

We Rise

Through Art

HandBook

Psychosocial Support through Art & Sports Activities
With children & pre-adolescents



Content



Peace of Art is a youth led organization building peace through arts, sports and other non-violent tools of communication and expression, as well as through soft skills training and social or civil awareness.

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Introduction

Established in 2016, **Peace of Art** is an organization based in North Bekaa in Lebanon that uses art, culture, sports and technology as tools to promote peace & social cohesion. Through these tools, the organization works towards an open and tolerant society where young voices engage with each other towards the democratic transformation of their community.

Peace of Art creates groups of young change makers to be the future leaders in Art and to transform a culture of violence, discrimination, extremism and ignorance into tolerance, acceptance, development, and freedom. Peace of Art does this through designed programs that focus on fine Art training (music, theater, photography, film making, drawing...), sports, technology and civil training (citizenship, acceptance toward others, leadership skills, conflict mediation and resolution).

Peace of Art aims to build a young generation that believes in Art and education as a way to solve community problems and to contribute to establishing an open and tolerant society where young voices engage with each other in the democratic transformation of the region.

Peace of Art is working to spread its mission worldwide through different offices based outside Lebanon and to become an international NGO making difference around the world.

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We Rise Through Art Project

In many ways, the Beirut blasts of the 4th of August have had a severe traumatic impact on the children of the Lebanese capital. Strongly believing in the power of art to overcome sorrows, "**Peace of Art**", a Lebanese NGO, has responded to the emergency with "**We Rise through Art**" or **WRTA**, a youth-led project supported by **UNESCO Beirut** as part of its flagship initiative **Li Beirut**.

Launched in September 2021, the project has brought together young volunteers who have been organizing a series of psychosocial art infused workshops, targeting children in the area of Karantina, near the devastated Beirut port. Initially planned to last 7 months, the project was further extended for 2 months till the end of May 2021, supported by the financial contribution of the "Prayer for Beirut", a group of Japanese artists who collected donations in Japan for the people of Beirut, in coordination with the National Federation of UNESCO Associations in Japan (NFUAJ).

Through art, music, dance, sports, and drama, infused with psychosocial support follow-up, the weekend activities combined verbal and physical expression and were organized at a public park and a local indoor space, targeting a group of 40 children and young individuals between the ages of 7-16, both males and females, Lebanese and Syrians.

For more information on the UNESCO "Li Beirut" campaign:
<https://en.unesco.org/fieldoffice/beirut/libeirut>



We Rise Through Art Toolkit

This handbook is created based on the evaluation of
Young trainers & volunteers
Peace of Art Lebanon

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Advice for Trainers and Coaches



It is important within this handbook not only to teach children and pre-adolescents how to perform arts and play sports and develop them into fundamentally sound athletes and artists, but also how to become social leaders and agents of peace who are able to deal with difficult situations, stress and negative emotions. Coaches and trainers play a huge role in helping children and pre-adolescents manage such emotions and deal with stress as well as building the leaders of tomorrow within their clubs, schools, NGOs...

The activities within the project "We Rise through Art" were designed to teach children and pre-adolescents life and social skills, how to handle stress, accept diversity, learn how to deal with wins and losses, decision making, build esteem and learn to reach team goals while identifying and dealing with possible conflict, knowing that children and Pre-adolescents are from different religions, nationalities and backgrounds.

When working with children and pre-adolescents from diverse backgrounds, the activities should bring opportunity for children and pre-adolescents to feel safe and prepare to transition to accepting the other in a safe space that accepts and embraces all differences, regardless if they are based on religion, race, sectarian environment, nationality or social status...

It is important that the trainer or coach pays attention that teams are not divided to groups representing a specific background, but that each team includes children and pre-adolescents representing the different targeted backgrounds, which will allow children, and pre-adolescents to start communicating and building the bridge.

Never stop learning or developing your skill set as a trainer. Every context has its own specifications and characteristics, and so the trainer or coach must be able to identify these specifications to be able to break the ice with the children and pre-adolescents and among the children and pre-adolescents themselves. You don't have to be a professional sports player or trainer to train the children and pre-adolescents, but you should be able to explain your methods and approach to developing fundamentally sound athletes and artists who will become also the leaders of peace in their own community.

