



Children  
and  
Youth  
At  
Risk

2008-2015

[www.beac.st/cyar](http://www.beac.st/cyar)



«The Children and Youth At Risk in the Barents region» (CYAR 2008 - 2015) is a co-operation programme within the framework of the Barents Euro-Arctic Council. It has been developed as a result of growing concern regarding marginalized youth and children in the region. The CYAR programme is run by a Steering committee (SC) composed by all Barents partners.

The CYAR programme emphasizes that all efforts should aim to strengthen the public services and their ability to adequately assist and support children and youth on the individual level. The programme aims to improve life conditions for the youth and children at risk through cooperative actions in general (creating frameworks for exchange of information) and project activities in particular (building partnerships between public institutions at all levels and non-governmental organizations in the Barents region with responsibility for the well-being of youth and children).

In the work of the CYAR programme, *family* is the key word. All efforts should promote the sustainment, strengthening, recreation, or – as a last resort – substitution of the family. The following fields of competence will therefore receive special attention

- Strengthening of parental resources
- Development of foster care services
- Social skill training for children and youth
- Monitoring of the rights of the child

## The CYAR Project

The CYAR Project contains four main activities:

- I. Developing a situation overview of CYAR in the Barents region – creating an updated situation overview by means of regular reports from the Barents partners
- II. Exchange of expert knowledge – by means of arranging an annual expert conference on selected topics in accordance with the CYAR programme profile.
- III. Competence sharing on selected methods/programmes – by means of dissemination of four methods with documented results throughout the Barents region

- IV. Information and network building – by means of establishing a functional and systematically updated web-site for the CYAR programme and all the relevant partners.

The project's core activity is part III: dissemination of the research-based methods/programmes, which are presented below.

## CYAR Project Part III - Competence sharing

The methods selected for dissemination purposes in the Barents region are

1. The Incredible Years Programme
2. Aggression Replacement Training – ART and Family-ART
3. Family Group Conferences
4. Restorative Justice – Juvenile Mediation
5. What About Us?
6. From Violence To Caring

These have the following characteristics in common;

- They are directed at prioritized CYAR target groups
- They are knowledge-based, i.e. their effect is documented by research
- There are positive results from both Nordic and North-West Russian regions
- Dissemination of these positive results is requested by the Barents partners

This booklet briefly presents these methods, their main characteristics and how they were applied in the world in general and in North-West Russia in particular. It contains contact information and useful links for those interested in more detailed information.

The Steering Committee invites organizations who would like to learn more about the programmes and participate in the dissemination activities to contact their regional representative in the committee for further information.

Pål Christian Bergstrøm  
Chairman of the CYAR Steering Committee

# The **CYAR** Steering Committee

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# The Incredible Years programme

## About

Caroline Webster-Stratton started to develop «The Incredible Years» 30 years ago as a parent training, teacher training, and child social skill training programme. The programme has been recommended as a well-established treatment for children with conduct problems.

## Mission and goal

*“We act on the belief – that a child is the most precious of all human beings, and the ability to withstand the emotional and social challenges as a teenager, clearly rests upon a caring relationship between parent, teacher and child.*

*Our mission is to advance the social and emotional behaviour of children of all ethnic groups, through a series of interlocking teaching programmes supported by more than twenty-five years of clinically proven worldwide research.*

*Our goal is to deliver teaching programmes and materials that develop positive parent-teacher-child relationships and assist in recognizing and treating aggressive behaviour before a child becomes an adult.”<sup>(1)</sup>*

Founded 1987

The Incredible Years: Parents, Teachers, and Children Training Series is a comprehensive set of curricula designed to promote social competence and prevent, reduce, and treat aggression and related conduct problems in babies, toddlers, young children, and school-aged children. Young children with high rates of aggressive behaviour problems have been shown to be at greatest risk for continuing on the trajectory to deviant peer groups, school drop out, delinquency, substance abuse, and violence. Ultimately the aim of the teacher, parent and child training programmes is to prevent and to reduce the occurrence of aggressive and oppositional behaviour, thus reducing the chance of developing later delinquent behaviours and preventing juvenile delinquency, drug abuse, and violence.

(1) <http://www.incredibleyears.com/download/mission-statement.pdf> – accessed on 22.10.2009

Each of the programmes in the Incredible Years Series seeks to alter the quality of relationships between parents and children, teachers and children, teachers and parents, and children with their peers.

The short-term goals of the series are to:

1. Strengthen children’s social skills and appropriate play skills (turn taking, waiting, asking, sharing, helping, complimenting).
2. Promote children’s use of self-control strategies such as effective problem solving steps.
3. Increase emotional awareness by labelling feelings, recognizing the differing views of oneself and others and enhancing perspective taking.
4. Boost academic success, reading and school readiness.
5. Reduce defiance, aggressive behavior, and related conduct problems such as noncompliance, peer aggression and rejection, bullying, stealing and lying.
6. Decrease children’s negative cognitive attributions and conflict management approaches.
7. Increase self-esteem and self-confidence.

The long-term goals of these early prevention programmes are to:

1. Reduce violence, drug abuse and delinquency in later years.
2. These short- and long-term goals are accomplished by promoting parent, teacher and child competencies.

Promote teacher competencies and strengthen home-school connections:

1. Strengthen teachers’ effective classroom management skills, including proactive teaching approaches.
2. Increase teachers’ use of effective discipline strategies.
3. Increase teachers’ collaborative efforts with parents and promotion of parents’ school involvement.
4. Increase teachers’ ability to teach social skills, anger management, and problem-solving skills in the classroom.
5. Decrease levels of classroom aggression.

Promote parent competencies and strengthen families:

1. Increase positive and nurturing parenting.
2. Reduce critical and violent discipline approaches by replacing spanking with positive strategies such as ignoring, using logical and natural consequences, redirecting, adequate monitoring, and problem-solving.

3. Improve parents' problem-solving skills, anger management, and communication skills.
4. Increase family support networks and school involvement.
5. Help parents and teachers work collaboratively to ensure consistency across settings.
6. Increase parents' involvement in children's academic-related activities at home.

## Target groups

- Children in the age of 0 -12 years
- Parents with children in this age
- Teachers and assistants in nurseries, schools, kindergardens

## Structure

The programme is divided into three sub-programmes according to their target groups, which in their turn are divided into several sub-programmes for different age groups.

