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BRIDGE 47 



THEATRE AS A TOOL FOR PREVENTION OF DATING

VIOLENCE

AMONG YOUTH

(handbook for teachers and youth workers)



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Table of Contents

1.	About the handbook and the project "Theatre as a tool for prevention of dating violence among youth"	3
2.	Key concepts	4
3.	Implementation	5
	3.1. Method	5
	3.2. Workshop rules	6
	3.3. Live workshop	6
	3.4. Online workshop	10
4.	Participants about workshop	14



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Institute for creating, research and learning Azum (hereinafter the Azum Institute) was founded in 2015 for the purpose of creative activities, research, counselling and educational as well as therapeutic activities. We are attempting to bring art and culture closer to the people, including therapeutic and psychosocial viewpoints. Therefore, our projects are mainly oriented toward vulnerable groups or those from socially disadvantaged environments.



1. About the handbook and the project

“Theatre as a tool for prevention of dating violence among youth”

For the purpose of the project, the Azum Institute organized a series of workshops dedicated to awareness about dating violence. The project was planned according to global education principles and follows one of the sustainable development goals (SDG target 4.7):

“By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and an appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development.”

SOURCE: SDG Goal 4 (<https://www.un.org/development/desa/disabilities/envision2030-goal4.html>)



Main project goals:

- To enable participants to address issue of dating violence and share and discuss the topic with their peers
- To provide participants with skills and tools that will increase their creative thinking, they will improve problem solving skills and respond to various situations in the future.
- To enable teachers and youth workers to incorporate techniques in their classes and continue addressing dating violence after the project has ended.

Teachers and youth workers have a noble mission and their work is invaluable. They provide children and youth with knowledge and skills for life and attempt to empower them for facing different situations in the future. Teachers and youth workers often have to deal with an overwhelming amount of administration instead of dedicating all their energy and attention to children and youth and acquiring new valuable knowledge and skills. As a result, this concentrated and user-friendly handbook was created in order to help teachers and youth workers who will address dating violence as a topic with different users. The handbook itself is based on experiences from previous workshops that had already been carried out and on feedback from participants and their mentors/teachers.

2. Key concepts

a) Sustainable development goals

In 2000, world leaders pledged to work together for global development and signed the Millennium Declaration, which set out eight Millennium Development Goals. The deadline for achieving these goals was set in 2015. This is the first internationally agreed framework for eradicating global poverty, hunger, disease and inequality. In 2015, world leaders at the United Nations (UN) Summit on Sustainable Development adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which directs development efforts for the next 15 years. The new development framework, which consists of 17 sustainable development goals with almost 170 sub-goals, is significantly broader than the Millennium Development Goals. In addition, the new global goals lay new foundations for addressing inequality, economic growth, desirable jobs, urban challenges, industrialization, energy, climate change, sustainable consumption and production, peace and justice. The key message of NGOs in preparing the new development agenda was that it should not leave anyone behind.

Source: Millennium goals (<https://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/>)



Image 1: SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

www.globalgoals.org

b) Violence

We talk about violence when there is a violation of human rights and human personal boundaries as well as an abuse of power. Most violence happens between people who know each other and it is always the responsibility of the person who instigates it. It can only be prevented with zero tolerance for violence.

Violence takes several forms: psychological, physical, sexual and economic violence. Other types of violence that often combine several of these forms of violence are: human trafficking and sexual exploitation, violence against the elderly, violence against the LGBT population, violence against the disabled, peer violence, discrimination, mobbing, dating violence, institutional (structural) violence, violence through information and communication technology (ICT), cyberbullying (including bullying via mobile phones), identity theft, sexting, stalking.

SOURCE: Association for nonviolent communication (<https://www.drustvo-dnk.si/o-nasilju/druge-vrste-nasilja.html>)

c) Discrimination

We talk about discrimination when it comes to unequal treatment according to personal circumstances. Discrimination can take many forms, such as direct or indirect discrimination, (sexual) harassment, multiple, long-term or mass discrimination, as well as incitement to discrimination. Discrimination is prohibited in Slovenia by law, although the extent to which penalties are implemented in practice depends on individual cases.

