**ACTIVITY Awareness Circle(s) – COUNTRY**

*Preferably, fill in the info for each Awareness Circle, since target audience, number of participants, content, agenda, outcomes, challenges, etc. might be different for each event.*

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| **Technical info on the event**  **90 minutes**  **Saku Gümnaasium (Saku Gümnasium), Tallinna mnt 10, Saku, Estonia** | | |
| **Session nr:**  **Date: 08.05.2024**  **Location: Saku Gümnaasium** | **Participants:** | 5 8th grade students. |
| **Facilitators:** | The facilitators are social pedagogues Marttina Kallaste and Marju-Riina Laugen |
| **Main objective** | Raising awareness of restorative justice and when young people need it. | |
| **Key messages for the participants** | * Restorative justice is an opportunity, a way of thinking that gives a voice to the victim. Helps the perpetrator to make amends. * The focus is on the harm caused by the behavior. * How does behavior occur? What do you think? * It is also important that it is voluntary. No one is forced to participate in the process. Must want to make amends, must want to forgive and move on. * It is necessary to offer support to the victim. * Inappropriate behavior is frowned upon in our community. We notice it and react. * Introducing the issues of conflict mediation. | |
| **Materials used / Methodology** | discussion circles, staging cases, sociometric exercises, self-feeling measurements, educational films, worksheets. | |
| **Additional support materials**  *(please, specify which additional materials you have from the event. Ex: pictures, drawings, videos, audio, etc.)* ***Please send this material by email together with the report.*** |  | |

**Detailed report including:**

* **Introduction** to the Awareness circles taking place in your country (brief)

During the i-RESTORE 2.0 project Social Insurance Board of Estonia worked together with Saku Gymnasium, where the awareness circles were conducted.

Awareness circles were conducted in three groups. Two groups of 20 students each consisted of third-grade students (2 different classes). The third circle consisted of five 8th grade students. The circles took place in 45-minute or 90 minute (2x45) classes. For 8th graders, there were 5 meetings in the 2022/23 academic year and 10 meetings in the current academic year.

The meetings were divided into topics. Every time there was a new topic, but the focus always remained on the peaceful resolution of conflicts and the prevention of bullying. The timetable was drawn up to the minute.

In each class, the lecture form, discussion and sociometric exercises were used. A lot of modeling was done. The 8th grade students also met a psychologist, regional police officers and rescuers, and they also went to see a trial at the court.

At the end of each meeting, young people's assessment of that meeting was asked for. What new did they learn? What they would like to share about today's meeting with parents or a friend who was not here? Their feelings before and after the circle were also measured. ( 0 I feel very bad, I don't want to be here- 10 I feel great, I'm curious).

* **Schedule and progress of the event**

*(ex: agenda; detailed description of each activity; what was discussed; highlights)*

1. Explanations of terms. What is restorative justice - 5 min. Showing the slides.
2. Discussion - have you ever been in a situation where you needed restorative justice? - 15 minutes
3. What kind of support can be offered to the victim? Exercise. 5 prepared stories describing one incident. Read the story, think whether restorative justice can be used here? How would you use it? Who is the perpetrator, who is the victim, who is affected? Who do you involve in solving the case? What and how are you asking? Each student talks about the read story and expresses an opinion - 30 min
4. RJ video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UbH5aeUYzkE> and <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Zw_TEkA0QoM>

8 min

1. What thoughts did the films evoke after watching them? Was there something familiar that you have already heard or experienced?– 5 min
2. ?

* **Assessment of the event from the perspective of the facilitators**

*(in as much detail as possible, make an overall assessment of the awareness circle. This can include reflecting on the organization of the awareness circle itself, reflecting on the course of the activities, how was the engagement with participants, what was achieved, etc.)*

Eighth graders got into the project because of bullying incidents. After the second meeting in the 2022/23 academic year, changes in young people's behavior were noticeable. Bullying ended, independent interests emerged, they were not afraid to express their thoughts and feelings to the group, each other's differences were accepted. The biggest change is the end of bullying behavior and violent behavior. The behavior of all five students this school year has been rated very good by the teachers.

