of the trainer. Their task is to perform a series of activities as fast as they can and come back to their current position. The activities can be created at the spot, but they should involve a lot of physical movement and some interaction. For example your activities can include:

- touching 2 opposite walls of the room
- touching something red (or of some other color)
- shaking hands with some other participant
- jumping across some line on the floor – left and right
- turning around their own axis
- returning to their original place

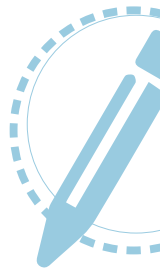
Trainer will measure the time that takes the group to complete the tasks. When they are done, let them know what was their time and ask them do they think they can do better? Let them do it again. And ask them do they think they can do even better, but this time, the first ones who finish all activities also need to take one paper from the table before going to their original place. Celebrate the record with the group with a big applause.

## 2. ANALYSIS OF THE PRINCIPLES

Why: Here we're directly focusing on the principles and the participants know they're dealing with their learning process. Thus, knowledge component is in focus in this segment.

How (PART 1): The persons who grabbed the papers become the captains of their teams. All other participants should select their team (randomly). Since you have 8 principles, you will have in average 3 participants per team. Their task is to find a comfortable place in the room, read what is written in their paper (the name and the short description of the principle) and discuss within their group on what the principle relates to.





How (PART 2): After the discussion in small groups, you will all gather in a big circle. Introduce the discussion by explaining that a lot of countries have their national ethical codes for youth workers and that they can vary and be also very similar and that, during the training you will reflect on these similarities that are covered in extracted 8 principles, but that you will also reflect on the national documents if your country has them. Explain that the principles cover the specifics of youth work (5 of them) and specifics of the relationship of the youth worker and young persons (3 of them). Each group will present its principle, with the trainer providing additional explanations to the principle if necessary. Take it one at a time, and for each one, ask the participants can they reflect on some situation from the training that associates them to that particular principle.

Notes (PART 2): Through this discussion you will introduce all relevant information about the principles – the information the groups didn't cover on their own in their short presentations. But still do not go in too deep, as analysis of the principles will happen during the next three days. At the end of the day, put the principles on the wall of the working room, so the participants can always see them through the rest of the training.

### 3. JUMP

Why: Since it's the end of the day, it is time to jump and collect our thoughts into one word.

How: All participants stand in a circle, holding hands. The trainer asks of the group to choose one word that sums up their main impression of the day. Participants can make some suggestions and the group chooses one. When the word is chosen, a group jump needs to happen by the following: the group will pronounce the first vowel from the word (for example, if the chosen word is fun the vowel will be the voice A) continually from the quietest to the loudest. As they are becoming louder and louder, they are going from the standing position to a squatting position. When they are the loudest, they are squatting all the way down and should jump at the same time, yelling the word they choose.

Notes: The trainers are also a part of the jump. Demonstrate shortly the movement while explaining the exercise to the group. End the jump with group applause (it will come naturally).

## DAY 3: PRACTICE, PRACTICE, PRACTICE

Structure: 1 session

**Purpose:** Enhancing their skills through applied drama techniques – entering the challenging scenes and trying to solve them by respecting the principles; Fostering reflective practices through group and individual reflection on each „test“.

**Rationale for the 3rd day:** We are now starting the intensive practicing segment of the training that will last all up the last day. The idea is to provide youth workers with numerous settings in which they can test their skills in implementing the principles, with the focus on challenging situations and on youth with fewer opportunities. On this day focus is on individual (one-on-one) interventions of youth workers.

**Notes:** Here, the trainer needs to be alert all the time, needs to follow all the group and individual processes and track important information. Pay attention and take notes.

### SESSION: PLAY, PERFORM, TEST, REFLECT

**duration: 6 hours**

**Rationale for the session:** We are putting our youth workers in situations that are relevant for their one-on-one interventions in sensitive subjects. We are testing their skills, their knowledge and beliefs, as well as direct understanding on how this topic should be approached to regarding the principles of youth work.

**Work materials:** Pens for all participants, flip chart papers with written names of the principles, post-its, a hat or a bowl, forms or papers for taking notes.

#### 1. TAKE MY PEN

Why: Since a lot of work is behind us and ahead of us, we are choosing just one fun game for the start, to gather all the participants' energy in one place. Feel free to use some other exercise if you do not like our suggestion for this particular moment.

How: Everybody's standing in a circle holding a pen in their left hand, holding it in front of them. When you say „ONE“ the task of participants becomes touching the pen of the person standing on their right. You will say ONE several times, in a dynamic, energized way. Then say TWO and see if they will be confused. Explain





afterwards that, when you say TWO, they should take the pen of the person to their right (with their right hand) and put it in their left hand. Test TWO a couple of times and then mix ONE and TWO. Then say THREE. After the group stops because they realize you did not give them the instruction for three yet, explain that THREE means they need to poke the person on their right with their right index pillow. Mix ONE, TWO THREE instructions and make it fast.

Notes: You are equally participating in the exercise with all participants.

## 2. HOW DID WE USE THE PRINCIPLES SO FAR

Why: In order to put the minds of our participants into the principles, they now have the task to connect the behaviors of the trainer(s) in the context of the principles.