### PARENT PROGRAMME CONSISTS OF:

#### *For parents with babies and toddlers (0 - 3)*

Parents of children in the age of 0 – 12 months learn how to observe and interpret the child's signals, how they can provide the child with psychological, tactile and visual stimulation and what role such stimulation plays in the development of the brain. Parents with children between 1(0) – 3 years, develop different parenting skills, for example how one can build up the child's self-esteem by means of encouragement and praise, or how one can create routines for meals, getting dressed, going to bed, treating a pet, etc. Parents learn how to control themselves through self-instruction and other strategies that help one to calm down.

#### *Parents with young children (3 – 6 years)*

The programme has as a goal to strengthen parenting skills. The programme deals with such problems as how one can develop the child's social competence, emotional regulation and academic skills. Parents learn how to use praise as a form of encouraging cooperation, and how to use positive upbringing strategies as rules, routines and effective limitation in order to prevent problem behaviour.

*"Basic" programme (for parents with children 4 – 8 years) is implemented withing CYAR*  
The programme consists of 12 – 14 weekly meetings and aims at strengthening the family by increasing parents' awareness of children of this age group, thereby reducing and preventing problem behaviour.

The BASIC programme starts with building positive relations between children and parents using a game as an arena for practice. It is in the game's nature that the child should be able to use imagination, to take initiative and to control the game. When parents participate in the child's game, on his/her arena and terms, it gives them an opportunity to interact positively with the child and gradually turn the negative development into positive relations based on trust.

#### *Parents with school-aged children (6 – 12 years)*

The programme has a goal to promote the child's positive behaviour, to reduce inappropriate behaviour and to support the development of the academic skills.

#### *"Advanced" programme (for parents with children 4 – 12 years)*

The programme is offered as a continuation of the "Basic" programme. Parents are instructed in effective communication with children, how to solve problems in upbringing and daily life, and how parents can teach their children effective strategies for solving problems.

## The Incredible Years in Russia

The program is designed for parents with children aged 3 to 8 years old with behavioral problems, and was developed by a psychologist, Ph.D. Carolyn Webster - Stratton. According to the experts, "The Incredible Years" is one of the best "equipped" with methodological resources (manuals, material for group lessons and homework, videos, etc.) and methodologically developed programs to address behavioral problems in children. Due to its many advantages, and most importantly high efficiency, the program is widely used in many countries.

In North-West Russia, since November 2005, the program "The Incredible Years. The main program for the parents" has been run at the center "Sampo" (Petrozavodsk, Karelia, Russia) for work with parents. The program started as a part of the Karelian-Norwegian project "New forms of correctional work with families and children" and was fully developed and implemented within the cooperation program of the Barents / Euro-Arctic Council "Children and Youth at Risk 2008 - 2015". Professor Willy-Tore Mørch from the University of Tromsø (Norway) conducted training courses for the specialists of the Centre.

To participate in the program, parents of children aged 3 to 8 years are encouraged with a variety of problems in behavior, such as whims, stubbornness, disobedience, aggression, destructive behavior, lying, stealing, hyperactivity, concentration problems, daring. Target groups for the training courses are professionals, team leaders, including psychologists, social workers, social workers, teachers, health professionals with special training. At the present, the Center "Sampo" has 4 specialists who work with the program "The Incredible Years", 31 parent groups and 20 children groups were held, 226 families underwent the course (276 persons, among them 224 mothers, 50 fathers and 2 support persons)

#### Statements of parents:

- «I used to read a lot of books on parenting, watched a lot of programs, every thing was clear, but my problem with children were not solved. It's like I'm lost in the woods, I do not know where to go. Through the program, I now clearly see where to go, and though the path is long, it does not scare me.»
- «The most important thing is my achievement, thanks to the program, I have not hit my child for the 3 months.»
- «Now I start to feel the pleasure of motherhood (this was a very big problem.) I want more children.»
- «This program is the golden key to the child.»

Evaluating the program as a whole it may be noted that according to K. Webster-Stratton improvement in behavior shows in about 65% of children (which should be seen as a fairly good indicator), whose parents participated in parent training "The Incredible Years". The main outcomes of the program at the Center "Sampo" are: improved behavior in 78% of children, and reducing stress in 86% of parents. Group leaders are happy to work with the program, they constantly receive positive feedback from parents.

#### Statements of group leaders:

- «The program has a clear structure»
- «The courses offered are consistent and logical in construction»
- «Using the skills and techniques learned in the program in the education of their children, in cooperation at work and family»
- «It helps to find the resources, the ability of parents, increasing their self-confidence and competence, uniting families and helps to resolve conflicts»
- «The excellent results of the program motivate us to work further, improve our skills and abilities»

An active advertising campaign for recruiting parent groups to the program "The Incredible Years" is run on TV, radio, in newspaper articles. The experience acquired in

Karelia allowed starting work on the dissemination of the program in other regions of the North-West Russia. After a series of training seminars, the parent training program is now available in eight cities in Karelia, Murmansk and the Murmansk region (6 centers) and Arkhangelsk region (6 centers), Komi (5 centers). The experience of the teams in all the cities has been very successful. In all the regions, the program shows the high efficiency, group leaders underline its effectiveness and the high demand and interest of parents for the program. It is scientifically proved that the program effectively reduces the number of behavioral problems in children, develop social competence of the child, reduces the number of cases of violent ways of disciplining their parents, improve parents' skills to deal with a child.

Since 2011 Mrs. Elena Vorobeva has been the mentor for the programme "Incredible Years" in the North-West Russia and is responsible for training of new group leaders and supervisions of those who underwent training earlier. For more information about the program is available on the website.

## Effect

According to a whole range of research (Reid, Webster-Stratton & Hammond 2003; Larsson et al. 2008) behavior improvement is marked with more than a half of the children whose parents participated in the parent training «Incredible Years». The children also demonstrate sufficient changes and decrease in deviant behavior, point out the decreased levels of stress and cruelty in upbringing. With two thirds of the children there was not detected recurrence of the previously made diagnosis of oppositional disorder / behavior disorder after 5-6 years since the training finished.

Scientific and methodological guidance of the «Incredible Years» program in the Republic of Karelia is performed by the specialists from Karelian State Pedagogical University. Two stages could be singled out in the series of research conducted during several years. The first stage – adaptation and standardization of Eyberg Child Behavior Inventory (diagnostic instrument for assessing intensity of behavior deviations in children, monitoring behavior changes in children whose parents participate in the program, evaluation of program effectiveness as such). The second stage is IY effect study in the Republic of Karelia.

The first stage is standardization of Eyberg Child Behavior Inventory (ECBI). The inventory includes two scales: child behavior deviations intensity scale and parent problem behavior scale. The degree of behavior problems is directly connected with the level of parents' overcoming the psychological stress. The standardization sample included more than 1500 parents of children aged from 3 to 8 living in four cities in the Republic of Karelia.