SOURCE: Advocate of the principle of equality (<http://www.zagovornik.si/o-diskriminaciji/kaj-je-diskriminacija/>)

d) Gender equality

By official definition, gender equality relates to equality between women and men. This means that both sexes should be equally visible not only legally, but also in practice have the same social power, be equally involved in all areas of public and private life, and benefit equally from the results of social progress. Equality between men and women, however, should not be confused with sameness and does not deny the differences between women and men. In practice, real equality between men and women has not yet been achieved anywhere in the world. Some people say that progress is (too) slow, others that equality between women and men in our society has already been achieved. On the one hand, both positions are correct, although it is by no means true in all areas and in all environments. Above all, changes are needed in everyday life

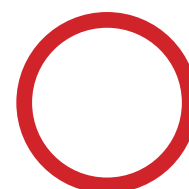
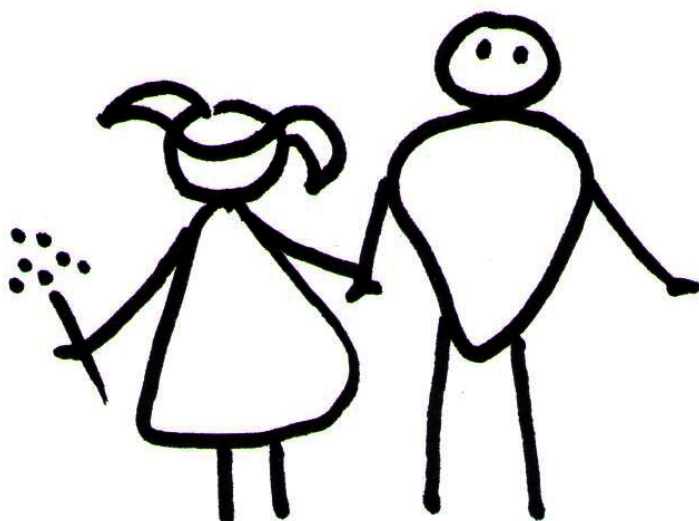
SOURCE: <https://www.gov.si/teme/enakost-zensk-in-moskih/>



e) Dating and dating violence

The term dating means “arranging a date or socializing throughout the relationship between a boy and a girl during a period when they are a couple but do not yet live in a joint household”. Dating violence is any physical, sexual, psychological or economic violence of one person against another during while they are dating. Dating violence can occur on the first date as a single act of violence, or it can be repeated as a pattern of violent acts. If dating violence occurs once, it will most likely happen again.

Source: »Do you date?« Dating violence
(<http://www.arhiv.uem.gov.si/fileadmin/uem.gov.si/pageuploads/ZlozenkaZmenkanje.pdf>)



"I would like to say that I really enjoyed the workshops. The students were active all the time. You used different approaches and knew how to motivate them. Above all, it was an interesting topic, as there is still too little discussion about these topics. Many situations that are violent or covertly violent are not known about by students because they are unaware of what is really happening to them. I think that this work encouraged students to think, pay more attention and behave differently in everyday life, especially in relation to their classmates and peers." **(M.G., Teacher of Slovene language)**

3.1. Method

Methods of dramatherapy and theatre in education were used during workshops. Sometimes we used also elements of art therapy. The aim is to create a safe environment, in which while addressing dating violence the participants will be able to share experiences and try out different situations.

Dramatherapy is a therapeutic method that uses dramatic processes in times of distress, emotional turmoil and mental health problems. The techniques are derived from drama and theatre. Among them are role-playing, the use of puppets and masks and storytelling. In many parts of the world, dramatherapy is recognized by the state as a profession and as a professional orientation, and dramatherapists are educated in both: drama and therapy.

SOURCE: Langley, D.M., An Introduction to Dramatherapy, Sage Publications, London, Thousand Oaks, Delhi, 2006.

