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INTERVENTION

HANDBOOK

GROUP PROGRAMME

FOR REDUCING DELINQUENT AND CRIMINAL
BEHAVIOURS AMONGST ADOLESCENTS AT RISK

Authors: Mihaela Săsarman, Andrei Chișcu

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Coordinators: Olivia Pirtac, Liliana Astrahan

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TERRE DES HOMMES MOLDOVA

6 Nicolae Iorga str., of. 3,
MD-2009, Chisinau, Moldova
Tel.: +373 22 23 80 39 / 23 86 37
E-mail: office@tdh-moldova.md

www.tdh-moldova.md
www.facebook.com/tdhmoldova
www.childhub.org

TERRE DES HOMMES HEADQUARTERS, SWITZERLAND

Avenue de Montchoisi 15, CH-1006 Lausanne
T +41 58 611 06 66, F +41 58 611 06 77
E-mail: info@tdh.ch, CCP: 10-11504-8
www.tdh.ch
www.facebook.com/tdh.ch
https://twitter.com/tdh_ch

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INTRODUCTION

This Handbook responds to one of the major needs of the juvenile justice system - that of changing children's criminal behaviours.

Delinquent behaviour amongst children is the outcome of multiple risk factors, given that the protection measures that have been taken proved to be insufficient. Professionals from the education, social protection and justice systems, and parents, in general, should have specific knowledge and skills and contribute, through their activities, to the prevention of juvenile delinquency. We have to prevent undesirable developments in the behaviour of all children and help those children who, for various reasons, can no longer keep their emotions and behaviour under control, and children who have committed criminal offences.

The Handbook's approach builds on the latest findings in psychology and neurobiology, which are complementary to the pedagogy methodologies. It has two parts: one theoretical and one practical. It should be noted that its structure, the

requirements for the organisation and running of the sessions, the focus on interactive techniques and exercises which derive from the experiences of art and crafts (improvisation, motion or visual art exercises) respond to the subtle causalities revealed by the latest studies and theories in neurobiology and education sciences.

The first part outlines a short description of the main theoretical elements of the intervention programme concept for reducing pre-delinquent and criminal behaviours amongst children and adolescents at risk.

The practical part of the Handbook contains 20 topics - each can be delivered in a one-hour session (60 min.). This complementary programme is difficult to organise, but it brings a lot of added value because it responds to the acute needs of the children at this age for role models and adult attention in a two-way relationship, which offers consistency and safety to a much greater extent than in a group.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Premise

The insights into human nature help us understand how people manage to adapt, to progress, to overcome adversities in an ever-changing world, and to function as part of it.

From a multidisciplinary perspective, which takes into account the scientific and technological progress that mankind has achieved, we will base our understanding and intervention in our work with children and adolescents on the following principles:

- *Principle of adaptation:* our evolution as a species is governed by the fundamental law of life, meaning that people have always lived in changing life contexts and environments, and are constantly going through biological, psychological and social transformations, which lead to new behavioural responses, appropriate to each context or challenge. Adaptation is our ability to learn from experiences.
- *Mind-body link:* the mental processes (emotional, cognitive) are inextricably linked to each other and influenced by our body and its development. The way the human mind develops through interaction with other people, and specifically, the way the mind of a child gets a sense of the surrounding world during the interactions with the primary caregivers (parents or those who have this role) very much supports and influences our body and our biology.
- *Human mind has an innate tendency towards health:* this tendency is mirrored in people's natural attempt to give meaning to their experiences and find a logical explanation to what is happening to them. The definition the World Health Organization uses (WHO, 1948) to describe health (as "a state of physical, mental and social wellbeing") means that wellbeing is also explained by the mind-body coherence, the coherence inside our system of representations (about the self, the world and the future (AT Beck, 1979)), and the coherence in our relationships - parent-child relationships.
- *Principle of development* refers to the main characteristic of life that the interaction between our environment and

our innate potential leads, over time, to the development of adaptive responses that enable development, growth and learning.

- *Human development depends on our experiences,* on how we "use" our brain (Bruce Perry, 1996). About 85% of a child's brain (of its adult volume) develops while the child is in the mother's womb and in the first 3 years of life through his/her interaction with the environment, and through the experiences which the child is exposed to, and in ways which he/she is involved by parents/caregiver. Aversive and negative experiences (contexts of abuse, domestic violence, neglect, lack of interaction with children) activate the stress response system and the neural circuits involved in the detection of danger. The prolonged activation of the stress response system in chaotic, unpredictable and violent contexts leads to the development of a brain architecture that will help the child to survive. Emotionally positive experiences loaded with stimuli (tactile, visual, auditory, olfactory, kinaesthetic), which stimulate the children's pleasure and curiosity, interactions with a parent/caregiver who helps them regulate own emotions (emotional co-regulation or interpersonal regulation (A. Schore, 1994)) allow children to develop an integrated brain architecture that will be resilient and able to cope with future adversities.

All these principles taken from biology, psychology of learning, social learning theory, attachment theory and the new neuropsychology underpin this intervention programme.

Growth and Development Stages of an Individual

Developmental psychology theoretically identified four milestones of development based on the individual's acquisitions and chronological age:

- Birth to 3 years (newborns to infants);
- 3 to 6 years (early childhood, preschool age);
- 6 to 12 years (later childhood); and
- 12 to 18 years (adolescence).



Adolescence is a period of big changes, neurobiological (it is the second big stage of brain remodelling, the first one being the 0 - 3 years age), endocrine, psychological and social transformations.

Biological:

- Accelerated and uneven morpho-physiological development (growth spurts);
- Hormonal imbalance (physiologically observable increased secretion of growth hormones, appearance of secondary sexual characteristics, acne and mood swings, hypersensitivity and irritability);
- Predominance of pruning processes (elimination of unused synapses), which extend until children become young adults; and
- While processing information, the emotional brain (limbic system and amygdala prevails over the rational brain (prefrontal cortex; responsible for self-control, self-regulation, making the decisions it considers rational; inhibition of impulses).



Psychosocial:

- Growing need for autonomy;
- Growing need to be accepted within the peer group;

- Growing need to delimit and challenge the authority of adults/parents, which often leads to tensions and conflicts;
- Growing need to define and find an identity (looking for role models, imitating and doing the things that seem attractive to adolescents); and
- Growing curiosity for new experiences (looking for sensations), which makes adolescents vulnerable to risky behaviours (substance use, testing and breaking limits/rules).

New Neuropsychology and the Impact of Child's Life Context on Brain Architecture

There were two main trends in brain research in the '90s (*apud* Stien and Kendal, 2004). The first one researched into the biological dimension of attachment (Allan Schore; Daniel Siegel) and development under normal growth conditions, showing how quality, quantity, the timing chosen for the interactions with children and their stimulation by parents/caregivers have a long lasting impact on the development of children's brain. The second trend tried to explain how childhood trauma (physical, emotional, sexual abuse, neglect) pathologically influences brain development, chemistry and structure (Frank Putnam; Bessel van der Kolk; Martin Teicher; Bruce Perry).

A safe and predictable environment leads to the development of multiple neural connections in the child's brain, to a coordinated and synchronous operation of brain subsystems, which increases the child's ability to adapt to stress and negative factors.

On the other hand, an abusive and unpredictable environment causes a long lasting activation of the neural circuits, the role of which is to protect and help children to survive, limiting their learning and ability to develop the social and emotional skills they need to be able to regulate their emotions and interact safely with others.

The nervous system starts to develop on the third week after conception. The ectoderm, which is one of the three primary germ layers (ectoderm, mesoderm, endoderm) placed one above the other, differentiates to form the neural tube, as well as skin, hair and teeth. Neural tube closure usually occurs by the end of the fourth week after conception, forming the brain and the spinal cord. On the fifth week, the bra-

in starts to divide into three main regions that will develop into brainstem, diencephalon and cortex.

The nervous system is made up of two types of cells: **neurons**, the role of which is to pass on the nervous impulse, and **glial cells**, which form a tissue to support and protect neurons. Our nervous system has about 100 billion neurons, but its functional capacity seems to be determined by the number of synapses, i.e. connections between neurons (the place where 2 neurons connect and pass on the nerve impulse), rather than by the number of neurons. The more synapses there are, the more quickly nerve impulses pass from one neuron to another, while neurons functionally associate into clusters to form sub-systems. During and after the intrauterine period, these sub-systems will connect with each other to form systems provided that the child is properly fed through the mother (with all the nutritional elements necessary for brain development: fatty acids, folic acid, proteins, carbohydrates – the rate of carbohydrate metabolism in the brain of a child under the age of four is twice higher than that of an adult, and carbohydrates are the main resource the brain needs to function properly).

The development of the nervous system takes place in several stages from the intrauterine period and until the age of 18. Two of them are important because they allow for brain modelling and remodelling:

1. Synaptogenesis – is the formation of synapses between neurons; and

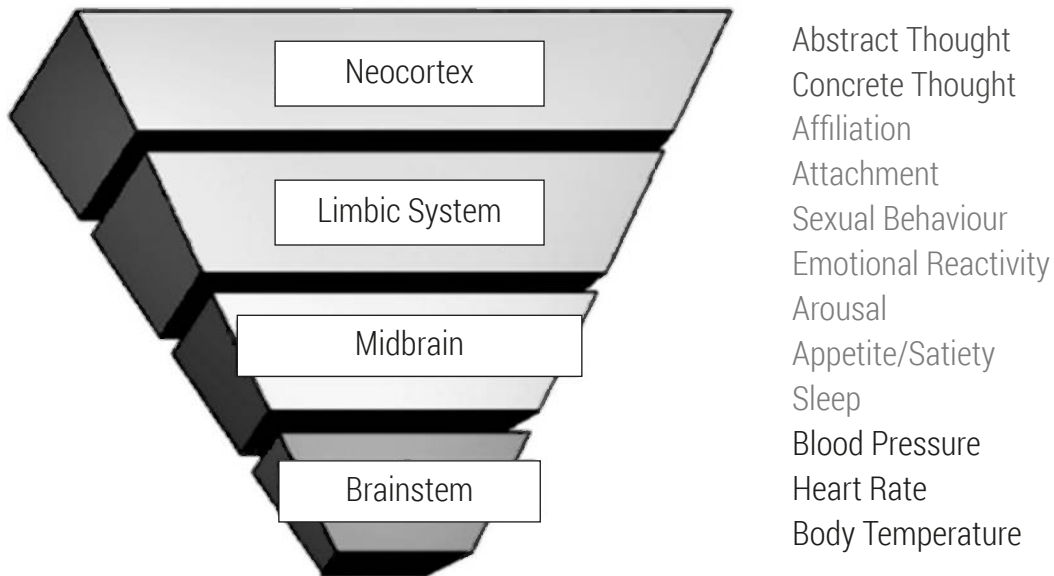


2. Pruning – is the process of elimination of the synapses that are not used, highlighting how important proper stimulation in mother/caregiver – child interaction is from the first years of life.



Each such explosive development cycle of new neural circuits is followed by brain “reorganisation” (its systems and sub-systems) or “remodelling” (Huttenlocher, 1994).

- The first remodelling period is between the age of 15 months and 4 years;
- The second occurs between the age of 6 and 10 years;
- The third remodelling period is the prepubescent period – 11 for girls and 12 for boys, during which important systems of the brain build and stabilise connections between each other; and
- The fourth is during middle adolescence.
- These brain development stages were linked to the cognitive development stages described by the Swiss psychologist Jean Piaget:
 - The sensorimotor stage (from birth to 2 years), when infants develop an understanding of the world through sensations, and the preoperational stage (2 to 7 years), when children learn to use pictures to represent objects;
 - The second and third periods are related to the concrete operational stage (7 to 11 years), during which children learn to understand and think logically (causality, reversibility, etc.); and
 - The fourth stage overlaps with the formal operational stage (11 to 18 years), during which adolescents begin to think abstractly (logical inference).



Brain Architecture

Some trends in brain research (Paul MacLean, 1990; Bruce Perry, 1997) see brain architecture (its structural and functional organisation) as having two dimensions:

1. **Vertical organisation** - the brain develops "bottom-up" from simple structures (brainstem), which coordinate vital functions (heart rate, breathing), to the complex ones (neocortex - the part of the brain controlling higher-order functions like planning, organisation, decision-making, impulse control). The brain, vertically, has the following structures: brainstem, limbic system and neocortex. All these parts/systems work in an integrated manner and are interconnected, while their phylogenetic and ontogenetic development is determined by their adaptive

function, in the case of humans, and influenced during the life of an individual, by his/her life experiences with other people.

Brainstem (reptilian brain) controls the vital functions of the body: heart rate, breathing, body temperature, swallowing. It is connected to another brain structure, called cerebellum, which controls posture and movements, helps decode and read certain social signals (emotional expressions of the people we interact with) and also helps cognitive functioning (Schmachmann, 1997).

The limbic system (mammalian brain) or the emotional brain is the seat of our instincts. It automatically triggers our emotional responses on the "low road", associated with contexts perceived as dangerous or threatening (the "fight/

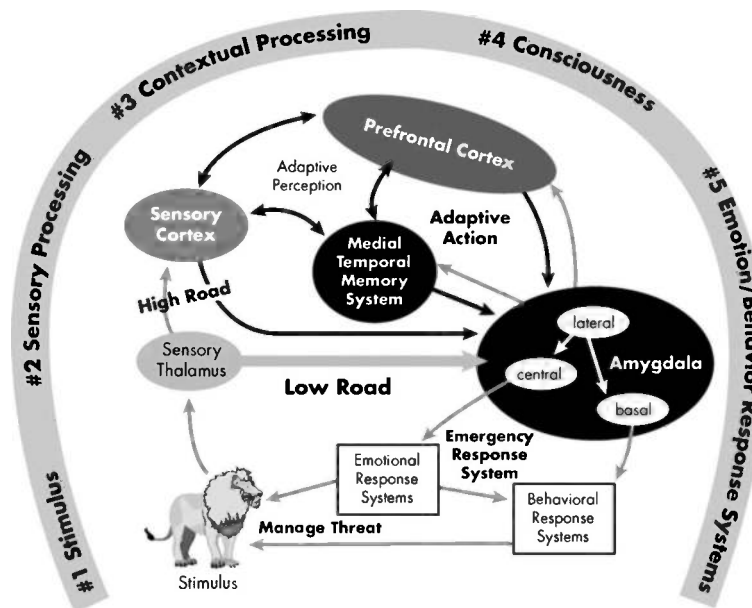


Fig.1 Le Douarin's survival circuit: the grey arrows show transmission of information about danger; the black arrows show transmission of information about "danger" or "safety" after a preliminary processing in the prefrontal cortex

flight/freeze" response, triggered with the help of amygdala – a cortical structure, which is the size of a pea, located at the base of the brain), or on the "**high road**", which warns the neocortex about a threat. This information is analysed there to determine if the threat is real, allowing for an appropriate response. Because it has an adaptive, survival role, this response is quick, automatic and is associated with the superior cortical areas (neocortex), responsible for the rational analysis of the context, postponement of automatic responses and impulse control.

Besides the amygdala, the limbic system has another structure – hippocampus, which plays a role in the formation of memories related to a certain context (pleasant or unpleasant) and implicitly, in learning the response that is adequate to such context. For instance, the positive emotions experienced in relation to the school context (the child was praised) will increase the child's engagement in school tasks, while the negative ones (the child was criticised, scolded and punished) will increase the avoidance and non-engagement behaviours caused by fear or anger.

Neocortex (rational brain), the third and the most complex brain structure, is the seat for logic and reasoning, analytical operations and decision-making. It is the part of the brain which allows us to plan and organise our actions, preventing automatic and impulsive responses. It is the last layer of the brain to have evolved in a child, while full brain maturity, some researchers claim, is reached by the age of 25. **The prefrontal cortex (PFC)**, the seat of executive functions (attention, memory, impulse control, etc.), as researchers in the field of attachment suggest, **only develops through the interaction of the child with an adult/parent/caregiver that is emotionally available, perceptive and responsive to the child's needs** (Daniel Siegel, 1999).

2. Horizontal organisation – our brain is divided into two hemispheres – right and left, each with specific functions.

Clinical trials conducted in the 60s and 70s and studies on traumatic brain injuries caused by neuron lesions which affected the connections between the two hemispheres highlighted the differences in the functions of the two hemispheres.

The part of the brain that connects the two hemispheres is called corpus callosum. Until the age of 4, both hemispheres are equally involved in the coordination of our behaviour and body. After this age, they take over distinct functions, one of

them becomes dominant and each of them starts controlling the opposite side of the body (the left hemisphere – the right side, the right hemisphere – the left side).

The brain splitting along corpus callosum, done for therapeutic reasons in patients with uncontrolled epileptic seizures, revealed that:

- The left hemisphere is responsible for:
 - Speech and language;
 - Positive emotions (joy);
 - Motivation for exploration, approach, decision making and action;
 - Processing of verbal communication, in words and numbers;
 - Sequential processing of information, analysis and problem solving; and
 - Detailed analysis of the reality or a certain situation.
- The right hemisphere is responsible for:
 - Sensory and spatial processing of information;
 - Negative emotions (fear, despair);
 - Motivation for withdrawal and avoidance;
 - Processing of non-verbal communication, communication and processing of social-emotional information, imagery and visual-spatial information;
 - Synthetic thinking, metaphorical thinking;
 - Global analysis, overview; and
 - Attention to own body.

The experiments conducted on 'split brain' patients (Roger Sperry, who had the idea of conducting psychological tests with 'split brain' patients) revealed a fundamental characteristic of the brain – *plasticity*. When some part of the brain is damaged, its functions are gradually taken over by some other functional part from another hemisphere.

This plasticity gives an answer to the question about the chances a traumatised or neglected child has to offset the accumulated deficits.

The chance for these children lies in their interaction with the adults who are responsible for raising them and for offering them the care they need in an environment that is careful and responsive to their specific needs.

Temperament

The longitudinal study of more than 1000 children (Thomas and Chess, 1977), which started in the 50s in Brooklyn and continued 3 decades thereafter, highlighted a number of individual differences in the children's style of interaction with their environment even from the first few weeks of life, suggesting that some traits are innate.

These temperamental traits (the authors identified 11 polar dimensions: level of activity, behavioural inhibition, persistence, adaptability, intensity of emotional responses, negative emotionality, distractibility, etc.) are the key characteristics of the nervous system that a child inherits from his/her parents. A set of characteristics was described as having clinical significance and was called 'difficult temperament' (irregular biological functions - e.g. irregular sleep-wake rhythm, increased intensity of emotions, avoiding changes and general negativity in mood). The 'difficult children' put their parents or the adults they interact with to test, demanding more resources and activating their vulnerabilities, which increases the likelihood of developing a coercive cycle in the discipline process and later, of behavioural problems.

