

Participant's Name: _____

Unlocking Children's Rights

**Strengthening the capacity of professionals in
the EU to fulfil the rights of vulnerable children**

Participant's Workbook

Introductory Module

This project is co-funded by the Fundamental Rights and
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Children's Legal Centre



CSALÁD, GYERMEK, IFJÚSÁG
KIEMELKEDŐEN KÖZHASZNÚ EGYESÜLET
FAMILY CHILD YOUTH ASSOCIATION

coram
Voice
getting young voices heard

 **errc**
european roma rights centre

 **UCC**
University College Cork, Ireland
Coláiste na hOllscoile Corcaigh

THESE MATERIALS HAVE BEEN DEVELOPED BY:



Coram Children's Legal Centre, UK

Coram Voice, UK



European Roma Rights Centre,
Hungary



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“Above everything else, the professionals should be at peace with themselves. If you are not at peace with yourself, you cannot help the children”.

Focus Group Participant, Greece

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ABOUT THE COURSE

“What is this course and who is it for?”

This course is a multi-disciplinary course on children’s rights (introductory), child development in relation to communication with children (introductory), communicating with children and on the Council of Europe’s “Child-friendly justice guidelines”.

In their original format, the training materials were designed to be delivered over three days. However, the course has been designed so that each module can be delivered on its own or as part of a broader training session. For this reason, each module has its own materials and participant’s workbook. The four modules are:

- Module 1: Introduction to child rights
- Module 2: Introduction to child development and communication
- Module 3: Communication skills
- Module 4: The child-friendly justice guidelines

The course is designed to be useful to anyone who works with children, including **all professionals/practitioners supporting children and young people** in residential and detention settings, as well as legal and other professionals and practitioners who interact with children in the context of judicial proceedings (civil, criminal or administrative law). These include:

Social workers; Health workers (nurses, healthcare assistants, doctors); Police officers; Probation officers; Residential home workers; Prison officers; Detention facility officers; Judges; Magistrates; Prosecutors; Defence lawyers/ paralegals; Family and civil lawyers; Intermediaries/ advocates/ guardians; Psychologists and therapists; Teachers; Youth workers and Community workers.

“What type of course is this?”

In order to have the widest impact for as many professionals as possible, this is a **skills-based** course. This means that the course focuses on providing participants with the tools and skills to protect and promote children’s rights, and to communicate effectively with children **in practice**. This also means that the course does not go into extensive theoretical or technical detail. Suggestions for further reading or additional resources are included in these materials, and in the participants’ materials to support further learning.

“What skills are covered in this course?”

This course covers the following skills:

- Why, when, where and how to **listen** to children in a child-friendly manner, and what to do with this information
- Why, when, where and how to **communicate** with children in a child-friendly manner, and what to do with this information
- How to facilitate child-friendly justice processes

“What other information is covered in this course?”

In addition to the skills listed above, the course materials also cover some knowledge-based learning about:

- What are the basic principles of international child rights?
- What are some key messages in the advocacy for child rights by professionals and children?
- How can a child’s development and behaviour affect communication and how can professionals respond to individual needs most effectively?

“How will the course materials be useful to me in my role?”

The reason for the ‘skills-based’ focus is to ensure the materials are applicable and useful in as many roles and situations as possible. However, the course materials also recognise that learning is enhanced when participants are able to see how these skills would apply to their own roles and circumstances.

HOW TO USE THIS WORKBOOK

This workbook contains all the information each participant needs for the introductory module of this training course. Each module has its own workbook for participants. The workbooks contain resource information and factsheets, as well as space for notes.

Each module also uses a PowerPoint presentation, which may be delivered using a projector, and/or through hand outs, depending on available resources.

Facilitators will share these presentation materials with participants.

Throughout the text, there are quotations from children and young people, including those from Coram Voice UK's 'Care Experienced Champions Group' who helped to develop these materials and others from Focus Group Discussions held across the partner States.

Above all, this workbook belongs to you, the participant, and you should feel free to make whatever notes you find useful.

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S VOICES

The voices of children and young people were paramount in the development of these materials. Children and young people were consulted at each step during the drafting of these materials, during piloting, and in the finalisation of the training package. It is important that their voices are heard by all those delivering and receiving the course, as their words capture why this course has been developed, why a facilitator would deliver it and why it is so important for participants to develop these skills and knowledge.

