



INCLUSION
TOOLKIT

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YOUTH EXPRESS NETWORK

We are Youth Express Network, Y-E-N, a non governmental, not for profit organisation of **31 members in 22 countries across Europe.**

Together we work on social inclusion of young people and strive to achieve our vision. Our Vision is **“An inclusive society for young people”**. Youth Express Network considers inclusive society a society where young people, their needs and participation are **recognised, valued and appreciated.**

We aim to encourage more young people to be **socially, culturally, educationally and economically** included.

Y-E-N means Youth Express Network.

«Express» has two meanings:

- Express yourself because we in Y-E-N believe that youth have a lot of valuable things to express, to say about social issues today;
- But express means also quickly. The idea is that if we want social change, then we can't wait for tomorrow, we have to start here and now.



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We are:

YOUTH LED

generating, disseminating and using knowledge of young people and always placing them at the core of all our activities

INCLUSIVE

appealing to all young people and creating opportunities for them to participate, taking into account diversity and the needs of excluded groups

SUSTAINABLE

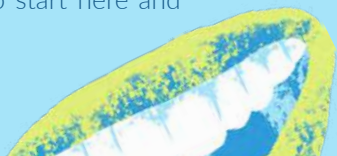
investing to continuously develop and improve services and opportunities for long-term impact

ACCOUNTABLE

actively participating and taking responsibility in the further development of the organisation

INNOVATIVE

developing new solutions and engaging young people to co-create and implement them



YOUTH EXPRESS NETWORK

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We do

SUPPORT

We organise training courses, seminars, cross-border projects and researches on youth and social issues.

We conduct researches and studies on youth related issues and try to be the voice of the most disadvantaged ones, either by representing them at local, regional and European institutions or by supporting them in creating and being part of youth councils and local policies. Youth Express Network also lobbies and makes recommendations at local, regional and European levels.

We are member of the European Youth Forum and the INGO Conference of the Council of Europe.

INVOLVE

Making young people' voices heard.

It is essential that young people be listened to on all levels of government and society. This is why we encourage them to get involved and become active and well-informed citizens, with real input on the policies that affect them. We promote youth political participation, sharing information; organising debates with politicians and helping young people voice their opinions on the topics that matter to them.

Making a difference in their communities

Young people are a formidable force for change. We work to give them the opportunities and motivation to get involved and make a positive impact in society. Our members organise and support youth volunteering and community engagement programmes.

INSPIRE

Celebrating their achievements

Many young people do amazing work for the benefit of their peers and society as a whole. We believe these young people should be celebrated and recognised => award programmes and ceremonies.

Promoting positive experiences

Through the award programmes and ceremonies, volunteers receive the recognition they deserve and other young people have the chance to be inspired and join volunteer programmes.




INTRODUCTION

The participants of the Advanced Training of Trainers "The Art of Togetherness II" produced this practical booklet for inclusion workers engaging young people from vulnerable groups in European projects, Y-E-N projects mainly.

Based on the experience of successful Y-E-N projects, the aim of this booklet is to collect examples of good practices and concrete tips or pieces of advice that will enable any other youth organisation in Europe to increase the participation of young people from vulnerable groups in, and reduce their exclusion from, European individual or group experiences.

The difference between a mainstream project and an inclusion project is the support. Each young person and each group is different.

The background features a light blue gradient. In the top right, a yellow hand reaches down. In the bottom right, a blue hand reaches up. In the center, the text "SUPPORT IS THE KEYWORD!" is written in a red, wireframe font. This text is enclosed within a circular graphic composed of two concentric dashed lines, with a dotted line forming the outermost boundary.

**SUPPORT
IS THE
KEYWORD!**



THINK

BE INCLUSIVE

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Think about participants' background (geographical, economical, social, etc. all of them)

**Each experience of discrimination is valid without proof
→ don't question it!**

Think of all the means you can use to be inclusive as a trainer / facilitator!

Think about inclusion from both trainers / facilitators and participants' perspective.

