

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.)

National project - ECPA entry - Lithuania

2. What is the title of the project?

WITH FORUM THEATRE - WITHOUT THE VIOLENCE

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

Problem description:

Analyzing the official statistical data in recent years it is obvious to see a decrease in juvenile crime; in addition, there also has been a reduction in cases involving minors. However, taking into account the decreasing total number of delinquent children and teenagers in Lithuania, the figures remain relatively high. On the other hand, various studies show that the nature of criminal activities committed by youngsters has changed – thefts and robberies have been replaced by more frequent drug dealing or violent offences (bullying, rape and assault). Recently, Lithuanian mass media has been overwhelmed by cruel and unmotivated homicides committed by teenagers.

These examples indicate that the grounds of juvenile crime are related not only to social circumstances such as poverty, but also to the psychological and domestic difficulties of youth as well.

Stereotypes and attitudes formed by mass media, easily available drugs, violent material, pornography, weakened family and local community bonds, tension and distrust in society, the increasingly rapid pace of life, permanent changes and instability – all these issues pose new challenges for contemporary youngsters. Unfortunately, psychologically vulnerable young people usually lack a positive, helpful and supportive environment. According to the results of a UNICEF survey, parents in Lithuania only have contact with their children for 7 mins per day on average. Furthermore, in Lithuania there is a huge problem with bullying – over 70% of pupils are bullied. Thus, youngsters in Lithuania constantly experience and face many serious problems and these problems are often left unresolved because of the lack of adult attention. Consequently, these unsolved problems and the inability to solve them in a socially acceptable way may result in criminality. Delinquent behavior in minors comes out of social neglect, especially when the crime is related to addiction and violence. Social neglect is one of the reasons that lead to negative social skills, frequent conflicts with parents and peers, inadequate reactions towards stressful or uncertain situations and low self-esteem.

According to the National Crime Prevention and Control Programme, a positive change in the criminogenic situation in Lithuania will only be seen if progress in social and cultural-spiritual spheres is made by using creative, involving and innovative methods. In order to ensure the effective prevention of juvenile crime, it is very important to focus on

community empowerment, youth self-expression and encouragement, social skills education, as well as encouraging society to correct these problems.

While implementing the prevention of youth crime through this programme, all activities have been based on the following fundamental principles: relevance, creative processes and community involvement.

The method of Forum theatre:

In the 1970 Brazilian theatrical innovator Augusto Boal funded the “Arena Theatre” theater in São Paulo. In order to find out people’s opinions, he organized discussions after the plays. Later, he developed the following method: during a performance the audience stop the action and suggest an alternative course of action. Once a play was stopped by a woman from the audience who excitedly climbed onto the stage and showed the actors how things ought to be. According to Boal, that moment was a theatrical coup. This was a birth of the Forum Theatre, where the boundaries between actors and spectators disappeared.

This method has come to Lithuania together with the people who work with youngsters initiatives. In 1998 the actress Rimanta Vaičekonytė studied this method in Estonia, Denmark and Sweden. During her studies in Estonia, she noticed the huge impact of this method to the participants the Forum Theatre. During each performance discussions about the story, characters and their behavior takes place. The audience then expresses their opinions, find a better solution to the stage conflicts.

In 2004 Rimanta invited the well know Forum Theatre Specialist Mary Nilson from Sweden to Lithuania; on the 1st of July 2004 the Public Organization “The house of arts and education” was established and a program for the Forum Theatre was created.

The Forum Theatre as a method of crime prevention is applied in many countries. This theatrical form of social debate aims to provoke discussion about important and painful issues in the community through theatrical means. During performances young people can see their problems played out on the stage, which they can then actively change by discussing what they see and feel, and they can participate not merely as passive spectators but also as involved actors.

This project is ongoing and its activities are implemented every year in different schools, day centers, foster homes, socialization centers and youth oriented organizations in Lithuania since 2005. The implementation of the project is financed by the Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry of Education and Science, the Ministry of Health and national and European funds.

Target group:

- Pupils from 5-12 grades (12 – 19 years old);
- High risk or delinquent behavior youth.

Other participants: teachers, social workers from schools and foster homes, school counselors, psychologists, policemen, Forum theatre volunteers, parents of pupils.

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

This project aims to reduce the risk of juvenile crime by using creative methods and reinforcing schools’ and other educational organizations’ ability to solve problems through developing adolescents’ social and psychological skills.

