

**European Crime Prevention Award**  
**and**  
**EUCPN Best Practice Conference 2011**  
Project Entry Form

The theme for this year's European Crime Prevention Award and EUCPN's Best Practice Conference is: "***Sport, science and art in the prevention of crime among children and youth***".

Because of the theme of the competition and general subject of the trio, projects should be linked with:

- activities of allowing young people avoiding the risks of crime or move away of it
- creating the system which allows juvenile to the creative development and which is choice to the juvenile delinquency
- education and related fields (i.e. sport, art, science) used in the crime prevention system

The list is not exhaustive. The projects may address any question relevant to this year's theme.

Please complete the attached form (the boxes are expandable). Note that the last point is for a one-page description of your project.

Entries should be in English, but may be accompanied by a version of the entry in the national language if wished. Each country may enter one project as its ECPA entry and up to two other projects to be presented at the conference. Projects should be submitted only through the National Representatives. The full ECPA rules can be found at [www.eucpn.org](http://www.eucpn.org)

Deadline for entries is **October 15<sup>th</sup>, 2011**.

Send your entry or entries to: [eucpn@mswia.gov.pl](mailto:eucpn@mswia.gov.pl).

If you have any questions, please contact [eucpn@mswia.gov.pl](mailto:eucpn@mswia.gov.pl).

## **ECPA/BPC 2011**

**Please answer the following questions in English.**

- 1. Is this your country's ECPA entry or is it an additional project? (Only one ECPA entry per country plus up to two other projects.)**

It is our country's ECPA entry (entry for France).

- 2. What is the title of the project?**

« La Montagne comme école de vie » (Mountain as a school of life)

- 3. Please give a short general description of the project.**

High mountain can be used as an exceptional and original social mediation tool when working with youngsters who are at risk of committing a crime or of reoffending. It is a very imposing natural environment that most of these youngsters do not know, and which compels them to adopt a different behaviour. They discover in themselves capacities they didn't know they had. Another important notion they discover is the need to respect strict rules -in particular with regards to security. Lastly, by spending five to six days in the mountain together with mountain professionals, they learn to establish a relation of trust with adults.

Mountain is seldom used for educational activities because it is a difficult environment. It requires specific equipments, logistical planning and it can be expensive. Our association uses the mountain as a tool for educational activities, particularly through sports, in order to foster integration and prevent risky behaviours among young offenders.

Our activities are based on the collaboration between education professionals and mountain professionals. These two groups have a different perception of young delinquents.

- 4. Please describe the objective(s) of the project.**

"En Passant Par la Montagne" (EPPM) - "Going Through the Mountain"- is an association created in 1995, the purpose of which is to allow young people who are in a difficult situation to find the motivation to go ahead by participating in mountain activities. EPPM acts as an intermediary between social workers and mountain professionals, in particular by assisting educational organisations in planning and implementing projects set in a mountain environment. The association helps

youngsters with a "difficult" background to practice mountain sports, and teaches them to respect a set of rules. These young people are under the tutelage of the Youth Judicial Protection institution (Protection judiciaire de la Jeunesse), or are sent by prevention services, colleges or other organisms and institutions dedicated to preventing juvenile delinquency.

The idea is that by being in contact with high mountain, young people discover how to overcome their own limitations and fears. Also, they personally experiment two important values: commitment and humility.

## **5. How was the project implemented?**

Each project has a duration of 5 to 6 days, and EPPM manages more than 20 projects a year. They take place all year long, in locations situated in the French, Italian and Swiss mountains. Also, EPPM offers mountain-climbing in the South of France and in the Ile-de-France region (around Paris).

The majority of the public are boys who come from "difficult", urban neighbourhoods, from all over France. They are minors under the tutelage of the Justice system (Protection Judiciaire de la Jeunesse), or who are sent to us by prevention services, or through schools that have special integration schemes. EPPM activities are also attended by a certain number of young adults recently released from prison.

Each project is built together by EPPM and educational teams. We follow a strict methodology, which includes the definition of objectives, a specific financial funding, the signing of a convention, the actual implementation of the programme on location, and its evaluation and follow-up.

On average, it takes two to three months to prepare a project. The amount of time needed for planning varies according to the type of institution that initiates the project (whether it is a school, a half-way house run by the Protection Judiciaire de la Jeunesse, a Minors Centre...).

EPPM is in charge of logistics: booking, housing, recruitment of mountain professionals, lending mountain gear... Youngsters follow a preparation programme, which includes psychological and physical exercises. Also, they participate in building "their" project together with the EPPM team.

Each project is tailor-made, according to the needs of each specific group of youngsters, and the objectives of each educational team.

However, all projects have a certain number of common characteristics, the first of which is that they all include mountain-climbing or trekking. After a first day of preparation, youngsters follow an "immersion" course ("ice school", cascade, or *via ferrata* which is a mountain route equipped with fixed cables, stemples, ladders and bridges). Then, youngsters spend two to three days in the mountain. Depending on the season and location, they may do nordic ski, raquettes or mountain trekking. They spend a night or two in the wilderness, sleeping in a mountain refuge or camping. Youngsters collaborate in daily activities such as preparing the meals or collecting wood. They also do heavier work such as helping to open a refuge at the start of the season or cleaning up a trekking path.