Think about participants with special needs.

Think about participants' needs!

Be open minded!

Think not only about including the people in the room but also who is not in the room.

Think un-biased!

Think about your community!

Your perspective is only ONE perspective!

Intersectionality:

Thinking about discrimination intersectionally
→ CF Google:
Kimberlé Crenshaw

Think out of the Box(es)!

Think about the way you will deliver information to a certain group

**Critically question yourself:
How inclusive am I?**

Is the project logistically inclusive?

(people with special needs, diets, gender neutral bathrooms etc.)

Put yourself in the shoes of others!

ENSURE THE BEST LEARNING EXPERIENCE

Think about the way you will deliver information to a certain group.

Think about the flow!

Keep in mind that they come voluntarily to learn something, **don't waste your/their time.**

Think about participants' profile: needs, motivation, interest, preferences...

Think positive!

Think about other professionals from other fields.

Take **inspiration** from different fields.

Think about participants' experience as a whole:
→ What kind of a learning experience do you want to create?

Make your workshops flexible.



ANTICIPATE



Think specifically!

Think carefully!

Think of a plan B

Think twice

→ Consequences

→ Long term also:

THINK ABOUT THE IMPACT

Think before you speak!

(what you say might have an impact/hurt feelings/perpetuate stereotypes)

**Take your
time
to think!**

EMPOWER THEM

Believe in their skills and strengths

→ support but don't lead, take over or carry.

Do not only think about their vulnerability (keep it in mind), but also their character, strengths
→ **see people individually**

You can give them advice but ultimately, they choose!

Keep in mind that they have enough authority in life, they need someone who will listen to them.

Don't think of yourself as a Superhero!



WHAT ABOUT YOU ?

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Reflect about your (un)conscious biases!

Reflect on your own emotions/sensibilities (triggers)
→ Get to know yourself



Think of your own resilience

→ Live in your head, don't always think about professional:
help yourself!

You never know everything, never stop learning!

You have two thinking tracks:
Normal person –
Abstract reflective

MAKE IT SIMPLE

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Be careful with
overthinking!

Keep it simple!

When delivering information:
**make it understandable,
as simple as possible !**

(Not everyone studied
nuclear physics and
knows all laws of
thermodynamics by heart)



CREATE A SAFE SPACE

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*Take into consideration
each person's space
(express, develop, work,
be individual etc.)*

Think of participants's safety first
and your personal belief second!



FEEL

Caring

OPEN MINDED

No stress

CURIOUS

Engaged/Engaging

(Don't)/be sorry

Self-Esteem

Interested

Faith in participants

Able to look forward

SOLIDARITY

Non-judgmental

Comfortable

Structured

COMMITTED

Positive

Understanding

RESILIENT

Comfort

respected/respectful

Empathy BUT don't be sorry

READY

OPEN

Aware

Believing in your job

Energetic

Confident

Risk management

FLEXIBLE

Loving

Free

Vulnerable

Humanity

Responsible

Receptive

SAFE

Accepting

Empathy

Selfish

HOPEFUL

STRONG

Honesty

Free to be yourself

Attitude

Balance of emotions

Beauty inside

(Don't)/feel guilty

Prepared

Transparent (Authentic)
To yourself + To others

Motivated
→ How to keep
yourself motivated?

PAY ATTENTION

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Feel the atmosphere
→ be attentive!

Feel when it is the moment to stop!
(because something is going wrong,
because you're asking too many
questions) → Intuition

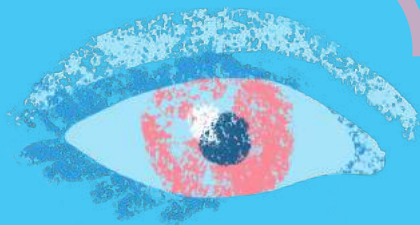
All the feelings, gestures, actions
are things to take into consideration
with vulnerable young people.
There is no "perfect recipe", it takes
a lot of time and multiple elements.

Trust your intuition!