Prepare your own curriculum that demonstrates your ability to successfully implement the activities to measure impact visually and on paper. The children and pre-adoleescents' development and progress should be visible not only to coaches and trainers but also to their parents and their teammates, as well as the community.

Focus more on building a good communication and space among the children and pre-adoleescents, especially with the children and pre-adoleescents who are shy at the beginning and who do not engage quickly with the activities.

Don't be afraid to ask many questions, but make sure you are asking the right questions to determine if the activity is suitable for the children and pre-adoleescents, and if they are able to relate.

Be mindful not to over exert the children and pre-adoleescents with too many activities to avoid the risk of burn out and tiredness.

Be careful not to impose your expectations and aspirations onto the children and pre-adoleescents, as every one of them has his/her own personality and characteristics. You must help them accept themselves as they are and encourage them to be confident about themselves, while at the same time respecting the others and their differences.



THE DEFINITION OF VIOLENCE

Violence is defined as the exertion of physical force on a specific target and causing harm to this target. This harm may be physical, psychological, or both.

Violence is a negative act by its nature and a relatively common behavior among humans and is not specified to a specific age.

It is any form of aggression exerted by one person or a group against another person or group, and it can have different shapes and not limited to physical violence as most people see it.

Violence may be exerted by an individual, a group of individuals or even structures. It is noteworthy to say that violence and conflict do not represent the same thing, as violence is just one of the forms of reacting to a conflict.

It is very important for the trainer or coach to know the types of violence and identify violence and conflict situations to know how to deal with them and when children or pre-adolescents are exposed to them.

Violence can be personal, interpersonal or collective, and it is divided to two categories:

DIRECT VIOLENCE

- PERSONAL

Ex: Self-harm, suicide, drugs...

- INTERPERSONAL

It can be in the form of physical violence, psychological violence, emotional violence, neglect, sexual violence, exploitation....

- COLLECTIVE

Ex: Torture, armed violence, violent crime, genocide...

INDIRECT VIOLENCE

It can be cultural or structural.

- PERSONAL

Ex: Anxiety, alienation, low self-confidence and self-esteem, powerlessness...

- INTERPERSONAL

Ex: Racism, discrimination based on nationality or beliefs or culture, religious or orientation intolerance, economic exploitation...

- COLLECTIVE

Ex: Cultural domination, religious intolerance coming from groups, refugee discrimination, extremism, marginalization, social inequality, unequal privileges...



THE DEFINITION OF CONFLICT

Unlike violence, conflict is not necessarily negative. Conflict is when two individuals, groups or any two parties disagree. The way we manage a conflict situation is what makes it either positive or negative.

Conflict is very natural and it happens in any context, among family members, in school, among teams, in companies and organizations.... If conflict was managed correctly it can lead to positive change and results, otherwise it can lead to violence.

The trainer must be ready to identify any signs of conflict, and take action to transform the conflict to a positive and productive lesson or discussion. The key is effective communication and learning to accept and discuss criticism, without over-reacting.

It is very important to have a person within your activities ready to intervene in case of conflict or violence, and who knows how to approach such situations.

Why is it important to engage children and pre-adolescents in sports & arts?

Coping with stress and dealing negative emotions
Building Strong Relationships and Tolerance
Building Reconciliation and Acceptance
Bridging Between Communities
Providing Safe Grounds in Situations of Conflict
Reducing Tensions and Therefore Violence
Empowering Children and pre-adolescents with Communications Tools and Space
Creating a Space for Interaction and Dialogue
Connecting Children and pre-adolescents to Their Communities
Building Peace and Coherence
Preventing Children and pre-adolescents from Engaging in Crimes and Armed Activities
Strengthening Team Spirit
Integrating Marginalized Children and pre-adolescents
Strengthening Marginalized Cultures

Activities

The following activities are integrated with the sports, drawing, music & percussion, dance and drama training sessions (And can be integrated with any sports or physical expression activities) to help build a common ground between the children and pre-adolescents and to encourage them to communicate and to get to know each other. Some activities are built to help children and pre-adolescents deal with conflict within their teams and to accept each other's differences as well as develop active listening skills that will help them throughout their community later on. The main goal is to help the children and pre-adolescents to process their emotions and let go of negative feelings and stressful thoughts through entertaining approaches.

It is very important to build the trust among the team members and to help them build stronger relations that will allow them to embrace the diversity and to build acceptance and tolerance, not only among themselves, but that can also be reflected in their community, which is the main objective of publishing the "We Rise through Art" handbook. This is important to help children and pre-adolescents integrate and become able to deal with their emotions.