Theatre in education is a newer approach, a method used during educational processes. It combines both education and theatre. It is very common in the UK. It is often used in schools in conjunction with a standard curriculum. The techniques allow students to learn a wide variety of topics. It can be used in the teaching of social sciences and language, as well as in science classes.

SOURCE: Landy, R. J., Handbook of educational drama and theatre, Greenwood Press, Westport Connecticut, London England, 1982.

Participants need to rationally comprehend that the situations, which take place during the workshop, are staged on a symbolic level. They also need to understand that someone taking on a particular role does not actually identify with their character (e.g. when taking a role as a bully). We emphasize the importance of security (physical as well as mental).

"The students also knew how to empathize with different roles. So, the workshop certainly works therapeutically as well. Playing the role of victim and bully can remind us of different forms of personal experience of similar situations. The students paid attention very carefully and had many interesting ideas, thoughts, to which it was possible to encourage them in a non-intrusive way."

(M.G., Teacher of Slovene language)

3.2. Workshop rules:



In the introduction of each workshop, we make agreements with the participants that help to establish a safe space during the workshop.

- There is nothing right/wrong during the activity (for example in performing activities).
- We talk about ourselves, our views, our experiences. We are not talking about others.
- If we disagree with someone, we should express our opinion without displaying a degrading attitude towards the other person. We do not condemn, ridicule, criticize, etc.

- Each individual can refuse to participate in a particular activity.
- If someone doesn't want to talk about something, they don't have to.

"We keep in mind that during the workshop that there is **mutual respect and trust**, despite the fact that we have different life experiences and world views. We can create a safe environment in which we can say what we think. That is why it is important that **we listen to each other** and after the workshop **do NOT share** what we hear with other classmates, friends and others, least of all on various social networks, etc." (Warning in the online classroom, which was established for the needs of the project)

3.3. Live workshop

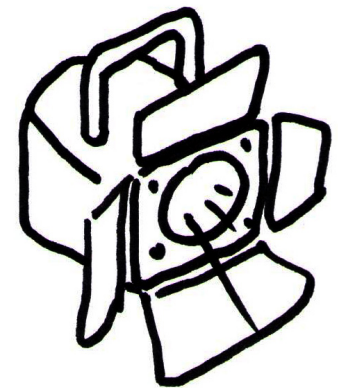
The workshop is divided into several connecting parts:

1. **introduction** (the facilitator briefly introduces themselves to the group and presents the project or the purpose of the workshop, agreement to the group),
2. **getting to know each other and "icebreakers"** (activities that help to connect and overcome any initial embarrassment and get to know the members of the group),
3. **central part** (addressing the main topics, creative activities) and
4. **final part** (reflection).

INTRODUCTION:

The facilitator briefly introduces themselves to the group and presents the project or the purpose of the workshop. Despite the fact that dating violence is a serious topic, we used humour to some extent during the workshops as a means of overcoming embarrassment and breaking the ice. In the introduction, the facilitator concludes an agreement with the participants about the workshop.

"It's easier if the conversation is led by someone who is relaxed, who is not like a teacher, but more like one of us." (13 years old)



WARM UP ACTIVITIES:

The activities listed in the table are drama games that are widespread and known throughout the world in various theatre and drama directions and schools. To a large extent, their description can be found by various authors such as Viola Spolin, Anna Scher, Charles Verall and David Farmer - the workshop facilitator can adapt them to the group according to the group specifics.