The second stage – effect study for Karelia

The main goal of the second stage became the program effect assessment. There were formed two groups, an experimental group and a comparison group, that were tested three times with the interval of several months.

The results were obtained on the basis of the sample from 91 families (112 children). At the beginning of the program 37 children (33 %) were enrolled in correction group, 46 (41%) – in the risk group, 29 children (26%) were the norm. 64 participants of the program (57 %) registered increased or high stress level. After completion of the program the risk group included only 20 children (18%). 87 children (78 %) according to the test data were ascribed to the norm. Only 5 children (4%) who were in correction group before the start of the program kept their status. There were also evident changes in the level of stress experienced by the parents: at the end 19 people out of 112 (17%) got points in problem scale corresponding to the increased or high stress level.

The research has shown that after the end of the program the degree of disruptive behavior intensity in children lowered to the norm in the groups of parent training. If before the start of the program the average score in the experimental group was 138, at the end it became 100. The level of behavioral problems intensity in children was at the same rather high level in the control group after three months. Analogous changes were obtained for the second scale (problem scale). The level of problems decreased from 17 to 6.6 points in the experimental group; there were no sufficient changes in the control group. It is remarkable that the effects of the program were evident after 3 month after its finish.

The parents who had the parent training «Incredible Years» have the decrease in the amount and the degree of psychological problems that are solved at the expense of a child; parental feelings are developed (there appears a wish to communicate with the child, interest to him/her and his/her affairs), projection of parents' own negative qualities on the child that stipulates emotional casting-off and violence is decreased.

On the basis of the results of the conducted work we can make the following conclusions:

- Implementation of the «Incredible Years» program favors the decrease of violation intensity in children (to the level of the age norm). Cultural differences between the USA, Europe and Russia evidently do not have any negative impact on the results of the program.
- As a result of parents' participation in the trainings, the level of parent depression decreases. Changes in emotional condition have a long-term character.

- There are changes in relations of parents and children. Negative manifestations in upbringing that have negative impact on the personality of the child and his / her behavior are exchanged by more positive forms of children-parental relations, upbringing deviations are becoming less evident.

## Contact information

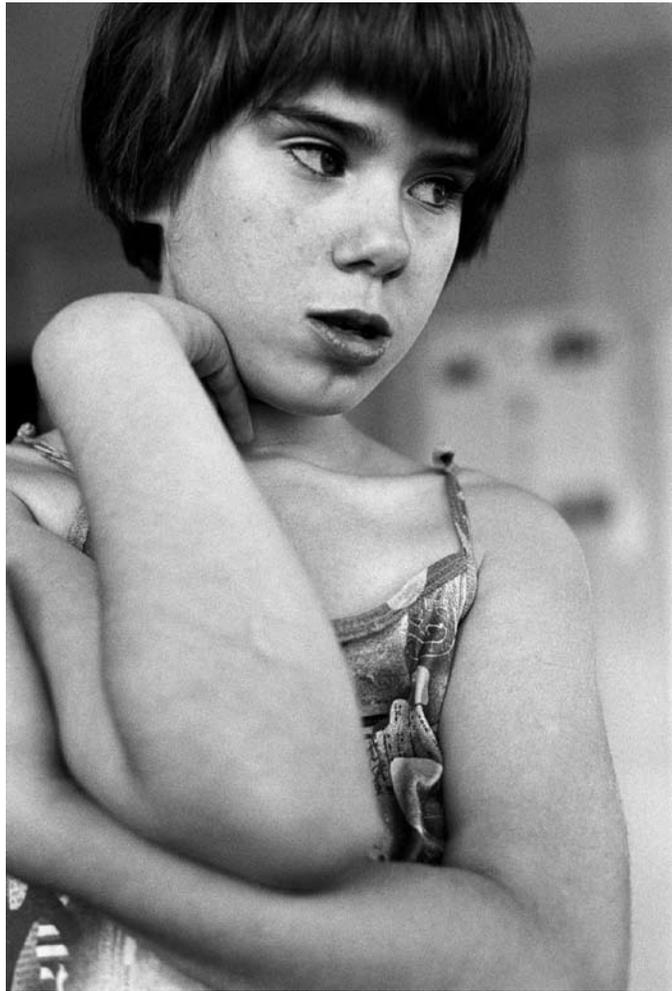
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## Useful links

[www.kspu.karelia.ru](http://www.kspu.karelia.ru) – «The Incredible Years» in Karelia, the web-site of Karelian State pedagogical academy  
[www.incredibleyears.com](http://www.incredibleyears.com) - the web-site of the original programme «The Incredible Years» of C. Webster-Stratton



# Aggression Replacement Training – ART and Family ART

## About

Aggression Replacement Training (ART) is a cognitive behavioral intervention focused on adolescents, training them to cope with their aggressive and violent behaviours. ART was designed by Arnold P. Goldstein and Barry Glick in the 1980s (Goldstein & Glick, 1988; Goldstein, Glick and Gibbs 1998/2000). It is a multimodal program and has three components; Social skills, Anger Control Training and Moral Reasoning.

Each of the three components focuses on different aspects of social functioning and uses a process to insure youth learn the skills in class and transfer such skills to new situations outside of the group. The model also focuses on the concept of peer learning by Jean Piaget. It has been shown that youth learn best from other youth.

The Family ART programme has been developed by Robert Calame and Kim Parker at Batshaw Youth and Family Centre in Quebec, Canada. The programme has been processed and developed in cooperation with the ART centre at Djakonhjemmet University College and Lindøy-centre for children and youth in Stavanger (Norway). The Family ART's structure is very similar to the ART programme.

## Goal

The goal of the training is to improve the ability of the participants to function socially and to reduce anger. The training focuses on finding action alternatives which are effective for everyone through a role play. The purpose of the Family ART programme is to increase the probability of new behaviour generalized at home. The programme is based on group work with four-eight families training together through family discussions, role play and constructive feedback.

## Target Groups

The programme is aimed mostly at children and youth who are in danger of developing problem behaviour (primary prevention) and persons that have already developed behaviour problems (secondary prevention of further negative development). However, persons with adequate behaviour also benefit from this programme.

## Methods

ART is a 10 week programme, meeting three times a week for one hour for each of the components. To have the best results it is facilitated and co-facilitated by trained group facilitators. Room set up, introduction of materials, the number of participants, and the participants' history are all issues that work towards having a profitable group. Goldstein, Glick and Gibbs (1998) recommend a group of 6 – 8 participants, but smaller groups, especially in the beginning of the programme, can be necessary and desired if the participants have serious behaviour problems. If the group is too small, the training might lose its dynamics and structure as some role plays require a large number of participants, and there will be less feedback from other participants.