The way the parent/adult manages these reactions points towards an indicator which measures the matching-adequacy level in the parent-child relationship, called "goodness of fit" or "poorness of fit". The individual differences between the frequency and DURATION: of crying episodes, degree of consolation, level of activation and alert, as well as the ability to soothe oneself have a strong impact on the parent's behaviour and the quality of the parent-child relationship and, implicitly, on the attachment relationship.

Attachment and Attachment Styles

In the relationship with the parent/adult, the emotions that a child experiences activate the brain circuits in the brains of both, and help the child to develop skills and ways to approach and interact with adults to help them meet their needs. This will happen only if the child interacts with an adult who is responsive to his/her needs and emotions, "emotion being the brain's central organiser" (Siegel, 1999).

One of the fundamental characteristics of the human nature is the ability to build relationships and ties with other people. This ability, which typically occurs in the relationship between the child and the parent/caregiver, has the following characteristics:

- a. It is an enduring emotional relationship with a specific person;
- b. The relationship offers the child safety, comfort, appeasement and pleasure; and
- c. Loss or threat of loss of the attachment figure evokes intense distress in children.

The attachment relationship is based on:

1. Parent-child bonding: observation, eye contact, physical proximity with the child. It is the 'emotional' glue that connects the two people.
2. Attunement: refers to the ability to read and respond to the cues of another; it is synchronous - done at the same time by both - parent and child, and continuous; helps prevent mismatch between need and provision (Bruce Perry).

Mary Ainsworth developed an experimental procedure, called the Strange Situation, that allows researchers to observe the variety of attachment forms between mothers/caregivers and children. The researchers observed the behaviour of infants in a series of 7 episodes - caregiver/mother leaves two times and returns two times, interactions with a stranger in the presence and in the absence of the parent. Using this procedure, the experimenters identified 4 types of attachment:

1. Secure attachment (60-70% of the children) - the child feels distressed when mother leaves, but is easy to soothe when mother returns.
2. Insecure-ambivalent attachment (or resistant, 15% of the children) - the child exhibits clingy and dependent behaviour, has difficulty moving away from the attachment figure to explore novel surroundings. The child shows intense distress when mother leaves and is not comforted by the interaction with the attachment figure.
3. Insecure-avoidant attachment (20% of the children) - the child shows no sign of distress when mother leaves and little interest when mother returns. Mother and stranger are able to comfort the infant equally well.
4. Disorganised attachment (5% of the children) - the children who appear to lack an organised strategy for coping with the stresses of the strange situation, and are the most affected by the separation with mother/caregiver.

In reality, however, none of us only have one type of attachment, but rather a predominant one. This means that a child with secure attachment can exhibit in certain con-

texts behaviours that are typical to the insecure attachment (whether ambivalent or avoidant) or even disorganised attachment. Similarly, a child with disorganised attachment in certain situations or with certain people (if predictable, careful and responsive to the child's needs, offering reliability and safety) can adopt behaviours typical to the secure attachment.

Studies and research on intervention programmes for parents aimed to improve the parent-child relationship provided evidence that the attachment style can change, shifting from insecure and even disorganised to the secure one (Kent Hoffman, Glen Cooper and Bert Powell, 2009).

The *internal working models*, described by J. Bowlby (1969; 1988), are cognitive representations of the attachment relationship built in the early years in the mother/caregiver – child relationship. Depending on the attachment style in this relationship with the caregiver (secure, avoidant, ambivalent, disorganised), the child develop a set of beliefs about *self, others and life*:

a. Secure attachment:

1. Self: "I am good, wanted, worthwhile, competent and lovable";
2. Caregivers: "They are appropriately responsive to my needs, sensitive, caring and trustworthy";
3. Life: "My world feels safe, life is worth living".

b. Insecure attachment:

1. Self: "I am bad, unwanted, worthless, helpless and unlovable";
2. Caregivers: "They are unresponsive to my needs, insensitive, hurtful, and untrustworthy";
3. Life: "My world feels unsafe, life is painful and burdensome".

These internal working models define how children perceive and interpret the social interactions and situations (Zeanah & Zeanah, 1989). The same social situation can be interpreted differently by two children, depending on the internal working method they have built in the attachment relationship with the caregiver. A child with a negative internal model can feel rejected when some other child refuses to play with him/her and this can make him/her feel worthless, withdraw and avoid playing with other children, or behave aggressively with the child who refused to play with him/her. On the other hand, a child with a po-

sitive working model perceives the refusal as a mere lack of interest, can be a little bit upset with this, and try to find somebody else to play with.

The child with disorganised attachment tend to see threat and hostility even where they do not exist, and respond to such situations aggressively or coercively, having no empathy for the pain and suffering they cause to others. The perpetuation of these conflicts with other children causes alienation and isolation from the social group in which the child with disorganised attachment is in, and needs support from qualified adults who have a relationship with him/her in order to change the internal working model.

Cooperation, care, and empathy are learned in a secure attachment relationship with the parent or a parental substitute who, in fact, should show: connection, atonement, sensitivity, and responsiveness to the child's needs, adequate and consistent responses, which make the parent's actions predictable, and ultimately, help develop a secure attachment relationship with the child.

Empathy and morality, which are protective factors guarding against the development of anti-social behaviours in children, adolescents and later, adults, can be learned in a context of safe and secure relationships in four psychological processes:

- *Modelling* – actions and behaviours the child sees in his/her parents;
- *Internalising* the values and behaviours of parents or other attachment figures;
- Experiencing *synchronicity* and *reciprocity* in attachment relationships; and
- Developing a *positive sense of self* (T.M. Levy, M. Orlans, 1998).

Trauma, as "an exceptional experience in which powerful and dangerous events overwhelm a person's capacity to cope" (Rice, Groves, 2005), an overwhelming experience one cannot get rid of if exposed to in childhood, influences the victim's neurobiology and neurochemistry (the body, activation of the hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal (HPA) axis, increased cortisol secretion, reduced immune response of the body) and the child's cognitive representations (internal working model).

The Needs of Children and Adolescents

Human behaviours, in general, have a reason - they respond to certain needs. Psychologists (Karen Horney, Abraham Maslow) tried to systematise these needs, relating them to an individual's development phases. Called *common human needs* and guiding our behaviour, they are exhibited in the interpersonal relations, the matrix for relating to them being the primary mother-child relationship.

These needs are:

- The need for physical and emotional safety (response to the fundamental needs, protection, predictability);
- The need for attention, warmth and affection (to be seen, to be engaged by the parent in the interaction with the latter, surrounded by love);
- The need for validation, approval and acceptance (we need to hear the people surrounding us, the people that are important to us say that we are good, appreciated and valuable);
- The need for adequate stimulation (it is important to have interaction with the caregiver; tactile, visual, auditory, kinaesthetic-motion stimulation); and
- The need for autonomy and control (as the child grows up, the caregiver has to engage him/her more and encourage the child to explore the environment, to learn and experiment in the learning process, which progressively increases self-confidence, competence and control).

The better these needs are met, especially when the child depends almost entirely on the adult, the healthier his/her development will be and the more resources and skills the child will have to cope with the aversive events in adulthood (resilience).

Between the age of 10 and 14 years (puberty) children have the following needs:

- The need for safety, which involves at this age, monitoring and observing the child, guiding and setting clear limits, providing information and consultation to understand, interpret and explore the big world;
- The need for connection and affection; and
- The need for models, i.e. access to behavioural resources other than the family environment, which explains the need for interaction with peers.

The role of adults/caregivers at this age is to offer a safe relationship (affection and connection), monitor children's behaviour and well-being, offer sound landmarks (guiding children by negotiating and setting limits), provide information and consultancy to help children understand, interpret and explore in a wider social context and offer access to other resources (models of other adults).

At this age, children expect the adults/parents/caregivers to develop and maintain a safe relationship by:

- Offering support;
- Having an attitude of acceptance;
- Offering warmth, affection and encouragement; and
- Adapting and appreciating their high level of maturity.

Between 10 and 14 years, children show their own identity in the following ways:

- They are often critical of their parents;
- Emotional distance;
- Withdrawal from family activities;
- Increased interest in activities with peers; and
- Selective sharing of personal information.

These things put pressure on adults, who have to strike a balance between the moments of closeness and separation, using the following skills:

- Negotiation skills;
- Ability to handle criticism or the anger expressed by children;
- Ability to listen;
- Conflict resolution skills;
- Problem-solving skills;
- Ability to adapt to change; and
- Ability to delegate responsibility.

The principles of learning demonstrate that young people can acquire these skills from role-models, i.e. if they see their own parents practicing them.

From the psychosocial point of view, the puberty period (10-14 years) is characterised by increased interest in:

- Peer group – becomes more important than parents;

- Affirmation (the fight for), the status in the group, recognition, appreciation;
- Search for identity – role confusion (who am I, what can I do, what do I want?), increased ambivalence;
- Sexuality (curiosity, exploration, autoeroticism, sexual experiences, hormonal transformations, morpho-physiological changes - appearance of secondary sexual characteristics, menarche, pollution, and therefore, emergence of reproductive capacity); and
- Risky behaviours (consumption of substances, driving at high speed, violence).

Children who did not have the chance to interact with a predictable, consistent, caring adult/authority figure responsive to their needs, but with parents/caregivers who managed the behaviours mentioned above in an authoritarian and abusive manner, in a coercive discipline cycle, turn to the peer groups where they are accepted as they are, where they are not criticised and some of them even develop other needs – criminogenic needs.

Criminogenic Needs

Criminogenic needs are those needs that make children commit crimes. They are grouped in the following categories (Andrew Bonta, 1997):

- *Pro-criminal attitudes and beliefs* (beliefs that minimise the suffering caused to others and dehumanise the victims; attempts to justify the committed crimes – “he made me do it; she looked for it; it is the society to be blamed for what I did”, denial of own responsibility, criminal pride, sees him/herself as unique and special);
- *Pro-criminal association* (gangs, bands, affiliation with a clan/'family');
- *Use of substances* (alcohol, nicotine, ethnobotanicals, solvents, heroin, etc.);
- *Conduct disorder* (injuring and hitting others, property damage, lying, running away from home, dropping out of school, etc.);
- *Poor problem-solving skills* (lack of cognitive skills, inability to make a life plan, inability to put oneself in somebody else's shoes, etc.);
- *Poor emotional self-regulation skills* (they do not know how to handle anger, fear, boredom); and
- *Disorganised attachment* (they demonstrate unpredictable, confusing behaviour in a relationship, which makes

it difficult for them to build and maintain trust in their relationships with others).

Efficient intervention programmes that reduce danger and the risk of relapsing into criminal behaviour are ones that target these criminogenic needs as goals for change:

- To reduce violence;
- For consumers of substances;
- For sexual aggressors; and
- To develop cognitive skills.

Criminogenic needs are like a ‘disease’ that children/adolescents/ individuals with criminal behaviours develop and, if not treated, they lead to a criminal ‘lifestyle’.

Children who most need help and who are most likely to relapse into criminal behaviour are the ones whose criminal behaviours *have the highest level of danger*. They are not good at dealing with people and problem-solving; they have a criminal thinking pattern; use of substances (alcohol, drugs); poor education.

Children and young people with criminal behaviours need programmes that will teach them cognitive skills (lateral thinking, thinking about consequences, forward thinking), social and emotional self-regulation skills (how to handle own and other people's anger, how to deal with denial and rejection, how to ask for help and accept it, how to postpone impulsive-automatic reaction) and problem-solving skills (to learn to identify a problem, distinguish between facts and assumptions, think of alternative solutions, pick up one solution from several solutions, assess what he/she has achieved after using that solution).

In addition, they also have human needs that have to be met (the need for safety, the need to belong to a group, the need for autonomy and competence); they need support to maintain the relationship with the family/community, support for social reintegration.

Emotional and Behavioural Self-Regulation

An essential prerequisite for the adaptation of an individual to the social and group life is to learn the ability to inhibit impulses, emotional and behavioural self-control skills, and this learning starts as early as preschool age in a relationship with an important adult, who is connected, attuned and responsive to the child's needs, careful and sensitive. A

child's self-regulation skills will develop if he/she has earlier had a co-regulation experience (interpersonal regulation) in his/her interaction with an adult.

Self-regulation is the ability to identify emotions, express them verbally in an acceptable, social way and to use language to guide behaviour (Carolyn Schroeder and Betty Gordon, 2002).

Self-regulation has two interrelated components: emotion and behaviour.

Emotion regulation is defined as "the process of initiating, maintaining, modulating the occurrence, intensity and DURATION: of the internal feeling states, and emotion-related physiological processes" (Eisenberg and Guthrie, 1997).

Behaviour regulation is defined as "the control of behaviour caused by emotions" (Carolyn Schroeder and Betty Gordon, 2002), the control of aggressive postural, body reactions. To learn how to do it, adolescents need to learn:

- To control anger;
- To tolerate frustration;
- To tolerate boredom;
- To manage fear;
- To cope with loneliness; and
- To negotiate friendships.

The inability to regulate emotions is associated with social behavioural problems; Emotion and behaviour dysregulation being the central element of adolescents with criminal behaviours.

Adequate/Appropriate Authority Style When Working with Children and Adolescents

In their relationships with parents, children learn a model of authority and how to relate to it. One of the most popular theories about parenting styles (discipline practices that parents use with children or method to model the expected behaviours) classifies the parental authority type by the following three dimensions: over-control - poor control, warmth-rejection, high expectations from children - low expectations (Baumrind, 1971; 1991).

There are three categories of authority styles of parents and of any other adults who interact with the child for a while, and become authority figures for him/her:

1. *Authoritarian parenting style* – these parents display little warmth and are highly controlling, arbitrary and sometimes abusive ("You will do this because I said so!");
2. *Permissive style* ("laissez-faire") – lack of engagement and neglect, letting children do whatever they feel like doing, without boundaries ("Do whatever you feel like doing, I don't care!"); and
3. *Authoritative style* – parents are encouraging, warm but firm, while maintaining certain limits when necessary and motivated controls on children's actions ("You do that now, in the future to be able to/to have...!").

The most effective and appropriate parenting style for the children's healthy development proved to be the authoritative style, because besides warmth and support, children also need structure, limits/rules and logical consequences that will facilitate their social adaptation and functioning.

Building a structure (Joan Durrant, 2012) means offering information, behavioural guidance and learning moments, by offering decision alternatives and consistently setting limits (e.g. when a child uses inappropriate language with an adult when upset: "I see you are upset. Can you tell me what makes you feel upset in a different way?"). Structure does not mean punishment or threat ("If you speak to me like that, I will kick you/kick you out of class!!!"-teacher). Threat makes adolescents fear, and fear, by activating the defence circuits in the emotional brain (limbic system and amygdala) and inhibiting the prefrontal cortex (which teaches us to control our reactions and think of the consequences of our actions before acting), teaches them to respond aggressively or lie, i.e. to hide in order to avoid punishment.

Adults (teachers, parents – any authority figure) must:

- give children clear instructions about the expected behaviour;
- explain the reasons;
- encourage and help children to learn;
- be a positive model (children do what they see, not what they are told to do);
- encourage children to think and learn to make own decisions; and
- engage children in handling the problems they are facing together (a collaborative approach in engaging children

is much more effective than when they are forced to obey and do what they are told to do).

Group Work

Unlike individual work, group work with children and young people has the advantage of using group processes (universality, peer modelling and social learning) to make changes in every member of the group.

Group work with children (aged 10-14) and adolescents is underpinned by an intervention programme (handbook with session plans) with: 1) goals for change (which take into account their criminogenic needs); 2) structure and predictability of the programme (regular sessions according to the agreed schedule); 3) support for change offered to children and young people (non-evaluative, non-critical attitude; we do not put ourselves in a superior position; openness and acceptance), and 4) confrontation of criminal beliefs.

The motivation of the children and young people for participation in the group sessions is an important issue, which we should keep in mind when we will assess the effectiveness of the programme. To motivate them to participate, the adults who will lead the group must keep in mind the *principle of responsiveness* (the sessions and exercises should engage all the sensory methods – images, words, motion, touch etc., experiences which can be tailored to each participant's learning style and which take into account the children's level of cognitive development, so as they are clear to them, and finally make them feel good in the group (appreciated for openness, courage, resourcefulness, competence, capability).

During the group work, the adults (teachers, psychologists, social workers, lawyers, other professionals) can notice the children/young people going through the following phases of change:

1. Resistance and denial;
2. Anti-social attitudes and behaviours; and
3. Practicing pro-social skills in the group (waiting for their turn, negotiation, compromise etc.).

At the last phase, it is important that the adult notices these changes and strengthens them.

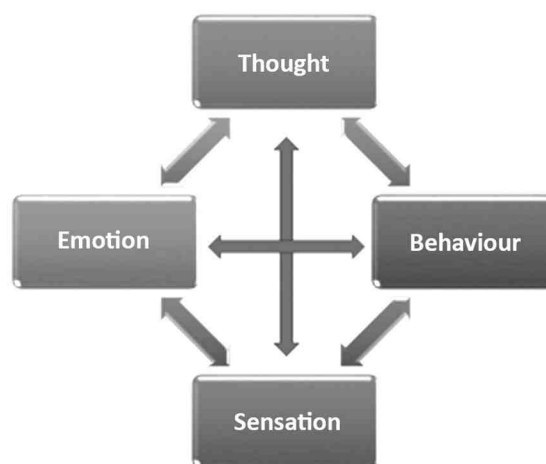
Cognitive-Behavioural Model of Intervention in the Work with Young People with Criminal Behaviours

Research into the effectiveness of the intervention programmes conducted with people with anti-social behaviours revealed that the most efficient at reducing these behaviours are the cognitive-behavioural orientation programmes.

The cognitive-behavioural model assumes there is a connection between what people think (thoughts, beliefs), feel (emotions and sensations) and do.

The connection between these components make up the mechanism that drives criminal behaviour, while intervention (*the process of cognitive and behavioural change*) involves identification, through self-observation, of dangerous thoughts and emotions that lead to criminal behaviour, and learning strategies tailored to each individual to stop the mechanism.

The Cognitive-Behavioural Model



To be able to do it, besides building a motivation for change, the adolescents need to learn:

1. To recognise a thought (can be an image, a word or several words), emotions, sensations, behaviour and the difference between them;
2. To notice the link between them;
3. To recognise the associated situations (the contexts in which certain thoughts, emotions, sensations and behaviours begin) and particularly, to identify the dangerous situations (those situations that can lead to criminal behaviours);
4. To observe how their mind works in ordinary life situations and in dangerous situations;
5. To identify their criminal behaviour pattern with the help of the thought log they will have to use regularly to observe their mind;
6. To identify specific cognitive distortions that lead to criminal behaviours;
7. Own effective intervention patterns (to stop); and
8. Efficient strategies to keep anger under control.