Activity	Description	Purpose	Addition
The Shark	The group stands in a circle. Everyone says their name. The facilitator steps into a circle and says she is a "shark". She chooses someone standing in the circle as a victim and begins to approach them. The group can save a victim by calling their name before the shark reaches them. Then the shark must select a new victim. If she manages to reach the victim before the group calls their name, the victim becomes the new shark and the previous one steps into her place. The person the shark chooses to be the victim must not call her own name.	getting to know each other icebreaker relaxation concentration	Useful where there are younger participants who do not yet know each other well and need to memorize names. You can enrich the game by having each participant say their name and make a move of their choice. The group repeats the name and reinforces the movement.
Free associations	Participants stand in a circle and pass on free associations by pointing to the next person and making eye contact with them.	getting to know each other icebreaker creativity concentration	If the group does not know each other well, participants can say the name of the recipient of the association before passing on the word.
Passing the objects	Participants stand in a circle. One person shapes an object with their hands and passes it to the other participant, who accepts it as they imagine what it is. The participants do not discuss the purpose of the object. It is also important that they follow the principle of "no right or wrong".	creativity empathy concentration communication	Useful also when participants do not know each other well and need to memorize names as they can say the name of the recipient before passing the object on.
The one who...	Participants stand in a circle. The places should be exchanged by the people to which the following statements, made by the facilitator, apply: "Let the people change places, who..."	empathy concentration getting to know each other trust building	This activity can act as a connecting activity with the next part of the workshop, as the facilitator can choose statements related to the theme of the workshop, e.g. ... who don't like screaming." ... who have ever scolded someone." ...who have ever hit someone." ...who have ever been beaten."

CENTRAL PART:

In the central part, we discuss key topics with the participants and invite them to share their views on certain situations/concepts. We can ask them questions related to their perception of violence, relationships, etc.

"You're not owned by a boy." (14 years)

"If he tells you not to hang out with your friends, do you ask why not?" (15 years old)

"It doesn't have to apply just to girls." (16 years old)

If necessary, the participants are divided into several smaller groups, and each group gets its own task and/or topic. Participants are again reminded of the agreement that they can move away/stop the activity if they feel any discomfort. In this case, we talk to them or respect their wish not to talk about it. We let them know that they can also approach us after the workshop ends.





Technique	Short description	Purpose	Addition
Forum theatre (Source: https://kudtransformator.com/gledalisce-zatiranih/)	The actors (selected participants) stage a short scene in which a scene of oppression is shown, the topic is agreed in advance. The first staging is followed by repetitions with interventions, as the spect-actors stage their suggestions for dealing with the situation and show it on stage. Each repetition is followed by discussion and reflection.	Testing different behaviours and situations in a controlled environment. Having the power to intervene, even if someone is a spectator at some point - by stopping the scene and changing one of the actors, being able to express and test their idea of how to act in a particular situation.	The technique of forum theatre allows the audience to test their ideas in a certain situation, precisely because of the possibility of repeating a certain scene several times. Therefore, we are talking about spect-actors. Situations can vary, e.g. a guy who accuses a girl of flirting with other people, etc.
Tableau (pl. tableaux)	The selected participants pose in the picture so that it is clear who represents which character. Also, the specifics of these characters (gender, age, mood, predominant emotion, status) are explained. It is especially important to show the relationships between the characters that create the picture. Each picture is followed by a discussion and reflection by the audience according to what is seen, also at the end of the activity.	Participants agree on the topic, the "role" they are supposed to take on and they need to reach cooperation and consensus. They debate about relationships, which is especially emphasized in the individual tableau, as it is difficult to tell what kind of relationship the characters are in if the relationship is not clearly visible (e.g. who shows their back to someone, who hugs whom, who raises her hand over someone). Attention goes primarily to body language as a medium for expressing each character and the relationships among them.	The group can make a sequence of three or more pictures (tableaux) that represent a certain situation. An advanced alternative is for the performers in the scene to come to life at the sign of facilitator and enact the situation. Thus, three action scenes can be created from three pictures.
Enactment, improvisation	The enactment is based on improvisation. A small group chooses a theme, although it can also be determined by the facilitator who supports them in building the scene to answer who, where, what and also sometimes when.	Improvisation requires the participation of everyone. It requires full engagement and clear and clean communication. It encourages quick decision-making and judgment.	In a way, improvisation is the freest form of the above, although it can be the most difficult for the performers. During improvisation, situations that were not planned can develop, as one of its main characteristics is spontaneity. Therefore, the facilitator must be very attentive to what is happening and, if necessary, be able to intervene or even stop the scene.
Visual/artistic depiction	Participants prepare an artistic depiction of a theme assigned to them by the facilitator, who can also give them the opportunity to choose it for themselves. The concrete technique is assigned to them by the facilitator. Comics, thought patterns and free artistic expression of associations in connection with key concepts were used here.	Some participants of the workshop will find visual /artistic depiction closer to them, as they can improve their self-awareness, develop their cognitive abilities and confirm themselves through artistic expression and conversation in the presence of the facilitator. During the process, they can also express their views and experience through creative artistic expression, without being directly exposed.	The group that created visual depiction can use it as a starting point for building a scene. In doing so, the facilitator supports the participants and can guide them if they lack of the idea, especially with free art associations, or with a thought pattern. The comic itself can insinuate the content of a stage scene.