How: Flip char papers with the names of principles are prepared all over the room. Each one has a pen next to it. Ask the participants to line up in space according to how they would access their expertise in this topic so far. Then create couples by pairing up the one with „the most expertise“ with the one with „the least“ and so on until everybody has a pair. If you have odd number of participants, keep one group of three. They all have a task to discuss among themselves by each principle in which actions of the trainer they recognize these principles and to write it down on the paper. They can do it in any way, but it is important that all pairs „visit“ all principles. Maybe they will have nothing new to add and that is ok, then they can add some sign by those statements they agree with.

## 3. TOUCHY STATEMENTS

Why: We want to base the following section of improving on realistic basis. This is why, through this exercise, we are gathering the materials for the following improv session.

How: Each participant should take a couple of post-its. They have a task to, individually, recall on different situations when young persons share something „touchy“ with them. Then, they should write them on the post-its, just one statement on one piece of paper. If they need more post-its, they can take more. There is no limitation on how many statements they should write. All statements should be written as the person is saying them – in the first person. All statements are put into a hat (or a bowl).

## 4. IMPROV SESSION

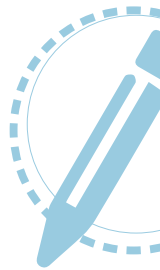
Why: For this round of improv we are choosing the applied drama techniques of introducing statements that change the flow of the scene. This allows the youth workers to have to adjust their behavior to new, disturbing information and leaves them with zero room for planning their response – allowing them to actually practice their reactions in a realistic setting.

How (PART 1): Choose one of the settings created during day 2 that provides you with a suitable context – such as a youth club, or a workshop anywhere, or some learning activity etc. Leave two persons from that story on stage – two young persons. Choose first 5 participants who will be youth workers. They will participate in this scenario one by one, as they did in the first contact exercise. The context of the improv is the following: An activity is in place, you're wrapping things up with the youth group and then one of those two young persons will tell you one statement (he/she will draw it from the hat). Ask the first youth worker to leave the room for a second. While he/she is out, let one of those two persons on stage to pick a statement from the hat. Tell him/her that this is the statement he/she will say to the youth worker at some point in the scene, it's up to her/him when will he/she say it. The youth worker comes back and the improv starts. He/she does not know which of those two persons on stage will have some issue, so his/her reaction will be more spontaneous. The scene ends when we see how the youth worker handled the touchy issue. After the first youth worker is done, rotate participants, so that you have new young persons on stage (so more participants find themselves in roles of young persons, youth workers and observers all throughout the testing sessions).

Notes (PART 1): Pay attention to each situation and take notes for every youth worker – what was good in his/her approach and what needs improving. Parallel, take notes in regard the principles and note important points that you will use in the grand discussion after the session is over.

How (PART 2): After the first 5 participants acting as youth workers, have a short discussion on how it all went, focusing on what in their approach was ok and what is walking into a trap. Analyze their behavior. Prepare for each participant a feedback pointing out the good and critical elements of his/her handling of the situation.





How (PART 3): Choose another setting – for the dynamics but also for the change of scenario that can affect the interventions of the youth workers. For example, you can choose an outdoor setting for the next round of improvisation and add more young persons on the stage. Choose next 5 participants and repeat the improv procedures from the previous sessions. Repeat the discussion process, then again change the scenario. Do this until all participants took part as reacting to some touchy statements of young people.

Notes: Of course, you will take breaks during the day (since the duration of the improv always vary greatly depending on the group and its individuals its hard to point out exactly where the break will happen).

## 1. WHAT THEY DID ON THE BREAK

Why: When you do take a break you can use this exercise before getting back to the improvisation. For gathering the thoughts and energy of everybody after the break, we are introducing one simple exercise to make a transfer from the break to the continuing of the testing. You can always choose some other exercise for this particular moment that will suit your group better.

How: All participants are in a circle, with some fun music in the background (not loudly). Their task is to, one by one, enter the center of the circle and show to other participants, without any words, what they did during the break.

## 2. IMPROV SESSION

Why: Continuing with the previous improv sessions, so all the participants have the chance to test themselves in the role of the youth worker.

## 3. SCREAM

Why: After a whole day of dealing with sensitive issues, and being in the process, we want to lose any possible negative energy residues from the improv sessions, and also we want to raise and gather our energy after a whole day of practice.

How: All participants stand in a circle, heads down, with their eyes fixed on the floor. Their own the task is to raise their head at the trainers' signal and look at

one of specific three people. They can look at the person on their left or right or at the person across from them. Once they look at one of these three people, they are not allowed to look away. If their eyes meet the person they are looking at, they both need to scream. Thereafter, all participants look down again and wait for the next sign from the trainer. Before starting the game, it is necessary to clearly establish with the participants who is their person across. If the number of participants is odd, it is necessary to have the trainer participate in the game. The trainers' sign can be a certain sound (clap, whistle) or verbal (three, four - now). Participants need to be encouraged to cast their voices. The end of the exercise can be marked by a joint scream.

