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Project: “Establishment of a transnational network of
adult education providers for the promotion of social
inclusion of vulnerable groups” – STEP UP

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Good practices - Hungary

Consortium partner: Nyitott Kör Egyesület



1. Art therapy for people with special needs

Zita Benke is using a specified version of arts therapy. There are two groups who meet weekly and create art. They use various forms of art i.e. painting, knitting, etc. They also create products that can be sold and create income for the organisation. The two groups have constant members and a new person can only join if someone quits the group. The people in the groups have been working together for 5 years now. The members of this group are people with intellectual challenges and psychiatric issues. They can channel their emotions and thoughts into these forms of art. Art gives them a tool to understand themselves and others more via art without words. Their behaviour have changed. They are more calm and it became easier for them to function in social situations. Participants also became more aware of the feelings they feel and also what other people feel.

The leader of this group is a person with special needs which gives her a unique position to work with people with special needs. At first she just started the group by instinct but later she studied art therapy professionally which really helped her deepen the work and be more reflective on her work.



- **More information:**

<https://presidiumegyesulet.hu/>

2. Series of bibliotherapy sessions for imprisoned young adults

This good practice was an initiation from an individual. She reached out to a local penitentiary institution and managed to get access in the facility. The leader of this practice is trained in bibliotherapy methodology, so she applied this knowledge to young adults in penitentiary. Bibliotherapy is a specific form of art therapy which only uses literature. There are basically two different approaches. One is when the participants immerse themselves in a piece of literature (short story, poem, novel, etc.) and reflect on its impact on them. It is not an academic analysis of the work but rather therapeutic process. The other approach is when the participants create literature themselves. They are given a specific type of literature (i.e. sonnet) and they write a sonnet about what interests them. Later they talk about these works in groups and reflect on each other and themselves.

There were no official measurement for this specific practice. Bibliotherapy as a method is a well measured technique. By the experiences of the professional providing the program and the feedback of the participants and the institution: Those involved have improved their skillset to describe their feelings and thoughts, solve situations without or less aggression, their vocabulary improved, their responsibility evolved and developed a sense for the consequences of their actions.

- **More information:**

<http://www.irodalomterapia.hu/en/>

3. Reinventing used clothes with vulnerable people

“Retextil is a method. It is a sort of sociotherapy where community work is being done by disabled people involving the Retextil technology.”

This is a practice-oriented initiation which is alive for decades. Their leader has rather spiritual approach and is less scientific. This workplace has 34 employees now who are exclusively vulnerable people: people with disabilities, homeless people and many others. ReTextil provides home and shelter, workplace and a strong community. Also they put emphasis on spirituality. The main goal is to rehabilitate those who have lost their ability to be in society. ReTextil states that being able to create (to be creative) in a sense which is not only a means of production is the key to function in society. They only hire people who are somehow segregated from mainstream society. These people are introduced to the technique of retextil. This is basically a method in which they tear up old clothes into stripes. Later from these stripes they create new objects: bowls, lamps, even playgrounds.



Today, ReTextil has a venue and is funded from the municipality. They also apply for grants and funds and also they sell the art they created.

- **More information:**

<https://retextil.hu/>

4. 'Szuno' - creating jobs for people in need.

'Igazgyöngy' Foundation is a Hungarian CSO. Their work focuses on underprivileged people and minorities in the area near 'Told' which is a really underprivileged region and city at the east of Hungary. They provide many different programs and initiations for those who want to escape from the circumstances in which they are destined to fail. This project uses art which is why only this part of their work is described here.

The story behind this project starts with a mother who showed her daughter's drawing to an employee of 'Igazgyöngy' Foundation and she suggested this drawing is so beautiful, it should be on bags. So the mother learned how to sew and sewed it on a bag. This program grew bigger and now it has many employees, who do this for wages and they create art which is also monetized which means they are providing for themselves and their family with art they (and their children) created.



Their measurement for evaluating this project is the number of staff and the production and sells numbers. As the leader of the association states: “the real product is the person on the job market” so the creation of these products is just means to an end which is to empower those who work in Szuno so that they can stand on their own feet.

- **More information:**

<https://szuno.com/>

5. Prison radio in 3 prisons in Hungary

This project is a unique and slightly changed version of the prison radio in the UK with more emphasis on the psychological value. The initiation started by two individuals, a Hungarian psychologist and a co-worker of BBC (British Broadcasting Corporation) stationed in Hungary. They had no financial support but their devotion.

Reached out to a prison in the capitol and managed to get access into the prison. They selected 8 prisoners to pilot the program with. These people needed to match certain values. The program coordinators managed to get radio tools from donations and they

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provided a few month long training for the participants. After that the prisoners could run their own show. They decided what kind of programs they would like to broadcast, who would run which show and so on. They had a person at all times to help them if they needed anything, but the radio was operated by the inmates.