Image 2: DRAWING ZPM.

FINAL PART OR REFLECTION:

In the final part, we talk about the topic and reflect on what we have seen and experienced. Participants become aware of the feelings, thoughts and knowledge they have acquired. They reflect on what they have learned, what is new to them, what has changed for them. They talk about their point of view and do not comment on the opinions of others. They can highlight topics that have remained open to them and would like to know more about. The facilitator can, if necessary, recommend a person for further discussion, literature or other sources where participants could find answers to their questions. It is important that in the final phase participants also check their well-being, to understand that the workshop has closed and that they do not feel emotional or psychological discomfort.

3.4. Online workshop

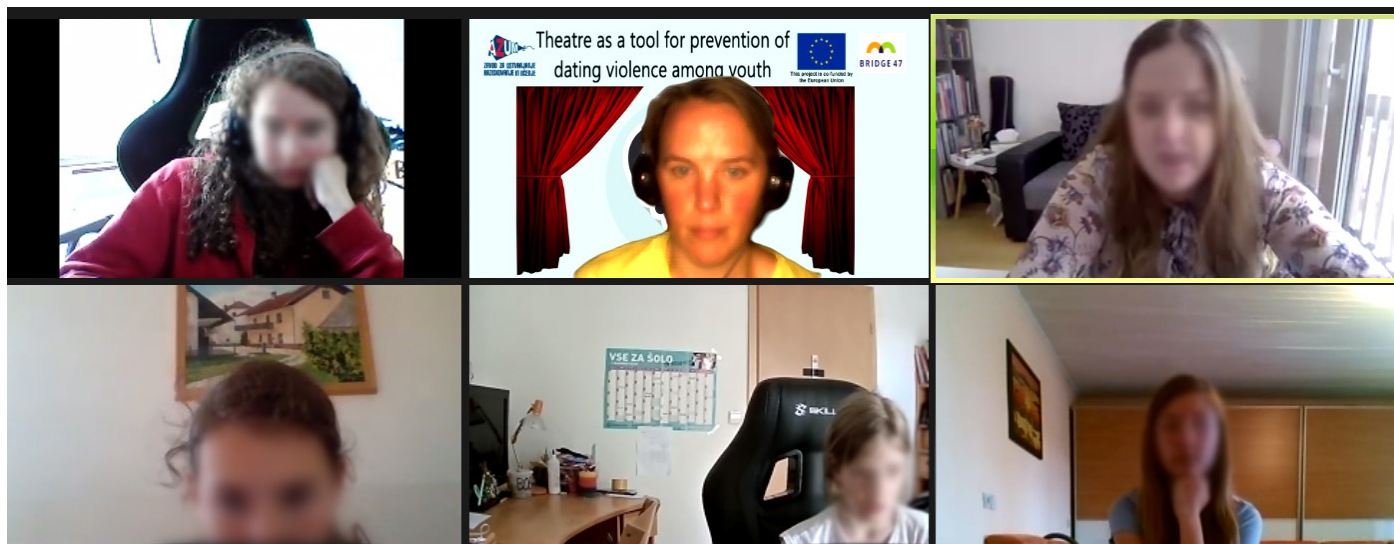


The online workshop is planned in three meetings, as otherwise it would be too much of a burden for the participants to stay in front of PC monitors, mobile phones or tablets for a long period of time. This can negatively affect concentration and the ability to perceive, as well as potentially causing eye fatigue. Before the start of each meeting, a very important part is when the participants are just gathering on the chosen videoconference platform. For things to go smoothly, rules need to be clearly defined and instructions given to participants prior to the workshop.