Notes: In general it is good that the trainer participates in this exercise and shows them how they can scream loudly and freely.

## 4. REFLECTION ON THE PRINCIPLES

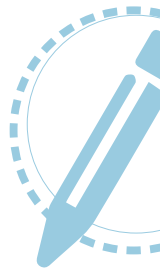
Why: At the end of the session, we want to integrate all the experiences and connect them to our learning topics.

How: All participants sit in a circle. Open the discussion by asking whether this session was difficult for them and why yes/no. After their reflections, ask them questions that will help them connect the situations with the professional and ethical principles. In this situation, the obvious principle is the one regarding accountability, covering the topics of confidentiality and professional boundaries – whether the issue young person came with to us is „for us“ or for someone else and what to do with that. But there are also other important elements regarding the youth work approach in general, thus the professional principles. So, ask them did they teach something the persons they consulted in their scenes. The goal is to get to an understanding that, by being supportive, we are also teaching a lot of things – we are creating opportunities for young people to learn that there are some people who will be there for them and that problems are normal etc. Thus, reflect on the non-formal and informal learning. Also, reflect on active participation – whether the way youth workers talked to the young persons engaged their active participation – did they get the young persons to think, propose and act on their issue, or they provided with a „done“ solution and told the young person what to do.

Notes: In all the discussions and reflections for this and the days to come, it is very important for the trainer to follow all the processes and for him/her to be capable







to catch and connects concrete behaviors with the principles, so he/she can support the learning process of the participants.

*Special note for the active Ethical code of youth workers of Serbia* (if you are doing a NAPOR training with the current Ethical code still in place): Connect the situations with the following principles: Treat young people with respect (regarding confidentiality), Respect and promote the rights of young people to make their choices and decisions (regarding active participation and learning opportunities), Promote and ensure the well-being and safety of young people (regarding the limits of our expertise). Possible with Perceive and understand the boundary between personal and professional life if some of the statements address this boundary.

## 5. JUMP

Why: Since it's the end of the day, it is time to jump and collect our thoughts into one word.

How: All participants stand in a circle, holding hands. The trainer asks the group to choose one word that sums up their main impression of the day. Participants can make some suggestions and the group chooses one. When the word is chosen, a group jump needs to happen by the following: the group will pronounce the first vowel from the word (for example, if the chosen word is fun the vowel will be the voice A) continually from the quietest to the loudest. As they are becoming louder and louder, they are going from the standing position to a squatting position. When they are the loudest, they are squatting all the way down and should jump at the same time, yelling the word they choose.

Notes: The trainers are also a part of the jump. Demonstrate shortly the movement while explaining the exercise to the group. End the jump with group applause (it will come naturally).

## DAY 4: PRACTICE, PRACTICE, PRACTICE

Structure: 1 session

**Purpose:** Enhancing their skills through applied drama techniques – entering the challenging scenes and trying to solve them by respecting the principles; Fostering reflective practices through group and individual reflection on each „test“.

**Rationale for the 4th day:** Focus of the fourth day is handling challenges that happen in the group work, and connecting them to the proper use of the principles. Today, youth workers will encounter a variety of situations and will use a variety techniques to try to solve them.

**Notes:** Here, the trainer needs to be alert all the time, needs to follow all the group and individual processes and track important information. Pay attention and take notes.

## SESSION: PLAY, PERFORM, TEST, REFLECT

**duration: 6 hours**

**Rationale for the session:** In the session of the fourth day we're raising the dynamic in their testing experience. We are testing and improving their skills in managing challenging group situations. We are testing and fostering their conflict management skills, improvisation and flexibility, as well as direct understanding on how different conflict situations should be approached to regarding the principles of youth work.

**Work materials:** post-its, hat or a bowl, forms or papers for taking notes, a list of disruptive situations.

### 1. DANCING IN A CIRCLE

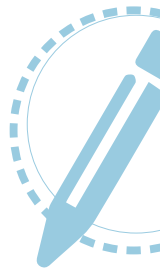
Why: We're starting the day with something relaxing and goofy, reminding ourselves that we're in a fun, open, safe space.

How: Play some upbeat music. Call everybody to join you in the circle. Choose one persons' to step into the center of the circle and to dance to the music. Everybody else should replicate the person movement and dance in the same way. After a bit that person leaves the circle by dancing to someone else and taking his/her place while that person now stands in the center and introduces new dance movement. Dance away until all participants were in the center.

### 2. DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOR

Why: We are choosing to start this session with a similar methodology as the yesterdays' one, just to lead the participants to the feeling that this is something familiar, that they know what's coming. This leaves us with a greater element of surprise and more skill practicing in the exercises that will come.





