



**Arab Orthodox Christian Community
Romania**

WORLD DAY OF PRAYER AND ACTION FOR CHILDREN (DPAC)

ACTIVITY REPORT

School no. 194, Bucharest

20 November, 2012

Theme: *"Stop Violence against Children"*

Date: 20 November, 2012

Venue: School no. 194, Bucharest, Romania

Participants:

- 1) 119 children and youth (between 12 and 15 years old)
- 2) 3 adults – 1 facilitator and 2 teachers

Facilitators:

Doina Rotaru

Activities:

1. DPAC Presentation;
2. Painting on wall;
3. T-shirt paintings;
4. Drawings;
5. Role plays and songs;
6. Prayer.

Description of the activities:

On 20 November 2012, the Arab Orthodox Community in Romania together with the School no. 194 from Bucharest celebrated the “World Day of Prayer and Action of Children”. Based on the theme “Stop Violence Against Children”, the activities were carried out by the facilitator, teachers, and children from 6th to 8th grade (119 of 12-15 years old).

After the DPAC and slide show presentation on violence which included pictures representing victims of violence in different contexts, the participants received flyers describing the significance of this important day.

After some short stories on violence have been presented, some key questions have been raised including:

- i. What is violence?
- ii. What kinds 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 the causes of violence against children?
- v. What are the consequences of the violence against children and what should we do about this?

To find answers, the participants have been divided into 3 groups. Each group discussed one kind of violence (violence in school, playground and community violence). The group discussion gave the children the space and the opportunity to realize and perform a short play on the concerned case.

The discussion groups have drawn the attention of the participants to different kinds of violence and their aspects, which they could meet and face in their own life.

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 one hour activities were carried out during the school program, at the art and counseling rooms.

1. As first activity, 25 of the participants from grade VIII painted on the schools wall the DPAC logo.
2. As second activity, 41 children from grade VI and VII painted some basic white T-shirts with different compositions, on their own choice where they had the possibility to express their own vision and aspirations regarding the theme of the celebrated day. Different positive messages for the children victims of violence have been expressed.
3. The third activity has been carried by the children of grade VII who executed two decoupage posters (letters cut from different colored paper) with positive messages related to theme.
4. The last activity consisted in a role playing activity and it was carried out by 28 children of grade VI.

At the end, the participants and the facilitators prayed together and kept a short moment of silence for children from around the world, victims of violence. The participants (Muslims and Christians) had prayers standing around the DPAC Logo with lighted candles.

Outcomes:

A. From participants

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

- All the children accepted the theme “Stop the Violence against the children” and found the venue appropriate, but some would have liked a different venue (mentioning excursions as preferred activities);
- All expressed their interest to participate in such activities in the future;
- They loved especially the initiative, the role plays, the idea of stopping the violence in schools area, the fact they discussed freely without shame, the entire atmosphere, the activities in general;
- As negative comments regarding the event we found that one child didn't feel well because all the other children looked at him/her when the teacher interfered with a question related to a specific situation happened in their real life and felt almost sick;
- They would like to participate in outdoor activities, sport activities, social activities (to help other children). They would also like to be volunteers. Some of them were interested in saving nature, planting flowers and trees, visiting other 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; the outdoor activity was very appreciated;
- ii. Logistics – the materials and resources were adequate for activities we have made
- iii. Positive/negative aspects
 - Regarding the interest manifested by the teenagers, the majority were attracted, active, receptive and excited by practical activities (artistic activities); regarding the role plays, at the beginning, the children didn't feel very comfortable to act in front of their colleagues, but at the end they liked the idea;
 - They have expressed availability for other activities;
 - The children 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; some of the activities promoted by LTLT manual;
 - Lack of space, we could have prepare the venue and the equipment more adequately so the children would have felt more comfortable and also the very short period of time (minutes) between the activities (each activity was in a different classroom);
 - The intervention of one of the teachers, which was uninspired, because drew the attention on one of the students and this one felt really bad about the situation (almost physically).