## SOCIAL SKILLS

Many youths have difficulties controlling their anger and/or lack social skills. The ART intervention focuses on the following social skills that are particular to reducing aggressive behaviour:

- *Making a complaint*
- *Dealing with someone else's anger*
- *Keeping out of fights*
- *Dealing with an accusation*
- *Expressing affection to others*
- *Understanding the feelings of others*
- *Getting ready for a difficult conversation*
- *Dealing with group pressure*
- *Helping Others*
- *Responding to failure*

These social skills are broken down into various steps (both thinking and action steps). The facilitator discusses the day's skill, bringing out relevant examples. Then the facilitator demonstrates a situation to give the youth a picture of how to perform the skill. The youth are asked to point out each of the steps. Then each of the youths is asked to use a relevant situation that they have recently had using the skill. Again, the other youths go through and discuss each of the steps each time.

## ANGER CONTROL TRAINING

Anger control training is the affective component of ART. This moves from the teaching of social skills to losing anti-social skills and replacing them with pro-social skills. The anger control training uses the anger control chain. This is a process taught to the youth to deal with situations that cause them to get angry. Once again, one segment of the anger control chain is taught each week, the both the facilitators and the youth practise the new skills with relevant life activities. The anger control chain is as follows;

- Triggers (external and internal) – The situation that starts the slide into anger and the self talk that perpetuates it
- Cues – physical signs of becoming angry
- Anger reducers – three (deep breathing, counting backwards, and pleasant imagery) to help reduce or take our mind off of the situation
- Reminders – short positive statements that we say to ourselves to further reduce the angry impulses
- Thinking ahead – Identifying the consequences of our behaviors
- Social Skill – Implementing a pro-social skill into the situation
- Evaluation – Looking back over the use of the anger control chain and evaluating how was implemented

## MORAL REASONING

Moral reasoning is the cognitive component of ART. This component provides adolescents with opportunities to take perspectives other than their own, thereby, learning to view their world in a more fair and equitable way. Group facilitators also identify four thinking errors to facilitate perspective taking and remediate moral developmental delay. The thinking errors that are identified are:

- Self-centered thinking – «It's all about me»
- Assuming the worst – «It would happen anyways», or «They would do it to me»
- Blaming others – «It's their fault»
- Mislabeling / minimizing – «it's not stealing, I'm only borrowing it...», or «Everybody else does it»

## ART in the world

ART has been thoroughly evaluated in several states in the USA (among others Washington), Sweden, recently in Great Britain and Norway.

ICART is an association of specialists and institutions in North America (USA and Canada) and Europe that practise ART, or its variation. The association was founded by Arnold P. Goldstein, and consists of the specialists who, in Goldstein`s opinion, are able to continue spreading and developing ART. Researchers at colleges and universities, correctional services, child welfare (public and private), health care, and school sector are represented in the association. The association gives advice on ART and distributes contact information of the relevant organizations.

## ART in Norway

In Norway, this method is applied in kindergartens, elementary and secondary schools, child welfare agencies, within psychiatry and in work with people with Asperger syndrome.

The Diakonhjemmet University College in Rogaland is the academic centre for the ART method in Norway. In 1999, after the meeting with Arnold P. Goldstein, a continuing education course (60 study points) in social competence training was started there, with special focus on the ART-method.

Nowadays, there are ART groups across the country with around 2000 instructors. Norwegian academic ART environment has become one of the leading ones in the world. The "Youth Alternative" in Sweden, Knut Gundersen, Børge Strømgren and Luke Moynahan get a large part of the credit for this. The ART centre at the Diakonhjemmet University College in Rogaland functions as a junction for the ART activity in Norway and has produced a number of interesting research articles based on the effect studies on ART in Norway.

## Effect

The research group appointed by the Directorate of Education and the Directorate of Health and Social Issues in Norway made the following conclusion about ART:

*«The Programme is considered to belong to category 3: Programme with documented results. The research group recommends ART for use at lower secondary school in groups where behaviour problems have already developed, or are likely to develop. Used as a primary prevention, the programme should be supplemented with school-wide measures.»*

The experience shows that the family's interaction patterns change considerably, the children`s pro-social skills and behaviour have improved after the ART training, and the relapse into earlier destructive behaviour is reduced.



## ART in Russia

ART method is implemented in all the four north-western regions of Russia participating in the program "Children and Youth at Risk in the Barents region, 2008-2015". More than 700 of children and youths have done a course in ART and Family ART. As of June 2013, more than 200 professionals had undergone basic ART training within the CYAR and were certified as trainers, including 100 professionals trained within Family ART, five professionals from Karelia having master-trainer certificates, and 12 more professionals from the Murmansk and Arkhangelsk regions and Karelia Republic being trained as master-trainers.

The pilot part of the research project to evaluate ART efficiency in Russia started under the bilateral cooperation between Norway and the Karelia Republic in 2009. Since 2012 the core activities within research have started including now also other regions participating in the CYAR program. The research project in general involves more than 20 institutions from the social, educational and penal systems.

The objective of the research activities is to evaluate the ART efficiency with regards to a) training of social skills, b) mastering anger control and c) reduction of problem behavior of children and youths participating in the ART groups. An average group consists of 6-7 members aged from 7 to 17. Questionnaire survey is performed among both children and teachers or tutors of the institutions, as well as parents, partly filling in the questionnaires, who participate in the ART groups. According to the questioning procedure, the respondents have to fill in the questionnaires twice – before and after the ART method use (pre-test, post-test 1). In case if the ART method is followed by the Family ART, another evaluation form is added (post-test 2).

Questioning includes filling out a questionnaire (Social Skills Rating Scale) (Gresham & Elliot, 1990) (SSRS), allowing to evaluate a wide range of social skills, as well as questionnaires for evaluation of problem and positive behavior. SSRS includes the following scales: cooperativity, thinking, self-control, responsibility, hyperactivity, «external» behavior (behavioral problems, aggression), «internal» behavior (anxiety, depression). SSRS is filled in by a child, a teacher (tutor) and a parent.

So far, the results from the pilot research project have been analyzed as well a part of the core project. While analyzing the pilot part of the project a number of problems were identified, such as incomplete testing (only pre- or post-tests), often absence of information on the control group, spontaneous formation of the main and control groups, etc. The results from the pilot and the core investigations demonstrate statistically-valid changes within 10 out of 12 of Social Skills Rating Scales in the form of improvement of cooperativity, positive thinking, responsibility, self-control, better situation with «external» problems (problem behavior and aggression and «internal» problems (anxiety, depression).