Psychosocial Support

Psychosocial support is important to make sure the art, sport, dance and drama activities are in line with the safety and well-being of the children and pre-adolescents. The psychosocial support specialist has to be present during the planning and preparation of every activity, to make sure they comply with the well-being of every child and pre-adolescent.

The psychosocial support specialist will also follow-up with the children and the pre-adolescents during all the activities, and prepare with the workshop facilitators and coordinators plays, drawing and other activities that are specifically oriented to support the children and pre-adolescents, and prepare them for the coming related training, and that at the same time help children and pre-adolescents to evaluate and analyze specific challenges and work out solutions.

Within WRTA, psychosocial support was part of the planning and preparation of all the activities with all the trainers, as well as in the post evaluation of all trainings, to make sure the activities are reaching the set objectives. Psychosocial social support was also part of every activity implemented, following up with the children and supporting them in the process of understanding their emotions and releasing the stress, especially with the aftermath of Beirut's explosion that has directly affected the children and pre-adolescents in Karantina area, who are exposed to anxiety, stress and psychological trauma.



Using Drawing & Arts

Arts approach includes drawing, painting, sculpture, collage, clay forming and other arts based activities. In order for the art activities to make the expected impact, the training must start with developing the children's and pre-adolescents motor and basic drawing skills, and then evolve to focus on geometry, colors, and sketching, then seeing things in both 2D and 3D forms. But to make a deeper impact, the activities must be incorporated with specific themes focusing on the challenges the participants face, moments of learning and change, and it must include discussions and reflection on the theme to help the children and pre-adolescents visualize and relate their art works to their own situations, as well as release negative emotions. This will also help them build their communication skills.

Trainers can study the targeted community beforehand and analyze local resources are available which children and pre-adolescents can use for their art works, and which they can continue to build on even after the training ends at home or in their neighborhood.

MOTOR & BASIC DRAWING SKILLS

The trainer starts the program with simple tasks to help children recognize their drawing abilities and break preconceived ideas about drawing and shift their perspectives on what it is and who can do it.

The trainer starts with asking the children and pre-adolescents to do simple tasks, like: Drawing an object in a continuous line without removing the pencil tip from the paper, drawing a chosen object by using six lines, drawing an object without looking at the paper, drawing an object using dots and dashes, drawing an outline of the object in one movement, drawing an object's shadow....

When their basic skills are built, the trainer introduces the children to known art styles including Picasso's style of drawing. The trainer explains the technique Picasso uses (in basic forms and approaches, and not professionally, to exhibit the freedom in drawing ordinary shapes in unconventional ways) to draw his paintings on the sketch level, and how they can use his techniques to draw their own paintings. Children and pre-adolescents will be able to use Picasso's style with their own drawings and their own touches and in new creative and freeing ways.



LEARNING THE GEOMETRY OF THINGS

The art trainer starts the program with introducing the children to basic geometric shapes and drawing schools that children and pre-adolescents without prior experience in drawing can use and build upon. From knowing the basic shapes like squares, rectangles, circles and triangles, the trainers started to envision these shapes with the children and pre-adolescents in the things they see around them.

After that the children and pre-adolescents start to figure out the shapes structuring each object in front of them, and drawing these shapes as outlines for their drawings. This helped them understand new perspectives, and see the world around them from different angles.

COLLAGE USING GEOMETRIC FIGURES

To emphasize on the shapes and geometry of the objects, the trainer previously prepares colored geometric figures from colored paper, and asks the children and pre-adolescents to choose one object and create a sketch of this object using a collage of the geometric shapes with glue on white A4 paper sheets. The children then talk about their drawings and explain how they envisioned them.

MIXING & RECOGNIZING NATURAL COLORS

After the children and pre-adolescents learn to recognize geometric figures in ordinary objects around them and use that to form their drawings and then outline and add details, the trainer starts working with them on colors. The most important step is helping the children and pre-adolescents recognize and know the primary colors: Red-Yellow-Blue, from which they can derive other secondary colors. The children and pre-adolescents start coloring their drawings and mixing to get new colors to use in their paintings. Whenever they finish their paintings, they add their names at the bottom, and stick it on a board the trainer prepares for them to form a collective exhibition. Once everyone is finished, every child or pre-adolescent explains about his/her painting and what it represents in their view.