The adolescents will need to know the premise underlying their behavioural change:

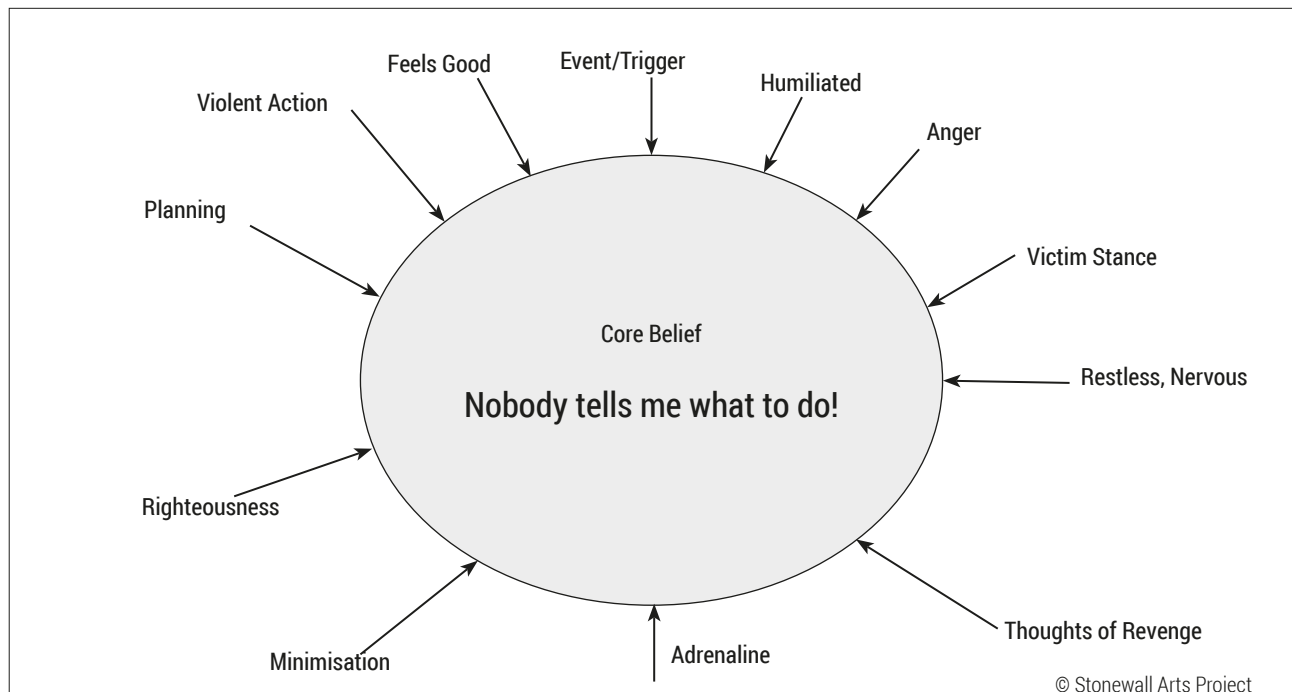
- “My thoughts influence my emotions and my actions.”
- “If I change the way I think, I will change the way I feel and act.”
- “I cannot change what I do not know.”

- “To be able to change the way I act, I have to observe what is going on in my mind.”
- “I can learn to observe what is happening in my mind.”

It is important to keep in mind that this process involves changing oneself and requires engaging young people in it to build and maintain their motivation for change. This process of changing oneself is assisted by the social worker/probation officer.

The Thought Log is one of the main tools, along with role-plays, used to change one’s own behaviour. It has the following components:

1. Event – what happened right before the criminal or violent action; the description must be objective (to report facts as they are, not the way the young person interpret them). E.g.: “He looked at me without saying anything”, instead of “He tried to provoke me”.
2. Thoughts – what occurred to the individual (images or words) in that moment. E.g.: “He was trying to provoke me!”.
3. Emotions – what the individual felt in that moment. E.g.: Anger.
4. Sensations – what the individual felt in his/her body in that moment. E.g.: Heat.
5. Action – what the individual did, his/her action or response. E.g.: “I punched him in the face”.



The more thought logs the young person will fill in appropriately for dangerous events in real life, the easier it will be to identify the criminal behaviour pattern, which can help them to learn how to stop that behaviour efficiently when they want to do it with the help of intervention thoughts.

Intervention thoughts should be practiced repeatedly during the group sessions with the help of the freeze-frame technique in order to be able to use them in real life situations in the future.

Early life experiences lead to the formation of cognitive structures responsible for the quick decoding of life contexts (to allow us to adapt to them), called cognitive schemes, which represent beliefs about self, world, others and future.

The logical category that governs the core beliefs and criminal behaviours, the thoughts about self, the excuses for committing offences are called cognitive distortions. Cognitive distortions are the ones that automatically make us perceive reality in a distorted way.

The main cognitive distortions in adolescents that commit offences are:

1. The Victim Stance

- Deny/do not feel responsible for their actions and feel entitled to do anything they want because they are the victim;

e.g.: "If I hit somebody, it will be your fault!", "I stole it because I needed money!", "The people/my family is to blame that I got here!"

2. All or Nothing/ Black-and-White Thinking

- If they do not get everything, they feel like losing everything; they see no alternative, and get stuck on a single solution – the anti-social one;

e.g.: "I had no choice!", "If I do not respond, they will think that I am a fool/loser!"

3. Power and Control

- What they care for is to have control over other people, and this is the only thing that makes them feel good (the sense of power);

e.g.: "Nobody tells me what to do/punishes me as they want!", "I will make you take me to another place today/take me to the doctor now!"

4. Criminal Energy

- Mobilisation, active involvement in anti-social activities (theft, cheating, violence, gambling, etc.), correlated with lack of energy/impetus for pro-social activities;

e.g.: "I feel so bad and I cannot go to school!" (after half an hour, he/she goes out in the courtyard to play craps);

5. Criminal Pride

- The pride related to their status in the criminal world;

e.g.: "I have a name!", "I am not a blabbermouth/snitch!", "I will not give in!"

6. The Good Guy

- Focus on the good things they do to confirm how good they are, ignoring completely the bad things they do;

e.g.: "Have I been causing trouble since I am in the group?!", "I stole it so my children do not have to starve!"

7. Sentimentality (false)

- They claim they care very much about a person, while treating him/her badly and abusively;

e.g.: "I love my girlfriend/mother/brother!" (while also beating, cursing, threatening them, disregarding their safety)

8. Uniqueness

- Part of the anti-social personality architecture; they think they are totally different from other people, they are special and the rules that apply to the others do not apply to them. This distortion goes along with the "I am special" distortion; and

e.g.: "I am not like the others! I am not like those you work with!"

9. I can't!

- They say "I can't" because, in fact, they want to do something else (something more interesting, attractive, instead of something boring, difficult, unknown, embarrassing);

e.g.: "I can't control my anger!", "I cannot say NO to my friends! I cannot change!", "I can't apologise to this asshole/ jerk!"

Once they identify the specific distortions in their own criminal behaviour pattern, the adolescents need to learn how these distortions can be corrected. To do this, they will need pro-social skills (forward-thinking, empathy).

Controlling Anger

Changing anti-social behaviours, mainly when we deal with reactive aggression, involves observing, knowing and managing anger. For adolescents and young people, anger can become a problematic emotion, which can lead to an automatic reaction, violent behaviours, which will bring negative consequences both for oneself and for the others.

Anger management or control involves: 1) identification of the signs of anger (associated physical sensations); 2) identification of the triggers of anger; 3) recognition of the various levels of intensity of anger (with the help of the instrument called anger thermometer); 4) recognition of the cost/consequences of anger, and the life areas affected by the failure to control it; 5) use of anger log to observe the connection between anger, violent action and its consequences – an essential step towards changing anti-social behaviour.

Writing down the events when anger makes adolescents act violently in anger logs helps to identify the right moment and the specific intervention thought to stop the violent actions.

A simple and effective strategy to manage anger is the 3-step technique:

1. Stop! – means that adolescents recognise the signs of anger, and identify a risky situation;
2. Move away! – to move away from the person(s) with whom they may become violent or may be in a risky situation; and
3. Calm down! – to learn the arousal control techniques, e.g.: abdominal breathing exercises, distraction techniques, physical activity (to counteract the effects of adrenaline).

Development of Alternative (Pro-social) Behaviours

Anger control is an essential objective towards the goal of behavioural change, but to increase its efficiency, adolescents need to learn additional skills that will help them live a pro-social life.

Social-Emotional Skills

These are acquired or learned skills due to which the people have more chances of receiving a positive social response from others, and are less likely to receive a negative social response. They are acquired during the pre-school years and are maintained by the positive or negative social reinforcements which come as a response from others. For instance, an adolescent's violent reaction towards another can be positively reinforced by the fact that he/she achieves what he/she wants ("I put him in his place", "I taught him a lesson", "I am cooler than him") or negatively reinforced if this is the only way he/she gets the adults' attention. Examples of social and emotional skills:

- To ask for help;
- To offer help;
- To manage own anger;
- To cope with others' anger;
- To cope with rejection;
- To be assertive (to say what you do not like/what is bothering you in a pro-social way);
- To wait; and
- To cope with boredom.

Cognitive Skills

Criminal thinking is described as „poor“ thinking, with many of the young offenders finding the following excuses for their actions: „I had no choice! I had/was provoked to hit him!“. This is why by developing cognitive skills, adolescents will be able to find pro-social solutions to their problems.

These skills can be developed during the group sessions with the young people, using logic exercises, in the form of games and experiential learning and role-pays.

The skills the adolescents will need to learn in order to be able to deal with their life issues in a pro-social way are:

- Lateral thinking (or thinking of alternatives);
- Thinking about consequences;
- Thinking about goals and means; and
- Forward thinking.

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PRACTICAL PART

How can I live differently? Programme for Minors with Suspended Sentences under Supervision

Presentation

The programme is intended for the minors who received suspended sentences under the supervision of relevant probation authorities.

They have not been sent to prison and the probation officers and facilitators do not know what their daily activities are. They can only make assumptions about their lifestyle. Therefore, the programme facilitators have to work with these assumptions and with what the minors tell them about their daily activities. Some of them might be scared of their sentences and will not commit any other crimes, while others will continue committing crimes without being caught.

The programme aims to help the minors to make changes in their lives: to stop committing offences, and live a decent and rewarding life in a pro-social environment. To be able to make those changes, it is absolutely necessary to know what we want to change. Therefore, to be able to help the convicted minors, the facilitators have to talk about the participants' real lives. There are three sources where they can get information about the real lives and activities of the children involved in the programme:

- school, if appropriate;
- police officer, if appropriate; and
- the minor.

It will be useful and necessary if the minors share with their group mates and the facilitators details about their real way of life. To change the anti-social and criminal behaviour, we need to talk about these behaviours. We will not ask them to tell us their life stories or criminal activities. What we want is to hear real examples from them during the programme sessions. To achieve most of efficiency, the facilitators will follow several principles:

1. The group is a safe workspace;

2. We are not their judges;
3. We will listen and respect what they will be saying about themselves;
4. Our job is based on decency and common sense;
5. No lies and promises we cannot keep;
6. We learn from the experience of mind and body, and the main learning tool is observation;
7. We keep information confidential in accordance with the law;
8. We learn from the group experience;
9. We are aware that they learn from us not just through the course content. The facilitators are MODELS (by what they do, say, etc.) for the young people participating in the programme; and
10. The apparently insignificant conflict and anti-social behaviours reflect the criminal thinking which leads to criminal behaviours.

Given the last principle, the facilitators can use the most insignificant examples, as well as role-plays and exercises in their work with the minors. They will all reflect the elements of the thinking that make them break the law. Respectful communication and compliance with the group rules, active listening and discussion on what the minors say about world and life will help the facilitators to successfully identify the thinking that leads to anti-social behaviour.

The programme OBJECTIVES: are:

- to learn about the connection between thought, emotion, belief, behaviour;
- to learn to observe own thinking and emotions that lead to anti-social and/or criminal behaviours;
- to learn how the participants can change their behaviour; and
- to engage the participants in the change process.

To achieve these OBJECTIVES; the programme has four modules each with a certain number of topics.

In the first module, we set the milestones of our work: the anti-social or criminal world in which the participants probably live and our pro-social world. Even if the participants will give examples of uncaught offenders who are socially successful, the facilitators will reject these examples because the question is whether we want to be pro-social or anti-social, rather than why certain offenders are not punished.

The second module gives an insight into the elements of a person's mind that lead to certain behaviours, and how behaviours can be changed. The participants will also learn to observe their own mind. At the end of the module those participants who attended the sessions and did their homework will be able to think seriously of starting to change their behaviours.

The third module offers the participants the context to voice their expectations, fears about the change, the risks they think they will encounter if they try to change, their strengths and what they think about their weaknesses. One or two sessions may be added here, if appropriate, to develop self-trust – a process that started and developed implicitly in the previous sessions. At the end of these sessions, the participants should be ready to make the decision to engage in the change process.

The fourth module refers to the implementation of the relapse prevention plan. Each participant determines what behaviours he/she wants to change, and makes a plan together with the facilitators.

When the programme is over, the minors will come back to the facilitators every time they will face some difficulties or will need support, and also after those moments that they considered to be successful to receive acknowledgment that they are successful in maintaining a pro-social behaviour.

The programme has 20 topics. Each topic will be delivered during 1 to 4 sessions.

The topics are:

Module 1 – Attitudes and Values

1. My World
2. My Plan for the Future
3. Pro-Social World - 5 Principles of Ethics
4. Pro-Social World – Pro-Social Lifestyle

Module 2 – About Change

5. Thoughts and Emotions
6. Core Beliefs
7. Violent Situations and Behaviours
8. Observing Thoughts and Emotions that Lead to Crime
9. Thought Log
10. Anger Diary
11. Identifying Distortions
12. Fixing Distortions
13. Learning Skills

Module 3 – About My Change

14. What Does It Mean to Want to Change?

Module 4 – Relapse Prevention Plan - Problem Areas

15. Authority: School
16. Family
17. Money and Work
18. Friends and Free Time
19. Alcohol and Substance Use
20. My Relapse Prevention Plan

A 50% attendance is not enough, and will require the facilitators to ask the participant to decide if he/she wants to stay or exit the programme. Those who decide to exit the programme will fill in a questionnaire on the reasons for doing so.

The programme will be delivered in a room that is big enough to host a group of up to 10 participants, and to allow arranging chairs in a circle or putting them away to free up space for exercises. There will also be at least 3 tables in that room, which will be used during the exercises that will involve writing or drawing. It should be possible to air out the room appropriately and to have daylight in it.

There will be no more than 10 and no less than 4 participants in the group. It works better if the groups are made up of minors who committed the same type of crime. The types of crimes will include all the offences that have elements of violence and crimes against property. It is NOT recommended to have sex offenders in the group, because this programme does not respond to the criminogenic needs of this category.

As for the minors sentenced for petty crimes, they should participate in the programme because ANY CRIME IS DRIVEN BY CRIMINAL THINKING. Even if it is a petty offence, the thought that led to it can lead to more serious offences in the future. The minors who committed petty offences should not be mixed with those who committed more serious offences, because otherwise they will find an excuse claiming that they are not offenders, and they will not get involved in the change process.

As for the drug users, we recommend that they do participate in the programme provided that they have stopped using drugs and can prove this.

It is recommended to have 1 or 2 meetings a week at the same time and place. Any change has to be communicated in advance. It is very important that the scheduled timing and place remain unchanged, because in this way the minors participating in the programme practice and experience something they did not have too often in their lives – a regular programme and adults who care about them.

The programme's main goal is to change. Changing does not only involve learning new things (acquiring knowledge) and developing social skills through modelling. It has at its core, the confrontation and change of the minors' main beliefs, fundamental thoughts about themselves, about a better life, about justice and society. To help them make that change, the facilitators must be able to adapt to their pace of understanding, self-discovery and motivation for change. This is why the facilitators may need from 1 to 4 sessions to go through each of the Handbook topics, depending on how quickly the participants will respond to the learning context. **The main goals are not considered as achieved just when a session plan has been closely followed, but rather when it becomes clear from the participants' answers and behaviours that:**

- *they understand the components of the change process;*
- *they consider making the change (contemplation stage in the Stages of Change Model, (Prochaska and Di Clemente)); and*
- *there are behavioural changes (e.g. they start following the group rules and getting ready for the sessions).*

The topics that are not clear to the participants must be explained once again. Yet, not all the participants will truly want to understand, learn, contemplate and change. Each facilitator will assess for each group how many partici-

pants have achieved the main goal and when to move on to another topic.

A very good indicator that the programme goals have been achieved is the participants' involvement in doing homework. For example:

- they keep their homework notebooks intact;
- they take them to the sessions;
- they do homework;
- they take notes during the sessions.

This is a performance criterion that is extremely difficult to achieve and a very good indicator of change.

Each participant will receive a small notebook for homework and a pen. Their job is not to lose it, take it to class and do their homework. If they claim that they cannot avoid losing it or it being stolen or someone reading it, the facilitators will suggest them to leave it at the probation office, and when they have homework to do to come half an hour earlier and do it.

Progress will be assessed with the help of the Rating Form in Annex 1 to the Handbook, which will be filled in before the programme will start, 3 months after it has started, and at the end of the programme.

Other assessment indicators will be:

- Attendance;
- Notebook handling – lost; lost and recovered; missing sheets; kept intact;
- Doing homework and taking notes during the sessions;
- Compliance with the group rules;
- Correct answers;
- A good observation of own mind during the session exercises;
- Significant criminal behaviours - changed; and
- Other actions that reflect changing attitudes noticed by facilitators.



Introductory Session – Why Are We Here?

During this session, we will present the programme, the rules we must follow to work efficiently as a group and the way these rules work.



OBJECTIVES:

- To present the programme and group rules;
- To practice the simplest group rules; and
- To obtain the participants' informed consent to participate in the programme.



MATERIALS:

A small notebook, pens, flipchart, markers, handouts with the programme topics (see below) (the facilitators may choose to read or write the programme topics on the flipchart instead), Group Rules handouts for participants and Group Rules poster to be available during all the programme sessions; the participation agreement, which will have to be signed by each participant.



DURATION: 60 min.



SESSION:

1. Introduction of participants

We can use an introduction exercise or we can ask the participants to introduce themselves: full names and the names they would like to be called by the group. Nicknames are not allowed. The reason is that the convicted minors often feel proud to belong to the criminal world, and we do not want to make them get the impression that we are treating them like children. We respect their self-image. The participants might forget this rigid self-image during group work.

2. Programme presentation: number of modules, programme goal, number and DURATION: of sessions, and when the programme is considered completed.

