

A black and white photograph of a child's face peeking from behind a wooden door. The child's eyes are visible, looking towards the camera. The door is made of vertical wooden planks.

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. The programme has been developed as a result of growing concern regarding marginalized youth and children in the region. The CYAR programme is coordinated 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 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 four research-based methods/programmes, which are presented below.

## CYAR Project Part III - Competence sharing

The four 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 and Mediation boards
- 5. 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

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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>*

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.

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.

(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 different 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 (parents, teachers, or children), which in their turn are divided into several sub-programmes for different age groups. Russia at the moment the parent programmes are being implemented.

THE PARENT PROGRAMME consists of four sub-programmes according to the four main stages of the child's development:

### *For parents with babies (0 - 8 months)*

Parents of children of this age 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.

### *For parents with young children in the age of 1 - 3 years*

Parents with children between 1 – 3 years learn 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.

### *For parents with children in the age of 3 – 6 years*

The goal of this basic pre-school programme is 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.

*For 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.

## The Incredible Years in Russia

Within CYAR since 2005 the basic parent programme for parents with children aged 4 to 8 years old with behavioural problems has been implemented in Russia. The programme consists of 12 - 14 weekly meetings and has as its aim to strengthen the family. To achieve this goal, parents learn to understand children at this age, in this way reducing the chance of developing problem behaviour.

The basic programme starts with establishing positive relationships between children and parents using game as the arena for practising. It is in the games nature that the child has to use their Imagination, take initiative and control the game. Participating in the game on the child's premises the parents get the possibility to interact with the child and gradually transform the negative development into positive relations, based on trust.

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 behavioural problems in children. Due to its many advantages, and most importantly high efficiency, the programme is widely used in many countries.

The dissemination of the Incredible Years programme in the North-West Russia started in November 2005 at the center "Sampo" (Petrozavodsk, Karelia, Russia) 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 programme 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.

An active advertising campaign to recruit parent groups is being run in the regions, including pieces on TV and radio, articles in newspapers. The experience gained in Karelia allowed to start the work on the dissemination of the programme in other

regions of the North-West of Russia. After a series of training seminars the parent training programme is now available in Karelia (7 centres), Murmansk and the Murmansk region (6 centers), Arkhangelsk and the Arkhangelsk region (8 centers), in the Komi Republic (13 centers). The experience of running group in all the cities has been very successful. As off November 2014 in the North-West of Russia, there are around 100 working group leaders. To participate in the programme, parents of children in the age 3 to 8 years with a variety of problems in behaviour are invited, such as whims, stubbornness, disobedience, aggression, destructive behaviour, lying, stealing, hyperactivity, concentration problems, daring. The courses are run by professionals, group leaders, among whom there are psychologists, social pedagogues, social workers, teachers, health professionals with special training in the programme "Incredible Years". During the programme implementation period, 225 parent groups and 75 children groups were held, 1433 families underwent the course (1998 persons, among them 338 children)

#### Statements of parents:

- «I used to read a lot of books on parenting, watched a lot of programs, everything 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 programme, 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 programme, 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 programme is the golden key to the child.»

Evaluating the programme as a whole it may be noted that according to K. Webster-Stratton improvement in behaviour 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 programme at the Center "Sampo" are: improved behaviour in 78% of children, and reducing stress in 86% of parents. Group leaders are happy to work with the programme, they constantly receive positive feedback from parents.

#### Statements of group leaders:

- «The programme has a clear structure.»
- «The courses offered are consistent and logical in construction.»
- «Using the skills and techniques learned in the programme 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 programme motivate us to work further, improve our skills and abilities.»

Since 2011 Mrs. Elena Vorobyeva 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 programme is available on the website.

## Effect

In all regions, the programme has shown high efficiency, group leaders point out its effectiveness, high demand and interest for the programme among parents and specialists. It has been proved on practice that the program is effective in reducing a number of behavioural problems among of children, developing social competence of the child, reducing the number of cases of violent disciplining among the parents, developing the parents’ ability to handle a child.

According to a whole range of research (Reid, Webster-Stratton & Hammond 2003; Larson et al. 2008) behaviour 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 behaviour, 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 / behaviour disorder after 5-6 years since the training finished.

Scientific and methodological guidance of the «Incredible Years» programme 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 Behaviour Inventory (diagnostic instrument for assessing intensity of behaviour deviations in children, monitoring behaviour changes in children whose parents participate in the programme, evaluation of programme effectiveness as such). The second stage is IY effect study in the Republic of Karelia.