SCULPTING WITH CLAY

The trainer distributes to the children and pre-adolescents mud clay and gloves to start experimenting. The children and pre-adolescents are then given safe plastic knives to cut through the clay and be able to create forms. The trainer explains about the 3D shapes and how objects are visualized in 3D. The trainer then teaches the children and pre-adolescents how to form facial profiles and expressions with the clay, which the children then replicated with their own ideas.

TEAM-DRAWING "YOUR DREAM COMMUNITY" IN 2D & 3D

The trainer divides the children and pre-adolescents to groups, distributes colored clay and A5 card sheets to each group then asks them to use the clay to represent their dream community. The trainer and the assistants will keep following up with the groups while they are working to make sure everyone is engaged and included in the process, and that they are able to work collectively. Some of the children may face difficulties translating their ideas into clay objects, and here the trainer must be able to help orient the children and pre-adolescents to come up with the ideas and translate them by themselves, by asking supporting questions and engaging in discussions with them. When they finish their work the groups will choose one or more of them to represent the group, to talk about their "Dream Community" and what it will look like.

Using Music, Sounds & Percussion



Music is one of the methods of storytelling by which children and pre-adolescents can express themselves creatively using words, rhythm and beat.

Children and pre-adolescents can work individually, in pairs or in groups to create sounds and songs on a selected theme and express themselves on challenges they face or learning moments or changes around them in the community.

RECOGNIZING RYTHMS & TEMPOS OF DAILY LIFE

Before introducing the children and pre-adolescents to music, notes and instruments, the trainer has to make them familiar with the basic components of music, starting with tempo, beat and rhythm. The trainer may find that many of the children are not able to recognize a fixed tempo or a beat, and stay on the same speed. So the first challenge would be to help children get to do a beat in the same speed at a fixed tempo and follow the trainer's (or another participant's) lead. To start this activity, the trainer can hand the children and pre-adolescents previously prepared sticks or same length pencils. Then the trainer will ask them to hit the floor or the table (Based on what is available) in front of them once, then repeat it again after a small pause, and again, and again until the children have started to tune to this pause's length and the speed (Which must be very slow at the beginning). When all the children and pre-adolescents have their beats synchronized, the trainer slightly speeds up the beat. Children and pre-adolescents will automatically increase their speeds as well to match the tempo (or the speed of the beat). When all are harmonized, the trainer changes speeds randomly but stays at the changed speed for a while to allow all the children and pre-adolescents to tune in.

Once the children and the pre-adolescents are familiar with the tempo and the rhythm, the trainer can start to give the lead to children and the pre-adolescents which will also help them gain leadership skills and confidence when they have to be the ones giving the speed and beat to the others. After that the trainer can start showing and teaching the children more complex rhythms and beats.

BEATS FROM SCRATCH (AB, AAB, ABB...)

In this part, the trainer introduces the children & pre-adolescents with the different sounds and how to annotate each sound with a specific letter to create complex rhythms and beats. For example a child can choose his/her first sound as a clap, and a second sound to be a foot stomp. This way A can annotate the clap and B the stomp. The trainer first introduces the children to the most basic dual beat, AB. With the above example, the beat would be made of the repeating loop of a clap then a stomp, then again a clap and a stomp: A B A B A B... Before the children start trying the beat, the trainer explains to the children that a raised vertical fist means to stop. Then the children try to replicate the beat. The trainer can ask the children to stand in a circle, and each choose an A and a B (Different than the clap and the stomp), and then apply the AB beat to them. Later the trainer introduces a third iteration of one of the letter (First AAB, then ABB).

The trainer can continue to introduce even more letters with more sounds for each beat, but it is a great opportunity for the children and pre-adolescents to explore the new sounds themselves.

PAUSES & SILENCES

Children will learn in this part the importance of silences and pauses as a very crucial part of any music, and which composes the greatest element of every speech and musical piece. Children will learn the shapes and durations of musical pauses and include them in their beats. For example, when the children add a full rest to the beat AAB, it becomes AABZ which replicates a beat in many known songs familiar to the children. The children and pre-adolescents can experiment here.

