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## SUCCESS STORIES

### Social Work Training Project at the University of Applied Science Joanneum Graz

#### Scope and main objectives of the project:

This success story is considered to be an educational project. Within a study project students of social work organised an exchange workshop between social work students and police academy students.

The participants and likewise target groups were social work students and police academy students. Social work students conceptualised a half-day workshop which took place once so far in a classroom at FH JOANNEUM. 25 people participated at the workshop. Didactical methods were a mixture of presentations and exercises in groups of 5 people.

#### Face-to-face workshop with the following main objectives:

- to increase the mutual understanding between the two professions;
- to reduce mutual prejudices;
- to improve the collaboration during official actions.

#### Agenda of the workshop:

Content	Time
Project presentation	10 min
Presentation of the profession police	15 min
Presentation of the profession social work	15 min
Speaking about mutual prejudices in plenary	20 min
Forming groups	10 min
Break	20 min
Group work 1 (commons of the professions in daily business)	30 min
Group work 2 (reading and discussing certain newspaper articles)	70 min
Break	30 min
Presentation and discussion of a case study in plenary	50 min
Closing remarks (Why is collaborating between the two professions meaningful?)	10 min
<i>Total</i>	<i>280 min</i>

### **Teaching elements for group work 1 (commons of the professions in daily business):**

- Story 1 “Crisis centre”
- Story 2 “Social security office”
- Story 3 “Youth shared flat”

For each story the participants had to answer questions e.g. on if and how the collaboration between social workers and police officers worked in that example; how the participants would have acted in the described situation.

### **Teaching elements for group work 2 (reading and discussing certain newspaper articles):**

- Newspaper article 1 “It needs both, the police and social work” (on the work with delinquents)
- Newspaper article 2 “Kinder garden closed because of psychological terror of a female neighbour” (on the work with mentally ill people in public space)
- Newspaper article 3 “Trial on police officer who shot nine times on a mentally ill woman during house search” (on the work with mentally ill people in exceptional situations)
- Newspaper article 4 “Alcohol ban in public area of Vienna” (on the work with homeless and addicted people).

### **Administration of the project:**

It was a study project for bachelor degree’s students of social work on behalf of the police academy Graz. Funding for the catering at the workshop was paid by the police academy. The half-day workshop took place in May 2018 and has been a one-time event so far.

### **Findings and conclusions of the project:**

#### *Exemplary feedback by social work students:*

- It makes sense for both professions to exchange professionally, especially if students are still in education
- It would have been better to reduce the amount of case studies in the workshop and instead to talk more about the different worldviews of the professions
- It opened my eyes that collaboration between social workers and police officers is important, because in many cases we work with the same clients
- Networking between the professions is very important

#### *Exemplary feedback by students of the police academy:*

- It was interesting to know what social workers do and that we can contact them in certain cases
- It is important to inform our colleagues about what we learned today about social work
- I’ll take with me that collaboration between the professions needs to be better, mutual respect for the other profession is very important
- I think it was interesting for the social work students to see what we can do and where our boundaries are, because we are bound by basic law principles

**Themes and settings:**

The case studies that were discussed in small groups focused on the following themes:

- Crisis Centre
- Social security office
- Youth shared flat
- Work with delinquents
- Work with mentally ill people in public space
- Work with mentally ill people in exceptional situations.