* **Assessment of the event from the side of the participants** *(if no survey has been sent to participants, reflect on what you think the experience was like for the participants, what was their reaction during the activities, which level of awareness on the topic did they present during the event, were there relevant comments/reactions/feedback, etc.)*

***8th grade youth feedback for circles:***

*"I am very pleased to be able to participate in these rounds. I feel more confident and better. Most of all, I feel that I know how to resolve conflicts. My problem-solving skills have improved, for example when dealing with conflicts. I now ask questions to help others understand better. I feel like my eyes have been opened. I have a wider horizon.”*

*"At first, I thought that we would only talk about how we bullied, because that's how it started. I didn't think that the topics would spread so much and we would learn so many new things. I had no expectations, thinking it was just for teasing. I like these matches, I feel like I get so much from here."*

*"I liked it the most when we went to court. I would never have believed that I would end up in such a place. The trial was very exciting and the judge who spoke. I didn't know at all that you can watch the court hearings if you are interested. In general, we have liked that we have learned so much, the police, rescuers, drug dogs, emergency work, psychologist. "*

*"I would like to be able to go everywhere more. I try my new skills more and I know I should practice them even more. But I would still like to know how young people end up in places of detention, what these places look like and what is done to them there. Do you also study? I would also like to know what an addict means and how addicts become."*

* **Quotes/testimonies/stories from participants** 
  + Priority should be given to the voice of children and young people (at least 1 testimonies/stories from children per country)
  + But also include perspectives from other participants (teachers, parents, school staff, speakers, others.)

„If/Whether“ questions don’t help me to move forward. I better ask how, what, which, who, with whom.

If I don't have control over myself, over my emotions, I get into conflicts and messes.

I also start to behave according to my parents. What I know about behavior has come from my parents.

Adults interject their experiences into our stories. Of course, we don't have a lot of experience yet, but we have to make our own mistakes to gain experience.

A neutral adult sounds good, who doesn't judge my behavior or my story, who doesn't teach.

In life, I need to be able to make money to pay the bills, but first I need to learn how to find a job. I have no idea. Between us, we have to manage in such a way that we benefit from each other, and do not quarrel. Conflicts arise from emotions.

I should learn to follow the rules, then I can handle myself and others better.

Taking out my bad things on others causes quarrels and also prevents me from doing well myself.

My future depends on my behavior. The bigger I am, the more important it is.

I am very pleased to be able to participate in these rounds. I feel more confident and better. Most of all, I feel that I know how to resolve conflicts. My problem-solving skills have improved, for example when dealing with conflicts. I now ask questions to help others understand better. I feel like my eyes have been opened. I have a wider horizon.

At first I thought we were only going to talk about how we bullied, because that's how it started. I didn't think that the topics would spread so much and we would learn so many new things. I had no expectations, thinking it was just for teasing. I love these meetings, I feel like I get so much from here.

I try my new skills more and know I should practice them even more. But I would still like to know how young people end up in places of detention, what these places look like and what is done to them there. Do you also study? I would also like to know what an addict means and how addicts become.

* **Suggestions/ recommendations** derived from the awareness circles.

*(Ex: regarding future awareness circles, content, target audience, materials or methodology to include, proposals for activities, practical suggestions, etc.)*

Young people want the circles to continue. They want to know even more about the consequences of the offenses. The youngsters were surprised that in Estonia you cannot join the defense forces if as young person you have been convicted of a crime. It was also a surprise that since February of this year, there are no juvenile detainees in Estonia. There is interest in what a Closed Children's Institution means, in what situations youngsters are sent there, how to change the behavior of a young person there.

Young people have found that the circles are real life and give them the knowledge they need for life, self-management skills, the courage to take responsibility, the courage to make decisions and problem-solving skills. These skills are valued more highly than, for example, a biology lesson.

Such discussion circles could be part of the curriculum. Such classes should not take place every week, but once or twice a month.

The methodologies were appropriate: discussion circles, staging cases, sociometric exercises, self-feeling measurements, educational films, worksheets.

* **Feel free to include any other additional information you consider relevant for the Awareness circle Storybook deliverable!**!!