To improve the quality of research activities, recommendations for questioning during the core part of the research project have been developed. At present, collection of data is going on. The data will be analyzed during 2013 and the results will be available for information.

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# Family Group Conferences - FGC

## About

"Family Group Conferences" (FGC) is an innovative method for working with children and families in crisis situations. This method appeared in New Zealand in 1989. Its appearance was caused, on the one hand by the crisis in social work during this period in the country, on the other hand by the Maori traditions. Maori believe that the closest network plays an important role in the life of a child. The family consisting of several generations knows their children better than any specialist; the family is the best place to raise a child, here children will receive necessary care. The family's responsibility for the upbringing of the younger generation can not be transferred onto the shoulders of social services. These principles were not taken into consideration in the 1970 - 80-ies, when the children of the Maori were placed into care of non-Maori families or in institutions of social protection.

In 1989, a law "On Children, Youth and Family" was passed, which emphasized the importance of family and cultural heritage in the upbringing of children. According to this law, responsibility for education rests with the family, and professionals should involve the closest network in the process of decision-making when the child is in a problem situation.

New Zealand's bold experiment to transfer authority and responsibility for their own children to the family influenced the philosophical outlook and practice of professionals working with the family around the world. Use of "Family Group Conference" is enshrined in law in countries such as New Zealand, in some states of Australia (South Australia, New South Wales and Queensland), in the Republic of Ireland. Family group conferences are designated as international best practice in the UK, Scandinavia, the Netherlands, many states in the United States of America, in Israel. The method is actively used in Spain, Slovakia, Poland, South Africa and other countries on all continents<sup>(1)</sup>. It is based on the development of the child's abilities to overcome the crisis through interaction with the nearest environment, i.e. family.

## Goals and target groups

The goal of the method is the prevention of marital distress, social orphanhood, neglect and juvenile delinquency, as well as support for families and children in difficult situations.

(1) Doolan M. Family Group Conferences: a partnership method. // Riepl B., Wilk L. & Berman Y., Policies and Services for Children at Risk. Vienna: European Centre, 2002. – p.107

## Method

FGC is a sort of family council, a meeting of all family members to discuss the situation and make their own decisions. This method is used in various crisis situations, such as family conflicts, adolescent drug use, juvenile delinquency, lack of understanding between parents and children, as well as in cases of domestic violence. FGC can be easily adapted to different areas, such as conflict resolution at work, at school, at home.

Family group conference is a meeting of family members in a broad sense of the word. It is more correct to say that it is a meeting of the family with friends and relatives. The concept of "family" is considered broader than the biological connection. The idea of family group conference is associated with a desire to strengthen the family's right to self-determination in matters of concern for their own children. Family group conference depends to a large extent on the cultural traditions than on scientific theory. Application of this method is closely related to the ethical principle, which states that individual responsibility is the most important responsibility. The method underlines, above all, the need to respect the central role of individuals in solving their problems, which have been identified and defined. The people themselves cope with their problems; you must give them the opportunity to propose solutions. This is the meaning of a new method of decision-making.

## THE MAIN CHARACTERISTICS OF THE METHOD

Rob van Paage points out four main characteristics inherent in family group conferences<sup>(2)</sup>:

1. This is an innovative method of decision-making based on the strength and capabilities of the family itself.
2. The full and sole owner of the meeting is the family and close associates (family members determine the time and place of meetings, organizes tea party, develops its plan, doing everything according to its prevailing culture and traditions).
3. The conference is conducted by an independent leader, a neutral person who is not related to this family and does not affect the adoption of family decisions and the development plan
4. The family shall be entitled to obtain information, necessary personal time, the unconditional acceptance of the plan, if it is safe.

(2) Pagee R. Van. *Family Group Conferencing. Manual for Independent Coordinators*. Eigen Kracht – Center for Restorative Action: Zwolle, the Netherlands, 2006. – p.10

According to the Norwegian researchers S. Horverak, C. Omre and L. Schjelderup these are five key principles of the method <sup>(3)</sup>.

1. The conference leader is an independent person.
2. The family, its relatives and close associates gather their forces and resources.
3. Experts and specialists are positive towards the family and their plan.
4. The family and the closest environment should get private time necessary for discussion and writing of the plan; the experts should not be present at this stage of the family council.
5. Children take part in a family group conference.

The first four principles are the basic principles of the method of Family Group Conferences. The fifth principle of child participation in the meeting is desirable, but if the child is absent for one reason or another, the family group conference does not lose its essence and its value if the first four principles are observed.

## Family Group Conferences in Russia

The project FGC within CYAR in North-west Russia has been implemented by the Russian Committee of the "Children's SOS-villages". Since 2000, the activity in the Murmansk region has emphasized strengthening the family as its goal by means of new strategies in family support and child upbringing in a difficult life situation. The Russian-Norwegian FGC project was introduced in 2004 for the first time. Initially the project was implemented only in the Murmansk region, but in 2006 it became a basis for enhanced cooperation between authorities, institutions, civil society and individuals in St. Petersburg, Leningrad and Pskov regions, the Republic of Karelia within CYAR

UN Children Committee conference a special emphasis was made on increased use of FGC. Within CYAR the method Family Group Conference has been implemented in all the regions participating in the programme.

It is necessary to implement this method as "Family Group Conferences" put the family in the center of decision-making. This is the right of the family and an effective method of work used and respected throughout the world.

(3) Horverak S., Omre S., Schjelderup L. *Familieraadslag – Demokrati og beslutninger i norsk barnevern.* – Bergen, 2001. – p.55

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# Restorative Justice — Juvenile Mediation

## About

Mediation is usually a face-to-face meeting, in the presence of a trained mediator, between the victim of a crime and the person who committed that crime. Mediation as a method is a part of the term "Restorative justice". Tony Marshall composed a frequently cited and still useful definition of restorative justice in 1999: "Restorative justice is a process whereby parties with a stake in a specific offence collectively resolve how to deal with the aftermath of the offence and its implications for the future." (TM 1999) In his Little Book of Restorative Justice, published in 2002, Howard Zehr acknowledged and modified Marshall's 1999 definition this way, "Restorative justice is a process to involve, to the extent possible, those who have a stake in a specific offense and to collectively identify and address harms, needs, and obligations, in order to heal and put things as right as possible." (LBRJ, p. 37)

## Target group and goal

Restorative justice is grounded in the desire to address harm to relationships caused by wrongdoing. It emphasizes responding to the harms and needs of victims rather than the wrongdoing of the offender.