How: Each participant should take a couple of post-its. They have a task to, individually, recall on different disruptive behavior that they encountered during their work so far, or some challenging situations they heard happened to someone else, or something they fear can happen to them during their group work with young people. Then, they should write them on the post-its, just one situation on one piece of paper. If they need more post-its, they can take more. There is no limitation on how many statements they should write. All statements should be written as the person is saying them – in the first person. All statements are put into a hat (or a bowl). Take a quick reading of the proposed situations and choose those that suit you the most. If they missed some important ones, use your pre-prepared list to fill in the suggestions. The list should consist of:

- one of the participants is mining the activity and its hard to keep the attention to the activity
- during the activity one of the participants has an abrupt emotional response to something – you don't know what
- during the activity one of the participants just continues to laugh and can't stop, it's getting annoying but it's disrupting the activity
- you're prepared for a group sports activity but when you arrive to it, there's only one person there
- you're arriving to an activity in an institution where young people live and they are super not motivated to do what you planned
- you're arriving to the activity and two participants start verbally arguing (a brother and sister)
- you want to attract new group of young people to your activity, so you're approaching them in their hood after a game and they do not seem quite interested
- during the activity a physical fight starts among two participants

### 3. IMRPOV SESSION + BOXING MATCH COACHING

Why: For this round of improv we are besides using our post-its for the creation of our scenes, we're using boxing match coaching as an applied drama technique for the realization of the improv scene. This allows them to recalculate and try a different strategy and also involves other youth workers as active participants even though they're not in the center of the scene.

How (PART 1): In this improv session the trainer is directing the setting for the interventions of youth workers. Divide the group in three (you will have 7 or 8 participants per group). Ask the first one to join you on stage. They will be the young

people. The second group will be the youth workers in this round of improv and the third one will be the observers. Tell them that the context is that they are a youth group and that the youth worker will arrive to the activity and start the activity with them. They are already working together for some time, they know each other and already have established basic trust. Young people can think of different young persons they created in the first day during sculpturing, so they will represent a diverse youth group. Now ask the youth workers to leave the room so you can instruct your young people. If two trainers are working one will step outside and give additional instructions to youth workers. While they're out they should plan with what activity will they come to the youth group, what did they plan to do that day, and they need to start the activity with the young people. Instructions for the young people involve introducing them with a selected disruptive behavior that will emerge during the activity. Let them choose who will show that disruptive behavior but remind them that their role is not to act, but to REACT, to follow the flow and act on how they feel according to their character when the disruption happens and when youth worker tries to fix things. You let the youth workers in and the first one enters the scene and the improv starts.

Notes (PART 1): Pay attention to each situation and take notes for every youth worker – what was good in his/her approach and what needs improving. Parallel, take notes in regard the principles and note important points that you will use in the grand discussion after the session is over. In the first round the youth workers is „alone“ and goes from the beginning to the end of the improvisation any way he/she figures out.

HOW (PART 2): After the first youth worker, repeat the preparation procedure in the same way (with youth workers exiting the room and preparing the young people on the scene). When the youth workers group comes back, inform the next youth worker that he/she will be able to have support from his/her youth workers group if he/she needs it. They will follow everything closely and stay „in his/her corner, like boxing coaches“. So, when the youth worker feels he/she needs support, he/she should yell STOP and that freezes the scene. The youth workers step out of the scene to his/her team and they can consult the youth worker on what he/she can try in order to solve the situation. Then he/she goes back and the scene continues. Play it like this for two more youth workers.

How (PART 3): For the fifth youth worker (and for the rest from this group) introduce a new option – for the boxing coaches to also yell STOP if they feel that their youth worker can intervene in a moment he/she missed, so the intervention can be timely.





Notes (PARTS 2 and 3): Depending on the choice of the disruptive behavior, mix the group of participants on stage – make the group the youth worker needs to work with larger/smaller, change the scenery of where they are – play with the dynamics so youth workers always have some new element to adapt to.

How (PART 4): After the first group of participants acting as youth workers, have a short discussion on how it all went, focusing on what in their approach was ok and what is walking into a trap. Analyze their behavior. Prepare for each participant a feedback pointing out the good and critical elements of his/her handling of the situation.

Notes (PART 4): Follow the needs of the group and the time for the break. If you have more time before the break, start the next round of improvisation before it, since it is important for everybody to have their turn in stepping into the scenes.

## 4. RATS AND RABBITS

Why: When you do take a break and come back from it, use this. Since our participants are now expecting some serious work, use the very energizing, fun and crazy exercise to just light the mood.

How: Ask participants to line up in two lines at the center of the room, one next to another. Ask them to let enough space between one line and another (a little bit less than 1 meter should be enough). Tell them that one line will be RATS and the other line will be RABBITS. Every time you say “RATS” the line with that name will run to the outer side of the room and try to arrive to a specific spot (a line or a wall) – which represents their safe house. Meanwhile, the rabbits line will try to tag the rats before they arrive to the safe spot. If you say RABBITS it will be the other way around. Each tagged person will change the line and so will become either rat or rabbit. While performing this exercise in English, play with words so introduce words like READY? RELAX! and play a little bit with the dynamics of your commands. It will bring a lot of tension and fun to the game.

Notes: This exercise is extremely physically active so pay attention to safety of all participants. Clear the room before the exercise but also tell them to try to not hurt each other during the game. Some small bumps are to be expected, just to be clear, since a lot of passion is activated through this game if the atmosphere is done right 😊. But participants enjoy this exercise immensely.