The goal of the programme is to teach the participants how to make a change in their lives. This change requires learning to live a life without crime and without doing wrong to other people. It is up to them to make the change. During the group sessions, the participants will learn what it means to live differently and what to do to change their behaviours.

The programme has 20 topics. Each topic will be delivered during 1 to 4 sessions.



3. Questions and answers about the programme. What are the participants' expectations? They will be written on a sheet of flipchart paper that will be available during all the sessions.

4. Introduction to the group rules

The participants receive the Group Rules handouts. The rules are also written on a flipchart sheet. We will dwell on each rule each time allowing the participants to express their views. The facilitators can encourage the participants to suggest additional rules.

5. Questions and answers about the group rules

The participants ask about what they have not understood about the group rules.

For facilitators

- We will encourage the participants to read one by one from the handouts and say what they think about what they have read: we will ask all of them to speak.
 - We will encourage the minors to participate in discussions: the one who monopolises the discussion will be stopped with the statement: "Thank you, we want to hear what other participants think".
 - It can happen that the discussions will be too long. We will stop them and follow the course of the topic.
 - We will make sure that all the participants say what they think about the discussed issues.
 - New rules can be added, but no rule will be removed. Most of the times the rules that have been challenged facilitate the integration of the concepts we use during the change process.
6. At the end of the session we will tell the participants: "Say one important thing that you can remember from what you have learned during the session", encouraging them to tell a word, an idea, an example, an image in their own words. During the programme, this question makes the participants feel that what they remember and what is happening in their minds during the sessions is important to us. After that they will be asked who wants to join the group.

For facilitators

The participants can refuse to participate in the programme. They will also be informed that they can exit the programme whenever they want. A 50% attendance is not enough and will require the facilitators to ask the participant to decide if he/she wants to stay or exit it.

7. Participation Agreement

The participants will read the Agreement, ask questions and those who want to participate in the programme will sign it.

For facilitators



Be careful of cases when a consent letter is necessary from the children's parents or guardians. The agreement signed by the children is necessary because it is a tool to make them more responsible, even if it has no legal force. By signing it, the minors cannot claim before facilitators and/or probation officers that they did not know what it is about, or that nobody asked if they wanted to participate.

The participants receive pens, notebooks and a copy of the Participation Agreement.

Assignment:

Name three reasons why you want to participate in this programme.

Indicators of achievement for the **introductory session**:

- a. The participants say what they remember from what they have learned; they have retained the information about the programme and rules;
- b. The participants complied with the group rules; and
- c. The participants signed the Participation Agreements.

Introductory session handout

Group Rules:

- 1. Verbal, emotional, physical and sexual abuse is not allowed;
- 2. Everyone has the right to express his/her opinion;
- 3. Opinions will be expressed without humiliating the others;
- 4. We will speak one at a time;
- 5. The chairs are arranged in a circle;
- 6. We will behave decently during our group work: the chairs and legs must be on the floor;
- 7. Fighting even as a joke is not allowed.
- 8. We will not use group work (homework, exercises and topics) to create or fuel out-of-session conflicts;
- 9. We become responsible for our own actions;
- 10. Criminal activities are not allowed before and after the sessions in the premises where the sessions are held;
- 11. If your behaviour bothers the group, you will be asked just once to take a break out of the group for 5 minutes.

MODULE 1 ATTITUDES AND VALUES



Topic 1 - My World

This topic will give all the participants the opportunity to tell about their situations: about their suspended sentence, if it has changed their lives and how their lives are today.



OBJECTIVES:

- The participants will tell about their lives;
- The participants will render a picture of how they see their lives at the beginning of the course; and
- The participants will follow the group rules.



MATERIALS:

small notebooks, pens, flipchart, markers, a poster with group rules.



DURATION: 60 min.



SESSION:

1. Getting ready

Warm-up exercise 1: **Touch Your Partner**

Purpose: to create the right work environment

Instructions:

Step 1: The players walk around the room at a normal pace in different directions. When the game leader (facilitator) says "stop", each player touches the back of another player and stops.

Step 2: The players go on walking around the room at a normal pace in different directions. When the game leader (facilitator) says "stop", each player touches with the right and left hands the backs of two different players and stops.

Step 3: The players go on walking around the room at a normal pace. When the game leader (facilitator) says "stop", each player touches the back of another player, while taking care not to be touched by other players.

Warm-up exercise 2: **Red - Green**



For facilitators

It is very important that when we explain the exercise, we give no example, because we do not want them to repeat what we have said. If nothing comes to their mind, this is what they will write.

The groups read what they have written. We will see what answers are similar. At the end, the facilitator will ask the entire group: "Are these things important to you?"

5. Participants' lifestyle - What happens more often in my world - I follow the rules and law or break them?

For facilitators

Talk to the participants about what they think their lives are. You might hear some of them say that they are good and that what they did was a mistake. Even if we know from other sources that this is not true, we will accept the way they talk about themselves and see themselves. The participants will be asked to write the answers to the questions in their notebooks.

After this discussion, we will ask them to write in their notebooks the answer to the question "What is the share of rule-breaking or crimes committed in my life?"

They will have to write down both the question and the answer in their notebooks.

6. Recapitulation

For facilitators

We will ask each participant to say what we have talked about during the session and what impressed them most.

7. Wrap-up exercise:

Imaginary Balloons

Purpose: to reduce the stress accumulated during the session, have fun

Instructions: **Step 1** All the participants stand in a circle. The game leader (facilitator) will ask all the players to inflate a huge balloon together. After they inflate the balloon, the game leader (facilitator) will tie the balloon, count 1, 2, 3 and then let it go. The players imitate the sound of a deflating balloon. **Step 2** The game leader (facilitator) will ask each of the players to be a balloon that inflates and becomes heavier, jumps and at one point blows up!

Pass on the Impulse

Purpose: to learn to accept equality and communication inside the group

Instructions: The players and the game leader (facilitator) hold hands to form a circle. One of the players squeezes the neighbour's hand a certain number of times (one, two, three or four), which will mean an impulse, and the neighbour will pass the squeeze (the same number of times) to the next teammate. The players have to have their eyes closed. The game will end when the first player who sent out the



Topic 2 – My Plan for the Future

This topic will give the opportunity to all the participants to speak about their plans for the future. The plan for the future is a very important tool for participants because it shows the pressure to which the convicted juveniles are subjected- to say that they regret what they did and to promise they will never do it again – and turns this pressure into a commitment.



OBJECTIVES:

- The participants should speak about their future plans; and
- The participants should follow the group rules.



MATERIALS:

small notebooks, pens, flipchart, markers, Group Rules poster, chalk, Current Situation – Future Objective worksheet.



DURATION: 60 min.



SESSION:

1. Getting ready

Warm-up exercise 1: **Mirror**

Purpose: connection

Instructions: The players (participants) split up in pairs. One of the partners is the leader, and the other is the mirror. The players (participants) stand face to face and look into each other's eyes. The leader moves his/her hands slowly and the partner mirrors them. The leader must make easy moves. After that, the partners switch roles.

Warm-up exercise 2: **Imaginary Scale**

Purpose: to observe preferences, the things the participants have in common; to have fun

Instructions: The game leader (facilitator) draws a line on the floor with the chalk and writes zero at one of its ends and 100 at the other one. Then he/she divides the line into 4 with marked values 25, 50 and 75. The rules are:

- the game leader (facilitator) will name some things that we like or do not, e.g. chocolate, homework, PC, the afternoon sleep, going to the cinema, going to a dentist; and

- every time the game leader (facilitator) will say a situation or a thing, the players will stand on the line near the number which shows how much they like (or do not like, i.e. zero or close to zero) the situation or the thing.



The last word the facilitator will say is “punishment”. The facilitator will observe the reactions of the participants to this word. Then the group will discuss the topic.

2. What do I want to do after my sentence time is finished?

All the participants will be asked what will be different between their lives during and after their sentences. They may see no difference. Let’s talk about that. Is it true that nothing will change? We will refer to our dialogue about how their sentences have changed their lives. Are there things they cannot do now? After the sentence time is finished, will there be things they will be able to do? How do they want their lives to change: do they want to return to their old lives? Do they want to start new lives?

3. Current situation – Future objective

The participants receive the worksheets.

Instructions: This is individual work. The participants will be asked to write in the left column three things they do not like in their lives today. In the right column, they will write three things they want to have or do in the future, and the things that are important to them. We will discuss the results together. What we want to know is if the things they want to have or do in the future are solutions to the current issues or may help address the current issues. We will talk to the participants about the link between the future and the present. Do they want to change something in the future? Are they looking for a way to change?

For facilitators

Helpful questions:

- What is the link between the things in the present and those in the future? Can a thing in the future be a solution to a present problem?
- If appropriate, discuss with the participants the nature of the future and present things. Together with them we will identify which answers are conflicts, needs, relationships, or objects. We will look for the connections between them: can an object (a car) improve a relationship (my father does not talk to me)?
- Will the things in the future make the participants feel better?
- All the participants will be asked to write down the important things named by the facilitator in their notebooks.

After the discussion is over, we will ask the participants to write down in their notebooks the answer to the following question: What do I want to change in my present life? The facilitator will ask all of them to read what they have written.



4. Recapitulation

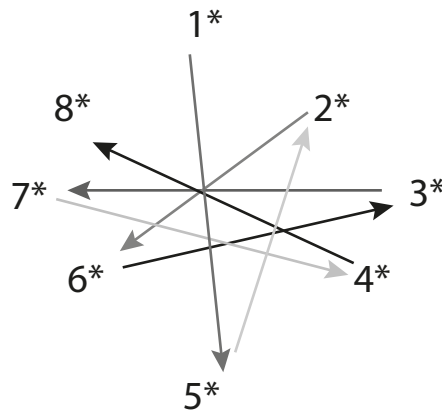
The facilitator will ask all the participants to each say what they can remember from what they have learned during the session.

5. End of the session

Wrap-up exercise: **Mirrors in a Circle**

Purpose: relaxation and connection

Instructions: The players (participants) form a circle.





The first player makes slow moves with the arms. Just like in the mirror exercise, the players who are immediately in front of each other mirror each other's moves: 5 mirrors 1, 2 mirrors 5, 6 mirrors 2, 3 mirrors 6, 7 mirrors 3, 4 mirrors 7 and 8 mirrors 4. The moves will be slow.

Indicators of achievement:

- The participants complete the worksheets;
- The things that the participants would like to change have to do with them, rather than with external factors like being rich; and
- The participants follow the group rules.

Worksheet

„Current Situation - Future Objective”

	CURRENT SITUATION		FUTURE OBJECTIVE
Write or draw 3 difficult situations or issues in your lives that you would like to change.	Write or draw 3 objectives you would like to achieve in the future.		



Topic 3 – Pro-Social World – 5 Principles of Ethics

To know what pro-social values are and to understand them, we will talk about 5 core principles of ethics and highlight the connection between them and our daily activities. These principles will help us show the difference during the following sessions between the two “worlds” - pro-social and anti-social.



OBJECTIVES:

- To explain the word/concept of ethics;
- To name five core principles of ethics;
- To highlight the link between the 5 principles of ethics and the group rules; and
- To practice the simplest group rules.



MATERIALS:

small notebooks, pens, flipchart, markers, poster with group rules, handouts with the principles of ethics and poster with the principles of ethics.



DURATION: 60 min.



SESSION:

1. Getting ready

Warm-up exercise 1: **Slalom**

Purpose: connection, increasing level of energy through competition

Instructions: The group will split up into two teams. One of the teams will stand in an Indian line with one-meter distance between players. The members of the other team will zigzag with their eyes shut among the players from the first team (poles) one at a time until they will get to the other end of the line without touching the poles and without opening their eyes. The teammates of the zigzagging players will guide them in the right direction. Every time a player touches a pole, the team loses one point. After that, the teams switch places.

Warm-up exercise 2: **Imaginary Balloons**

Purpose: communication, coordination

Instructions: The game leader (facilitator) will ask all the players to inflate together a huge balloon. After they inflate the balloon well, the game leader (facilitator) will tie the balloon, count 1, 2, 3 and then let it go. The players imitate the sound of a

deflating balloon. The game leader (facilitator) will ask each of the players to be a balloon that inflates and becomes heavier, jumps and at one point blows up!



2. Principles of ethics – definitions

The concept of ethics is most often unknown to the participants. So is the word “principle”. First of all, the facilitator will write the two definitions:

a. What is the definition of ethics?

Definition	Ethics – a system of generally accepted norms of moral conduct.
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b. What is the definition of principle?

Definition	Principle – the fundamental idea that shapes the way I live and see the world or a theory (e.g., sports and health theory)
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After each definition, the facilitator will ask the participants if they have understood them and will tell them to explain what they have understood in their own words. If it turns out that the definitions are not clear to the participants the facilitator will make sure first of all that the participants understand the words “norms”, “conduct” and “moral”. After that, he/she will talk about why these principles are generally accepted. The right answer is that these are principles that facilitate the cohabitation of more people. It is very important that the facilitator makes sure that these concepts are clear to most of the participants.

3. Explanation of the principles of ethics

The facilitator will give the participants the handouts with the principles of ethics.

There are 5 of them. The facilitator will read these principles and give an example for each of them. These are generally accepted principles, which were developed by philosophers and moralists since the fourth century BC till the 20th century. If necessary, the facilitator will explain what fourth century BC means.

We only have one life.

Explanation: e.g. No one lives twice. It is ethical to do what we can to put life forward. Time is irreversible. Therefore, any suffering a person goes through is wasted time, a piece of life that will never be lived again in a better way. Taking somebody’s life and causing pain is not ethical or admissible because this would mean wasting a supreme value.

Discussion: ask two questions: “Why do we need this principle?” and “What would happen if nobody cared about it?”



An action is ethical if it does more good than harm.

Explanation: e.g. Although medical interventions cause physical pain for a while, they are measures to improve the patient's health, quality of life and to prolong life.

Discussion: ask two questions: "Why do we need this principle?" and "What would happen if nobody cared about it?"

An action is ethical if it benefits the community. Good and evil should be equally shared.

Explanation: e.g. Construction of a flood prevention dam. Building it requires flooding two villages and resettling households in the villages that will be saved (the resettled people will be allocated and will become owners of new lands in the villages that were saved).

Discussion: ask two questions: "Why do we need this principle?" and "What would happen if nobody cared about it?"

An action is ethical when you have the right information. It is ethical to tell the truth.

Explanation: e.g. A patient is facing terminal illness. It is ethical to tell him/her the truth for him/her to live the rest of the life as he/she likes.

Discussion: ask two questions: "Why do we need this principle?" and "What would happen if nobody cared about it?"

An action is ethical when it takes into account the individual's uniqueness.

Explanation: e.g. Romania respects the religious cults of the minority groups.

Discussion: ask two questions: "Why do we need this principle?" and "What would happen if nobody cared about it?"

4. Group rules/principles of ethics: is there a connection between them or not?

The facilitator will give the participants the *Principles of Ethics – Rules Connection* worksheets.

Explanation: the participants will have to write in the empty boxes on the right the rules they think apply to these principles of ethics. This is individual work. When the participants are done, they will read their answers.

Discussions with the participants about those principles of ethics that are reflected in the group rules. Is there a principle that has nothing to do with these rules?

5. Recapitulation

The participants will be asked about what they have discussed during the session.

Worksheet

Principles of Ethics – Rules Connection

PRINCIPLES OF ETHICS	GROUP RULES
We only have one life.	
An action is ethical if it does more good than harm.	
An action is ethical if it benefits the community. Good and evil should be equally shared.	
An action is ethical when you have the right information. It is ethical to tell the truth.	
An action is ethical when it takes into account the individual's uniqueness.	

Topic 4 – Pro-Social World – Pro-Social Lifestyle



The people who have been convicted and who have committed crimes often do not know the pro-social rules and believe that it is impossible to live by pro-social rules (“everybody steals”). During this session, we will tell them how the pro-social world works.



OBJECTIVES:

- To provide an accurate and clear picture of the mechanisms of a pro-social life; and
- To practice the simplest group rules.



MATERIALS:

small notebooks, pens, flipchart, markers, poster with group rules.



DURATION: 60 min.



SESSION:

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1. Homework checking

For facilitators

The facilitators will check the homework in the following way: all the participants will be asked to read it. If necessary, the facilitator will ask additional questions to better understand the participants’ answers. The participants who did not do their homework can think of some answers when asked, but they will have to do their homework next time. If necessary, the facilitators can also ask additional questions to check the participants’ understanding of the concepts learned during the previous sessions.

2. What does pro-social behaviour mean?

The facilitators will explain the meaning of the word “pro-social”. They can give more definitions depending on the chosen perspective. From the legal perspective (fundamental law, social policies):

Definition 1:

Pro-social behaviour – behaviour characterized by:

- compliance with law,
- respect for the rights of all community members,
- showing respect for the dignity of individuals and their needs, and
- engagement for the common economic and social welfare.

The facilitators will write down the definition.



From the perspective of the good and evil theory:

Definition 2:

Pro-social behaviour – behaviour governed by the 5 principles of ethics, the most important rules for social cohabitation.

The facilitators will write down the definition.

From the perspective of human relationships:

Definition 3:

Pro-social behaviour – behaviour you have when you try not to cause suffering to the people around you.

The facilitators will write down the definition. Then they will check if the participants understand all the words in the definitions and all the definitions.

Helpful question:

- Do the three definitions refer to the same behaviour or to different behaviours?

Explanation: the definitions refer to the same thing from different perspectives.

For facilitators

The explanation of the definitions will depend on the children’s education and intelligence. If the participants dropped out school early and have lost the habit to learn and to practice concentration, memory and abstract thinking, the facilitators will explain until they will understand. The concept of pro-social behaviour is fundamental in the process of change. It is recommended that the facilitators prepare a detailed description of a pro-social life in compliance with the Moldovan law and standards to be able to answer all the children’s questions and counter-arguments.

3. What is a pro-social rule?

The facilitators will ask the participants to give examples of pro-social group rules and will write their answers on the flipchart. The easiest examples are the rules of the working group that are written on the poster.

The facilitators will define the pro-social rules, and write down the definition. The participants will write all the definitions in their notebooks.

Definition	The rule of a law-abiding group, equality between members, their rights and needs.
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4. Description of the fundamental pro-social rules that are guiding our society and are underpinned by the 5 principles of ethics:



- All the people have equal rights;
- We must not cause suffering to other people and they, in turn, must not cause suffering to us;
- We must respect the property of others and others must respect our property;
- We work to earn for a living; and
- We participate in common social expenses through taxes, contributions and we have the right to know how they are spent.

The facilitators will write down and explain each of them and will make sure that all the words are clear to the participants.