The first stage is standardization of Eyberg Child Behaviour Inventory (ECBI). The inventory includes two scales: child behaviour deviations intensity scale and parent problem behaviour scale. The degree of behaviour 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 programme 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 programme 37 children (33 %) were enrolled in correction group, 46 (41%) – in the risk group, 29 children (26%) were the norm. 64 participants of the programme (57 %) registered increased or high stress level. After completion of the programme 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 programme 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 programme the degree of disruptive behaviour intensity in children lowered to the norm in the groups of parent training. If before the start of the programme the average score in the experimental group was 138, at the end it became 100. The level of behavioural problems intensity in children was at the same rather high level in the control group after three months. Similar 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 programme 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» programme favours 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 programme.



- 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 behaviour are exchanged by more positive forms of children-parental relations, upbringing deviations are becoming less evident.

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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 behavioural 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 programme 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 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 programme "Children and Youth at Risk in the Barents region, 2008-2015". More than 1760 of children and youths have done a course in ART and Family ART. As of November 2014, more than 300 professionals had undergone basic ART training within the CYAR and were certified as trainers, including 100 professionals trained within Family ART, 16 professionals from Karelia, the Murmansk and Arkhangelsk regions and Komi Republic are certified master trainers and consequently can train new ART 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 programme. 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 behaviour 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 behaviour. SSRS includes the following scales: cooperativity, thinking, self-control, responsibility, hyperactivity, «external» behaviour (behavioural problems, aggression), «internal» behaviour (anxiety, depression). SSRS is filled in by a child, a teacher (tutor) and a parent. At the moment the data from the main research project have been analyzed. have been analyzed On the basis of the child questionnaires (self-reports), the results have shown positive changes of the general indicators of social competence compared to the pre-test and post-test among the children from the ART-group. The ART-group has demonstrated a higher level on all the four sub-scales on the scale of social skills, such as cooperativity, self-affirmation, compassion and self-control. The most reliable and marked effect of the programme is observed o age groups; 6 - 9 years and 10 -14 years. On the contrary, the control group (children who did not participate in the ART group), when compared to the results of pre- and post-tests, has not demonstrated any changes neither in general indicators of social competence nor subscales of the SSRS.

The data provided by the parents and teachers, the children in both the experiment and control groups demonstrate more social competence and less problem behaviour when we compare the indicators of the pre- and post-test in the groups. The general results indicate a considerable improvement of the social skills among the children in the experiment group. However, the improvement is also registered in the control group. This finding can be considered as a result of the influence of the children from the experiment group on the children from the control group. (Koposov, R., Gundersen, K, & Svartdal, F. (2014). Efficacy of Aggression Replacement training

among children from North-west Russia. The International Journal of Emotional Education, 6 (1), 14-24.)

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# Family Group Conferences - FGC

## About

Family Group Conference (FGC) is an innovative method for working with children and families in a crisis situation. On the one hand, its appearance is connected with the crisis in the sphere of social work in the country in this period, on the one hand, with communal traditions of Maori tribes. Maori considered the child's welfare as an integral part of the family's welfare, and the notion of a "family" included both parents and the whole family clan. In those years a great amount of Maori children were brought up in institutions: specialists ignored the help of the immediate circle for family members in a difficult life situation. The creation of a new system that could recognize and take into account Maori's traditions, values, beliefs in the process of decision-making concerning the children and the family was required.

In 1989, a "Law on children, youth and family" was adopted. It emphasized the importance of the family and cultural heritage in resolving the issues of children upbringing. This law claims that the child welfare is a personal issue, not a public one. The law also admits that a family includes a wide range of relatives: it is supposed that specialists should engage the immediate circle to make a suitable decision concerning the child.

After the establishment of Family Group Conference (FGC) in New Zealand in 1989 according to the "Law on children, youth and family", the interest to this innovative approach to social support for children, children protection and teenager-friendly justice grew. Research projects were developed on the local level in order to work out a decision-making methodology. The usage of the "family group conference" method is legally registered in such countries, as New Zealand, in some states of Australia (South Australia, New South Wales and Queensland), in the Republic of Ireland. Family group conferences are stated as a leading international practice in Great Britain, Scandinavian countries, the Netherlands, many states of the USA, and Israel. The method is actively used in Spain, Slovakia, Poland, South Africa and other countries on all the continents <sup>(1)</sup>.