BUILDING INDIVIDUAL & TEAM RHYTHMS & MUSIC

After mastering tempos, simple beats and complex beats, the trainer can now work with the children and pre-adolescents to create collective rhythm and music. First the trainer starts with body rhythms without using any instruments, and allows the children each to come up with their own sounds and beats, but repetitive ones. Later the trainer can provide the children with percussion music kits and instruments they can use for their music. The trainer here plays the role of the maestro, orienting the children to start and stop at different times to create different sound effects. The trainer can also work here on volume by either raising his hand or lowering it. When children and pre-adolescents grasp the idea of the maestro's role and gestures, the trainer gives them the floor to lead one by one randomly. This again encourages the leadership spirit among children and pre-adolescents.

UNDERSTANDING THE FUNDAMENTALS OF MUSIC INSTRUMENTS:

The trainer introduces the children to the musical pitches and the basics of music notation and sounds. After that, the trainer introduces the children to the three families of musical instruments (Woodwind, percussion and strings), and asks the children to name a few musical instruments in each family.

This is where the trainer starts to introduce the musical instruments to the children and pre-adolescents: How to hold them, how to play each, the parts, the sounds, the musical families.... The children and pre-adolescents try each instrument by its-self and the trainer and the assistants help them correct the way they hold them and play them. The trainer can play a few pieces for the children on the instruments and the children can sing along.

WRITING LYRICS & SINGING COLLECTIVELY

Before writing the songs, the trainer must introduce the children to rhyming words; which are words ending with the same or similar sounds like: Plane and gain, boy and joy... In small groups, the trainer asks the children to brainstorm and make a list of rhyming words. After they finish, the trainer explains to the children how they can create balanced and similarly structured sentences ending with rhyming words to start writing their songs, and asks some of the children to come up with similar sentences. After that, the trainer asks them to try and write a few verses (or if they can't write, the assistants can help write the children's ideas). When they finish writing their verses the trainer asks the groups to select one person from the group to read the verses to the other groups. The trainer then asks the children and pre-adolescents to collect their verses together to form a song, and creates a melody, on the guitar maybe and a beat with them.

Using Drama & Performance



Drama and theater are great approaches by which children and pre-adolescents can act, recreate or perform a part in a specific situation. Drama can be utilized to assist children and pre-adolescents to imagine different circumstances. To conduct this method, the trainer can ask the children and pre-adolescents to act a chosen topic, or a challenge they have faced. This will allow the children and pre-adolescents to gain self-confidence and learn more about their capabilities.

MOVING BODY PARTS & VOCAL EXERCISES

The Trainer starts the drama session with familiarizing the children and pre-adolescents with their bodies. The trainer can start with energizing exercises that help the children and pre-adolescents become more confident moving their bodies which include physical exercises starting with their fingers, palms, hands, head and shoulders, back, legs and feet as well as vocal exercises empowering the children and pre-adolescents to speak up.

The physical exercises include warm up through arm swinging, hand flows and waves, head tilt, shoulders moving, jumping in different directions... Vocal exercises include breathing activities that help the children and pre-adolescents concentrate and at the same time become confident in expressing themselves. Vocal warm up includes saying the sounds in order: Ooh | oh | ah | eh | ee

Pitch exercises include counting from one to five with each number having a higher pitch than the one before it. And then this can be reversed..

Volume exercises: The trainer asks the children and pre-adolescents to sound a long vowel quietly first and then gradually louder.

Speed vocal exercise: And here the trainer asks the children and pre-adolescents to speak a sentence quickly and then repeat it slowly.

SELF-EXPRESSION & STORYTELLING

Drama and theater allow children and youth to simulate situations and challenging circumstances while imagining different versions and angles to the stories. It also allows them to express themselves by speaking up or acting up the place of characters.

Simulations give children and pre-adolescents the opportunity to meet their learning objectives and use their abilities in a meaningful and authentic challenge within their communities and within the activities.

Simulations require children and pre-adolescents to utilize critical thinking in the moment and to draw appropriate expertise from a wide range of concepts and abilities since they seek to emulate the complexity and unpredictability of real-world situations.

The trainer must make sure to help the children and the youth to come up with the simulations on their own and do it either individually or in small groups. Storytelling is part of the drama training which encourages the imagination and the creativity, as well as the needed skills to build the children's and pre-adolescents' self-esteem. It allows them to express deep emotions and challenges in a very expressive way. Storytelling entails more than simply reading a story aloud. It also necessitates additional abilities. When delivering a tale, being able to employ multiple tones in the children's and pre-adolescents' voice is crucial, and this is what the trainer has to work on. If they keep their voices at the same volume, they'll have to raise and drop their voices, and change the volume of their voices to build their delivering skills. This can be developed by playing games.