5. Discussion on the rules

Most of the time, the participants claim that there are no pro-social rules, that it is impossible to live within the law or that one cannot observe the law when one is poor or was born poor. The facilitators will have to confront these statements. It will be difficult because each person has the right to aspire to having money, luxury, time and to live only for fun. What we know, and we will reiterate this, is that there are people who live pro-social lives regardless of how much money they have.

Additional questions:

- Give examples of situations when these rules are broken.
- Do you think it is right or not to break the rules?
- Which rules seem right or not to you?
- Have you ever been the victim of someone who broke one of the rules written here?
- Would it have been better for you if all the people followed these rules?

6. Recapitulation.

The facilitators will ask the participants what they have learned during the session.

Assignment:

- a. Write 3 pros of the pro-social lifestyle.
- b. Write 3 pros of the anti-social lifestyle.

Indicators of achievement:

- The participants have understood the new concepts and this can be seen in their answers to the facilitators' recapitulation questions; and

The participants follow the group rules.

MODULE 2 ABOUT CHANGE



Topic 5 – Thoughts and Emotions

The facilitators will ask the participants to identify the thoughts in their mind, to speak about the things that come to their mind. "I think that...", "I don't like...", "I remember the first day...", "I go mad if..." - You do not have to be an expert to have thoughts or to talk about what comes to your mind.



OBJECTIVES:

- To understand the definition of thought;
- To understand the definition of sensation;
- To understand the definition of emotion; and
- To follow the group rules.



MATERIALS:

small notebooks, pens, flipchart, markers, poster with the group rules.



DURATION: 60 min.

Obs.: This topic is very likely to require 3 group sessions. At the end of each session, the participants will recapitulate what they have talked about and the facilitators will give them homework to do for the next time: (1) name 3 thoughts, (2) name 3 sensations and (3) name 3 emotions, after each of the 3 sessions. At the end of each session, the participants will do a wrap-up exercise (they have already done or know).



SESSION:

1. Getting ready

Exercise: Fortunately - Unfortunately

Purpose: to develop lateral thinking, to observe thoughts

Instructions: The players (participants) will play in pairs. One says "fortunately.....", the other answers "unfortunately.....".

e.g.:

- Fortunately, it is Friday and the weekend is near.
- Unfortunately, we have to work on Saturday.
- Fortunately, we don't have to work on Sunday.
- Unfortunately, your friend is leaving for the mountains tonight.
-



It is very important that the reasons that something is fortunate or unfortunate must be real! And they have to be linked to the partner's statement.

Duration of the exercise: 40 seconds.

When the participants give no other alternatives, the facilitators will ask if the exercise has been difficult. What did you have to do to do in this exercise? The right answer is: to think what to say.

2. What is a thought?

The facilitators will ask the participants to give examples of thoughts and will write the answers on the blackboard. After that, they will explain what thoughts are.

Helpful questions:

- How do thoughts look like and what are they made of?
- Is image a thought?
- What is the role of a thought?
- What is the definition of thought?

DEFINITION: Thoughts are the words and images in my mind about real things or about the things that are on my mind that make me do actions.

For facilitators

Very often the participants are not able to express a thought as it is and as we expect. However, we should not forget that observation of thoughts is not that easy. Our goal is to teach the minors to observe their mind very thoroughly. At the beginning, their answers will look like: "I thought that I will beat him up". We will ask: "How did that thing that was in your mind look like?" or "Was it a word, have you seen anything...?". It will be very helpful for us if the examples that we/the participants give are true, realistic and in the form in which the thoughts come to their minds.

3. What is a sensation?

The facilitators will write the definition of sensations on the blackboard or flipchart.

DEFINITION: A sensation is what is happening to our body in a certain situation (what we feel in our bodies).



The facilitators will ask the participants to identify the sensations they are feeling in their bodies using the definition above. All the participants will be asked to speak. If they are not able to do it, they will do the following exercise:

Exercise:

Instructions: The participants will split into pairs. The partners stand face-to-face and touch each other's palms, leaning against each other while moving their feet so as the distance between them gets bigger. They should not be too far from each other not to fall.

Alternative: Each participant stands some distance away from a wall (made of stones, not plasterboard), leans with the shoulder against the wall and stands so for about 30 seconds. The facilitators will ask the participants to observe and then describe what they are feeling in their bodies (in the shoulder, in the point of contact with the wall, in the trunk, in the back, in the middle, etc.).

Discussion: Have you felt any part of your body while doing this exercise? Which? Have you ever felt this sensation before? When?

4. What causes sensations and where do we feel them?

For facilitators

The facilitators will explain the following:

4.1 Sensations can be caused by external stimuli (e.g. temperature, touch, hits, and ingestion of substances) or internal stimuli.

The facilitators will ask for examples.

Helpful questions:

- What were the external stimuli in the exercise we did earlier?

4.2 The internal stimuli can be health changes or changes in the nervous system as responses to the external stimuli (e.g. amygdala's response "fight/flight/freeze" to the external stimuli which is seen as a danger).

The facilitators ask for examples.

Helpful questions:

- Can you remember a time when you were in danger?
- How did you feel?

4.3 The last category of sensations is associated with emotions. These sensations help us to observe our emotions.

For facilitators

This they need to know in order to understand the next part of the topic. The facilitators will not ask for examples.

5. What are emotions?



For facilitators

The facilitators will ask the participants what they know about emotions and how they experience them. *We will find out that some of them do not know how to talk about emotions at all or claim that they never feel anything. This can have an explanation: prolonged exposure to pain has changed their tolerance threshold; the belief that a real man feels "nothing", is tough, resistant. Whatever may be the cause for this lack of awareness, the facilitators will do their best to teach the participants to observe their emotions.* To help the participants to express themselves, the facilitators will use comparisons, e.g.: it is like a fireball, like pressing the pedal. They can also use pictures which depict states, newspaper pictures, and drawings. They can use emoticons that show simple emotional states like joy, sadness, anger, grief and fear, and ask what the participants think the emoticons feel. The answers that seem to be wrong must not be corrected at this stage.

Explanation: Emotion is a reaction, a response that has an adaptive function, which makes an individual act quickly, which is reflected in the phrase "I feel like...", which is so often associated with the emotion – and stimulates them to communicate with the surrounding world. Because of the speed the emotions occur in our body and mind it is difficult to describe them.

For facilitators

The participants will also be encouraged to tell/speak about how they feel and when they feel, for instance, the emotions shown using emoticons. We must accept their emotions as they are described by the participants. *While describing a thought in an accurate and realistic manner requires a limited number of words, sometimes even a syllable, a photogram, to describe an emotion accurately, we often need more words. It is ok if the participants do not mention the standard emotions. This is the reality!*

The facilitators will write on the blackboard or flipchart:

Definition of emotions:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• an automatic reaction to a thing from the surrounding reality or your mind that results in physical sensations, a change in the body condition;• an automatic reaction after a thought that is immediately followed by another thought, a relationship phenomenon, something that results in physical sensations.
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6. What is the link between thoughts and emotions?

Explanation: thoughts and emotions are in our mind and body. Sensations are associated with emotions. Let us make an exchange of views about the link between emotions, thoughts and sensations in our mind and body.

For facilitators

The facilitators will talk with the participants about their experiences and about what they can see in their minds – are thoughts separate from emotions? Do an emotion and a sensation appear at the same time? How can I describe the emotions in my mind? While looking for the answers to these questions, the participants will practice observing their mind. Some part of what is going on in our mind is connected to our body. Mind and body work together.

7. Recapitulation

The facilitators will ask the participants what they can remember from what they have learned during the session.

8. End of the session

Wrap-up exercise: **Wave**

Objective: to reduce tension accumulated during the session; to improve group coordination

Instructions: The players will stand in a circle with their arms stretched out and palms up next to each other. From above this will look like a huge flower made of opened palms. One of the players will bend the fingers of one hand one at a time to make a fist and will continue with the second hand. The other players will follow suit until the palms of all the players turn into fists. Now the participants will open their fists again one finger at a time.

Indicators of achievement:

- The participants understand the definition of thought and give concrete examples.
- The participants understand the definition of sensation and give concrete examples.
- The participants understand the definition of emotion and give concrete examples.
- The participants follow the group rules.

Topic 6 – Core Beliefs



A belief is a strong thought that is always on somebody's mind regardless of the time when the individual is doing something. Each of the participants will learn the definition of belief and how a belief influences action. They will identify in particular, the beliefs that make them do dangerous things: “Nobody tells me what to do”. “Nobody controls me”.



OBJECTIVES:

- To understand what “belief” is;
- To observe several personal beliefs;
- To observe several core beliefs; and
- To follow the group rules.



MATERIALS:

small notebooks, pens, flipchart, markers, poster with group rules.



DURATION: 60 min.

Obs.: *This topic is very likely to require 3 group sessions. At the end of each session, the participants will recapitulate what they have talked about and the facilitators can give them homework to do for the next time: (1) to name 3 beliefs about money, (2) to name 3 beliefs about friendship and (3) to name 3 core beliefs. At the end of each session the participants will do a wrap-up exercise (one they have already done or know).*



SESSION:

1. Recapitulation of previous topics

The facilitators will ask each participant to read all the thoughts they wrote during the previous sessions. Then they will discuss the previous topics and talk about thoughts.

Helpful questions:

- How many kinds of thoughts are there? (words, images, sounds, persistent, clear, fragmented, ...)
- What kind of thoughts come to people's mind? What can thoughts be about?
- Are there thoughts that influence our actions? (thoughts lead to actions)
- Can you remember what thoughts you had when you woke up?

The facilitators will ask the participants to write what they are thinking about in their notebooks.



2. What are beliefs?

2.1 Role-play 1

The facilitators will ask the participants to role-play a scenario: Role-play the following scenario – one of you is a chef, the other is a new assistant chef. The chef thinks that the new assistant is lazy. How will the two behave? What thoughts do they have?

Instructions for a role-play

We need:

- An initial situation: the assistant chef has been given the task to cook a sauce for a meal;
- A conflict: the sauce did not come out as the chef wanted; and
- Two characters: the chef and the assistant chef.

What we want to show in our role-play is the discussion between the chef and the assistant chef and the final action. The players (participants) need to understand very well the characters, the situation, why the chef says that the sauce is not good, (is the sauce really bad?, who decides if a meal is good or not?), why does the assistant chef think that the sauce is good (because he has followed the recipe)? The facilitators will ask two volunteers to role-play the scenario. They will talk to the participants about the situation because they have to understand the situation and what is going on. ***The facilitators will not tell the participants what to say while role-playing; they will only ask "what do you think your character will do?, what do you think your character will say?"***

After the facilitators make sure that the players (participants) understand very well the situation, they show them the role-play area, give them the things they will need, ask the crowd to sit outside the role-play area and the role-play will begin.

The role-play must be simple and real. Most often the role-players use elements from their own experiences.

After the role-play is over, the facilitators will talk with the entire group about what has happened and, more importantly, why.

Helpful questions:

- What did each character say?
- What did each character do?
- Why did they answer that way?

The facilitators will write on the blackboard or flipchart both the thoughts observed by the players and the explanations, the answers to the questions "why did you answer like that?" or "why did you do that?"

A simple conflict like the one above may quickly lead to verbal or even physical violence. The moment the violence escalates, the facilitators will stop the role-play. This

is the behaviour that needs to be observed. Why does somebody respond violently to an accusation? What thought makes you think that the accusation is not fair? What thought makes you want to teach the blaming person a lesson?



2.2 Role-play 2

The facilitators will ask the participants to role-play a meeting with the probation officer. The minor is late for the scheduled meeting, and the probation officer does not like it. The role-players will follow the instructions above.

The facilitators will stop the role-play when necessary.

Helpful questions:

- Why are you late?
- What thoughts do you have about the meeting with the probation officer?
- What excuses did you think of?
- Why did you act/spoke like that?

The answers will be written on the flipchart.

2.3 Comparative analysis of the thoughts written on flipchart

Helpful questions:

- What do we notice in these lists of thoughts?
- Are there similarities?
- Are there differences?

The questions will first explore the differences to highlight the thoughts about the situation – sauce, recipe, chef, punishment, probation officer, traffic, laziness. Then the questions that will explore the similarities will follow in order to highlight the thoughts about authority: what the role-player thinks about the authority of the chef or probation officer.

Helpful questions:

- What are the most dangerous/risky thoughts from the written ones? Which of these thoughts have led to verbal or physical violence?

Conclusion: there are thoughts that can never be changed, thoughts about a certain thing, person or situation. These thoughts are called beliefs.

2.4 We have beliefs about everything. We use them to act.

Exercise:

The facilitator will say some thoughts that no situation can change and will ask the following questions, involving all the participants one by one.

a. What do I think about pizza?



I think that pizza is.....; therefore, if I have pizza, I will.....

b. What do I think about teachers?

I think that teachers are.....; therefore, if I have to go to school.....

c. I think that nobody tells me what to do; therefore, when somebody tells me what to do.....

d. I don't like that person; therefore, when I see him/her.....

f. I like that person; therefore, when I see him/her.....

e. Adults only say nonsense; therefore, when I hear them.....

Explanation: The beliefs are thoughts which work as internal rules and are specific to each individual. We recognise them because the wording of these rules implicitly or explicitly contains the words "always" or "never" or "all" or "nobody".

2.5 Definition of belief

The facilitator will write on the flipchart the definition of belief:

A belief is a permanent firm thought.

A belief is not a truth, but rather what an individual believes is true about something.

Exercise: Give examples of beliefs about chocolate, work, football, Moldova, money, life, honour, fruit, freedom, designer clothes, self, men, women, drugs, nature, and alcohol.

For facilitators

Some of these beliefs are more important than others. The facilitators will ask the participants to make a list of the most important beliefs, firm and fixed thoughts, without which an individual cannot succeed in life. The beliefs about self, life, the most important things in life, happiness are CORE BELIEFS.

3. Recapitulation

The facilitators will ask the participants to say what they can remember from what they have learned during the session.

Wrap-up exercise: **Same gestures in Reverse Order**

Purpose: to develop focused attention, cool down

Instructions: The players split up into pairs. The first player makes a couple of gestures. The partner will have to repeat the gestures and then make them in reverse order. Then the players switch roles.

Assignment:



Name 3 beliefs that are the most important to you.

Indicators of achievement:

- The participants use correctly the concept of thought and are able to identify their thoughts.
- The participants use correctly and observe their emotions and sensations, even if they are not asked to do it.
- The participants understand the difference between a thought and a belief.
- The participants understand the link between a belief and an action.
- The participants understand and identify correctly their core beliefs (at least one correct example).
- The participants can take part in a role-play.
- The participants follow the group rules.

A series of horizontal dotted lines extending across the right side of the page, providing space for writing answers to the assignment questions.



Topic 7 – Violent Situations and Behaviours

During this session, the participants will talk about the link between stimuli, thoughts, emotions, beliefs and violent actions.



OBJECTIVES:

- To observe the link between situations, thoughts, emotions and behaviours; and
- To follow the group rules.



MATERIALS:

small notebooks, pens, flipchart, markers, poster with group rules.



DURATION: 60 min.



SESSION:

1. Getting ready

Exercise 1: Walking with Closed Eyes

Purpose: body control; observation of sensations; correlation inside the group

Instructions: The players (participants) walk randomly around the room until the game leader (facilitator) says STOP. The players (participants) stop. The game leader (facilitator) asks them to close their eyes and walk straight ahead with their eyes closed carefully, to not bump into each other. The game leader (facilitator) says STOP again and asks the players (participants) to walk back with their eyes closed carefully, to not bump into each other. The game leader (facilitator) says STOP. The players (participants) stop. *If they are careful enough and walk slowly, they will feel when they get close to somebody and can stop. They have to stop when they no longer feel safe. They must always keep their eyes shut.*

Exercise 2: Blind Man in a Circle

Purpose: to exercise trusting the group by following the rules; to improve coordination inside the group

Instructions: The players (participants) stand in a circle. The game leader (facilitator) walks outside the circle and touches with his/her hand the shoulders of a player. The latter will have to close the eyes and walk through the circle with the eyes shut. After getting to the other side of the circle, one of the players will take him/her by the shoulders, direct towards the centre of the circle and make him/her walk again through the circle but in a different direction. The 'blind' player will be guided this way by the other players, so as not to bump into the players (participants) that form the circle.

For facilitators

The facilitator will make sure that the players that form the circle guide the blind players safely. If the players are in danger, the facilitators will stop the game and explain what rules were broken.

2. Dangerous thoughts

The facilitator will ask the participants what is a dangerous thought. Then they will ask the participants about how they perceive the connections in their minds.

2.1 Thoughts related to crime

Helpful questions:

- What was the link between thoughts and behaviour in exercise 2?
- Some thoughts can kill – can you find an example in the newspaper?
- Can you give examples of thoughts that made you commit an offence? These thoughts are called dangerous thoughts.
- Can you remember a movie that you watched where the characters had dangerous thoughts?

The facilitators will talk to the participants about the situations when they committed crimes. What happened before the crime? What happened after the crime? What were their thoughts about? What did they feel? What are their beliefs related to crime? Are crimes just “mistakes”? Was the crime just an accident? Did it happen only “once”?

2.1 Dangerous thoughts

The facilitators will ask the participants to give examples of dangerous thoughts.

Helpful questions:

- What thought is dangerous for a fat man?
- What thought is dangerous for a butcher?
- What thought is dangerous for a Formula 1 driver?
- What thought is dangerous for a plane pilot?
- What thought is dangerous for a nurse?

For facilitators

The right answers are: the food does not make him/her fat or this piece of chocolate has very few calories; I can look elsewhere when I cut up the meat; I can overtake the other car even if I have not changed my tires or I did not drink much; I can deal with the emergencies without asking for the doctor’s help.

3. Beliefs that lead to crime

Explanation: We will talk about the influence of thoughts on actions!



Helpful questions:

- Which of the participants has violent behaviour?
- Tell us some situations when you have violent behaviour.
- Why do you think you had a violent behaviour?
- What belief has made you act violently in that/those situation/situations?
- What do people think about fear?
- What does a real man mean?
- What is the link between violent behaviour and what you are saying that a real man is?

Helpful explanations for the participants:

- The beliefs, dangerous thoughts, and emotions lead to violent or criminal behaviours.

The facilitator will write the definition on the flipchart:

Thoughts, emotions, beliefs influence our behaviour, make us act, and do things.

4. Recapitulation

The facilitators will ask the participants to say what they remember from what they have learned during the session. In conclusion, the facilitator will stress the connection between beliefs, thoughts, emotions and actions, and will read the definition once again.

Assignment:

Give examples of two thoughts that are not dangerous.

Indicators of achievement:

- The participants can talk about the thoughts associated with crime.
- The participants identify correctly at least one dangerous thought related to crime.
- The participants identify correctly at least one belief that leads to crime.
- The participants follow the group rules.