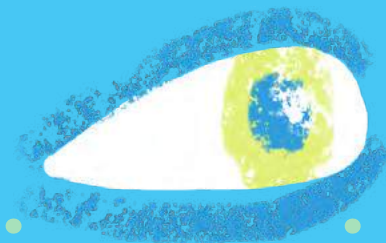
Feel Traumas
→ Know them,
be prepared!

*How do your methods
impact the feeling of
participants?*

*Feel the attitude
of people,
their feelings!*



USE FEELING / SENSES AS A TOOL



Use colours
→ make people feel
(colour theories)

*Use metaphors
to help you
switch your mood!*

Use all your senses!

Body feeling of youth:
→ stretching/meditation during
the sessions ex: reflection
→ Movement impacts your brain



YOU ARE HUMAN : BE KIND TO YOURSELF AND SHOW VULNERABILITY

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“The experience for me and my colleagues working with vulnerable youth showed that it is really important to be transparent to share a little bit of your own life story and being really consequent/structured.

That will make them **open up about themselves, feel safe, and feel being heard.**

And thanks to that, they will gain **trust and confidence.**

So they are eventually more comfortable to ask for help if needed”



Give space and time for your own emotions: **You also have a privacy!**

Vulnerability

→ Don't be afraid to show you have a Heart, don't be afraid to show tears and emotions (also from yourself) + Strategies to work with it!



BE OPEN MINDED

Don't be afraid
of the unknown
differences!

*Feel comfortable with
being faced with differences!*

Feel open-minded!
→ show it through
your body language.





SAY

BE INCLUSIVE

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Always use examples reflecting different life realities!
(Words, references everyone can relate to.)

*Don't be afraid to ask
for the right expressions/
group/identity name!*

Every person has a different
connotation to a word.
→ Check!

Address to people
the way they want
to be addressed!
→ Check PRONOUNS.

Use gender neutral
pronoun THEY
instead of he/she,
or at least try
to address
all the genders.

Generalisations are dangerous.

Ask if there are special
requirements in the group!

Break down
gender/stereotypes
and roles in your speech
→ **Disrupt perpetuation
of stereotypes!**

Use inclusive words (vocabulary):
“Economically challenged” instead of “poor”
“People of colour” → NEVER “N” WORD
“People with disabilities” instead of “disabled people”
“Undocumented immigrants” instead of “illegal immigrants”
“Roma people” instead of “gipsy”
“People from the LGBTQIA+* community”
“Caretaker” or “Responsible person” instead of “Mother”
“Father” or even “Parents” (some people are without parents)

Learn and say some words
in the mother language
of participants

Use words like
“people”/”folks”/”they”
in order to avoid
exclusive genders
(“Guys”).

Sign Language!
→ International,
national,
lip reading.

Train your vocabulary constantly!

CREATE A SAFE SPACE

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“Is everyone comfortable with this?”
“Does everyone understand?”
“Is everything clear?”
→ **Check!**

Don't assume, ask!

Warning about triggers
before certain situation,
content or sessions...
→ **Trigger warnings**

**Be careful with jokes
and (sarcastic) humour!**

Non-Violent communication

Confidentiality

***Speak in a way that is not
offensive for anybody!***
(religious, gender,
economic situation etc.)

EMPOWER THEM

"I Believe in you!"
"You can do it!"
"You have all the resources you need
to make it happen!"
"You have the support!"
"I'm here for you!"
"I'm here to help you"
→ **Verbal support, validation**

*"I respect you/
your decisions/
your choices"*

PRIVATELY:

Tell people that they did well,
mention what they did well.

Let the young people speak/answer:
don't cut/finish their sentences!

"You have value."



SHOW A GOOD EXAMPLE, BE KIND

*Be inclusive not only
in your professional life
but in your personal life
as well.*

“Please” and “Thank You”

Friendly language

Body language, volume, tone of voice, vocabulary
→ are all part of the atmosphere!

Good manners of inclusion



BE PREPARED

*You made a mistake
→ Admit when you
don't know something!*

Look into communication models & theories!