Goals	How it is implemented
To help communities find out the problems of their minors and encourage communities to talk about these problems.	Questionnaires, discussions during project presentation for the community, debates during the creation of Forum Theatre performances, dissemination of information about the project and its results (articles in the press, flyers, posters, brochures, public events).
To empower communities to solve their problems creatively by using the Forum Theatre method.	Introduction of the Forum Theatre to the community, seminars for teachers and other actors of the community, Forum Theatre workshops for teenagers in schools, dissemination of methodological material and information about the project and its results (articles in the press, flyers, posters, brochures, public event).
To involve youth in positive and creative activities.	Presentation of the project – motivating people to participate in the Forum Theatre activities, art therapy and other creative workshops.
To develop psychological resistance, social and healthy lifestyle.	Forum theatre, art therapy and other creative workshops, film education, communication and cooperation skills training group, extreme hiking, team formation.
To involve high risk teenagers into socially acceptable activities.	Summer camp.

5. How was the project implemented?

In the first stage of the project performances are created using real life problems that come to light through discussions, surveys and interviews, and are then performed in schools, foster homes or other educational organizations. Forum theatre volunteers and youth from the educational organization participate together in this creative process. Secondly, prevention is implemented by organizing summer camps for the delinquent or high risk youngsters. These camps help to develop social and healthy lifestyles, positive involvement, personal responsibility, self-esteem and trust, critical thinking and creative problem solving and orientation of values. To achieve these goals creative methods such as performance, art therapy, film education, extreme hiking etc. are used.

The project has been implemented according to the following model.

I PHASE - FORUM THEATRE IN SCHOOLS.

The project is implemented in several schools at the same time seeking to promote partnership between schools. The duration of activities in one school ranges from 2 to 6 months.

1. *Presentation of the project.* In the partner school pupils, teachers, psychologists, social workers, policemen and parents are acquainted with the Forum Theatre method. Their expectations toward the project and critical issues are discussed and future activities are presented. The seminars are organized for the teachers and other people who work with youth. In these seminars the theory of Forum Theatre is presented,

filmed material is shown, the possibility to exploit the Forum Theatre method for violence, drug use and crime prevention purposes is explained. Posters and flyers are distributed in the schools.



The presentation of Forum theatre for the schools community and teachers. 2010 m.



2. *Surveys of community problems in schools.*

These are carried in order to find the biggest social and psychological problems and their causes in schools and foster

homes, and to assess the psychological climate in these organizations. They include:

- Questionnaire surveys for pupils from 5-12 grades;
- Interviews with teachers, social workers, school counselors, psychologists, police officers and other workers about existing problems in the partner school or foster home;
- “Forum theatre mail”: in the schools big mailboxes are placed in which teachers, pupils and parents of that school can post information, stories related to the problems, crimes and other sensitive issues pupils faces in their community. Pupils from schools and children from foster homes can write to an “Anonymous Forum Theatre Friend” about their problems, that they would like to solve through Forum theatre activities and may also receive a replay of support.

To preserve the anonymity and credibility of the project, the youth mail and research is carried out by school counselors and psychologists who do not work in particular partner organization.

The results of this research and all the recommendations for further prevention work are presented to the authorities of the organization, teachers, social workers, psychologists and police officers. Also the material is passed down to the creative group of Forum theatre as a basis for creating a new performance.

3. *Psychological workshops.* In these workshops pupils learn how to communicate and cooperate effectively, how to manage and solve conflicts and problems positively; they also learn to recognize and understand their own feeling and to compassionate wit others. These seminars are conducted by psychologists from other organizations.
4. *Creating the Forum theatre performance.* In this phase the volunteers from Forum theatre and pupils from the partner school cooperate together. The Forum theatre workshops are held in the school or foster home once or twice per week as a non-formal educational activity:

- Few individual scripts based on the problems highlighted in the survey are prepared. The actors and mentors of Forum theatre analyze and discuss the scripts, their problematic themes, the roles of victim and offender. The scripts are mostly created on an improvisational basis and by developing explicit conflict between victim and offender in order to show the existing problems and its consequences clearly.
- The performance is constructed according to the scripts: the creative-debate rehearsals are conducted by professional actors. These rehearsals are not focused only on performance as a final product but also on the assessment of the participants attitudes, values, ability to communicate and work in a team.