Later on they introduced this program to 2 more prisons so prison radio was active in 3 different prisons for nearly 5 years. They recorded the broadcast and the prison leaders accepted it. After this process, radio could have been listened to on the televisions in the morning before 6 am. All broadcasts were huge successes, everybody loved them. During these years suicide rates have dropped significantly and practitioners told us, all who were creating shows became more self aware and active. Their willingness for work has raised significantly. None of those who participated in prison radio have relapsed.

After the first few years, they created an NGO to get some funding for the program but besides a few grants it was mainly volunteer work.

- **More information:**

https://nepszava.hu/1143170_elzartak-a-bortonradiot

6. Drama in education programme for people with disabilities

This program was initiated in 'Fészek Csillag' which is a place for people with special needs. They offer occasional and regular programs for the 40 people using their services. This is a daytime service, the people only spend time there - and work there - during the day; otherwise they live with their families or in their own places. 'Fészek Csillag' invited a drama teacher to do a series of workshops for those who are interested and use drama in education as a tool.

This series was 10 weeks long and they met once a week. They explored role-playing and storytelling. The participants could experience what it means to pretend you are someone else. They explored themselves in situations they haven't been in before. These 'games' gave them true experience on how they would handle situations in real life. They would discuss every situation and explore which behaviour was useful and which is not. This program helped the participants increase their independence and be more self-sufficient.

The program was coordinated by 3 people: one from the institution who works with the participants day by day, one trained psychologist who is also working with the institution and one practitioner with experience both in drama and special education.

The series were funded by the institution which collects state quota and national funds also.

7. Volunteer training for people with special needs

'MÁSzínház' is a CSO working for nearly two decades. They provide theatre and drama workshops for people with special needs. During the last few years they created inclusive theatrical pieces.

During the years MÁSzínház have been active they gathered a significant amount of people with special needs who are regular attendants of the company's services. For them, they

created a program in which they could learn how to participate in the everyday life of a theatre company. The goal is to empower them and provide them with enough know-how to be able to not just participate in the theatrical programs, but to contribute the very existence of the CSO and its programs.

8. Dance therapy for people with special needs

Szudki Osayma is a student in the University of special education. She is experienced in dancing. She decided to do an experiment as her thesis. She wanted to know if you can improve movement, strength and posture by dancing just as much as you can with physical education.

She made an open call for an 'inclusive dance group' in which anybody could apply. 10 people applied and one person was invited by the group leader. This meant 1 person with Down syndrome and 10 people without special needs. The program lasted 11 weeks and they met twice a week. The lessons were regular dance lessons with the aim of creating choreography. The process was planned as if there were no people with special needs in the group. Szudki's theory was: people with special needs can participate in programs just as anybody else can.

In practice it varied a little, because she had to change some parts of the plan on the way, but in general the process was the same as with people without special needs.

Before the process they measured some aspects of movement from the participant with special needs. At the end of the process every single aspect of his movement, strength, posture, etc have significantly improved. During the process those without special needs had a unique experience of sharing a program with a person they don't usually get acquainted this way the experience was sensitizing for them.

The practice was self-funded; the university provided a room and professional consulting.

9. Dance therapy for elderly people

Sára Tóth is a dancer with training in physical education and dance ability. She started a movement called 'dance rehab'. Its slogan is: 'dance belongs to everybody'. This rehabilitation program says that those who are marginalised from the society can be rehabilitated with dancing. In dance they can experience empowerment, they can improve body strength and they can improve their social skills.

One of the practices she implements is for nursing homes. She reaches out to nursing homes and offers them dance therapy. If the institution can fund the program, she will provide group sessions. There are two groups - one without standing and one that requires standing.

A lesson contains some warm up and strengthening and lots of dancing with costumes and props. These sessions are equally enjoyable and useful.

- **More information:**

<https://tancrehabilitacio.blog.hu/>

10. Art-based action research with underprivileged people

Parforum is a CSO which is involved in social research. Two decades ago they started an art-based program in 'Szomolya' - a very small village. Their goal was to build a constant presence in this underdeveloped community. Their theory is to not intervene directly from outside, but to provide opportunity for those inside the community who want change. Today they are present in three different villages and they provide help, programs and services for those who require it.

The project "At least zero" focuses on the debt spiral. They connected to a local CSO which works for local Roma people. They gathered a few devoted volunteers who had experience with the debt spiral. Parforum reached out to a CSO experienced in participatory theatre. These three CSOs together created a forum theatre play. This is a form of theatre in which there are situations presented and the audience can step into the situation and offer a different solution. Audience can try their take on the situation and the actors can help them experience how it would turn out in the real world.

The actors in the play are people with experience with the debt spiral. They are not actors nor do they have any theatrical training. They are more like researchers who are using art as a tool to research a serious social issue. They created a play and toured it in the villages nearby. This way they gathered information from a wider perspective. Also, during the development phase they interviewed financial experts and prisoners who went to prison because of a spiral debt and all kinds of people who have different experiences and knowledges about the debt spiral.

- **More information:**

<http://www.sajatszinhaz.org/english/>