Be sure of what you are saying!



MAKE IT SIMPLE

Recap the content of what the previous person said to make sure you understood it.

**Use visualisation,
graphic facilitation
in explanation.**
→ easier to understand

*Break abstract
things down.*
→ easy words





BEFORE AND DURING THE PROJECT

Easy words

Ask why participants came to you, what are their expectations.

Pay attention to details.

Explain your work/role as youth worker.

Take the initiative!

Establish mutual work rules.

Pay attention to your body language.

Motivate young people!

Use picture language.
(drawings, illustrations, graphic reporting)

Research and keep yourself updated.

Find common interests among participants.

Use peer to peer learning.

Check the place beforehand.

Focus on the positive
“Positive approach”
+
“Talent approach”

Don't be afraid to use resources.



BUILD TRUST

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Create a safe space
/ give space.

Allow for safer spaces.

Be honest.

"The Glass of Water":
offer tea, coffee, juices
or water at the first meeting
(Welcome Evening,
first meeting in the office
or in the NGO)
**=> create cosiness,
make the participants
feel welcomed!**

Listen!

Show vulnerability.

Be balanced.

*Take time to
build trust.*

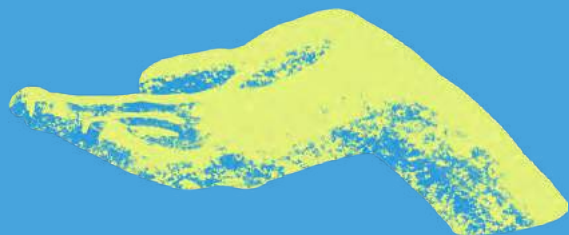
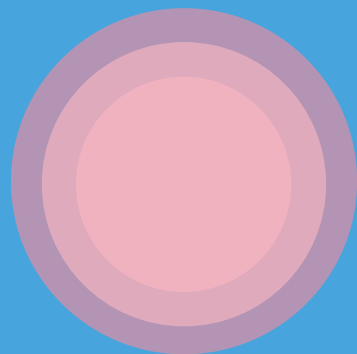
Be there:
mind, body and spirit.

Be patient!

Don't assume, ask!

Show your
open-mindedness
with body language.

*Don't force
them to speak!*



ADAPT TO THE GROUP

- Adapt
- Understand
- Be creative
- Adapt

When implementing, apply the know how and the adaptive approach with each specific group.

Prepare diverse type of activities and methods suited for everybody!

Be inclusive according to the needs.

Ask in advance about any possible special need.

Choose methods according to participants' abilities.

Research on people with special needs/fewer opportunities.

Be flexible to adapt (feel) – Don't stop to create tools, as there is no "magic pill".

Make sure that the programme is built according to participants' needs.



BE INCLUSIVE

*Redlines & strategies
to counter harassment!*

Check pronouns!

**Create
inclusive
activities.**

Application/registration inclusive.

Awareness Team

Ensure logistics
(space, food, transport)
are inclusive to everybody.

Write inclusively!

Ask for “Self-Defining” terms,
but it’s your job to keep your-
self informed.

**The discriminated person
doesn’t have to teach you.**

**Try to organise
everything
sustainable.
(global inclusiveness)**



RESPECT / DIVERSITY

31

*See what it is,
instead of what
you want or were
taught to see.
(Lemon exercise)*

Put methods
which put
participants
in eye-to-eye
level.

Respect every person and opinion.

Don't judge!

Don't teach others how they
should feel about their situation.
(each feeling is at first valued)



EMPOWER THEM

Give responsibilities!

“Encourage young people to step up and share their opinion, because that way, they will learn more and discover more. During activities, we, as youth workers, make safe place without prejudices and discrimination. Maybe in other places young people don't have that chance so they could use it”

**Do not help before
you are asked for help!**

Be supportive!



CREDITS

IMPRINT

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CONTENT

Youth Express Network
<http://youthexpressnetwork.org>



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