## 5. IMPROV SESSION – FREEZE AND REWIND

Why: We're continuing with our challenges for our youth workers, but we're introducing new intervention techniques. It is possible that you will start this part already before the break and if that happens, just continue where you left the group with the next youth worker in line.

How (PART 1): The second group of youth workers is now the test one. Prepare the scene in the same way as in the previous session. But, this time, the instructions for the youth worker is that he/she can yell FREEZE when he/she thinks he/she needs a second to consolidate, to observe where is who in his youth group and to assess on what he/she needs to focus on. When he/she is ready, he/she yells UNFREEZE and the story continues. Repeat this version for two youth workers, also allowing youth workers group to provide support through discussion if the youth worker wants their inputs.

How (PART 2): For the next 2 youth workers, you are introducing a REWINDING FREEZE option. This means that, when the youth worker yells FREEZE, he/she can also rewind the situation through images, to observe in more proximity what happened in the group and how the situation escalated. This means that, when the youth workers yells FREEZE, young people on the scene become FROZEN IMAGES and the youth worker can walk around them, analyze and discuss what he/she sees. But he/she can UNFREEZE the situation only in the moment where she/he froze it and to try to continue with the solving of the issue. This one can be very suitable for physical conflict analysis – if it escalated.

How (PART 3): The next part allows the rest of the youth workers, when they're on stage to yell STOP, to discuss with their team what they could have done better and to „go back in time“, to REWIND to the beginning of the activity and start again.

Notes (PART 3): This intervention is very important and suitable for those conflicts that escalated, so you can save the most tricky ones for this part. Throughout the whole improv session play with the settings to provide dynamics and variety for youth workers to walk into. Pay close attention to which youth worker got to participate in which form of interventions. Since you will have the last improv round tomorrow, it is important that the ones that did not get a chance to „come back“ or rewind have more practicing tomorrow.



## 6. FORUM SCENE

Why: This kind of choice allows different participants to try to solve one challenging situation.

How: The last group of youth workers is in focus now and they are officially the audience. They will watch an improvised scene where a conflict between two groups of participants that are fans of opposite football clubs and came to a youth work activity right after a big game where the score was an issue and the judges ruled for one team, but the other ones feel robbed. The conflict escalates so high that a big physical fight happens and the youth worker stands powerless or even hurt in the process. Prepare the scene with a group of other participants during the break. Everybody besides the youth workers group is on the stage, so they're dealing with a bigger group of 'conflict ready' young people. The task of youth workers in the audience is to watch the whole scene and then to think in which moment could the youth worker prevent the conflict to escalate. They can discuss it a bit, but then the scene will start from the beginning and, when they have an idea on how the youth worker should react, they yell STOP, and the youth worker with the idea steps in and tries to react to prevent the chaos. After his/her intervention the trainer discusses with him/her did he/she manage to do what he/she planned and do he/she thinks it worked. Then the rest of youth workers say what they think and can suggest a different intervention in a different moment earlier or later in the story.

Notes: This is a complex improv situation where literally anything can happen. The youth workers can derive with the idea that they would call up a colleague to help them. In that case, assign another youth worker to play the colleague. If they decide for example to call the police, improvise that as well, with the realistic outcome that the young people resent the youth worker for it and do not want to return ever to his/her activities. Explore each suggestion. If for some reason some of the youth workers do not get a chance to step in the scene but only discusses, pay attention to this and include him/her in the tomorrows' improvs.

## 7. GROUP SHAKE AND HUG

Why: After a super intensive day of conflict presentation, we need to chill a little bit and get back to our positive group cohesion and group support.



How: Ask all participants to stand in a circle and to shake their hands, legs and whole body so that all the gathered negative energy can leave the body. They can free some sounds as well. Then, ask them to bread out loudly by raising their hands up and dropping them down with the rest of their body and a loud exhale. Do this for a couple of times. Now, tell them that it is time to remind ourselves how we care for one another and that you will send a hug around the circle and wait for it to come back to you. Hug the person on your left side and he/she needs to hug the next person and so on.

## 8. REFLECTION ON THE PRINCIPLES

Why: At the end of the session, we want to integrate all the experiences and connect them to our learning topics.

How: All participants sit in a circle. Open the discussion by asking whether this session was difficult for them and why yes/no. After their reflections, ask them questions that will help them connect the situations with the professional and ethical principles. The challenges they will cover will interwind with all the principles for sure, but we cannot predict in advance which elements will be activated by each scenario, as you will create the scenarios with them. So, the skills of the trainer are here in play to connect the dots and to connect the interventions with different elements of our principles. Use the group also for this, since in this part of the training their reflective practice should be extremely active.

Notes: In all the discussions and reflections for this and the days to come, it is very important for the trainer to follow all the processes and for him/her to be capable to catch and connects concrete behaviors with the principles, so he/she can support the learning process of the participants.

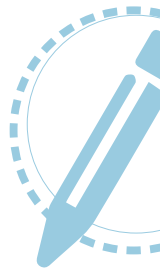
*Special note for the active Ethical code of youth workers of Serbia* (if you are doing a NAPOR training with the current Ethical code still in place): Connect the situations with the principles from the Ethical code of NAPOR.

## 9. JUMP

Why: Since it's the end of the day, it is time to jump and collect our thoughts into one word.