Restorative approaches to justice seek to engage and empower involved and impacted parties including the offenders, the victims and a broad circle of individuals from their families and communities. Therefore, the focus for a restorative approach to justice is in the answers to four questions:

- Who has been hurt? What harms have been done?
- What are their needs?
- What does it take to repair the harm (put things as right as possible?) and
- Whose has responsibility or obligation to participate in making it right?

## Method

The mediators invite all those affected by the offence, including victims, to a meeting. The mediators use a script to facilitate a structured discussion about the harm caused by the offence and how this could be repaired. Using the script the mediators facilitate the dialogue between the parties. They use the following open ended questions structured in three phases of the past, present and future:

- What happened when....?
- What did you think when...?
- What did you feel when...?
- Who is affected by the harm done....?
- What do you need to do now?

It is also possible to involve the immediate network from both sides (family, friends, teachers, neighbours and so on), so that more practical and emotional consequences of the conflict are revealed. The network can cooperate with the parties in order to find a lasting solution to the conflict. Mobilizing networks and support persons in recovery and reconciliation process has proved to be an advantage.

## Mediation in Norway

All municipalities in Norway offer mediation in the Mediation Services in accordance with the law on Mediation Services of 1991. There are currently 22 Mediation Services and about 700 local mediators. Approximately 9000 cases per year are handed over by the police, prosecutor and others to the Mediation Services. The mediation organised by the Mediation Services is free of charge for the parties involved. All cases require consent of both parties before mediation can take place. Mediation Services deal both with civil and criminal cases.

Mediation can be used as an alternative, or as a part, of the punishment, as well as a condition for suspended sentence. It is prosecutors who transfer criminal cases to the Mediation Services. The Attorney General has instructed prosecutors to increase the use of this scheme, and the transfer of cases to the Mediation Services has increased in recent years.

A pilot project was established in 2006 within the Mediation Service of Sør-Trøndelag to ensure close follow-up of young offenders committing repeatedly serious crimes. Following the results of this pilot project the Norwegian authorities have allocated resources to establish such kind of follow-up teams in all Norwegian municipalities. The follow-up teams consist of representatives of different agencies like the police, child welfare, health care, school system and correctional services.

All who are affected by a crime can participate in a process where they decide in cooperation and jointly how to deal with the effect of the offence and its consequences for the future. The goal is to stop the criminal "career".

Greater focus on "restorative justice" and increased use of mediation is an important priority for the prevention of new crime among young offenders in Norway. In this work, the need to mobilize a broad and inter-agency network around the offender is emphasized. Mediation service plays a key role as facilitator for a coordinated effort from the support system around.

Several Mediation Services have particularly good experience with conferencing/circles. Conferencing involves a systematic group process that can lead to conflict resolution. The intention is that participants will be able to take responsibility for the conflict. This kind of meeting normally has many participants sometimes up to 30 participants. To sum it up, in crime prevention, the Mediation Services play a central role. The emphasis is on expanding the use of mediation and at the same time ensuring the comprehensive follow-up of the individual offender.

## Mediation in Russia

Arkhangelsk and Murmansk regions have launched pilot projects for training and using mediation with juveniles in conflict with the law. This is organised under the umbrella of the CYAR program as well as the cooperation program between the Ministry of Justice and Public Security of Norway and the Ministry of Justice of Russia.

The trained mediators are specialists of educational centers, social welfare institutions, youth authorities, commissions for the affairs of minors and protection of their rights, and non-profit organizations. Training is performed in the same processual way as it is done in Norway – through workshops, working in teams, role plays and theoretical lectures. A complete course consists of 7 days training seminars divided into sessions. In between the training sessions (2-3 months) the participants practise their acquired skills and knowledge and are obliged to organise the mediation process in at least two cases each.

Mediation is very well developed in the Arkhangelsk region where 22 specialists have already undergone training and use mediation in practice. 15 mediators from Arkhangelsk region have been trained as instructors in order to facilitate the further local trainings of mediators. Arkhangelsk region has established a local multi-agency working group on introducing child friendly justice in order to facilitate the use of mediation using minors.

The working group has developed a procedure that, in particular, means to apply mediation at the pre-trial and trial stages. The introduction of mediation in Arkhangelsk is coordinated by the Commission for the affairs of minors and protection of their rights with the support of the Governor of the Arkhangelsk region.

Mediation is used in 5 pilot towns of the Arkhangelsk region. Arkhangelsk region has established a very successful multi-agency local cooperation mechanism. After one year of implementing these measures it is reported a significant increase of applications for mediation from investigating authorities. As a result of mediation processes in 2013 54 adolescents, who committed a crime, made agreements with the victims of the crime and thus avoided traditional juridical punishment.

The next step in the promotion of mediation in the North-West of Russia is to facilitate the introduction of mediation in Murmansk region during 2013-2014. The first group of mediators have undergone training in 2013. It is also planned to broaden the mediation network in the Arkhangelsk region. Instructors have started the training process in order to be able to train more mediators.

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# From Violence to Caring - FVC

## About the programme

FROM VIOLENCE TO CARING – Violence and the Frames for Compassionate Non-Violence (FVC) is an international study programme for students and for in-service training for professionals in various fields. The programme is coordinated by Women's and Gender Studies (WGS) in the University of Oulu.

At the background of the programme is the need for professionals, and students as future professionals alike, to have access to education on issues of gender, violence, and compassionate non-violence. Professionals need education to support their work with the victims of violence, to prevent violence and support non-violence. This education needs to be based on a wider understanding of violence, include approaches on how gender and other socio-cultural dimensions are related to it and provide multidisciplinary and multiprofessional approach to violence prevention and intervention.

The FVC programme was constructed to respond to these challenges. The programme includes five e-learning courses, each focusing on a particular aspect of violence:

- **VIOLENCE AND THE PREMISES FOR COMPASSION**  
This course offers participants definitions of violence with sensitivity towards gender and other intersecting dimensions. Violence is approached in the lifespan, across generations and through multisectoral and multidisciplinary approach.
- **THE MULTIPLE FORMS OF VIOLENCE IN GLOBAL CONTEXTS**  
This course studies violence as a global issue and introduces international conventions for violence prevention. The course includes topics such as harmful traditional practices and violence in conflicts which are looked at from global and local perspectives.
- **SEXUAL EXPLOITATION; TRAFFICKING AND EXPLOITATION**  
This course introduces definitions of sexual exploitation, trafficking and prostitution and looks at vulnerabilities and routes related to them. During the course understanding of the phenomenon and its prevention is expanded to support professionals' abilities to recognise and prevent sexual exploitation and support those in vulnerable positions.

