



#1 Differences - Experimental workshops on gender education in high school to prevent and combat violence against women

Leading organisation: UISPAPS

Country: Italy

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Type of discrimination

- Gender Discrimination in Sports
- LBTQIA+ Discrimination in Sports

Target group

- Boys and girls between 13 and 17 years

Problem/Solution

This practice is based on the observation that the phenomenon of gender inequality, which frequently results in discrimination or outright violence against women, is still dramatically present in Italy. At the root of this phenomenon is a cultural problem. In our society, in fact, there are still deeply rooted elements of a culture that defines the characteristics of men and women and their relative roles in society on the basis of prejudices and gender stereotypes, which strongly discriminate against women.

We are approaching and deepening the topic conducted by the representatives of the Anti-Violence Centres involved; experts in the field; psychologists/psychologists, teachers, linguists and journalists able to provide the young people involved with information and arguments that draw on different areas and fields of knowledge. The information and insights are not given in a frontal manner but through direct testimony, interactive meetings and sports and through the involvement of the target group in simulations and role-plays useful to bring out their emotions, experiences, prejudices and stereotypes but also doubts and fears if not real experiences of exclusion, violence, bullying etc..

Objective

- Achieving gender equality and empowerment of all women and girls.
- Promoting the relations based on the principle of substantive equality and equal rights between men and women taking into account their equal dignity and gender differences
- Preventing of and fight against all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual violence against children, adolescents and young people.

Activities

14 interactive experimental workshops were activated in the secondary schools of the 14 cities involved. A total of 485 boys and girls (13-17 years old) were involved in theoretical training/didactic modules (meetings with experts and sector representatives), practical modules (role-playing and sports animation) and in the co-design and management of a communication and awareness-raising campaign on the theme of gender-based violence and the promotion of the value of differences designed by young people for young people. 10 project handbooks, designed and produced by the project's Scientific Committee, were produced for three target groups: children/young people; teachers; parents.

Results

This is an ongoing project, it is expected that there will be a positive change in the attitudes and socio-cultural behaviour of the young participants, and more generally in the communities targeted by the intervention a change in customs and other practices based on stereotypical gender models. ➔

Top tips

- We recommend asking the teachers of the school not to be present in the classroom during the lessons with experts in order to allow children to express themselves freely without fear that their teachers will listen to their doubts, experiences, prejudices, etc.
- Often the debate on the topic of violence against women or gender discrimination inevitably leads to 'heated' discussions from which clichés, prejudices and even aggressive verbal responses emerge. It is advisable to be prepared to handle such conflicts.
- In a project linked to the fight against gender discrimination, the educators who go into the classroom must pay great attention to the language used, which must NOT be exclusively masculine, but must always be inclusive and respectful of gender representation.
- During the project, many girls have confided directly to psychologists or through anonymous notes that they have been harassed or discriminated against, both in the field of emotional relations and in sport: it must be foreseen from the beginning of the project how to manage these

disclosures and what support to give them after the testimonies.

- Training should be provided for the social and sport workers who will go to the school, also in terms of psychological support to manage what emerges from the classes, avoiding excessive empathy and/or burn out.
- It is advisable to have a specific focus on gender discrimination in sport, also through games and activities: young people are often unaware of the extent to which this field is subject to differences between genders linked to salaries, anti-maternity clauses, lack of professionalism for women, differences in prizes, obligations for costumes to be worn.

More

Web site: www.uisp.it/torino

Video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f_zhBfHCrIU



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