

Project Proposal: CRESPE

Child Rights Education for European School Psychologists

Though Educational Psychologists (EP) play an important role in LLL, for the ET 2020 objectives and other EU policies, there is a EU-wide need of improved ET of EP. Though schools are key settings to support the EU Strategy on the Rights of the Child, there is no systematic EU CRB education for SP. Available resources address mainly teaching staff or human rights education in schools.

This project addresses the gap of missing resources building on the international CRED-PRO initiative. It responds to the needs of improved ET by implementing a multilingual/cultural course on CRB practice/creating a network of EP to share good CRB practice. Improved quality of EP practice will have a positive impact on learning environments/ outcomes/inclusive education, mental health and well being of youth/ teaching staff. This project includes therefore the development of an impact assessment tool, which will be beneficial for the monitoring of FRA indicators as accessibility, adaptability of education. This project is meant to

- Develop, test, implement and disseminate a new European training course and material on CRB professional practice for the initial and in-service-training of EP.
- Develop and exchange experience on systems of CRB EP guidance and counseling particularly adapted to students, teachers, school leaders and school systems
- Improve quality of school support systems through training and exchange of best practice among EPs and their educators/trainers
- Increase mobility of EP.

Leading EP and EP educators from different European countries will gain insight/understanding in the relevance of principles of human rights/ UN convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and how to apply these principles in their professional practice and their working environment through a the CRED-PRO training course developed by the International Institute for Child Rights and Development. They will develop this educational module specifically for the professional practice and cultural working environment of EP. They are also expected to apply strategies for ensuring the implementation of the training course in initial/continued education levels for EPs across Europe and to train EPs according to this new educational module. Information about this new training possibility will be disseminated e.g. by collaboration with ET organizations and with professional associations of EPs. In order to maintain sustainability of this project, a network of trained EPs and training organizations will be established, which is supposed to share best practice of CRB SP work for further professional quality.

Preliminary Partners

- 1) Lund University Sweden
- 2) Comenius University Bratislava
- 3) City College Thessaloniki, Greece

- 4) Rino Noord-Holland, Netherlands
- 5) Perspective, Belgium
- 6) Belgian Federation of Psychologists, Belgium
- 7) ISPA Training Centre, Germany
- 8) Dublin Institute of Technology, Ireland

Child Rights Education for Professionals (“CRED-PRO”) is an international initiative endorsed by the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child. It is devoted to developing and providing educational programs on the human rights of children to professionals working with and for children in partnership with professional associations and other key organizations worldwide. CRED-PRO is intended to foster a critical mass of respect for children, their needs, their rights and their best interests among and through professionals who, by virtue of their expertise, leadership and acknowledged value, influence the lives of children, their families, and communities. Its fundamental orientation to children’s rights is embodied in the values, principles and standards of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. Consistent with the spirit and nature of the Convention, CRED-PRO’s primary goal is achieve understanding, respect and application of children’s rights as a way of professional life for all those working for and with children in order to improve the well-being, development and health of children. Voluntary, respectful partnerships are central to CRED-PRO’s mission and values, pursued through working cooperatively with professions, higher education, civil society and government to make mutually valued advances in direct practices, community and systems programs, and advocacy influencing children’s quality of life.

The CRED PRO curriculum for professionals working with youth is designed to provide professionals with an understanding of how to respect and promote children’s rights in their practice and working environment. CRED-PRO is currently primarily focused on the health professions/professionals. This project is dedicated to

- develop and implement strategies and systems for ensuring the implementation of child rights education by EPs at initial and continuing education/training levels in Europe; adapt the curriculum specific to the profession and their working environment with various versions to fit different professional, educational, cultural, economic and social environments.
- share and implement the child rights education curricula-modules for across Europe through creation of an interdependent network of EPs and education and training institutions for educational psychologists
- develop the CRED-PRO educational module in form of an e-learning course made available on the CRESPE website
- produce and make available a CRESPE website and virtual network platform for trained EPs to share best practice and to access the developed educational CRESPE module
- increase the number of EPs fostering child rights through the implementation of the educational CRESPE module as an accredited education programs across the participating countries

Goals of the educational module are

- to provide insight and understanding in the relevance and importance of the principles of human rights and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child to health and well-being of children and adolescents and their families
- to train EPs to apply these principles to their practice and working environment

In particular, the project aims

- to identify training/CPD needs of educational psychologists , differences among EU member states in access to training courses, possibilities to improve access to training/CPD related to the children's rights convention;
- to develop a proposal for a joint programme of training/CPD courses across the EU related to the children's rights convention.

The course addresses the implications of children's rights in the educational system. From individual day-to-day relationships between EPs, children and families, to the development of relevant public policy on the local, national and international levels, this course will seek to introduce the knowledge, perspective and skills required to improve educational systems, environment and health and well being of children by respecting their human rights.

Criteria for participation in the Training of Trainers (TOT)

Participants will have to demonstrate:

- Competence in both spoken and written English
- Skills to enable them to use the ToT to develop training on the curriculum within their own country
- Representation or active membership of a lead or influential organisation of EPs
- Willingness and capacity to undertake advocacy to promote the implementation of the curriculum at the national level.
- Preparedness to bring proposals for an implementation strategy to be shared and discussed

Impact

Child rights education is achieving increasing attention and support in the nations/regions where CRED-PRO initiatives have been underway. CRED-PRO has developed a foundational child rights education curriculum for all youth health professionals – available for revision for cultural fit throughout the world.

Central Eastern Europe partners have held a successful regional training of trainers and regional planning meeting (Turkey, Croatia, Serbia, Azerbaijan, Uzbekistan, Georgia, Iraq participants in Ankara, December 2008) with observers-contributors from South America, the US, and Canada. The Patient's Rights Centre of Georgia is planning its first organizing meeting as follow-up for February 2009. Work is being undertaken in each of the other countries to develop a strategy for advancing the curriculum for training child health professionals.

In Latin American pediatric leaders have developed a regional-Spanish version of the original curriculum on child rights education for child health professionals, and have added a child protection module.

Latin America leadership in Argentina, Chile, Colombia, and Uruguay have taken part in regional training, national plans have been developed, and training and planning are being implemented to institutionalize a child rights approach in child health preparation, continuing education, policies and practices.

In South Africa a participatory model for incorporating child consultation in the development of child rights education has been successfully tested and its findings are to be applied in the development of curricula and education programs.

In British Columbia, Canada, a project team has been established, including representation from pediatrics, nursing, and family practice medicine, to cooperatively develop programs of child rights education. Review of medical school curricula in British Columbia has been conducted revealing opportunities for incorporation of child rights education. In Tanzania cooperation has been achieved among critical government agencies and civil society NGOs to design, develop and implement child rights education for early child development professionals and service providers.

Adaptation of the CRED-PRO curriculum for professionals working in the field of early years is being undertaken in collaboration with the Government of Tanzania, and a wide range of civil society partners. The revision of the curriculum will be finalized in April 2009 and a national training of trainers undertaken in June 2009, together the development of an action plan for sustained implementation. The curriculum is intended to be incorporated into the core training of early years workers, community health workers, nursery staff, pre-primary teachers, social workers and community development workers. CRED-PRO is also collaborating closely with the initiative to develop early childhood indicators which may be piloted in Tanzania.

CRED-PRO and the IICRD have begun a research and development program, initial literature review completed, to develop indicators, measures, and evaluation tools/systems to determine change influenced produced through child rights education and interventions.