- **PRACTICES FOR PREVENTING AND INTERVENING IN VIOLENCE AND CONSTRUCTING COMPASSIONATE ENVIRONMENTS**

This course provides participants with current perspectives to the practical measures for violence prevention and interventions.

- **EQUALITY AND COMPASSION AS A FOUNDATION FOR NON-VIOLENCE**

This course gives tools and approaches to work towards equality and equity from the perspective of non-violence. Work is founded on better understanding on human rights and capabilities, children's rights as well as other legislation and policies to support non-violence and equality.

## Goal

The goal of the FVC programme is to increase the awareness of violence, give tools for encountering violence, for working in different violent environments, supporting compassionate non-violence and through this help the victims of violence. Violence is approached as a broad phenomenon, from local and global perspectives and by reflecting the knowhow acquired by the participants in their own environments.

Through the studies the participants will gain

- a broader understanding of violence as a phenomenon: ability to explain and recognise various forms of violence in life span in different local and global contexts.
- competence based on sensitivity towards issues of gender and other intersecting dimensions: ability to apply the approaches to analyse and recognize violence, to develop actions to prevent and intervene in violence and to support the victims of violence;
- knowledge and ability to develop one's work on violence preventions and in supporting non-violence; to design practical measures to intervene in violence and construct non-violent and equal practices, reflect and develop non-violence and compassion in one's own practices and interaction, and to work in a group and reflect group collaboration from the perspectives of non-violence and equity

## Target groups

The FVC programme is targeted to both students and professionals. The programme is multidisciplinary by nature and invites participants from various fields. Professionals and students from social work and education will find the programme particularly beneficial in developing their professional competence.

## The method

The FVC programme is a distant learning programme. The basic programme is structured from five courses, each of which studies the phenomenon of violence from different perspectives. Each course includes four modules with sub-themes that are discussed and worked on together with the other participants. The programme starts in September and continues over one academic year. Individual courses last approximately two months.

The studying takes place in an e-learning environment where students can participate from their own countries or regions.

- Studying includes group activities and individual work
- International e-learning studies provide the participants with the possibility to participate flexibly in relation to time and place
- Exchange of practical knowledge between participants from different backgrounds offers unique learning possibilities.

Participants' learning process is evaluated by course tutor as well as through participant's self-evaluation. This evaluation is included in each course and affords both insight on the past learning process as well as support for the future learning in the FVC programme and in everyday contexts.

## The programme in Finland

The FVC programme was developed by the Women's and Gender Studies at the University of Oulu together with a vast network of professionals. The development work has been done over the past decade, six EU Daphne-funded projects, and international collaboration. The work was collected into a five-course programme in 2007. Since then the programme has been offered regularly and biannually in Finnish and English.

Since the beginning of the programme more than 200 participants have joined the studies from around the globe; Scandinavian countries, Europe, Russia, Asia. This international nature of the studies is made possible through the use of information and communication technologies.

## Effect

The learning experiences of the participants are continuously followed through collecting student feedback from each individual course as well as from the entire programme. Also the study journals of participants have been material for the research on

the programme. The non-violence pedagogy developed for and in the study programme has been discussed in more detail in Heikkinen, Pihkala & Sunnari 2012. According to this, "the study programme constructs a critical, reflective learning environment that respects the individual dignities of students and the shared learning process, and [...] ensures equal relationships among the participants and treat the topic with the sensitivity it deserves. The programme platform offers participants an opportunity not only for possible self-empowerment in their contemporary work or in their future career, but to combat gendered and sexualised violence collectively in their everyday lives."

## FVC in Russia

The international FVC programme (25 ects) has been introduced to students and professionals in Russia since 2012. Additionally two new courses – an 8 week basic course and a 12 week continuing course – are offered in Russia for professional competence building on violence and non-violence. The courses include:

- research and perspectives to increase professionals' skills in the understanding of violence as a broad phenomenon to better recognise violence in its multiple forms
- current perspectives on family, local and regional issues and violence prevention
- tools to support professional work on violence prevention.

## Contact information

The FV Study Programme is coordinated by Women's and Gender Studies at the University of Oulu.

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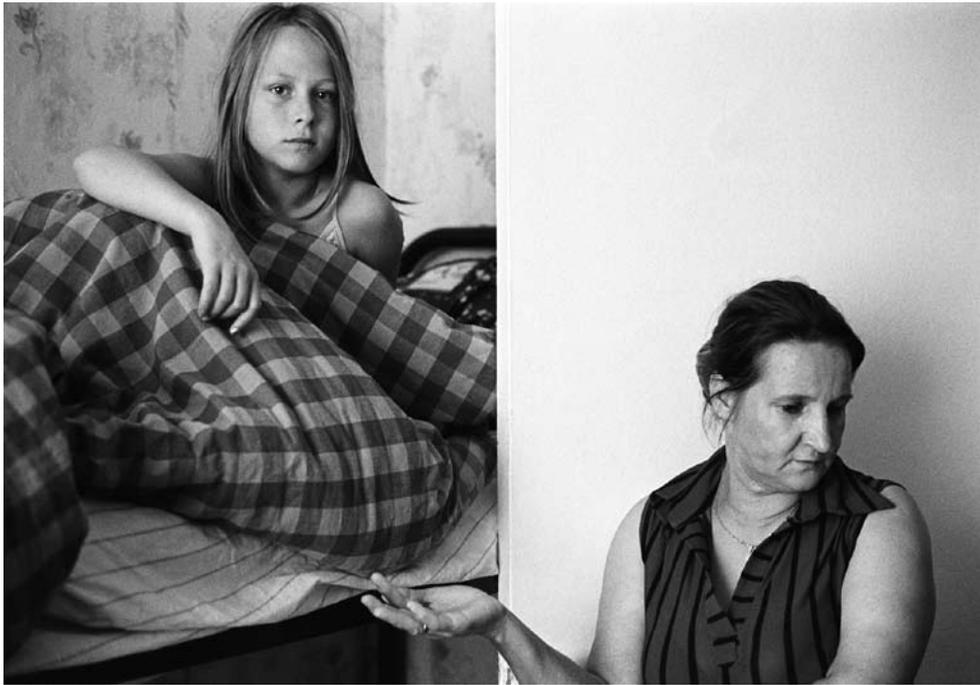
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# What About Us?

## About the programme

What About Us? (hereafter referred to as WAU) is a programme on relationships for parents who have children with developmental delays. Developmental delays meant here range from minor (ADHD/ADD) to greater ones (such as, for example, combined disorder or mental retardation). Developmental delay can also mean mental dysfunction.

