

# USING RESTORATIVE TECHNIQUES AT HIGH SCHOOLS

The evaluation of the 'Conflict Resolution Face to Face' programme carried out with the co-operation of the 'Zöld Kakas' High School and the Family, Child, Youth Priority Association, Budapest, Hungary

Borbala Fellegi  
Trainer, researcher  
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# The background of the project

- Present situation:
  - legal background and possibilities
    - Criminal Procedure Code
    - National Probation Service
    - National Criminal Prevention Program
  - pilot programs, trainings, conferences
- Future Goals:
  - implementation of restorative justice or its elements into the Hungarian justice system
  - complex research to support its effective implementation and usage

# The goal of this project

- to try the method, the communication tools, the effects, and the messages of restorative justice, real justice, mediation, and facilitation
- experiences of how these methods work in practice
- model-case in a micro-world and further use of its conclusions in the macro-dimension
- practical methods for widening the scale of the tools used in alternative conflict resolution and alternative sanctions in the case of conflicts and/or crimes

# Why in the school?

- Micro-space
- First 'field' for
  - feeling and admitting the responsibility for our actions
  - the power of the community
  - rules, norms
  - conflicts
- Hypothesis:
  - roots of everyday conflicts = roots of serious crimes
  - = acting against the rules of the community
  - the answers for these could have the same roots as well
  - facing the results of our activity in everyday life → crime preventional effect

# Partners and Motivations

- The High School
  - dealing with 'drop out' young people, aged of 16-24
  - looking for methods for conflict resolution which could be alternatively used in addition to the traditional processes, sanctions
- Family, Child, Youth Priority Association
  - study and help the implementation process of restorative justice
  - looking for a field where these methods can be tested in order to know what is needed for the successful adaptation

# Structure of the project

## ■ 5 steps

- 1.) a 3 day long **facilitator training** course for all the teachers in the school
- 2.) regular **course** for the youngest class about the basic idea of restorative justice
- 3.) dealing the **actual conflicts** in the school with the method of real justice
- 4.) **involving** some teachers into the practice in order to pass the method over to them
- 5.) following them through consultations and **supervision**

# The Course

- its goal: preparation for further facilitation
- its special aspects: the objectives used in real justice are not topics in the traditional school system
- form and content based on real justice
- example topics:
  - community rules; their formation
  - ways of conflict handling
  - fear, secure, community, exclusion
  - dynamics of interests, contrasts, different point of views
  - aggression vs. negotiation
  - 'winners'- 'losers' of situations
  - admitting, responsibility, reparation
  - being a victim – being an offender
- methods:
  - discussions of the topics in one big group with a moderator
  - conversations in small groups, in pairs
  - games
  - writing
  - hand-outs

# Experiences

- 1. About the class
  - Was it a real community?
  - thoughtfulness, self-expression, communication skills
  - aggression
  - responsibility – reparation
  - rules ↔ freedom of choice
  - expression of emotions
- 2. About the school
  - active communication, co-operation
- 3. About our team
  - more realistic goals
  - defining clear messages, values
  - well-structured, speedy lessons
- 4. About the method
  - voluntary aspect
  - original dynamics and cohesion in the community
  - focus on the strengthening of the communication skills
  - consistency, clear messages
  - self- and teambuilding elements are needed

# Where are we now?

- Courses: 3 further courses led by a teacher of the school
- Conferencing: regular conferences for local conflicts
  - student-teacher, student-student, teacher-teacher, external conflicts as well
  - more than 10 cases in the last half year
- Facilitator training courses for students
  - training + real 'Exam Case' facilitated by them
  - 10 new trained facilitators among the students (peerfacilitators) who are respected by the students and the teachers as well and continuously required to facilitate in different cases

# Summary

Restorative techniques used in a high-school



Preparation course about the basic ideas of  
Restorative Justice



Facilitator training course for students



Real Justice conferences in the everyday life of the  
school, integrated into the regulation of the school