How: All participants stand in a circle, holding hands. The trainer asks of the group to choose one word that sums up their main impression of the day. Participants can make some suggestions and the group chooses one. When the word is chosen, a group jump needs to happen by the following: the group will pronounce the first vowel from the word (for example, if the chosen word is fun the vowel will be the voice A) continually from the quietest to the loudest. As they are becoming louder and louder, they are going from the standing position to a squatting position. When they are the loudest, they are squatting all the way down and should jump at the same time, yelling the word they choose.

Notes: The trainers are also a part of the jump. Demonstrate shortly the movement while explaining the exercise to the group. End the jump with group applause (it will come naturally).

## **DAY 5: FINAL COUNTDOWN**

Structure: 2 sessions

**Purpose:** Enhancing their skills through applied drama techniques – entering the challenging scenes and trying to solve them by respecting the principles; Fostering reflective practices through self-reflective evaluation and group evaluation.

**Rationale for the 5th day:** The first part of the fifth day will again be focused on practicing of the skills of youth workers and reflecting on their understanding of the principles in practice. The second session is focused on closing the processes of the training and on overall evaluation.

**Notes:** Here, the trainer needs to be alert all the time, needs to follow all the group and individual processes and track important information. Pay attention and take notes.

### **SESSION 1: PLAY, PERFORM, TEST, REFLECT**

**duration: 3 hours**

**Rationale for the 1st session:** In the first session of the last day we continue to practice with some scenes that touch the boundaries issue, both on the personal and professional level, and are connecting them to the principles.

**Work materials:** Forms or papers for notes.

## 1. BREATH IN

Why: This is a very strong yet simple exercise, perfect for the ending day of the training.

How: Participants are walking around the room. Tell them to start paying attention to their breathing. To breathe in, breathe out, slowly, calmly, and to continue to walk. Next, tell everybody to stop. Explain that now, they will be able to breathe in only when they touch someone on the shoulder. When someone touches you on the shoulder you need to stop so that person can breathe in. When you took enough air, you will continue walking. Everybody now takes one big inhale and starts walking. After a while, change the instruction and say that now they need to hug in order to breathe in. After the exercise thank the group for being so supportive to each other throughout the training and for helping each other breathe.

## 2. IMPROV SESSION

Why: Here we will use some already planned contexts for youth workers to get tested in. It provides with additional room for those that got to boost their skills a little bit less to have more chances to practice.

How (PART 1): For the first improvisation you need a smoker to volunteer. The context is that you're on an intensive several days training with youth group and now its break time and you're lighting a cigarette (away from the working facilities). You will prepare the participant that will play as the young person before the exercise, so the youth worker does not know what will happen. A young person is approaching the youth workers and asking for a light. The youth worker needs to solve the situation solely, no interventions are allowed. After the improv a short discussion on the concrete issue is held with the whole group, connecting it with principle of accountability (for NAPOR on Respect and promote the rights of young people to make their choices and decisions, Perceive and understand the boundary between personal and professional life).

Notes (PART 1): Choose youth workers based on their experiences from the day before – choose 4 participants that got the least practicing experience yesterday, they have the priority. But, for the first one, you need an actual smoker, so the smoker has the priority. Since your group is now always on topic, it will be easy to connect the challenge with the principles, so you can have a short and effective discussion after each scenario.





How (PART 2): For the next scenario, you need a group of participants and one youth worker who will leave the room for a moment so you can instruct your youth group. They're a group the youth worker already works with but one young person is continually trying to be super close to the youth worker – is trying to be his/her favorite and is continually asking for attention from the youth worker. After the improv a short discussion on the concrete issue is held with the whole group, connecting it with principles of accountability and equality (for NAPOR on Perceive and understand the boundary between personal and professional life).

How (PART 3): For the next one you will again have one youth worker and a group of young people on an activity. Instruct one of the 'young persons' that his role is to ask for money from the youth worker. He got into trouble by gambling and own money to guys who are now threatening to break his legs (anyway this is the story the young person is telling the youth worker, we do not know whether it's true and to what extent). After the improv a short discussion on the concrete issue is held with the whole group, connecting it with principles of active participation and accountability (for NAPOR on Promote and ensure the well-being and safety of young people, Treat young people with respect).

How (PART 4): For the last scenario you need a youth worker who is coming for the first time into a youth group from an institution (so he/she needs to come up with some introduction activity). The instruction for the youth group is that they are too intrusive – making a lot of personal questions and taking high interest in the personal life of the youth worker. After the improv a short discussion on the concrete issue is held with the whole group, connecting it with principles of equality (for NAPOR on Perceive and understand the boundary between personal and professional life).

### 3. ROUNDING SPEACH

Why: This is the final summation of the key messages from the training for the participants.

How: Tell the participants that, after the break, you will focus on the closing session for the training, but that you are now officially done with their practicing (and celebrate this with an applause). Highlight that the understanding of these principles is very important because they are the thing that colors youth work and separates it from other professions. And, since we want to be professional, we have to be super good on those things that are key in our youth work profession. Thus, continuous work on their skills, engaging in reflective practices with their colleagues, lifelong learning and practicing practicing practicing will help enhance not only their skills but the youth work position in our society. By respecting the principles, they will have more success in their practice, more professional respect from professional experts in other fields and better connections with young people.