The method has different names in different countries: a family effort conference, a family group conference, family group meetings, a family group consultation, a family council. There are several names, but the idea uniting all the countries is the same: the family is the only legal host of this process.

(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



The goal is to develop the child's abilities to overcome difficult life situations by means of the cooperation with his / her immediate circle, i.e. the family.

The goal in the framework of this project is prevention of family problems, social orphanhood, neglect and crimes committed by minors, support to families and children in a difficult life situation.

The method "Family Group Conference" corresponds to the ethic principle according to which a person is responsible for his / her actions, meanwhile respecting personal views of family members concerning the ways of problem resolving.

## FGC implementation area

The technique of this method can be easily adapted in many spheres; the implementation area is wide and includes conflict resolving in a family, at school, at work.

This method allows using an individual, differentiated approach to solving crisis situations:

- parents' divorce (the issue of children's residence, documental issues, treatment)
- the problem of mutual understanding between parents and children
- drug abuse and committing offence by teenagers
- family violence
- conflicts
- leaving home
- difficulties with children adaptation in foster families
- problems in the family during adopted children stay
- the period of preparation and adaptation to responsible life after living in a foster family (a foster home or an orphan boarding school)

The success in using FGC during working with children aroused interest to the usage of this approach in other cases, such as mental disturbances in adults, family violence to adults, in providing services and protecting the rights of the elderly.

## The main characteristics

Family Group Conference is a kind of a family council, a meeting of all the family members to discuss the present situation and make independent decisions. It is an opportunity for planning together with the family. The process of a family group conference includes the nearest relatives and other people important for the family who can make a contribution into the planning of the future welfare, care, and protection of children.

FGC has two sources: the family and specialists.

The goals of the family group conference are:

- To adopt plans that are safe and appropriate for children.
- To urge family members to participate actively in the planning of childcare and child protection.
- To study the possibilities inside the family, the society and the professional organizations.
- To support the partnership between families and professionals.
- To empower family members, giving them an opportunity to make plans corresponding to their children's needs.

FGC values include the following:

- A person has the right to maintain kinship and cultural bonds throughout the life.
- Every person belongs to the systems of the extended family and the society, both of which bring him up and are responsible for him.
- Family members, not specialists, are the environment for care, protection, and welfare.
- Family members know their history and use this information combined with the assistance provided by professionals by means of planning.
- The active participation and the leadership of family members are necessary for the positive result; it is necessary to pay attention to the fact that there is no inequality between family members and specialists.
- Family members have the right for respect from governmental institution representatives who need to take extra effort to respect the poor, socially excluded, marginal members of the society who lack access to services and resources.

- The state is responsible for the detection, the assistance, and the strengthening of the family's possibility to protect its members and take care of them.
- The state is responsible for the protection of family members against unwarranted interference and for the strengthening of the family potential.

## The FGC process

The FGC process is planned in detail and is followed-up in order to ensure the compliance with the FGC principles and that these principles are used in practice. The following five components are important for the compliance with the FGC principles. European researchers Rob Van Pagee, Sveinung Horverak, Cecilie More, and Liv Shelderup single out the main characteristics of the family group conferences:

**An independent leader is responsible for the meeting of family members with specialists from institutions.** When it is necessary to make a principal decision concerning family members, a dialogue between family members and specialists takes place. An independent leader creates an atmosphere of openness, honesty and respect during this dialogue, emphasizing the importance of using "no pressure" practice by specialists.

**Specialists recognize family members as key partners and provide the family with the time and the resources for decision-making.** Providing an independent leader with the time and the resources to find family members and train them (along with specialists from institutions) underlines the importance of family members in the adoption of effective plans and the importance of their role.

**Family members have an opportunity to meet each other and discuss the received information in order to define their claims and plans.** Providing the family with private time allows them to use their knowledge and experience in a known environment according to their ethical and cultural practice of decision-making. Recognizing the importance of family's private time and making active steps to encourage family members to plan this time underlines the restrictions of specialists themselves; the family should adopt the best possible decision and plan.

**The plan made by family members is preferred to all the other plans.** Taking into account that the preference is given to the family as a leading partner, specialists emphasize their confidence in family members as partners in providing care and support to its members and help the family to develop its skills to do it.

**The institution supports family members providing them with the necessary services and the resources to fulfil the plan agreed upon by family members and specialists.** During the fulfilment of the plan specialists from institutions help family members by means of supporting them and facilitating the resource unification of the institutions and the society in order to support family members.