An evaluation of the trip is done immediately afterwards. A second evaluation is conducted two or three months later by the institution that initiated the programme.

**6. Were partners involved in planning and/or development and/or implementation of the project? If so, who were they, and what were their roles?**

There are two main partners: the Judicial Protection of Youth (Protection judiciaire de la Jeunesse), with which a convention was signed in 2002 and reconducted in 2010, and the inter-regional penitentiary administration of the Rhône Alpes region, with which a convention was signed in 2011.

Both institutions recommend EPPM to the education teams who are in contact with "difficult" youngsters, whenever EPPM's objectives and activities are in line with their own educational objectives.

Also, both institutions are involved in defining and evaluating each project together with EPPM. Other partners also intervene, depending on each project. These can be the social services department of a city or a Regional Youth Information Centre. These partners also participate in defining and preparing the project, selecting youngsters, supervising the programme, and providing staff.

**7. How did you build in plans to measure the performance of the project? Has the project been evaluated? How, and by whom?**

EPPM has defined a certain number of qualitative and quantitative indicators in order to evaluate the results of each project.

Some of the qualitative indicators are:

- did the youngster establish a good relation with adults?
- did he reach the summit?
- has he, or the group, achieved the objective of the sport activity?
- has he shown support towards other youngsters?
- how did he behave when confronted with failure?
- did he take good care of the equipment? did he lose anything?
- did he respect the schedule?
- has he been able to prepare his mountain gear on his own?
- is he satisfied with the stay?
- how does he deal with values such as overcoming his own limitations, success, solidarity?

Some of the quantitative indicators are:

- number of conflicts among youngsters during the trip
- number of problems encountered with security measures linked to the mountain environment
- risky behaviours in daily life

A first evaluation is done right after the trip, thanks to a standard evaluation sheet that all participants have to fill -teachers, youngsters, social workers, and mountain professionals. A second evaluation is conducted a few weeks later, within the structure that initiated the project. This second evaluation is done jointly by the

education teams, the youngsters themselves, the various partners and the EPPM team. It is included later in the overall evaluation of each institution.

**8. What were the results? How far were the objectives of the project achieved?**

In 2010, the association managed 22 projects, and 189 youngsters were offered a stay in the mountain. The number of staff involved was 79.

In 2011, the number of projects increased to 28 projects.

The objective is to allow youngsters to discover new ways of living their daily lives through the experience they live in the mountain, and the exchanges they have with teachers and instructors on site as well as back home.

One of the main objectives that was achieved is that each of the 189 participants reached his own "summit" during the stay.

Another achievement is that each youngster discovered a new place, a new way of life that has compelled him to change -even for a limited time span- his view on life. Each youngster is confronted with a new natural environment, as well as new rules that are not meaningless but perfectly sound, and a new sense of discipline. Also, youngsters are placed in a situation where they must collaborate with others. Lastly, they discover that effort and difficulties can actually bring pleasure.

However, one area that needs to be improved is how to translate the values learnt in the mountain into the youngsters' urban life and environment.

**9. Are there reports or documents available on the project? In print or on the Web? Please, give references to the most relevant ones.**

The latest yearly activity report (2010) of "En passant par la montagne" association.

**10. Please, write a *one page* description of the project:**

By being confronted to a mountain environment during a five to six days course in mountain climbing or trekking on site, youngsters develop their own capacity to adapt to a new set of rules and to a different kind of risk. When climbing a mountain as part of a group, youngsters learn to establish a different kind of relation with adults and with other youngsters. They discover they have capacities they did not know they had. They learn to anticipate, and to work towards the achievement of an objective. These notions are fundamental when it comes to crime prevention and integration. Youngsters learn to feel their body in a different way. They discover their weaknesses and strengths, their limits and capacities. They learn how to respect rules that are vital in a mountain environment. They learn how to reach a "summit" through effort and by abiding to rules. Also, they learn how to collaborate with other participants. They have to take care of their own mountain gear, to help each other, and to respect others. All these elements are part of a long-term education.

EPPM association works closely with various institutions: the Judicial Youth Protection (Protection judiciaire de la Jeunesse), the inter-regional penitentiary

administration of the Rhône Alpes region, cities and schools. The originality of its approach is that it brings together education professionals and mountain professionals. By sharing their experience and know-how, these professionals are able to offer "difficult" youngsters a unique, life experience that will help them avoid risky behaviours and re-offending.

With the same idea of bringing together people from different backgrounds, EPPM also offers courses where blind people participate in mountain activities together with non-blind people. By being confronted together to a mountain environment, both groups learn about their own limitations and unknown capacities.

Other sport associations are currently offering similar courses based on sports, such as sailing and surf.

EPPM has been working in the French and Italian Alps (in partnership with "ASPERT", an Italian NGO working on the same topics), and has developed a network in the Pyrenees. EPPM is keen to set up throughout Europe a network of associations working on crime and reoffending prevention through mountain activities.