For this purpose, we can set up an online classroom.

- Sign up for the call is 5-10 minutes before the start, which allows time to resolve any technical issues.
- When you register for the meeting, you have to wait for the moderator to confirm you (you are in the “waiting room”).
- Sound and video check will follow.
- When you find that everything works, you put the microphone on “mute”.
- When you want to say something, you raise your hand and wait for your turn.
- When you're not talking, you have your microphone on “mute” to avoid confusion.

(Instruction in the virtual classroom set up for the needs of the project)



MEETING PLAN:

	First meeting: KEY CONCEPTS	Second meeting : VIOLENCE AND DATING	Third meeting: RECOGNIZING AND PREVENTING DATING VIOLENCE
Introduction	Greeting, presentation of the facilitator and the project. Agreements valid in the workshop.	Greeting, topic.	Greeting, topic.
Warming up /Icebreakers	Passing the objects	One lie, one truth	Mute-on
Key concepts	DISCRIMINATION, GENDER EQUALITY, VIOLENCE	VIOLENCE	DATING, DATING VIOLENCE
Conclusion	The video conferencing platform we chose offers a “white board” option. Participants see a blank white surface on their mobile devices and computers, which they fill in with their responses and associations. This is followed by a discussion of the topics we addressed.	Each participant writes one thought about the violence discussed in the chat. Followed by conversation and reflection.	During the reflection, participants express their feelings about what they have seen and heard. The workshop facilitator invites participants to use visual or digital means to depict one of the key concepts or associations to them. They can also depict a concrete situation. Complete instructions with a more detailed description are published in the virtual classroom. Before the start of the workshops, we send the participants information on how to access the virtual classroom. At the end, the participants prepare a short evaluation of the workshop, which they record in a “chat”.

DESCRIPTION OF INTRODUCTION ACTIVITIES:

Activity	Description	Purpose	Addition
<i>Passing the objects</i>	The workshop facilitator creates an imagined object with their hands. They show the object's size, weight, shape, purpose, smell, their relationship to this object. Makes sure that it is clearly visible on the camera. They pass it on to the person whose name they call. Passing can be done in different ways: the object can be pushed into the camera, thrown towards the camera, thrown to the ground, thrown behind the camera. The person whose name has been called accepts the object in the way it was given and mirrors what it represented to the previous holder. They then change the purpose of the object and passes it on...	Creativity, empathy, concentration communication	Also useful when participants do not know each other well and have to remember names.
<i>One lie, one truth</i>	Each participant tells one lie and one truth about themselves. Other participants guess what the lie is and what the truth is.	Ice-breaker creativity concentration trust	We agree with the participants that the statements can be taken from everyday life or can be related to the topic of the workshop.
<i>Mute on</i>	The selected participant turns off the microphone. In the chat, the moderator assigns them the word. The selected participant can say the word aloud. As the microphone is switched off, the other participants cannot hear them. Their task is to guess which word the participant is saying.	Creativity empathy concentration communication	The word assigned by the moderator to the participant may be related to the topic of the workshop.

KEY CONCEPTS



• DISCRIMINATION

Technique: Role playing

Example: Employment discrimination

Background:

WHO? Boss, secretary

WHAT? The secretary sends a job application with photos to the boss. The boss reads the application and sees that a candidate it is a highly qualified, black skinned, aged 50, single and childless. The boss rejects the applicant and instructs the secretary to cancel the interview. The actors develop the situation so that the secretary plays the role of the candidate's advocate and the boss tries to find counter arguments.

Discussion: Where do you think the discrimination occurs? Have you ever experienced this before, or do you know anyone who has experienced it? Can discrimination be caused by a single personal circumstance or by a combination of several circumstances?

• GENDER EQUALITY

Technique: Role playing

Example: The children are at home for the duration of the measures against Covid-19. They are cared for by their mother, who is working from home.