WAU programme was started in 2002 by order of the Ministry of Children and Family (MCF) and is carried out all over the country by the Modum Bad Center for Family and Relationships. The money allocated for the three-year project (2002-2004) was divided between 5 healthcare regions. WAU was over as a project in December 2004 and changed into a permanent programme with courses on relationships for a target group. The programme is supported on the national level, financed from the State budget and is secured at present in the Family Protection in four healthcare regions.

The name of the project comes from the experience of the couples which is based on the fact that the relationships between the spouses used to be «above-line accounts» and accordingly, in the everyday life full of many-things-to-do when most of the attention is paid to a child, such relationships take the last place in the list of priorities.

## The method

WAU is a state programme which arranges courses on relationship for couples with children with developmental delays. The programme also includes maintenance courses, WAU 2, which is meant for couples who participated in the WAU basic course. The course encourages couple relationships based on good communication and conflict resolution, cooperation and mutual respect. The couples cover part of the expenses themselves – 1000 NOK per one couple, which includes arrangement of the course, as well as accommodation in a hotel for one night with three-time meals. An important input to the program was made from the “The Prevention Relationship Enhancement Program” programme (PREP). PREP was initially an American programme which was translated, re-considered and adopted to the Norwegian conditions for the first time in 1998 by the Modum Bad Center for Family and Relationships.

## Target groups

The course invite parents of children with developmental delay. The group of children with developmental delay includes all types of developmental disorders and different ages, including also above 18, irrespective of the fact where a child lives at home or in a specialized institution.

## Goal

The course is meant for a weekend and is held from Friday to Sunday in a hotel. The course includes tutoring by the course management, working in groups, own activities and discussions in plenary meetings.

The following topics are discussed at all the courses:

- Introduction in the family life and relationships of the couples
- Communication: a key or a lock?
- Mixed feelings
- Men and Women – two different worlds?
- When do we humiliate each other
- Create a space for living for every family member
- Friendship, intimacy and privacy

The course leaders have to undergo special education at the leader courses and become a certified WAU course leader. They also have to meet once a year for experience exchange and their knowledge update under the supervision of the Directorate for Children, Youth and Families.

## The programme in the world/Norway

The WAU programme was represented in many places all over the world, but Norway is the only country where they work so purposefully on relationships for this target group. The WAU programme caused international interest when it was presented outside the country.

## Effect

NOVA held a research in 2005 based on evaluation of the WAU course participants during a certain period of time and their answers in questionnaire forms after completion of the course.

NOVA concluded that the WAU programme received positive feedbacks and was highly evaluated with some slight differences on separate topics. Thus, the topic of communication was definitely mostly appreciated.

In autumn 2011 Directorate for Children, Youth and Family gave a task to AO «NTNU Public Research» to evaluate the “WAU?” programme course for couples – parents who have children with developmental delays. The evaluation was held by a group of researchers from the Department of Diversity and Inclusion, and the evaluation report was prepared in November 2012. The evaluation was based on a research project where a group of researchers accumulated data with the help of the following methods:

1. Quantitative interviewing of about 25 former course participants. The participants were selected from different places of living and also those who attended the course in different periods of time.
2. Qualitative interviewing of the people in charge of the courses in different regions, as well as qualitative interviewing of the course leaders.
3. Monitoring over two courses.
4. Qualitative research and questionnaire survey of all the course participants beginning from 2006 when the responsibility for the course was given to the Directorate for Children, Youth and Families.

The main purpose of the evaluation was to record the importance and significance of the courses. The methods were chosen so that to collect not only qualitative data, but also a more detailed and specified feedback and experience form the participants and organizers. The report has been completed and delivered.

## WAU in Russia

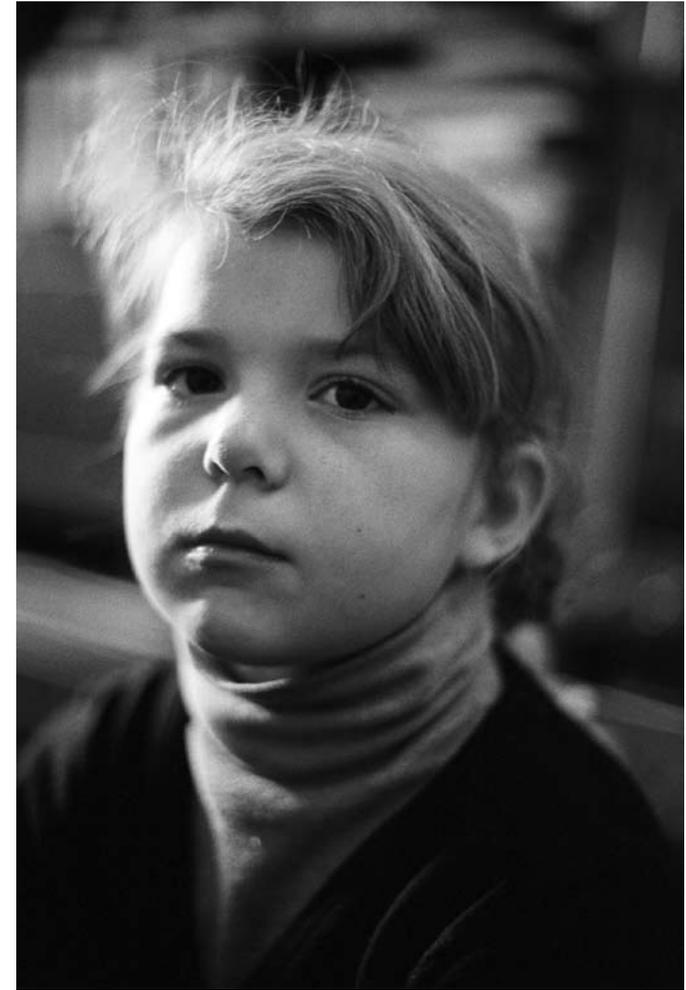
WAU was for the first time presented at the Russian-Nordic seminar in Russia in March 2008. The reason for that was in a great amount of divorces in the Northern region. The programme was very much welcomed. In February 2009 it was presented for the first time in the Complex Centre in Monchegorsk, Murmansk region. It was the beginning of cooperation with the Centre which is still going on. These days the program is under implementation also in Arkhangelsk region, Republic of Komi and Republic of Karelia.

Russia is the only country in the world which introduced the WAU programme together with Norway and this cooperation is still in progress.

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## ART and Family-ART

The information has been kindly provided by Knut Gundersen, the social centers participating in the program in Murmansk and Arkhangelsk regions and the Republics of Karelia and Komi, Russia and by the contact person for the ART programme in Russia Dr. Roman Kopusov.

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