Topic 8 – Observing Thoughts and Emotions That Lead to Crime



The violent behaviour mechanism activates so quickly that the minor does not manage to notice how it happens. What we offer the participants is a set of techniques to observe, intervene and acquire new behaviours that all together make the change process. The first step is to observe how mind and body work, often automatically, to respond to a situation involving an action that is a crime. The approach proposed by the programme has a simple logic, which is accessible to everyone, and does not require a high level of education from the participating minors.



OBJECTIVES:

- To understand what mind observation is; and
- To follow the group rules.



SESSION:

Exercise 1: Look at a Fixed Point

Purpose: to highlight attitude towards the power relationship

Instructions: The participants will split into pairs. One of the partners will hold his/her palm in front of the other's face at a distance of about 30 cm. The other partner will look at an imaginary fixed point in the partner's palm while the first one will be moving slowly. He/she has to keep the same distance while looking at that point.

The exercise explores the power relationships between the group members. We will ask them why they were or were not able to follow the rules of the exercise. What belief or firm thought influenced their reaction?

1. How do we observe our own mind?

To learn to observe our mind we will use the information from the previous sessions. We will recapitulate it with the group participants. What is the most important piece of information? The fact that your thoughts, emotions, beliefs determine your behaviour. If we want to change the behaviour, what do we have to change? We will explain that if we want to change our behaviour we need 3 elements:

- A. To change the dangerous thoughts and beliefs.
- B. To learn to manage our emotions that lead to criminal actions, such as fury, envy etc.
- C. To learn behaviours that will make us successful and follow the rules and the law.



To be able to change our thoughts, beliefs and manage our emotions we have to know them first. We will observe our mind and, especially, the mechanisms that activate automatically in it in certain situations, e.g. when somebody is offending us.

We will draw a head with a telescope and ask the participants to say what they think is inside. Then we will ask them to say what is in an individual's mind. There are also memories and fantasies or imagination in an individual's mind – this is the way each person imagines the actions that are not part of the reality or which may become real but they have not happened yet.

We will talk about the connection between the things that are in an individual's mind (thoughts, emotions, memories, images, etc.). Why does a person act in a certain manner? We will ask: What influences human mind?

We will accept all the correct answers given by the participants, e.g.: environment, what you have learned, family, TV, newspapers. We will want to focus on the answers that refer to those things in the human mind about which we can say that they “influence” how it works, e.g. memories, dreams, interests, human needs.

It is important to us to manage to see together with the participants that there is something in our mind which at least at the beginning of the process seems to be as difficult to control as the environment, school or family. We will see later that this thing is the automatic thinking that is triggered by the violence mechanism and criminal distortions.

Exercise: Millipede

Purpose: to develop cooperation and problem-solving skills

Instructions: The players split up into teams of 3, 4 or 5. Each team must form a fantastic animal sitting on the floor and touching it with a certain number of points – the palms, feet and bottom will be one point. Any other part of the players' bodies which lies on the floor will not be considered a point. The game leader will say how many points of the fantastic animal portrayed by each team should touch the floor. The players from each team have to make sure that they touch the floor with the number of points requested by the game leader while also touching each other. Depending on the size of the teams, the game leader will first say more points - 14, 17 or 19; the second time – fewer points; the third time – even fewer; and the last time – a small number of points, for instance 2 for a team of 3 people.

Assignment:

With what can we compare the human mind? (the answer has to be other than a car engine)

Indicators of achievement:

- The participants understand what mind observation means.
- The participants follow the group rules.
- The participants answer the questions.

Topic 9 – Thought Log



When something is happening in our body (a change in our usual condition), the laboratory tests can tell us which of the biochemical parameters have changed. These results are communicated to us by a laboratory assistant in the form a lab report. The doctor interprets the results and tells us what we need to do, e.g. to take calcium or phosphorus supplements, more sleep or exercise. Similarly, the thought log is a condition indicator. With the help of the thought log, we learn to observe our own mind, without the help of a doctor or laboratory assistant.

Maybe we know how we want it to work so we can do what we want to do, and not what SOMETHING IN OUR MIND that is unknown, and as we have seen, threatening, wants us to do. To know why our MIND does not work as we want it to work, we have to make a change, and to make that change, we need to know not only how we want our mind to look like, but also most importantly, what does not work in it. We will find out with the help of the thought log.



OBJECTIVES:

- To help the participants discover a practical way to observe what is in their minds;
- To understand the connection between the components of the thought log;
- To understand how thoughts, emotions, sensations and beliefs can be observed in the thought log; and
- To follow the group rules.



MATERIALS:

small notebooks, pens, flipchart, markers, Thought Log worksheets, group rules poster to be available during all the programme sessions, poster with principles of ethics.



DURATION: 60 min.



SESSION:

1. The facilitators will talk about the instrument called the THOUGHT LOG.

Definition	The thought log is a faithful record of the sequence of the thoughts, emotions, sensations triggered by an event, which lead to an action. It captures the hidden logic that shapes our actions.
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Structure of the thought log:



Vertical dotted lines for writing on the left side of the page.

EVENT:

(what happened)

THOUGHTS, EMOTIONS, IMAGES, SENSATIONS, BELIEFS:

(in the order in which they connect to each other in our mind)

ACTION:



There is no recipe for the thought log. It does not look like the medical record we have mentioned at the beginning of the session. If we take a close look, though, at the real flow of our thoughts, emotions and sensations, we will see the pattern!



The thought log defines what exactly leads from an external stimulus (EVENT) to the response action (ACTION), e.g. thoughts, emotions, images, sensations, in the sequence in which they occur in an individual's mind.

When we work with the participants, we have to make sure that they do not confuse EVENT with ACTION. There are often intermediary actions between the triggering event and the violent action. "It just happened" - the phrase the participants use so often when they talk about a crime they committed, refers to an event, to the mind's automatic reaction and the quick violent action, for instance, robbery ending with the killing of the victim - "the victim happened to be at home". These situations give us the best material to work with: we will ask the participants to observe how their minds worked during the "it happened" part of the event.

A THOUGHT LOG is a tool used to observe the thoughts, emotions, sensations and images that have led from EVENT to ACTION.

Definition of EVENT: is the objective reality that contains the stimulus or the "challenge" that makes the minor act and the factual context in which this stimulus occurs (the minor wants to enter a place and is not allowed; the minor wants to drive a car that does not belong to him/her).

Definition of ACTION: in the thought log, we are interested in actions that are the minor's response to a stimulus (the minor starts fighting, steals if he/she cannot have something, takes pills trying to avoid a more violent action).

The thoughts, emotions and sensations will be recorded in the thought log in the sequence in which they occur. We have to insist that the participants describe each element as accurately as possible, we do not want to have a story or a literary summary, e.g. "I thought that I would cope with any kind of work!" "I thought I would succeed!". The thoughts have to be written in the form that they came into the minor's head, e.g. "Drat, I'll do it!", "I'm not stupid!", "What?" Hate! (image) Knife! (feeling excitement) "Now!"

On the other hand, the participants must not be forced to say what we think is on their mind. They are the only ones who know what is on their mind. We can have reservations about how accurately they have formulated their thoughts into words, but even so, our job is to help them find that wording which is the closest to the thoughts that popped up into their minds at that moment. We will not tell them that it is not true. We will use the following questions: how was the thought you are telling about or what did you see in that very moment in your mind? The spirit of the questions will be "Could you please be more specific?", instead of "No, this is not true, what you are saying is not good!".

It is very important to start with the observation of the mind, observation of a segment of the mind on a simple conflict situation, about which we also know something, and which is not necessarily criminal. The minors will always tend to hide their dangerous and aggressive thoughts and those thoughts which minimi-



se the victim, which contain offensive words and/or images of severe violence. Remember that the participants were always punished when they said the truth to people like us who are not part of their world. This is why they will not say what they see in their minds very easily. To maintain a working relationship with them and keep the communication channels open, we will start with a less confrontational situation, e.g. I have run out of cigarettes and I already owe some money; I want to quit smoking but all my friends are smokers; I am waiting for an important call, but it turns out that I have lost my phone.

That is how we will work: we will take a situation that is very common in everyday life.

Situation: It is evening. Some friends have come by. I have only one TV set - 3 people want to watch 3 different channels.

What will happen? Who decides what channel they will watch?

The thought log belongs to the one who is unhappy with the decision. (If the example is not realistic, we will ask the participants to say another conflict situation).

How to fill in a thought log

1. We will ask the participants to write the EVENT. The statement will have all the key elements: in our case - there is only one TV set and all the 3 friends want to watch different TV channels. Example of **wrong wording**:

- 3 people are watching 3 different TV channels;
- 3 people are watching TV;
- I was watching TV.

Examples of **right wording**:

- There was only one TV set and all three of us wanted to watch different TV channels.
- I was watching TV and my friend changed the channel without saying anything.

These statements have both the conflict and, in the case of the second wording, the thing that provoked the minor.

It is ok if they find it difficult to write down what is on their mind.

2. We will write separately the detail which they think led to the violent action: "He took the remote control from me".

3. We will try to write on paper what came to his/her mind, in the sequence which those things occurred: ... I see an object (remote control) ..., I hate him..., I have to take it back..., I feel that I can take it back..., I take it back.

4. We will use the definitions the participants learned during the previous sessions, and ask them to identify the THOUGHTS, EMOTIONS and SENSATIONS in

what they have written. We must not force them and insist to have a complete thought log at the first try. Even if there is only one correctly identified thought in the first exercise, it is very precious. The thought log for the situation above:



- ...I see an object... (remote control)
- ...I hate him...- EMOTION
- ...I have to take it back...- THOUGHT
- ...I feel I can take it back...- EMOTION
- ... I take it back...- ACTION

Regarding "I feel I can take it" we will have to talk to the participants in the future every time when he/she speaks about this emotion - that he/she can do something. This is a crucial element of the criminal thinking pattern and of the violent behaviour mechanism.

Exercise: **Walk On**

Objective: to improve concentration, cooperation

Instructions: The players walk around the room and when the game leader says STOP they all stand still. Only one player can walk; the others have to stand motionless. They will not speak to each other. Having made several steps, the player stops and another player starts walking. The players are not allowed to talk to each other. Two players are not allowed to start walking at the same time. If two players start to walk at the same time, the game will start again.

Assignment:

Each participant chooses a conflict situation and tries to complete a thought log.

The facilitators will do as many sessions as will be required until each participant has two properly completed thought logs.

Indicators of achievement:

- The participants recognise their thoughts.
- The participants recognise their emotions.
- The participants recognise their sensations.
- The participants recognise their beliefs.
- The participants completed properly at least 2 realistic thought logs.
- The participants follow the group rules.



Topic 10 – Anger Diary

“I don't know what anger/nervousness is. Because it has never caused me trouble. Last week a friend told me that I am messy and that somebody always has to clean up my mess. This is not true! Not true!!! And if he goes on telling me that, he's gonna have to deal with me”. Anger/nervousness has a negative impact on us and also on the ones surrounding us, especially on our relationships with the others, but we are not always aware of these things. Anger has a direct effect on the human body (blood pressure increases and oxygen supply to tissues decreases, preventing the normal functioning of the vital organs – heart, brain, and weakening the body's resistance and immune system, leading to illnesses), and when it comes out it destroys the relationships with other people. Anger will be explored during this session on two dimensions: the anger pattern and the anger diary. Observing how the strong emotion “anger” leads to criminal actions and activities is an essential step towards change.



OBJECTIVES:

- To identify the anger pattern;
- To draw the anger map; and
- To follow the group rules.



MATERIALS:

small notebooks, pens, flipchart, markers, Anger Map and Anger Consequences worksheets, a group rules poster to be available during all the programme sessions, and a poster with the principles of ethics



DURATION: 60 min.



SESSION:

Exercise 1: **Yes and No**

Purpose: to experiment *in situ* with conflict-related emotions

Instructions: One of the partners will always say YES and only YES, and the other one will always say NO until one of them wins.

1. Have any of you managed to win? What did you feel when you lost?

Discussion: We will ask the players to provide a short bulletin of thoughts. Were there nervousness or anger in it?

Exercise 2: **Fortunately, Unfortunately**

Purpose: to practice alternative thinking



Instructions: The players will play in pairs. One says “fortunately.....”, the other answers “unfortunately.....”

e.g.:

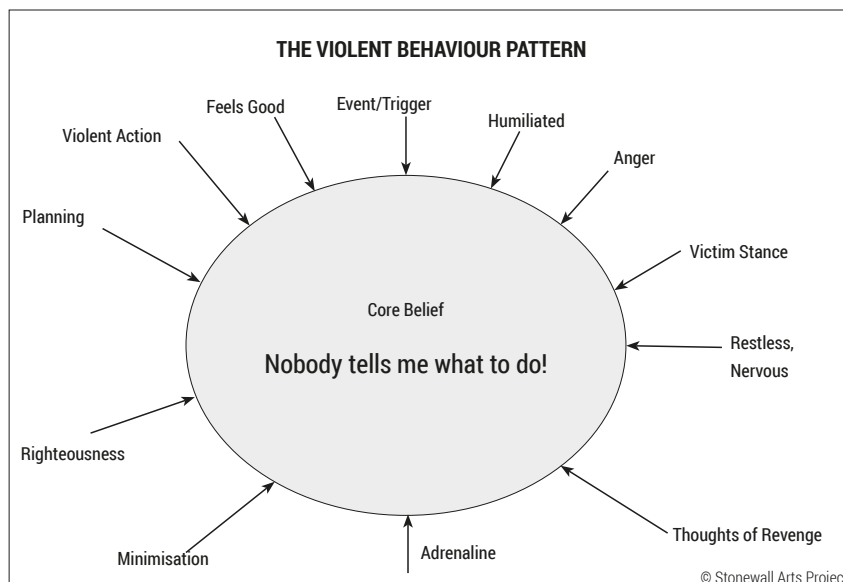
- Fortunately, it is Friday and the weekend is near.
- Unfortunately, we have to work on Saturday.
- Fortunately, we don't have to work on Sunday.
- Unfortunately, your friend is leaving for the mountains tonight.
-

The reasons why something is fortunate or unfortunate must be real, and have to be connected with the partner's statement.

2. Analysis of thought logs

All the participants have the thought logs they have completed earlier. We will ask them what emotions from the thought logs can be associated with violence. We will split the group into 2 and each smaller group will add other emotions that can be associated with violence to the list. Then we will join the two lists together; we will write the resulting list on the blackboard or flipchart and talk about the connection between the emotions written on the blackboard. We can expect that anger, nervousness or another word for that emotion will be mentioned most often, and we will decide with the group what word you will all use from now on for observation purposes. This word has to be the equivalent for ANGER in order to render the deep emotion that comes before the violent action (we will further use the word ANGER). We will talk about the trouble caused by these emotions.

3. Does anger have a pattern?



We will talk to the participants about this. We will look at the thought logs to check if there is a pattern - if the same thing determines the same reaction. To do this, we will use the model below.



4. How do I know that I am getting angry? How do I know that I am going to be violent? How do I become aware of that?

Violence is a response to some stimulus that our mind interprets as a threat, a danger. Many of us learn from adults how to manage this automated response and act according to our own interests to achieve the best results. The adolescents can also learn from adults how to manage their anger. To control an automated response, they first have to learn to observe it. There are situations that are always a source of annoyance, anger and violence.

5. Anger Map: When do I get angry?

We will ask the participants to identify the situations when they get angry and/or nervous regardless of the time of the day or body condition, e.g. when a school mate insults them, when somebody talks to them in an authoritative tone and gives them orders, when they see a friend getting off an expensive car. Each participant will have to make a comprehensive list of such situations.

6. We will ask each participant to think about why they get angry in these situations. For this exercise, we will use the worksheet below:

I get angry/mad every time I...	Why?



And:

Role-Play

For the role-play, we will need:

- An initial situation: Maria wants to go to the disco.
- A conflict: her mother does not let her go to the disco.
- Two characters: Maria and her mother.

What we want to role-play is the discussion between Maria and her mother and the final action. The players need to understand very well:

- the characters and the situation;
- why Maria wants to go to the disco (for instance because she can only meet a boy that she likes very much there);
- why her mother does not want to let her go (for instance because last week a girl was raped on the driveway behind the discotheque).

Once we make sure that the players have understood these things, we show them the role-play area, give them the things they will need, ask the viewers to sit down and let the role-players improvise.

The improvisation has to be simple and real. Most of the time, role-players use elements from their own experience.

Do not tell the role-players what to say, do or feel. We cannot give them directions because they are not actors.

When the role-play is over, the group will talk about what has happened, and most importantly, why and what could have happened, and what are the consequences of the actions we have seen.

This technique is best suited for the programme module that aims to develop skills. When children role-play, they engage their real social skills. After the discussions, the facilitators can ask the participants to role-play the same scenario, but another behaviour that will bring a much better solution for them. We discuss if it ever happens in life. If not, why not. We will tell them when it can happen and what the benefits of a controlled behaviour are. We use everything that we have taught them during the sessions dedicated to prevention of dangerous thinking and fixing of distortions.

8. Anger management

To manage to change, the participants need to know what they need to do in order to stop the anger pattern. This will involve three steps:

1. STOP!

The first step can be made even before the situation that will activate the anger mechanism/pattern will take place. Being aware of the situations that cause anger reactions will help the minor to say STOP before a dangerous situation will

take place. He/she can also say STOP when the anger mechanism/anger has just activated and the level of emotion is not very high, and it is easier to cope with the pressure of the emotional response and the automated cognitive structure. It is difficult to say STOP when the level of emotion is close to outrage and the head is full of thoughts about a violent action.



2. MOVE AWAY!

This step involves reducing the energy fuelled by emotions, reducing the anger. The most useful techniques to do this are:

- moving away from the dangerous place;
- focusing on something else than the source of annoyance;
- focusing on self-control; and
- use of techniques that help focus on the energy balance of the body.

3. THINK!

This step involves appealing to control thoughts (recalling and using them), to the reasons to make an action to be nonviolent or to the thoughts that originate in the distortions that have been fixed (intervention thoughts).

Assignment:

The assignments for the Anger Diary sessions will be to complete thought logs or the two tables after each session.

Indicators of achievement:

- The participants understand the Anger Diary instrument.
- The participants can observe and describe their anger patterns.
- The participants understand how to manage anger following the three-step technique.
- The participants follow the group rules.



Topic 11 – Identification of Distortions

Distortions are components of the automated response structures to the external stimuli. They form in our mind cognitive “shortcuts”, quick, economic reactions, which double the reactions of the emotional brain: the “fight/ flight/ freeze” response. Distortions can be seen most easily in the core beliefs and in the frequency with which these core beliefs appear in the criminal behaviour patterns. However, distortions can be seen in all the elements of verbal and nonverbal behaviour and in the frequency with which these action strategies come to mind.



