



**Arab Orthodox Christian Community
Romania**

WORLD DAY OF PRAYER AND ACTION FOR CHILDREN (DPAC)

ACTIVITY REPORT

"Ion Heliade Rădulescu" School, Bucharest

27 November, 2012

Theme: *"Stop Violence against Children"*

Date: 27 November, 2012

Venue: "Ion Heliade Rădulescu" School in Bucharest, Romania

Participants:

- 1) 24 children (14 -15 years old, 10 girls and 14 boys, Grade 8)
- 2) 5 adults – 2 facilitators and 3 teachers

Facilitators:

Ramona Lupu

Doina Rotaru

Activities:

1. Presenting images from other DPAC events;
2. DPAC Presentation;
3. Ingredients for a successful time together;
4. Videos and songs;
5. Pictures;
6. Prayer.

Description of the activities:

On November 27th 2012, the Arab Orthodox Community in Romania celebrated the World Day of Prayer and Action for Children with children of grade 8 from "Ion Heliade Rădulescu" School. Based on the theme "Stop Violence Against Children", the activities were carried out by the facilitators, teachers and children (24 of 14-15 years old).

The activities were focused on the following aspects:

1. violence in schools,
2. violence on playgrounds and in community (outside the school area),
3. violence in family,
4. physical and emotional abuses against children;

The celebration started with a short PowerPoint presentation including photos of different DPAC activities took place in different parts of the world in previous years.

Flyers describing the significance of the Day have been distributed while one of the facilitators presented the "World Day of Prayer and Action for Children", including pictures representing victims of violence in different contexts: various places, different victims, various types of violence (we used a slideshow on a musical background).

Further the participants had to find out together with one of the facilitators which are the ingredients for a successful time together during the activity.

After that, the participants were divided into 3 groups in order to visualize 3 different short videos with some cases of school, family, playground and community (outside the school area) violence. After watching the videos, 1-2 representative of each group had to present to other colleagues the subject of the video performing a pantomime or telling a short story.

This way we intended to draw their attention to different aspects of violent situations, which they could relate to their own life experience.

From this, the participants had to reflect to the subject of the videos and slideshows watched previously and each team had to realize a short presentation focusing on the following questions:

- i. What is violence?
- ii. What kind of violence do you know/encountered/found?

- iii. In which context we can find violence against children (home, school, institution, community)? What kind of violence (physical, emotional, etc.)?
- iv. What are, in your opinion, the causes of violence against children?
- v. What are the consequences of the violence against children?

Further, there were presented to the teenagers some photos (distributed on the floor) containing several images with different messages (only visual or also written) related to solutions against violence. Each participant supposed to pick up one of it and present his/her photo and its meaning in the context of the DPAC theme.

At the end the participants and the facilitators made a prayer together and kept a short moment of silence for children from around the world, victims of violence.

Outcomes:

A. Participants

The children responded to our evaluation questionnaires. From their responses, we could extract the following:

- The majority accepted the theme “Stop the Violence against the children” and found the venue appropriate, while few didn’t accept the proposed theme and would have liked a different venue (mentioning visiting monasteries or excursions as preferred activities);
- More than a half expressed their interest to participate in such activities in the future;
- They loved especially the initiative, the videos, the idea of working in teams, the activities in general;
- As negative comments regarding the event we found: it was boring (1), didn’t like the idea of performing pantomime (2), “the idea was totally useless”, the other teenagers made too much noise, it lasts too short;
- They would like to participate in outdoor activities, sport activities, healthcare activities. They would also like to take part in activities implying art or manufacturing objects and to be volunteers. Some of them were interested in saving nature, visiting monasteries or other cities or places in Romania.

B. Facilitators

As a result of the performed activities, the children acquired a more profound knowledge about different forms of violence and became more aware of their rights and responsibilities within the communities they belong to.

- i. The venue – the classroom was appropriate in terms of space, but it would have been much better if we had a location of our own, so the young people could feel more attracted by the idea of doing some extracurricular activities;
- ii. Logistics – the materials and resources were adequate for activities we have made
- iii. Positive/negative aspects
 - Regarding the interest manifested by the teenagers, they were divided into two groups: one interested in the theme of this activity and who were active, receptive and excited by practical activities and the other one with a totally opposite attitude, who have not shown too much interest in taking part, but raver even disturbing their colleagues;
 - Nethertheless, they have expressed availability for other activities, with few exceptions;
 - The teenagers became aware about the fact that violence against children still exists and it is manifested in multiple forms and contexts, in their immediate environment, but also in other parts of the world and we introduced to the young people some of the activities promoted by LTLT manual.
 - Lack of our own space slowed the beginning of the activities, because we had to arrange and prepare the venue and the equipment in a very short time (minutes);
 - Although two of the teachers were present with us until the end of the event, the other one stayed only for a part (maybe 1/2) and this had an impact on the teenagers behavior;
 - The participants schedule: they were tired, because our event was programmed at the end of the day (5 to 7 p.m.), after they had a important test previously.