Background:

WHO? Two kids, mother, her boss

WHAT? The mother is trying work on her computer. One of the kids needs her help and the other is hungry. Her boss is on the phone, demanding that the mother urgently sends him an important document.

Discussion: Where do you think gender inequality can occur? Have you ever experienced this before, or do you know anyone who has experienced it? Where can unequal treatment occur for men, and where for women?

• VIOLENCE

Technique: Live statues

Example: Consider how you can show one of the types of violence mentioned by posing as a live statue - either as a victim or as a bully.

Discussion: We look at each statue and reflect our feelings about it. Is violence always visible, or is it also hidden? Who can hurt you the most?

Technique: Visual material

Before the workshop, we prepare visual material, which we share with the participants during the workshop. The material depicts situations that deal with different types of violence. The selection depends on the group structure and the purpose of the workshop. For especially younger participants, it is also possible to choose drawings that in some way soften the discussion of the topic.

Example: The photo shows a screenshot of one of the workshops and the spontaneous response of the workshop participants to cyberbullying. We shared a photo with rude and disrespectful captions on the screen with the students. As soon as the students saw the photo, they reacted by crossing out the captions.

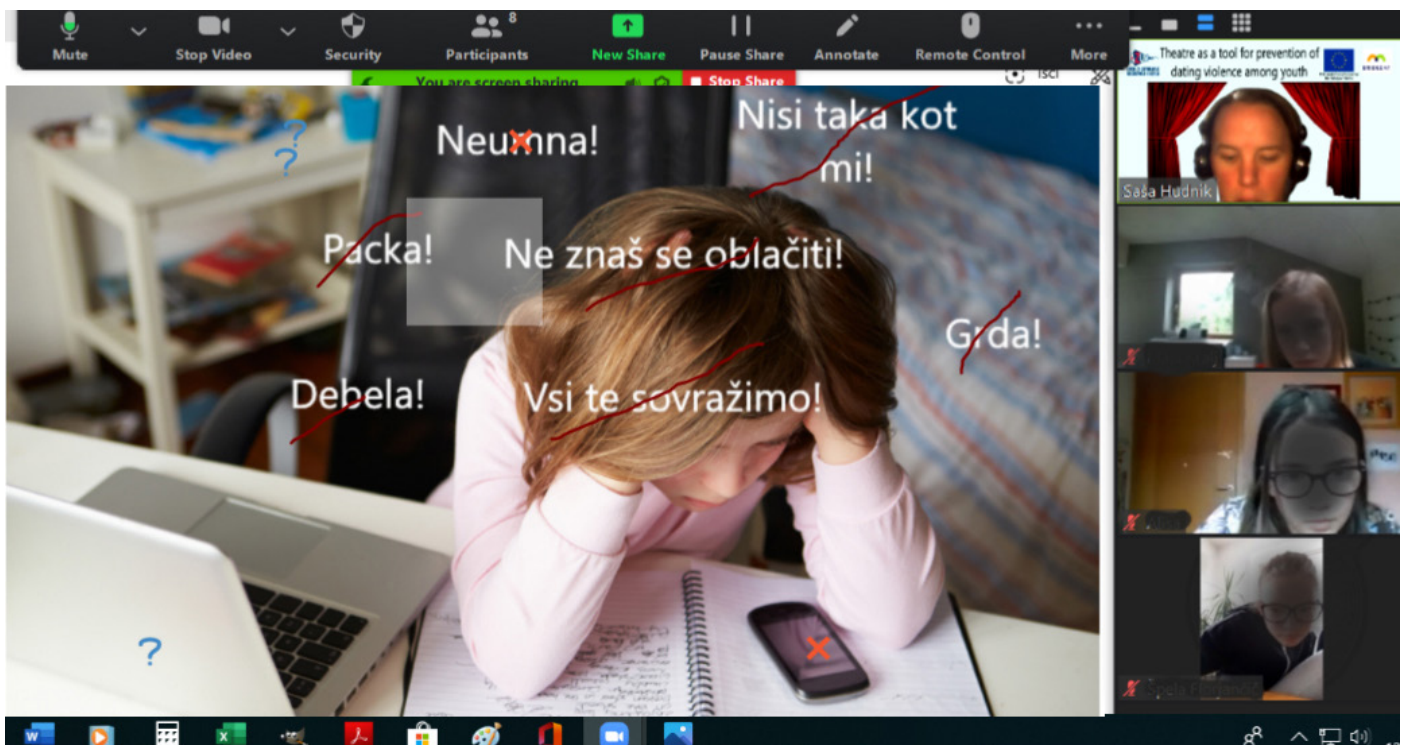


Image 3: REACTIONS (Stupid! You're dirty! You're not like us! Fat! Ugly! We all hate you! You don't know how to dress!)

Technique: Improvisation/dialogue

Example: We present different statements to the participants and ask what types of violence the participants recognize in the situation. How would you act? Participants can type their responses into a "chat" or enact an improvised dialogue. The facilitator adapts the examples to the group and its specifics.

Examples:

"If you don't let me copy your homework, I won't be your friend anymore."

Response from the workshop participant:

"She's not a real friend at all, so I wouldn't pay attention to what she said and I wouldn't let her copy my homework". (14 years)

"I'm not going to go to school with you anymore because you're dirty and you don't know how to dress. And you're ugly and stupid."

Response from the workshop:

"I'd ask if it's prank, but if she said it wasn't, I'd be very disappointed in her and want to talk. But if that didn't help, I just wouldn't go to school with her." (15 years)

• DATING VIOLENCE