### 4. JUMP

Why: Since this is an ending of a „whole“, a jump is in order to round up the learning experience.

How: All participants stand in a circle, holding hands. The trainer asks of the group to choose one word that sums up their main impression of the day. Participants can make some suggestions and the group chooses one. When the word is chosen, a group jump needs to happen by the following: the group will pronounce the first vowel from the word (for example, if the chosen word is fun the vowel will be the voice A) continually from the quietest to the loudest. As they are becoming louder and louder, they are going from the standing position to a squatting position. When they are the loudest, they are squatting all the way down and should jump at the same time, yelling the word they choose.

Notes: The trainers are also a part of the jump. Demonstrate shortly the movement while explaining the exercise to the group. End the jump with group applause (it will come naturally).



## SESSION 2: REFLECTIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

duration: 3 hours



**Rationale for the 2nd session:** This session is focused on closing processes of the whole training module. It involves individual and group reflections and evaluations, as well as some future plans creation.

**Work materials:** Papers with the names of principles, envelopes (1 per participant), post-its (a lot of them), a ball of thread, scissors, blank papers.

### 1. PACKMAN

Why: We're starting the finishing round with one more interesting and fun exercise.

How: Participants sit on chairs that are randomly distributed around the space (it is important that avoid some proper formation like a circle, as well as that in the space in which it is performed exercise will not be tables). Only one chair is empty. The group has a task not to allow the trainer to sit on the empty chair, but they can only do that by having some of the participants to sit in that chair before the trainers. However, then that participants' chair remains empty, so it becomes the new "target" of the trainer – because his task is still to sit on an empty chair. Therefore, all participants actually keep the empty chairs safe by moving. Draw participants' attention to the fact that it is not allowed to push or move the chair. Participants can run, but take care of safety. The trainer can only walk during the game, he/she is forbidden to change the pace, therefore not to accelerate when he/she is close to a chair – and just sitting on a chair should be performed at a relaxed, light pace. After a couple of takes, it is possible to give participants a chance to agree on chair saving tactics. It is possible to allow other participants to try themselves in the role of someone trying to sit on a chair. After the game make a conclusion that, when we're rushing, when we're in panic it's hard for us to think and to see the solution. But if we're calm, if we are straight on our goal, know our tools and are comfortable with going toward a challenge and not trying to avoid it, all will come to its place quite smoothly and easily, and we'll have fun on the way.

### 2. MARKING OF THE PRINCIPLES

Why: This allows the self-reflection of participants and prepares them for the following task.

How: Prepare the papers with the names of the principles and put them on a wall or some other part of the room that is approachable to the participants. Their task is to mark in any way (with a dot or some drawing) the principle they find the hardest to implement in their practice – the one they're having the most trouble with).

Notes: Take a look on the results, it is expected that there is a variety of principles covered.

### 3. INDIVIDUAL PLANS FOR FUTURE PRACTICES

Why: In order to provide some support effects to the transfer of the learning process to the „real world“ individual plans are made.

How: Each person should create his/her personal plan on how will he/she work on improving on that particular principle. The plan should consist of some concrete strategies that will lead to future practices in the real life, with also some time table that follows this plan. The plan can cover a time frame of 6 months to a year maximum.

Notes: Play some light music in the background while they're working. Be there for support if someone needs it. The individual plans will remain with the participants and will be discussed individually during the exiting interviews.

### 4. WE'RE THE BEST

Why: We mapped our weak sides, now it is time to map our strengths.

How: Each participant is given with an envelope he/she should write his/her name on it. Each participant should take the number of post-its that respond to number of participants (including the trainers) minus one (he/she does not need a post-it for himself/herself). On each post-it they should write the name of the participant and one thing that they instantly see or know from this time together that is his/her biggest strength. They should do this for every single person in the group. When they're finished, they should put the paper in the envelop of that person. When everyone s done, tell them that they can choose to read their papers now or later, however they choose. But, it is important to know that, what is written on their post-its are their actual, big strengths, that are noticeable to others and that they should not question whether they are there or not. Since we are all different, we do not have the same qualities, capacities or strengths. Thus, our papers provide us with our super-powers, something we can rely on when a crisis emerges,



because this is something that we're experts in. And these strengths can help us in our challenges and can get us closer to our goal of enhancing our skills even more and dealing with those principles we choose to „attack“ in the future. And we can do it, because we're the best!

## 5. FORMAL LEARNING OUTCOMES EVALUATION

Why: This is first formal evaluation exercise you will conduct with your group. It serves for their own self-evaluation, but also for the evaluation of the training module.

How: Prepare 6 chairs in the space. You will read the formal learning outcome for the training, one by one. Their task is to assess for how many „points“ did they move up on the scale from 1 to 5 on each point. If they did not move up at all they will go to the „zero“ chair. 😊

## 6. GROUP REFLECTION

Why: Besides the formal learning outcomes we want to open the floor for a wider reflection process with the participants.