5. *Forum theatre performance - discussion.* In this stage the Forum theatre performance shown and discussed with the community of that organization:

- In the beginning interactive games are played with the audience in order to create communal atmosphere;
- Then a short conflict situation based on problematic issues is performed;
- Joker (facilitator/moderator) together with audience discusses the situation and searches for ways to solve that conflict. People from the audience willing to change role-players are found;
- The situation is performed again, the person from the audience tries to improvise and to solve the problem;
- The situation is discussed again: if changes are needed, the situation is performed again.



In these activities teachers, parents, pupils, police officers and other authorities are involved.



6. *Presentation of project results to the community.* The final performance is held for all the community which is presented with the results of the project. All the actors, pupils and other community members share their experience and impressions, and the community is motivated to use the method of Forum theatre independently from the project.

II PHASE – SUMMER CAMP FOR TEENAGERS FROM HIGH RISK GROUPS

This free of charge camp aims to help children from high risk families or delinquent youngsters to find ways to express themselves, lead a healthier and safer lifestyle, introduce them to socially positive and creative activities as well as to psychological and creative ways of solving problems. The camp can be long-term (2 weeks) or as a day center activity (day-camp). All the methods that are used are adjusted specially to the demands of the children of high risk families. Activities are intended not only to develop social skills and effective problem-solving, but are also focused on cognition and emotional management, self-regulation and safe and effective stress management techniques.

Generally there are about 10-30 social risk/delinquent behavior teenagers (14-17 years old) participating in one camp. These teenagers are invited to the camp through the partner organizations which participated in the first phase of the project. Non-problematic youngsters – volunteers of Forum theatre also participate in the camp too to help others perform their problems.

These workshops are conducted in the camp:

- *Workshops of Forum theatre.* In assistance with theatrical methods children analyze their personal and global social problems, create, play out and discuss short stories based on real life events.
- *Art therapy group.* Trains kids art skills, creativity and perceptiveness, self-expression, individuality and self-sufficiency.



Day camp 2010.

- *Psychological group communication exercises.* Participants learn partnership cooperation, to hear and understand each other, to express their wishes without upstaging others, to analyze conflicts, to recognize and understand feelings and worries, to solve apparently simple things which can make our life difficult.

Depending on the type of a camp, it's financial situation and local conditions additional activities are also provided: oratorical language, know-how and sport marches, dance therapy, sport and healthy lifestyle, trips and excursions.



Camp finale in Neringa, 2008 m.

At the end of the camp a public event for the participant's parents and sponsors is organized. The participants put on a Forum theatre performance, which was specially created during the camp. Afterwards they share their impressions and experience.

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?

The partners are involved in all phases of the project: preparation, implementation and project dissemination. The partner provides facilities, informs the community, helps with the surveys and promotes the project.

Partner schools:

Vilnius Jono Pauliaus II-ojo gymnasium;
 Vilnius Tuskulėnų secondary school;
 Vilnius Antano Vienuolio secondary school;
 Vilnius Gabijos gymnasium;
 Vilnius Sausio 13-os secondary school;
 Vilnius Simono Daukanto gymnasium;
 Vilnius Gerosios Vilties secondary school;
 Vilnius Barbaros Radvilaitės gymnasium;
 Vilnius Švento Kristoforo gymnasium;
 Vilnius Minties gymnasium;
 Vilnius Antakalnio gymnasium;
 Kaunas Milikonių secondary school;
 Palanga Vlado Jurgučio secondary school;
 Lentvario I – oji secondary school;
 Vilnius P. Vileišio secondary school;
 Kalvelių 2-ji secondary school;
 Vilnius Jezuitų gymnasium;
 Vilnius „Senvagės“ secondary school;
 Vilnius Baltupių secondary school;
 Vilnius Jeruzalės gymnasium;
 Vilnius Naujininkų secondary school;
 Kaunas Jono Jablonskio gymnasium;
 Klaipėda „Aukuro“ secondary school;
 Druskininkų Ryto gymnasium;
 Druskininkų Atgimimo secondary school;
 Druskininkų Saulės secondary school.

Foster homes:

Vilnius 3-iejį child foster home;
 Vilnius problem-oriented child foster home;
 Visų Šventųjų parapijos child foster home;
 Child foster home “Turn to children”;
 Child foster home „Gilė”;
 Vėliučionių problem-oriented child foster home.

Other organizations:

Klaipėda regional amendment inspection;
 Druskininkai youth activity center;
 Cultural centre of Kirtimai;
 Children day centre of Pilaite;
 Culture workers training center;
 Kaunas Youth Steering Group of the Forum Theatre partners;
 Educational center of Širvintai region.

