

YOUTH – BELGIUM: Youth at risk of school drop-out

SUMMARY

A multi-year programme in collaboration with various Belgian services d'accrochage scolaire (SAS), which are a structure within the Fédération Wallonie-Bruxelles that bring a social, educational and pedagogical support to young people who are at risk of dropping out of schools and aim to improve their learning and developmental conditions.



Where

Various services d'accrochage scolaire (SAS) across Wallonia (Belgium)



When

From 2021 onwards



Type of mission

Group art therapy interventions
Arts-based capacity building and training



Participants

Young people at risk of dropping out of school
Caregivers of the SAS

CONTEXT & OBJECTIVES

In addition to being widespread, mental health problems also have a huge societal impact and increase the risk of school dropout and social isolation among young people. It is estimated that nowadays one young Belgian out of three has dropped out of school. The Covid crisis exacerbated that situation which will have significant negative effects on the longer term according to experts. Youth frequenting school dropout prevention services can show symptoms of anxiety, depressive tendencies, a feeling of insecurity in themselves, isolation and shutting themselves indoors, loss of the sense and meaning of schooling leading to little or no life projects. They lack self-confidence and feel emotional unease.

Creative arts therapy is uniquely positioned for youth at risk because it is a non-verbal approach which is appropriate for children and youth who have difficulty expressing in words what they feel and need. It is indicated to treat anxiety, which is very common among young people, and it can be practised by anyone, whatever their social or cultural background.

The objectives of the programme for young people are:

- Identifying and expressing their emotions
- Exploring their identity and strengths
- Engaging in an activity

THE RED PENCIL (EUROPE)

Boulevard St-Michel, 47 B-1040 Brussels BELGIUM

www.redpencil.org – rpe@redpencil.org



When we rescue the child,
we save the adult

- Staying focused
- Enhancing their self-confidence and autonomy
- Understanding other people's emotions
- Cooperating
- Applying tools to cope with frustration or anxiety
- Developing communication and openness to others
- Learning and well-being

The caregivers of these young people are trained in order for them to understand what art therapy is about and equip them with arts-based tools they can apply with youth.

IMPACT

Participants have expressed the following about them joining art therapy sessions with the Red Pencil:

"During this workshop, I felt happy and peaceful. It was a real moment of calm where I could put my troubles aside and unwind."

"I don't really like to express my feelings and here, whether artistically or orally, I was able to learn, dare to do it a little while being less afraid of the eyes of others."

"These workshops allowed me to get to know myself better, especially to better distinguish my emotions."