OBJECTIVES:

- To understand what distortion is;
- To identify own distortions; and
- To follow the group rules.



MATERIALS:

small notebooks, pens, flipchart, markers, handouts with the programme topics (see below) (as an alternative they can be read by facilitators or written on flipchart), handouts (for participants) and poster with Group Rules (to be available during all the group sessions), and the participation agreement that has to be signed by each participant.



DURATION: 60 min.



SESSION:

Exercise 1: **Vampire**

Purpose: to practice the skills for asking for help and empathy

Instructions:

a) One of the players will be the vampire, and the others will be people. The vampire can turn a player into a vampire by touching his/her left shoulder. The person that becomes a vampire will try to turn other people into vampires. The game will end when all the people become vampires.

b) We will play the game once again with adding one new rule: the people can be saved if they form pairs and hold each other’s hands until they count to three.

Exercise 2: **Vampire in a Circle**

Instructions: The players will form a circle. One of the players will be the vampire, and the others will be people. The vampire is in the middle of the circle and can turn a player into a vampire by looking at that player, getting slowly closer to him/

her and touching his/her shoulder. The vampire can be prevented from doing it: the victim can be saved if and when he/she looks at some other player, the latter tells the former's name. When a player becomes a vampire he/she goes to the middle of the circle and the game goes on.



1. Can we say that, while playing these games, some of the participants have had behaviours that are 'typical' to them or we have expected?

We will tell the participants that each of us acts in the same way in similar situations so that we can expect certain behaviour from somebody that we know. We will ask them to name some typical behaviour.

2. A behavioural style reflects a thinking style.

Definition of distortion:

The logic category that shapes the core beliefs and criminal thinking, the thoughts about oneself, the criminal justifications.

Distortion can be seen in all the behaviours and can be identified through repetition and frequency.

3. A few distortions

We will talk to the participants about several main distortions that shape the criminal behavioural style. They will have to write them down in their notebooks and remember.

- Power and Control...

...when you really like controlling others, you feel like a king and all the others are weak, you do not let others have control because you would feel humiliated, you are afraid of being controlled by others...

"No boss, no woman will tell me what to do!"

- Criminal Pride ...

... when you insist that your anti-social deeds make you special and strong, and when you see any challenge as a threat for your image; you will not give up, you believe you are the main character, you are over-sensitive to anything that could be a humiliation...

- Uniqueness ...

... nobody can understand you, you are above the rules, you expect a special consideration, you believe you have super-special skills and that you can see in one second what takes a lifetime for others to understand; you look at mediocrity from above.



• Victim Stance ...

When you think you are the victim of others, authorities, system: "...these things happen to me only, you see only me, only I am the victim, this is not my fault, it is other people's fault, it is the society to be blamed, I am just a victim".

• Criminal Energy

... you feel full of energy and excited when you are going to do something violent (steal, fight, teach somebody a lesson), but you are completely lacking energy and eagerness when you have to do pro-social things (go to school, attend classes).

• Fragmentation

You tell the others: "... You are my best friend. If somebody causes you trouble just let me know and I will deal with him myself!" ...but you immediately add: "I need some money...give me all your money...!"

... you flatter people and rob them; you tell them you love them and care about them, or that you like them very much, while robbing them and buying drugs or alcohol.

• Lack of Empathy ...

Means ... to not put yourself in the place of others, to care about your needs only: "I could die tomorrow; I need some attention, more than they do ...!"

... you do not think about the bad things you did to other people, you do not see that you did something wrong to other people: "I was hurt, I am the victim, to hell with the rest! ..."

• All or Nothing Thinking ...

... you see only the extremes, positive or negative, black or white, only what is absolutely good is good and any small flaw makes a thing bad; you do not see the positive elements ... Everything must be the way you want it, yielding in a small issue means defeat...

4. How to identify own distortions

Distortions are like hidden levers, like an engine put in a nice and compact body of a Ferrari Testarossa: you see it clean and polished on the surface, but you do not know what is inside it.

Like cars, we can understand its parts if we look at how they work.

We often notice the distortion before the minors do. Do not conflict with it, it is real. We will find a way to help the minor observe his/her behaviour and its meaning. We will analyse the thought logs together to see the logical link between distortion and belief. Both result in actions. Criminal actions most often lead to conviction. The minor does not want to be sentenced again. Fixing the distortion is a way NOT to get into the system again or even to prison in the future. Distortion is in thoughts and even if a participant cannot see it, the other group mates could see what is happening there and identify it.



(picture taken from www.auto.ferrari.com)

Indicators of achievement:

- The participants understand what distortion is.
- The participants can detect distortion with the help of thought logs and anger diary.
- The participants follow the group rules.

Handwriting practice area consisting of multiple horizontal dotted lines for writing.



Topic 12 – Fixing Distortions

Distortions have the categorical nature of final sentences. “If I do not do it perfectly, that means that I did not do it at all”. This distortion (all or nothing thinking) makes an individual believe that a 99% achievement is equal to ZERO. The consequence of this distortion on the individual is the stress caused by almost continuous dissatisfaction, fatigue and lack of social connections because of lack of time - an almost anti-social behaviour, which can be used however, for a pro-social cause. Personal comfort, balance, and finally, satisfaction in life are heavily jeopardised. What to do?



OBJECTIVES:

- To understand the role of a distortion for a balanced life without crime;
- To understand the process of fixing distortions; and
- To follow the group rules.



MATERIALS:

small notebook, pens, flipchart, markers, group rules poster to be available during all the group sessions, and poster with the principles of ethics.



DURATION: 60 min.



SESSION:

Exercise 1: Seasons

Purpose: to observe the emotions not related to crime.

Instructions: The game leader will talk with the players about the four seasons of the year, asking them to say what seasons they like, and how seasons make them feel. Then each of the players will freeze in a position representing his/her favourite season and mood or feeling.

The players will split up into pairs. One of the partners will “carve” the most disliked season and the most unpleasant mood or feeling caused by that season on the other partner. After that the player will try to do this once again but blindfolded. We will notice that when blindfolded, the player is no longer able to do this.

1. What are the prerequisites for a change?

We will discuss the results of the exercise together. As long as we do not see what we need to change (the initial position of the second player), we cannot make the

change (the wanted position). Similarly, to be able to fix our distortions, we first have to see them.



2. Fixing distortions

● **Criminal Pride**

How to fix: understand the things that you can be really proud of, reconsider what being a man and respect means; give in, and accept others' will; choose pro-social ways to make other people respect you, e.g. to be appreciated for what you can do (other than crime and do these things without making others fear).

Assignments that help fix the distortion:

- Make a list of the things that make you feel really proud; and
- Where should I give in and where not?

■ **Power and Control**

How to fix: Can you control yourself? What are the things in your life that you can control? If you want power, it must be achieved honestly through effort, training, tasks, and achievements.

Assignments that help fix the distortion:

- Step 1 - how many times a day do you try to control other people? Take one day and make a list of the situations when you wanted or tried to control somebody that day;
- Step 2 - put yourself in the place of the person you tried to control; and
- Step 3 - what can you tell yourself to stop controlling others?

■ **Uniqueness**

How to fix: accept that you are just a human being like all the others; accept that what works for others, also works for you; you can learn responsibility from normal people: what you can get, hard work, achievements that are important to you and to others and self-respect.

Assignments that help fix the distortion:

- Observe and write down during the following week the thoughts that suggest that you deserve special consideration, the situations when you think you are not understood;
- Observe and write down during the following week the moments when you think "I am better than all the other people"; and
- Choose a normal person and write 3 things you can learn from him/her.

■ **Criminal Energy**

How to fix: I have energy for many things that I do; I wake up, go out, talk to people; but these are things that I do not like and this is why I also do not like the energy

A series of horizontal dotted lines for writing notes, positioned to the right of each text block.



that I have for these things; I only like the energy that I have for criminal actions, adrenaline.

Assignments that help fix the distortion:

- Work out for 10 minutes, run, play basketball during one week and write down your body sensations when you do these things;
- write down the difference between your sensations when you work out and the ones caused by adrenaline; and
- make a list of the effects of training and the effects of criminal behaviour. What do you prefer?

The participants will have to do these assignments **at home**.

Indicators of achievement:

- The participants can recognise at least 3 distortions.
- The participants are willing to fix the distortions.
- The participants do the assignments they received to fix distortions.

Topic 13 - Learning Skills



Pro-social behaviour is a way to relate to others based on two essential conditions: to respect oneself and own needs and respect others by following the rules. Although it sounds simple, in daily life it is very difficult for each of us to maintain the balance between personal satisfaction and the obligation to follow rules and laws which often requires that we lose something. A set of thinking and social-emotional skills help us live a better and safe life. The minors we are working with can learn these skills, in spite of their serious handicap caused by the fact that they started the learning process very late and being in a crisis situation (conviction).



OBJECTIVES:

- to learn about social-emotional skills;
- to learn pro-social behaviour alternatives; and
- to follow the group rules.



MATERIALS:

small notebooks, pens, flipchart, markers, I - Messages.... worksheets, Problem-Solving Steps handouts, group rules poster to be available during all the group sessions, and poster with the principles of ethics.



DURATION: 60 min.



SESSION:

1. Alternatives in anger

The facilitators will talk to the participants about alternative behaviours when they feel anger.

GOOD STRATEGIES when you have a conflict with someone:

- tell me how you feel (tell somebody how you feel);
- I think you could...;
- find a solution together;
- be fair to all;
- what if...;
- to be willing to solve the problem;
- to listen to what others want and feel;
- to say what bothers you;
- attack the problem not the person; and

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- think about more solutions;

Add other good strategies:

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STRATEGIES THAT ARE NOT GOOD:

- to grumble;
- to ask questions when the time is wrong;
- to say offensive words;
- to blame others;
- to refer to past things;
- to not listen to what you are being told;
- to say humiliating things to others;
- to hit or threaten;
- to invent excuses; and
- to get even with someone.

Add other strategies that are not good:

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-
-

2. Using the I-messages

The I-messages are messages that make it clear that this is the point of view, the wish, the intention, the decision of the person that speaks and that it is not imposed on others. This wording helps to keep a conflict under control.



4. Thinking about alternatives (lateral thinking)

Definition

To define lateral thinking, we will compare it with vertical thinking. Vertical thinking involves reasoning. Lateral thinking does not focus on the "cause-effect" principle, or what is "logical" or realistic. It has no restrictions or barriers; it does not judge; the most well-known form of lateral thinking is fantasy.

It is not easy to think out of the box of our logical frameworks, disregarding logic and reasoning. However, this kind of thinking is useful and necessary. Logical frameworks only offer us what we know or what is old. The world system is evolving and what is logical and good at one point, although still logical after that, might not be good because it may turn out to be inappropriate to the context. We need to discover new things and we can only do this with the help of lateral thinking.

Lateral thinking offers us very many answers to one issue, answers which we do not know if they are good or bad. With the help of reasoning, we will identify which of these new solutions are good.

There are some bottlenecks, however, that prevent the development of lateral thinking. If we want to use our lateral thinking efficiently, we need to be able to recognise, detect and overcome them.

Bottlenecks

■ Assumptions

Definition: the presumption that elementary ideas are true; cliché, scheme; what is taken to be true although it is not known for certain.

For comparison, a "prejudice" is a preconceived and often mistaken opinion, an idea usually formed without knowledge.

Assumptions are intrinsic: we understand that a situation is as it is and because the situation as a rule has certain characteristics, we assume that in the case of X, it has the same characteristics and we do not check if it is so or not.

Prejudice is extrinsic, rendered by an observer without knowing the situation.

■ Judgement

Definition: a fundamental logical form expressed in a sentence used to state or deny something; the processes we involve to evaluate and give the verdict if something is true or not.

This process is based on the already existing ideas and, by evaluating all the new ideas and giving the verdict if they are true or not, good or not, it almost cancels lateral thinking.

■ Dominant idea and essential factors

Definition: a dominant idea is the main idea that shapes the way we look at a situation; it is often present, but undefined.



Definition: an essential factor is an element of the situation that always needs to be taken into account regardless of the way we look at the situation; an essential factor is a key point.

How to overcome bottlenecks

- *Non-acceptance of assumptions;*

Examples:

- You put sugar in your cup of coffee, but it does not dissolve. How come?

- *Suspension of judgement;*

- *Identification and changing of the dominant idea and essential factors; and*

- *Fragmentation of previous operations.*

5. Pro-social problem solving

Definition:

A PROBLEM is a discrepancy between the current state of affairs and a desired one.

PROBLEM SOLVING is the process of finding a solution to a problem.

We can also say that we are getting closer to the desired state of affairs.

Problem solving steps

a. PROBLEM IDENTIFICATION AND DEFINITION

- We realise that there is a problem.
- We name it.
- We gather information.
- We define and redefine the problem.

I realise I have a problem. I think: what is my problem? I will think about it, I will think about only one problem.

b. SEPARATION BETWEEN PROBLEM AND POSITION

- We accept our feelings.
- We identify positions.

When I think about the problem I feel strong emotions and feelings. What feelings? Why? What do I want? I want the feelings to go away so I can think about the problem. To achieve something: an object, a relationship, a favour, any change for the better for me.



c. GENERATION OF ALTERNATIVE SOLUTIONS

How to do this?

d. EVALUATION OF SOLUTIONS

- i. We make the link between means and purposes.
- ii. We anticipate the consequences.
- iii. We look ahead: we look at the problem from different angles.

e. MAKING THE DECISION

At this point, our job is to make sure that they understand every single step of the problem-solving process and explain why we need to go through all of these steps.

6. Negotiation

The best way of addressing a conflict successfully and in a pro-social manner is to consider it a problem. Having dealt with the problem, we put an end to the conflict. In negotiation, the most important step is to separate our position (expressed in beliefs) from the problem (I need...).

Indicators of achievement:

- The participants understand the problem-solving steps.
- The participants use the problem-solving steps.
- The participants think about consequences.
- The participants seek and find alternative answers.
- The participants use assertive communication.
- The participants follow the group rules.

MODULE 3

MY CHANGE

Topic 14 - What does it mean to want to change?



During this session, we will talk about making the change. It is expected that the participants have already started doing it during the group sessions by following the rules, during exercises or even by trying to have pro-social behaviours outside the group sessions. We will also ask the participants if they want to make the change in their everyday lives and make a coherent change plan.



OBJECTIVES:

- To become aware of where they are in the change process;
- To decide to make the change; and
- To follow the group rules.



MATERIALS:

small notebooks, pens, flipchart, markers, Current Situation – Future Objective worksheets, the Current Situation – Future Objective worksheet completed at the beginning of the programme, group rules poster to be available during all the programme sessions, and poster with the principles of ethics.



DURATION: 60 min.



SESSION:

We will do the exercise that we did at the beginning of the programme and will ask the participants to write in the worksheet below:

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Current Situation – Future Objective

	CURRENT SITUATION		FUTURE OBJECTIVE
Write or draw 3 difficult situations or problems in your lives that you would like to change.	Write or draw 3 objectives you would like to achieve in the future.		

After they are done, we will compare the two worksheets (the one completed at the beginning of the programme and this one) and analyse the differences. This is a very good observation tool for all the participants. Even the most uninterested participants are often surprised to find out that they have changed just because they went through a learning process.



At the end of the session, we will ask which of them wants to attend the next module.

Exercises to help complete the worksheet above:

Picture

Purpose: safe representation of conflict situations and strong emotions

Instructions: There is a chair in front of the group of players. One volunteer will sit on it. The game leader will ask the volunteer to sit in a position that describes an emotion, for instance boredom, impatience, relaxation, and freeze like a statue. Then the game leader will ask the other players to say what they see. The game leader asks the other players to sit next to the volunteer in a position that shows their attitude to the character(s) in the picture they see. All the people in the picture should be motionless until all the players get in the group picture.

Circle of Truth

Purpose: to develop the ability to express oneself

Instructions: The facilitator will draw a circle on the floor and will ask the player who stands in the middle of the circle to say something that is TRUE about him/herself. The player in the middle of the circle will have one minute to speak. All the players will go into the middle of the circle one by one.

The Last One Wins

Purpose: to develop the concentration and emotional self-regulation skills

Instructions: The game leader draws two long parallel lines in the room. The distance between them will not exceed 30 cm. All the players line up at the start line. They must always keep moving but as slowly as possible. The winner will be the one who is the last to come to the finish line.

Group Counting

Purpose: to improve group coordination

Instructions: The group has X members. The players will count one by one from 1 to X following the rules below:

- each player will pronounce one number just once;
- the numbers will be counted in ascending order;
- anyone can say the number that comes next, but the players are not allowed to negotiate who will be the next one; and



- two players are not allowed to say the same number at the same time, otherwise the exercise will start again.

The exercise will end when the counting is right and done to the end.

Analysis of the two completed worksheets. The facilitators will say how the present behaviours shape the future. Is there a difference between the two worksheets? Is there something in the future that they can achieve with the help of what they have learned during the group sessions? Can the change, giving up anti-social behaviours have an important role in shaping the future?

Who wants to change?

Indicators of achievement:

- The participants are determined to make the change or leave the programme.
- The participants follow the group rules.

MODULE 4

RELAPSE PREVENTION PLAN – PROBLEM AREAS



This is the most flexible module in the programme and it can be structured depending on the characteristics of each participant, on how quickly they learn, on their relationships with the facilitators, the support from home, school or community. The topics that will follow will cover the stages, working tools and issues the minor will have to learn together with the facilitator. The main tool is the relapse prevention plan.

Another tool that can be used during the following sessions is:

Pro-Social Problem-Solving Plan

Situation	
What I want	
Obstacle	
Problem	
Separation between the position and the problem	
Possible solutions	
Solution analysis	

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Topic 15 - Authority: School



Often the minors do not know how to behave in their relationship with the authorities - they have to follow the rules, but they also want to have the chance to get at least a little bit of what they want or need.

RISKY SITUATION: AUTHORITY - SCHOOL

You are at school. Usually you get bored during the classes. What situations are dangerous for you?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

We will ask the minors to give us examples of situations when they may feel provoked by the authorities and commit an offence, either violence or theft.

We will role-play all the situations they will mention. What behaviours are inappropriate? What behaviours are appropriate? When the minors do not know how to react, the facilitators will show or help them to recall the appropriate behaviour, or the thinking and the self-control skills they need in such situations. The minors will write the solutions down.

Topic 16 - Family

RISKY SITUATION: FAMILY

In the process of reintegration, you will need your family's support. What situations in your family are dangerous for you, what will make you commit other offences?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

We will ask the minors to name those situations in the family which might make them commit offences again. We will not suggest any answer to them. However,



what they tell us has to be true, and taken from their reality. These issues are often the most painful for minors, and we must have a lot of patience and understanding.