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

Project evaluation is done by project coordinators every year after working with every school, foster home or after every camp.

Qualitative evaluation of the project has been performed during final discussions with communities (teachers, parents, pupils, and partners) and other Forum theatre actors: what is the opinion of project participators about the project activities, and how the values of participators have changed during the project. We analyzed the situation and assessed the results of the project during those meetings. The participants of the project carried out the assessment of the project effectiveness and found that the project had the planned influence on the prevention of youth delinquency and we achieved positive changes in an extremely cost-effective manner. At the end of the calendar year, we organized discussions to evaluate the project. During that discussion we analyzed, assessed and summarized the projects results, evaluated the weak and strong sides of project implementation and difficulties motivating the members of the target group, foresaw possibilities to continue the project.

Quantative achievements of the project have been evaluated according to these criteria:

- How many community members participated in every phase of project (in the presentation of the project, in problem survey, in creating the performance, in the performance itself, in the final event, in the camp and its final event);
- How many were active partners;
- How many workshops are conducted;
- How many performance are created and demonstrated;
- How widely the project was publicized (how many articles, informational messages were printed).

We carried out the assessment of children’s and teenagers’ adjustment, social competence, situation in families, relationships with adults and peers, relations with school, and relation with micro environment (structured interview at the beginning and the end of meetings) and interview with parents. The effectiveness of the project could be proved by the intentions of participants of the project to improve preventative activity and achieve long-term results of that activity.

The project won a Prize at the National Best Preventative Project Award in 2007 and was recognized as one of the best such projects by the Interdepartmental Commission established by the Minister of the Interior.

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

During these workshops it was improved:

- Internecine communication;
- Learning by observing;
- Learning to help people to avoid emotional stress;
- Learning to solve conflicts and difficulties;
- Learning to recognize frequently recurring problems;
- Learning to recognize difficulties before they raises;
- Learning to take an active role in problem solving;
- Learning to understand others deeply;
- Learning to reduce tension;
- The civil, intercultural, social competencies.

Already implemented separate project activities of the I phase:

1. 2010:

- “Education of youths’ and teenagers’ social resistance in Vilnius by using the method of Forum theatre”. 10 partner schools from Vilnius, about 5000 participants;
- “Modulating a socially acceptable behavior by using Forum theatre method”. 4 partner schools from Vilnius and Lentvaris, 1 partner foster home. 600 participants of target group, 100 teachers, social worker and etc.

2. 2009:

- “Modulating a socially acceptable behavior by using Forum theatre method”. Veliucioniu Socialization Centre, participated 18 social risk teenagers;
- “Forum theatre is a youths’ initiative”. 1 partner school, 2 day centers, 345 participants.

3. 2008:

- “Modulating a socially acceptable behavior in schools of Vilnius by using Forum theatre method”. 3 partner schools, 1 teachers’ qualification centre, and 2000 participants;
- “Forum theatre and social interventions – creative methods to improve the work of various groups”. 1 partner foster home. 400 participants of target group, 100 teachers, social workers.

4. 2007:

- “Drug use prevention in the schools by using method of Forum theatre”. 4 partner schools, 1000 participants;
- “Mental health and violence prevention in the schools by using the method of Forum theatre”, 2 partner schools, 1 foster home, 1 day centre, 1500 participants;
- “Creative method of Forum theatre for youths and teenagers to enhance their self-expression and initiative”. 2 partner schools, 1 day centre.

5. 2006 - "Creative method of Forum theatre for youths and teenagers", 2 partner schools in Vilnius, 2 foster homes, 500 participants.
6. 2005 - "Creative method of Forum theatre for youths and teenagers", 4 partner schools from Vilnius, 3 foster homes, 5000 participants, 3500 of them – children.

Already implemented camps:

1. 2010 – day-camp "Forum theatre is my friend"; 20 social risk –behavior teenagers, 5 volunteers; Long- term camp "Forum theatre in Croatia"; 98 children from all over Lithuania;
2. 2008 – day-camp "New vision on yourself and the others", 25 social risk –behavior teenagers from the Roma community and foster homes; long-termed camp „Forum theatre as a interactive educational method for youth and teenagers”, 37 youngsters from all over Lithuania.
3. 2007 – long-termed camp „Forum theatre as a interactive method in crime prevention”, 50 youngsters from all over Lithuania.
4. 2006 – long-termed camp at the sea „Forum theatre in crime prevention”, 40 delinquent teenagers, 200 other actors.

