

Youth – Actor of Social Change

“Parents Together”

This document is part of a larger collection of examples of current policies for young people in Europe. The collection is an outcome of a European research project called “UP2YOUTH – Youth: actor of social change?”

The basic idea of the “current practice” collection is to see how current practices and policies relate to young people as active agents in shaping their lives. Therefore, our intention is not a collection of “good” or “best” practices. Rather, it includes also practices, which are interesting because of their relation to young people’s agency but which involve problematic aspects, such as restricted financial resources, a very thin spread, or no clear evaluation criteria. We have applied a searching pattern which asked for “strengths” and “weaknesses”. This explicitly opens space for your own evaluation, because also policies are included, which definitely do have weaknesses, but are highly interesting for specific reasons. Therefore we have to stress that the researchers did not evaluate these practices themselves.

The whole collection can be found at <http://www.up2youth.org/content/view/192/60/>

Section	Indications of contents
Title of programme/ practice	“Parents Together”
Location	Italy - Florence
Main theme	Young parenthood
Practice/Programme-related keywords	Support; Learning
Summary of programme/ practice	This plan aims to create a free space of advising and supporting parents in difficulty in their development of parental tasks. After some individual <i>colloquiums</i> there is the opportunity to attend to weekly groups, guided by specialised coordinators. This same association organises also separate groups for fathers or mothers, in which they have the opportunity to discuss between themselves, on the difficulties of living together and of being a parent. There is also a telephone line for parents and a one to one counselling service.
Target	All the parents who feel unsatisfied with their role and capabilities. This is not a space planned to serve only young parents or new parents; the target group includes also parents with adolescent children.
Objectives of programme/ practice	
Content of programme/ practice	Since the beginning of the project, the Association also organises open seminars and a telephone line for parents with problems.
Time scale	It is an ongoing practice that continues since 10 years, and the

	results seem to be appreciated (there is no official evaluation going on) by the parents who use it.
Programme/ practice design	Decision-making actors and process: funded by the City Council and the Province of Florence.
	Management and leadership of programme: The association " <i>Centro di Solidarietà di Firenze – onlus</i> "
	Implementation: The Association that promotes it.
	Legal framework: This practice is locally organised and has local partnerships (with the city council and the Province).
Resources involved	No information
Evaluation	Evaluation process: The Association asks participants for feedback, but there is no external evaluator.
	Assessment of programme/ action/ practice in terms of sustainability: This service can be considered as a good practice because it promotes the personal increase without introducing packages or pre-discussed answers. The guiding line is that the best knower is the one who is experiencing the difficulties. This service applies the feminist methodology of "starting from oneself". It has high level of sustainability because the costs are low and because it involves as organisers the parents who participate.
Lessons to be drawn from programme or practice implemented	It is an important practice, because it creates networks between parents, it is flexible and can quickly respond to different needs.
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