We will role-play the situations they will mention. What behaviours are inappropriate? What behaviours are appropriate? When the minors do not know how to react, the facilitators will show or help them to recall the appropriate behaviour, or the thinking and the self-control skills they need in such situations. The minors will write the solutions down.

Topic 17 - Money and Work

Many convicted minors dropped out of school and make a living by committing offences, or using various "schemes" or doing seasonal or unskilled works, without having an employment contract. They learned to earn some money this way and work just a little - just when they feel like working. These children can start building their pro-social future by returning to school. However, school is not the only issue that needs to be addressed. If the minors decide to work, they have to learn what labour market means, and what having a legal job and paying taxes means. To make sure that the money they will receive under an official employment contract will be enough, they also have to learn to manage it wisely instead of wasting it on gambling, entertainment and other inappropriate things. Learning and work will help them stay away from prison, and earn more and more money.

RISKY SITUATION: MONEY - WORK

You have no money. You want to buy things, but you do not want to beg your parents or other people to give money to you. You do not want to account for every penny you spend, and you want to be independent. What risky situations do you notice here?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

We will role-play the situations they will mention. What behaviours are inappropriate? What behaviours are appropriate? When the minors do not know how to react, the facilitators will show or help them to recall the appropriate behaviour, or the thinking and the self-control skills they need in such situations. The minors will write the solutions down.

Topic 18 - Friends and Free Time



Often the group of friends and the free time spent together with them is a big risky situation because of Criminal Pride and Criminal Energy distortions.

RISKY SITUATION: FRIENDS - FREE TIME

It is Sunday. You have nothing to do. You go out with your friends. What risky situations are there for you?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

We will role-play all the situations they will mention. What behaviours are inappropriate? What behaviours are appropriate? When the minors do not know how to react, the facilitators will show or help them to recall the appropriate behaviour, or the thinking and the self-control skills they need in such situations. The minors need to learn alternative ways to spend their free time. They will write the solutions down.

Topic 19 - Alcohol and Substance Use

This topic has two levels: if the minors are dependent on substances (alcohol, drugs), while in this programme they should have completed a rehabilitation programme until this point in time. If they have completed a rehabilitation programme, relapse prevention will also be a part of this problem area.

RISKY SITUATION: ALCOHOL AND SUBSTANCE USE

You have been clean for 2 months. What risky situations are there for you?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____



We will role-play all the situations they will mention. What behaviours are inappropriate? What behaviours are appropriate? When the minors do not know how to react, the facilitators will show or help them to recall the appropriate behaviour, or the thinking and the self-control skills they need in such situations. The minors will write the solutions down.

Topic 20 – My Relapse Prevention Plan

The facilitators will have to talk to each participant individually about their relapse prevention plans. At the end of each session, the group will get together again to assess the progress and failures. The stages of the process will be the following:

Making the following lists:

1. Comprehensive list of problems – we will use the 5 problem areas.
2. Comprehensive list of risky situations - starting with those with minimum risk to the situations and with maximum risk for each problem area.

Each participant will define for him/herself what a minimum and maximum risky situation is depending on what they think they can control; the risky situations that are too difficult to manage alone will also be on the list.

3. The comprehensive list of the new behaviours the participants want to adopt. We will want to see here the connection between the identified problems and the desired behaviours.
4. A comprehensive list of resources
 - a. personal resources: learned skills, self-control, the ability to observe own behaviour and thinking;
 - b. personal resources: pro-social beliefs that will help the participants to control themselves/ control their behaviours;
 - c. the institutions and the people they can turn to for help; and
 - d. the list of specific skills the participants will need to learn in order to be able to develop a new behaviour (pro-social).
5. Setting a goal for the future:
 - e. the list of objectives leading to that goal; and
 - f. the list of the actions the participants will be able and will have to take towards adopting a pro-social lifestyle;

Strategy implementation



6. INTERVENTION STRATEGY

Compulsory steps:

- To avoid the places where risky situations can happen;
- To avoid the people that create risky situations;
- To develop relationships with the people who do not create risky situations;
- To keep track of the resources on the list and make sure there is easy and quick access to them;
- To make sure there is a simple strategy for possible relapses.

NOTE!!! Relapse is part of this plan. Since we have worked with the "All or Nothing" distortion and fixed it, a relapse will not mean that all that work has been in vain. We will search into the causes of relapse, complement the lists of risks and resources and will work with distortions. We will learn the lessons and continue the relapse prevention plan.

Example of a relapse prevention plan:

1. I do not go to places where I can be in risky situations (pub, group of friends, football match, women);
2. I need to have a list of places where I am safe (pro-social); I may not like those places very much, but I will be safe there; I need a person I could meet with and who can help me when I hate the places where I am safe; I need this person in the first 6 months, after that I need to get used to the places where I am safe and learn to have fun there.
3. I have to keep all my beliefs that make me think that I am weak under control if I want to follow the relapse prevention plan successfully; I am not less of a man and I do not hide if I do not go out with my friends for a drink; this is very difficult for me and if I can do that, it means that I am very brave and strong; I am a responsible adult and I want to change;
4. I have to control my anger. I was very good at the programme exercises about the three steps:
 - STOP
 - MOVE AWAY
 - THINK

Doing the same thing in everyday life will be challenging.

5. I will not meet with people who create risky situations for me; when my friends will tell me to join them to steal I will REFUSE; I will have no help, I will have



to deal with it alone and they will mock me; they might even threaten me, they might tell me that they did not betray me when I was investigated by the police; this will be true; but I have to find another way to pay my debts to them because I do not want to go to prison; I will not steal anymore and I will not commit any other offence;

6. I have to make new friends; I will go to the park on Saturday where people play chess and backgammon and I will try to make friends with them; I might even have a beer with one of them;
7. CAREFUL! Beer is prohibited! I hate the people in the park, they are boring! But they are safe, they do not create risky situations for me; I need help; I will ask for help.

The relapse prevention plan can look like an action plan with bullet points or like a diary. What is important is that it should contain all the lists and strategies mentioned above.

To have a simple strategy in case of relapse is the least simple thing of all.

- a. If he/she stands on the doorstep of a pubhe/she may still decide to leave.
- b. If he/she has not had a drink yet he/she may still decide to have soda or a juice and then go home.
- c. If he/she has already had a glass of beer he/she can still stop and refuse to drink the second one, go to the door and out to the street.
- d. If he/she has drunk several glasses of beer and it is already morning.....
 - Has to revisit all the thoughts and emotions he/she felt the day before: unpleasant emotions, partially controlled emotions, dangerous thoughts, and justifications.
 - Has to make a list of consequences: thoughts, emotions, others' actions towards him/her.
 - Has to talk to the support person to understand why the relapse happened.
 - Has to identify the problematic emotions and improve the emotion management techniques (if appropriate to revise the anger control techniques).
 - Has to identify the beliefs which were stronger and led to relapse and to design intervention thoughts (to fix the distortion that has led to the relapse).
 - Has to be active:
 - a. Attend school, do homework.
 - b. Look for a job.

ANNEX 1

Rating Form to assess social, emotional and independent life skills of children/adolescents

Name and surname of the child: _____

Age : _____

SKILLS and practical KNOWLEDGE	DESCRIPTION	Very high	High	Moderate	Low	Very low	None
I.1. Healthy eating skills							
	1. Food handling skills						
	2. Knows about the number of meals/day						
	3. Knows about healthy food						
	4. Knows about the impact of diet on the physical and mental health						
	5. Reads food labels before buying						
I.2. Cooking and food preparation skills							
	1. Makes a daily meal plan						
	2. Makes a shopping list based on the daily meal plan						
	3. Knows how to cook (at least 2 meals for each course - I and II)						
	4. Uses kitchen utensils to prepare food						
	5. Reads recipes and follows the instructions						
	6. Knows how to set a table						
	7. Cleans the kitchen after eating or cooking						
I.3 Use of home appliances							
	TV set						
	Automatic washing machine						
	Mixer						

	Stove						
	Washing machine						
	Vacuum cleaner						

II. SKILLS / KNOWLEDGE for self- and health care	DESCRIPTION	Very high	High	Moderate	Low	Very low	None
II.1. Hygiene skills							
	1. Knows how to maintain personal hygiene						
	2. Wears clean clothes						
	3. Washes own clothes						
	4. Irons own clothes						
II.2 Skills for maintaining hygiene of personal and shared rooms							
	1. Spring cleans own room (at least once a week)						
	2. Engages in the cleaning of the shared rooms (bathroom, kitchen, corridors, dining room)						
	3. Uses the right cleaning products						
	4. Uses furniture and home appliances carefully						
II.3 Skills for disease prevention							
	1. Knows different ways of maintaining health (vaccines, how to avoid colds)						
	2. Has minimal knowledge about how to treat minor diseases						
	3. Knows and understands why it is important to take medications as prescribed by the doctor						
	4. Regularly practices physical activity						
	5. Has difficulty falling asleep						
	6. Number of hours of sleep/ night						

II. SKILLS / KNOWLEDGE for self- and health care	DESCRIPTION	Very high	High	Moderate	Low	Very low	None
II.4. Skills for assessing the risk associated with substance abuse (alcohol, drugs)							
	1. Smokes (no. cigarettes/day)						
	2. Drinks alcoholic beverages (what exactly)						
	3. Number of drinks						
	4. Drinking frequency						
	5. Knows about the negative effects of smoking on health						
	6. Knows about the negative effects of heavy drinking on health						
	7. Takes drugs						
	8. Knowledge about drugs						
	9. Knows about the effects of drugs on health						
II.5. Skills for maintaining sexual health							
	1. Knows about the changes that occur in the male and female body at puberty						
	2. Knows at least one way of preventing pregnancy						
	3. Has the right knowledge about pregnancy						
	4. Identifies at least 3 sexually transmitted diseases						
	5. Knows at least one way of preventing STD						
	6. Names at least 2 sexual risk behaviours						

III. Skills for living together	DESCRIPTION	Very high	High	Moderate	Low	Very low	None
III. 1 Social skills							
	1. Has friends (number)						
	2. Time spent with friends/day						
	3. Easily interacts with strangers						
	4. Asks for help when needed						
	5. Offers help when asked for it						
	6. Offers help without being asked						
	7. Makes the difference between friends/acquaintances/unknown person						
	8. Engages in common tasks						
	9. Handles problems in a non-aggressive manner (negotiation, compromise)						
III.2. Emotional control skills							
	1. Identifies at least 2 anger management techniques						
	2. Uses anger management techniques in real life situations						
	3. Expresses negative emotions (anger, sadness) verbally						
	4. Shows empathy						
	5. Recognises other people's emotions by reading the nonverbal cues						
	6. Shows empathy (can put him/herself in others' shoes and understand what they feel)						
	7. Talks about what he does not like about other people						

III. Skills for living together	DESCRIPTION	Very high	High	Moderate	Low	Very low	None
III. 3 Positive relationship skills							
	1. Uses polite language with others						
	2. Asks for the permission to take something that does not belong to him/her						
	3. Respects other people's privacy (their personal space, things)						
	4. Tells his point of view without offending other people						
	5. Respects other people's points of view even if he/she disagrees with them						
III. 4. Skills for following rules associated with a certain social situation							
	6. Follows civilized behaviour rules at home and in public						
	7. Is polite with the elderly						
	8. Greets and replies to greetings						
IV. Skills for using community resources							
	1. Names at least 3 institutions and related services						
	2. Describes at least 3 services briefly						
	3. Knows the purpose of at least three services						
	4. Knows how to use at least 2 sources of information (internet, mass-media)						
	5. Knows the place where he/she can get official documents.						

	DESCRIPTION	Very high	High	Moderate	Low	Very low	None
V. Money management skills							
	1. Makes a shopping list according to a planned budget						
	2. Goes shopping alone and does not spend more than planned						
	3. Shows the receipts/invoices that justify the purchases						
	4. Manages the weekly money alone (buys the basic foods needed for one week)						
VI. Free time management skills							
	1. Took part in out-of-school activities with teachers						
	2. Took part in leisure programmes with peers						
	3. Knows the specifics of different TV channels						
	4. Went to the theatre						
	5. Identifies at least 4 ways of spending free time						
	6. Knows at least 2 sources of information to identify places to spend the free time						
VII. School and professional orientation							
	1. Self-knowledge – skills, interests, values, personality traits						
	2. Knowledge about the labour market - trades						
	3. Knows the specifics of the schools that facilitate the access to a certain trade						
	4. Skills for writing a CV						
	5. Skills for giving an interview						
	6. Knows several ways of looking for a job (internet, mass-media etc.)						





Terre des hommes
Helping children worldwide.

Terre des hommes Moldova

Terre des hommes (Tdh) is the leading Swiss child relief agency. Founded in 1960, we are committed to improving the lives of millions of the world's most vulnerable children. Through our innovative protection and health projects, we provide assistance to over three million children and their families in almost forty countries each year.

ACTIVITY IN MOLDOVA

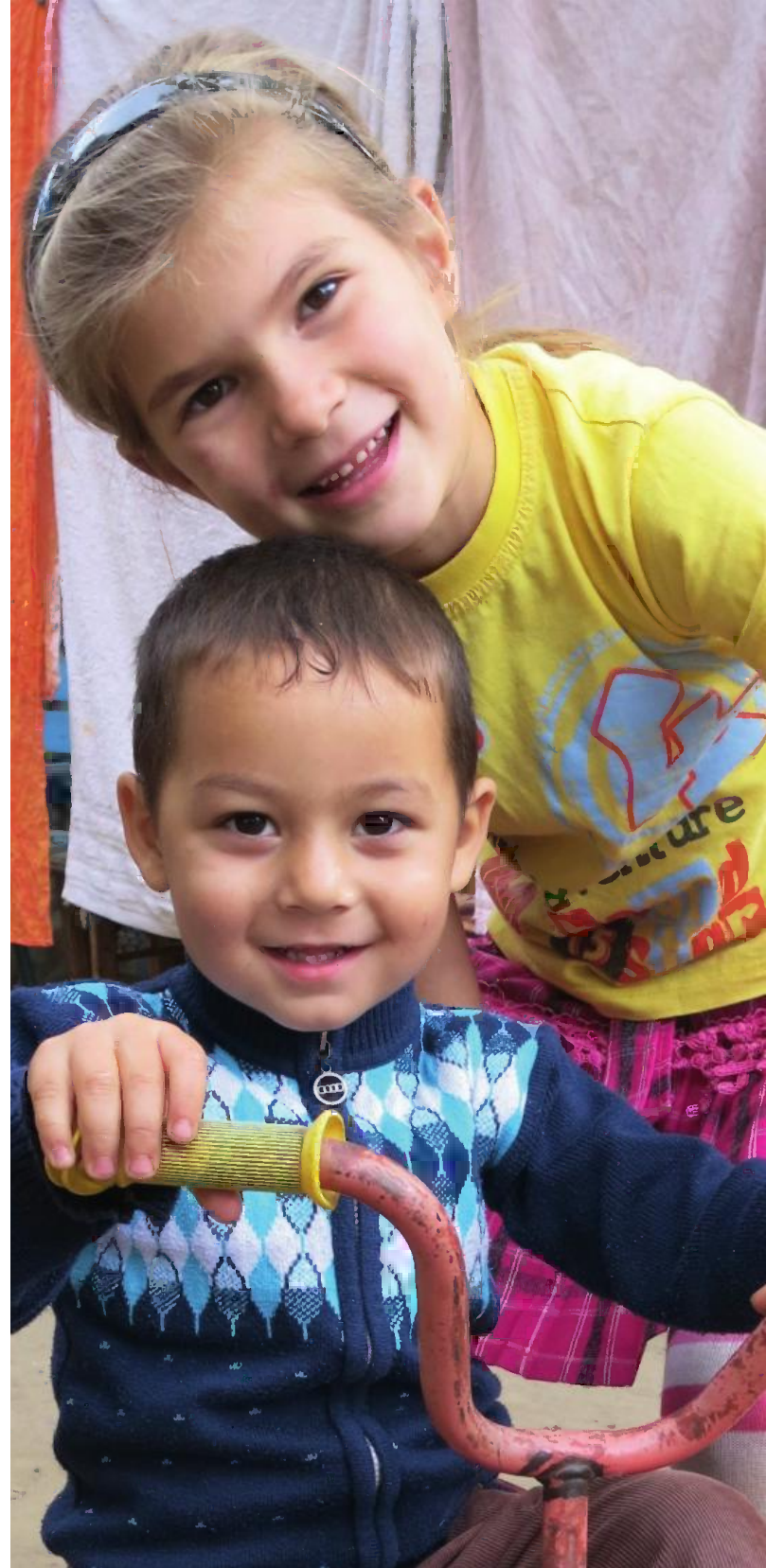
Terre des hommes is active in Moldova since 2004. Registered as a local Foundation, Tdh Moldova employs an expert team of 15 child protection specialists, trainers, project managers, communication and M&E specialists, legal experts, finance and administration specialists. Tdh Moldova works to reduce vulnerability and strengthen the protection of children affected by migration; to strengthen children's access to their rights in the juvenile justice system by promoting a restorative approach; and to build the protection and prevention capacity of child protection institutions and professionals, as well as individuals with rights, such as children, families and communities. We work to ensure that all children in Moldova benefit from a system that can guarantee their survival, protection, development and participation, with a specific focus on the most vulnerable children.

CHILD PROTECTION / EXPLOITATION

To create a safer environment for children's development, our team and partners mobilise families, communities, and public authorities to protect children who are at risk or are victims of neglect, abuse, discrimination or exploitation. We work with schools to ensure that disadvantaged children are integrated and can receive psychosocial support in toy libraries, summer camps, and through group activities. Our activities in local communities are focused on preventing violence against children, strengthening families, and increasing children's resilience. We advocate for effective child protection services and build the capacity of professionals to effectively deliver these services to children.

JUVENILE JUSTICE

We work with justice, child protection, and education institutions and professionals in preventing juvenile delinquency and supporting children in conflict with the law. Our goal is to build effective and sustainable programmes and services that prevent juvenile delinquency, reduce recidivism, and ensure that children at risk of committing an offence are properly protected. Our specialists provide training and resources for professionals, strengthening their ability to understand and respect children's specific needs. We advocate for policy improvements and for the institutionalization of child delinquency prevention programmes in the justice, child protection, and educational systems.



CHILDREN AFFECTED BY MIGRATION

Terre des hommes works to improve protection of Moldovan children left behind due to parents' migration. We work with local communities, parents, and professionals in developing effective and sustainable community-level actions that improve the protection of children left behind and strengthen families affected by migration. At the national level, we raise awareness about migration and strategies for preventing and reducing the negative impacts of migration on children. Our local experts help children to cope with the emotional challenges related to their parents' absence, inform parents how to maintain a sound relationship with their children, and train professionals to work with families affected by migration.



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