How: Ask everybody to sit in a circle and tell them that, besides the formal learning outcomes we want to find out what do participants themselves recognize they gained through the training, as well as to give feedback to the trainers. Then the floor is theirs.

## 7. BALL OF THREAD

Why: This is done somewhat like a jump version for the whole training – with the goal of summing up the experiences and the process of the whole training process in one word.

How: Everybody is standing in a circle. The trainer holds in his/her hands a ball of thread. The task of the person holding the ball is to say one word that represents something he/she is taking with himself/herself from the training. When he/she says it, h/she will throw the ball of thread to someone else, holding one end of the string. This way, through the exercise, a web of stings is being created, with every participant holding one part of it in his/her hands. When everyone is done, the trainer will go around the circle with scissors, cutting the strings, so each participant is left with a part of it – so they can actually take their „thing“ they gained with them.



## DAY 6: EXITING INTERVIEWS

### Structure: Individual interviews

**Purpose:** Through individual exiting interviews each participant will receive personalized feedback and an individual analysis of their individual plan.

**Rationale for the interviews:** Group process is extremely important for the chosen methodology of the training. But still, it provides only non-formal room for full individual feedback to each participant. So the exiting interviews are a crucial part of a round-up learning experience of each participant.

**Notes:** For the interview, the trainer needs to prepare individual notes on each participant.

## TRAINERS' CORNER

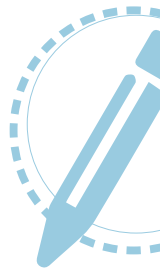
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Here are some important additional **GUIDELINES** for the trainers that will support successful implementation of the training module:

- ✓ Every exercise serves as an assessment tool and provides insight into the group and individual functioning of every individual in the group. So, you should always pay attention to different processes and behaviors of participants, since they can give you important insights in what is somebody's strength/ weakness / prejudice / opinion / attitude / non-verbal position or anything else that can be very important for your positive educational interventions further on in the training.
- ✓ You have to know your principles very well. The methodology that is used in the training implies that the most of the content will be derived by the participants themselves, thus, it is impossible to lay out all the connections between the situations they will be presenting and testing on the training with the principles in advanced, through this publication. So, you need to be prepared and sure that you can form these connections easily and clearly.
- ✓ Besides the systematization we used for the training it is relevant that you are acquainted with the national ethics frame for youth workers – if your country has one, and also to make connections to that document, if that is something your youth work group needs to follow or is familiar with. The best is to discuss with them about these differences and similarities so they will understand the mere essence of the principles that make youth work youth work.







- ✓ One of the most important principles of applied drama methodology is improvisation. We use improvisation to teach our participants, but we're also teaching them how to use improvisation in their work, to be free to change their plans, adjust their approach and not panic in a stress situation. So, you should also be very comfortable with improvisation and be free to use it during the training in order to respond to your group needs.
- ✓ If you have a dilemma on how a particular exercise or technique should look, we are always here for consultations! You can contact us via the email of the project coordinator, CEPORA: [office@cepora.org](mailto:office@cepora.org)
- ✓ You need to be aware of your position, behavior and pay attention that your actions reflect the youth work principles in practice. Make your participants comfortable and let them enjoy the ride with you as their "leader".

In order to be able to use this training module in your work – in order to use applied drama effectively and comfortably, you should recognize yourself in most of the **CHARACTERISTICS** from the following list:

- ✓ Flexible
- ✓ Be able to think on your feet
- ✓ Playful
- ✓ Observant
- ✓ Dynamical
- ✓ Energetic
- ✓ Analytical
- ✓ Self-aware

Regarding the **FORMAL CONDITIONS** a trainer should meet before using this training module in his/her work, they cover the following:

- ✓ Minimum 7 years of experience of direct youth work or work in social-humanistic fields implementing direct work with young people;
- ✓ Minimum 5 years of experience of direct work with youth with fewer opportunities;
- ✓ Minimum 5 years of experience in the preparation and implementation of educational trainings;
- ✓ Good knowledge on the youth work practice, principles relevant for youth work and challenges of youth workers, especially in contact with youth with fewer opportunities;
- ✓ Strong facilitation and supervision skills.

# PARTICIPATING ORGANISATIONS

## **CEPORA - CENTER FOR POSITIVE YOUTH DEVELOPMENT**

Country: Serbia

City: Belgrade

Type of organisation: civic society organisation

website: [www.cepora.org](http://www.cepora.org)

contact: [office@cepora.org](mailto:office@cepora.org)

## **GADEPLAN BØRN OG UNGE**

Country: Denmark

City: Aarhus

Type of organisation: Public service provider

website: <https://www.aarhus.dk/english/>

contact: [Milar@aarhus.dk](mailto:Milar@aarhus.dk)

## **NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF YOUTH WORKERS**

Country: Serbia

City: Novi Sad

Type of organisation: Association

website: <http://napor.net/>

contact: [office@napor.net](mailto:office@napor.net)






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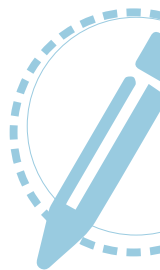
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