"They simply don't know how to communicate with us. Maybe they have forgotten what it is to be young, so any pointers will be good for them."

"I may be young, but that doesn't mean that I am not right for some things and they have to listen to me sometimes."

Focus group participants, Bulgaria

"Above everything else, the professionals should be at peace with themselves. If you are not at peace with yourself, you cannot help the children".

"Children who act out are children who have not been heard and who have not been helped by anyone".

"A child does not always know what's in his/her head. The adults should know and understand that".

Focus group participants, Greece

"Talk to your colleagues and share experiences; feed off their knowledge."

Focus group participant, UK

INTRODUCTORY MODULE

PROPOSED DURATION: 1 hour 15 minutes

AGENDA

❖ INTRODUCTION

- To each other
- To the course material

❖ GROUND RULES

❖ CIRCLES OF INFLUENCE

❖ PRE-ASSESSMENT FORM

❖ SELF-REFLECTION

❖ LEARNING OBJECTIVES

[This area is kept free for participants to make notes]

Notes from the Ground Rules exercise:

Circles of influence diagram:



Explanatory example: imagine you want to adopt one of the practices shared during the training but are concerned that this is not the current practice in your organisation.

It may help to think about which circle or circles the change falls in:

- ✓ The 'ME' circle (can you make this change without consulting anyone?),
- ✓ 'Colleagues' (is this something that you need to agree with colleagues?)
- ✓ 'Organisation/ supervisors' (is this something that is more cultural within the organisation, or that a supervisor would need to approve?)
- ✓ 'Professional body' (is current practice dictated by professional guidance or regulations, and what is the scope to challenge these?)
- ✓ Country/ government (is current practice dictated by government, legislative, or other national-level control?)

SELF-REFLECTION: MY LEARNING EXPERIENCE

This form is for your own personal learning experience, and will not be shared with other participants or the facilitator(s).

1. Communication skills and characteristics

- a. How confident are you in the following areas? Please tick the box that matches your confidence level.

Statement	Not confident	Fairly confident	Confident	Very confident	N/A
Communicating with very young children?					
Communicating with teenagers/young adults?					
Communicating with children/young people with communication difficulties?					
Communicating with children/young people who speak little of the/a national language?					
Making children feel welcome and valued?					
Involving children in decision making?					
Showing a child you are listening?					
Managing children's verbal challenging behaviour?					
Recognising children's communication difficulties and using appropriate communication techniques?					
Communicating with children according to their age and level of ability?					
Helping children to understand sensitive information that relates to them?					
Explaining to a child why a decision has been made in their best interests and not in line with their views, wishes and feelings?					

b. What are your top personal qualities and skills?

Below are words that some professionals use to describe themselves. Circle the **top five** that apply to your communications with children and young people.

Put a question mark beside the ones you would like to improve.

Active Listener	Assertive	Brave
Calm	Caring	Communicative
Confident	Conscientious	Considerate
Creative	Dependable	Determined
Direct	Empathetic	Enthusiastic
Friendly	Funny	Good Reader
Good Talker	Good writer	Helpful
Honest	Kind	Motivated
Optimistic	Organised	Persistent
Polite	Reliable	Resourceful
Serious	Trustworthy	Willing

These are the course objectives:

○ **Overall objective**

- Increase knowledge and capacity of professionals to protect the rights of children in care, detention and justice systems

○ **Specific Objectives**

- Increase knowledge and capacity on how to communicate with children in an age- and context-appropriate manner, and on child-friendly justice
- Train professionals on how to create and implement child-led communication
- Provide practical tools for eliciting children's views and feelings and to ensure these are taken into account

It's about encouraging young people to speak up about their feelings and what they want.

What's the point in speaking up if you don't get anything?

Children and young person's voices

Every person is different so everyone communicates differently.

We are all equal, but we are not all the same.

Children and young person's voices

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PRE-ASSESSMENT FORM

Name:

Role:

Date:

1. Needs

a. My knowledge of child rights is

b. My knowledge of child development is

Limited Average Good Excellent

c. My communication skills with children are

Limited Average Good Excellent

d. My listening skills with children are

Limited Average Good Excellent

e. I know how to make a process child friendly

Disagree Strongly Disagree Neutral Agree Agree Strongly

f. The three things I am best at when communicating with children are:

...

g. The three things I most need to improve when communicating with children are:

...

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