After we discuss the term “dating” we continue with the conversation about relationship between the partners and dating violence. We watch a video showing a relationship in which one partner wants to constantly control the other while being violent in several different ways.

Example clip: <https://www.facebook.com/JayShettyIW/videos/1830457917085036/>

Alternative: in pairs, participants role play a short scene that deals with the topic of dating violence.

Discussion: What did the participants see in the video/scene? What types of violence are shown? What do they agree with, what is “normal” for them? Where are the boundaries and what is the correct reaction? IMPORTANT! All of the above applies to both boys and girls, as well as to relationships where both partners are of the same sex.

4. Participants about workshop

“I hope you will continue with them (workshops). They would be recommended during class hours or as an additional activity for young people.” (M.G., Teacher of Slovene language)

“More should be discussed about these topics, even randomly, among friends.” (14 years)

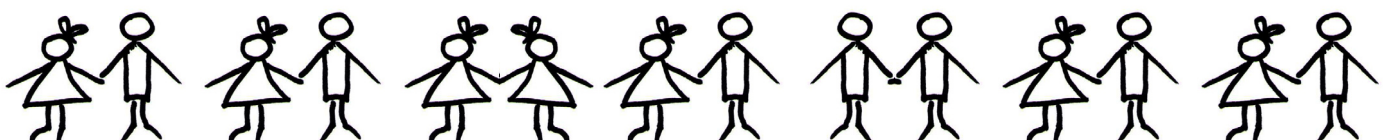
“It was great, especially now at the end because it was funny. It's very nice to think a little bit about violence and these things, so it's great!” (13 years old)

“The usefulness of the workshop is that you can immerse yourself deeply in the tyrant, the victim and the eyewitness. This is how you learn to better recognize violence and take action. I really liked it this way! That we have transformed into these people. It was good that we chose the topics ourselves.” (14 years)

“We're all relaxed at the workshop. We develop our own ways of thinking about certain situations where the roles may be different than they seem at first glance and the violence occurs. It's useful for everyone. I like that it's connected to the theatre.” (15 years)

“The workshop was very useful because this topic is important, but we don't talk about it at school. I also really liked that we included theatre as well. We should talk about this more often. When we were doing the scenes, I liked that we had very free hands. I also liked the games we played, because that's how we broke the ice.” (14 years old)

“The workshop is useful because we can think about violence and go in a fun way through different situations that can happen to you in life. I was also in an online workshop. But this one was better for me because I met new people. And I liked the online one because we talked more and supported the conversation with video sources.” (15 years)



The workshop can also be organized at your school or organization. We also provide training for those who would like to conduct these workshops.

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