Part of the activities was oriented to general preventative measures, which were tried and proved in the every year activities. Preventative work is a creative activity. It is based on constant search for innovations, which often is connected with new problems, which face children and youth. It is very important that the project has succession; we have been looking for new, interesting and attractive forms of children and youth occupation. The help of volunteers has been very important. The criteria of the project effectiveness is the factor that we have not confined ourselves only providing the information or organizing leisure activities for the project target group – we have used complex preventative activity, applying effective and new methods. We looked for the possibility to develop our activity. We were interested in the situation in other countries of the EU, were looking for the partners to share our good practice and experience. We applied the variety of purposefully measures, i.e. the complex of measures, which are oriented to formation and development of social skills and children's occupation (consultations, group activities, individual meetings, modulation of situations, thematical discussions and so on).

According to participants evaluations it can be stated that in the schools where the project was implemented self-communication was improved, pupils learned new communication forms, ways of solving problems and conflicts, to avoid stress and emotional tension, people became more open, tolerant and friendly. As a result Forum theatre method is used in the school activities after the project is finished solving the problems that appeared in daily class life. Often additional seminars or other additional activities are asked, pupils actively taking part in Forum theatre activities became volunteers and join daily theatre activities.

Recently our organization is implementing a new project activity in which 145 Lithuanian schools, 2600 pupils (1000 social risk behavior children among them) from 37 regions of Lithuania. This activity will integrate Forum theatre into the school non-formal education programs. 148 teachers from various Lithuanian schools will be educated to use Forum theatre method.

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

Problems establishment evaluation survey questionnaire;

Methodical book "Towards the Forum theatre";

Methodical book "Forum Theatre for children and youths during non-formal education workshops"

Footage from the Forum theatre camp;

Methodical film "Bullying: recognize, evaluate, stop";

www.forumtheatre.lt

<http://www.bernardinai.lt/straipsnis/2010-12-15-forumo-teatro-metodo-mokesi-sesios-vilniaus-mokyklos/54722>

<http://www.visitneringa.com/lt/main/news/news?id=15017>

<http://www.vilnius.lt/newvilniusweb/index.php/101/?itemID=91587>

<http://www.sietuva.lt/naujienos/forum-teatras/>

<http://www.ve.lt/naujienos/nuomones/nuomones/forumo-teatras---pries-nusikalstamuma-402196/>

<http://www.menufaktura.lt/?m=1052&s=62770>

<http://www.bernardinai.lt/straipsnis/2008-09-24-tekle-kavtaradze-forumo-teatras-kviecia-rupintis-savimi-kitais-ir-pasauliu/21638>

<http://www.lkdte.lt/lkdte/aktualijos/archyvas/2008/8.5/17.pdf>

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

Teen crime is only a tip of the iceberg, the last point, beyond which are hidden social and psychological problems such as a social neglect, social exclusion and it leads to psychological or physical aggression, anxiety, low self-esteem, poor social skills. Public organization "The house of arts and education" already works 6 years in cooperation with various Lithuanian schools, day care centers, foster homes, socialization centers and other institutions and through the Forum Theatre method implements the project "With Forum Theatre – without violence". The project intends to empower social skills of youngsters, to build their psychological resilience, also to strengthen school / community care institutions.

During the project the school / community care institutions met with the Forum Theatre and similar creative methods through seminars, meetings and as a consequence of that learn to solve problems both in individual and community level. Questionnaire-based surveys, e-mail forum, chats with teachers, social educators, police assistance helped to face problems of daily school or child care home life. Those problems were handled through the Forum Theatre sessions: young people were discussing, creating plays, exploring their values. Pupils through psychological communication skills workshops were improving their social skills. Prepared by the Forum Theatre team performance has been demonstrated to the whole school community.

In addition summer camps for the social risk / delinquent adolescents of the participating schools or other institutions were organized. In that camps were performed various Forum Theatre activities: psychological and communication skills improvement in sports and healthy lifestyles, art therapy and other creative activities. At the end of the project the presentation of the results and discussion with the participants took place. Information on the activities of the project usually is published in the Forum Theatre's website, local newspapers and other online newspapers.

The Forum Theatre project always attracts great interest, active involvement and positive feedback from participating youngsters, teachers and parents. Forum Theatre is expected in Lithuanian schools, other home care institutions. This project can be repeated continuously, every time with an increasing new facilities, new people. It can be adapted for all ages from various backgrounds addressing various social problems.