## Family Group Conference in Russia

At the conference of UN Committee on the Rights of the Child there was emphasized a broader use of FGC. In the framework of the CYAR program the FGC method is implemented in all the regions of Russia participating in the program.

The Russian-Norwegian project “Family Group Conference” was for the first time presented by the Representative Office of the humanitarian organization “SOS – Children’s villages Norway” in Murmansk region in 2004. Initially the project was implemented in Murmansk region, and since 2006 it has become the basis for the wide cooperation between the governmental bodies, the institutions, the civil society, and the people in St. Petersburg, Leningrad and Pskov regions, the Republic of Karelia. The organization’s activity in all the projects implemented in North-west Russia was aimed at the family strengthening by means of the implementation of the new technologies in order to support families with children in a difficult life situation.

In 2010, the Representative Office handed the project “Family Group Conference” over to the Non-state educational institution of further education for adults “Development Center of Family Hosting for Children”. The founder of the center is a Russian committee “Children’s SOS-villages – Russia” (Moscow). The acquaintance of the Russian specialists with the new technologies will facilitate the outlook broadening, the change of the social opinion. No doubt, the new knowledge will have a positive effect on lives of participants themselves.

The implementation of the method “Family Group Conference” into the work of specialists assisting families in a difficult life situation should be continued so that an innovative method “Family Group Conference” could gradually be introduced into practice in the specialists’ work along with other methods on decision-making, and this process should be systematic.

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# Restorative Justice – Juvenile Mediation and Mediation Boards

## About the programme

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 programme as well as the cooperation programme 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 five 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 2014, 65 adolescents, who committed a crime, made agreements with the victims of the crime and thus avoided traditional juridical punishment

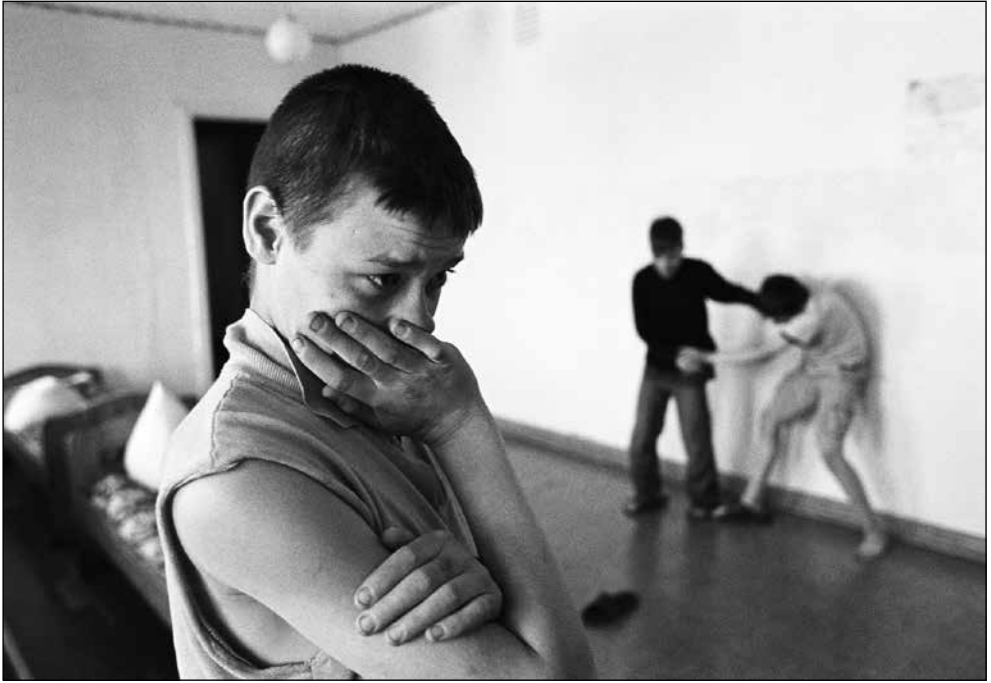
The next step in the promotion of mediation in the North-West of Russia is to facilitate the introduction of mediation in Murmansk region during 2014-2015. The first group of mediators have undergone training in 2013. It is also planned to broaden the mediation network in the Arkhangelsk region. Instructors 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.

More information and current updates <http://www oulu.fi/naistutkimus/fvc>

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## ART and Family-ART

The information has been provided by Knut Gundersen, the social centers participating in the programme 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 Koposov.

## From Violence to Caring

The information was provided by the coordinators of the online education programme “From Violence to Caring” at the University of Oulu (Finland).

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Notes:











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