As an activity, the trainer asks the children and pre-adolescents to walk across the room several times, and pretend to be something with every time they cross. Ex:

- Ask them to pretend being in a shop with a shopping cart.
- Ask them to pretend walking in a muddy ground.
- Ask them to pretend walking in a hot desert with scorching sun.
- Ask them to pretend walking amidst a crowd.
- Ask them to pretend walking on an old rope bridge over a deep valley.
- Ask them to pretend you are in space with little gravity.

LEARNING TO COPE WITH EMOTIONS

Theater and drama improve the children's and pre-adolescents' emotional intelligence by enhancing their capacities for recognizing their own feelings and the feelings of other individuals as well as increasing their motivation and dealing with their emotions in the right way that will affect their wellbeing and their relationships with others. Drama allows children and pre-adolescents to practice recognizing, naming, acting and expressing emotions. This is very important to allow them to understand what they are feeling at any moment and translate it to know how to deal with it.



Using Dance, Sports & Physical Expression



Dance, sports and physical expression develop children's and pre-adolescents' skills on several levels, and help them on both the personal, team and community levels.

The skills include:

- **Flexibility:** Children and pre-adolescents learn through physical activities how to be flexible both physically and mentally. They learn endurance, patience, perseverance and adaptability which are very important skills and traits to build in order to face difficult or stressful situations.
- **Releasing Stress & Dealing with Emotions:** Dance, physical expression and sports serve as a coping mechanism and way to deal with stress and negative emotions. Children who are engaged in sports have a great capacity to manage emotions and deal with them instead of keeping them inside. Youth can learn to understand the emotions they feel, because in sports, children and pre-adolescents come to deal with joy, anger, frustration, pride...
- **Confidence & Self-esteem:** Children and pre-adolescents who are exposed to sports and dance gain greater confidence levels and better self-esteem because as their strength and skills increase through training and activities, they will have more confidence in their own abilities because they will see those abilities and improvements.
- **Leadership & Teamwork:** Collaboration is one of the essential values sports can educate members. Cooperation & collaboration make a difference to encourage the child or pre-adolescent to do their work, helping the group to reach its extreme objective, and thus building teamwork. Collaboration too includes designation of tasks and roles, which is what effective leaders do each day. Leaders require group building abilities and decision making in many situations improving the leadership skills with the children and pre-adolescents.
- **Communication & Self-Expression:** Sports, dance and physical expression provide a great space for practicing communication and self-expression. Even the children and adolescents who usually are shy and do not communicate in normal situations are able to express themselves freely and actively, and in many cases as an alternative to words and writing. Many children and pre-adolescents may be a bit hesitant to join sports and dance activities in the beginning, but that will change quickly once they see the action and when they see others doing it. The trainer also plays a great role in making sure the children and pre-adolescents feel comfortable and safe joining such activities.

- **Energy & Understanding the Body:** Through playing sport, children & pre-adolescents learn about their bodies, their capabilities, their strengths and their weaknesses. This allows them to understand themselves in the process and be aware of their emotions and their needs, psychologically and physically. The energy they receive from such activities allows them to release stress and negative emotions. Plus it this type of trainings is very enjoyable by the children who find a great deal of entertainment doing it.

Physical expression has benefits unmatched with other activities. Through WRTA project, sport included balancing, flower-stick juggling, spinning plates, aerial hoops, and a balancing rope, which were provided within Cirquenciel's venue. The dance sessions allowed the children to learn to listen to the music and learn to translate it to movement that allows them to release all the kept emotions and at the same time reflect on their challenges in a very creative way, which all children and pre-adolescents can perform in their own way, and which all can understand and relate. Children and pre-adolescents learned to try new experiences, cooperate to succeed and to teach each other. The trainer first showed them how to do an action, and then asked one of the children or pre-adolescents to try with the trainer's support. Once they tried, children would cheer each other even if the child or pre-adolescent did not succeed, creating a support system that would encourage the peers to keep on trying and learn from their mistakes. Once children or pre-adolescents succeed, the trainer divides them and asks each group of 2, 3 or 4 peers to help each other to learn it. This helped the children and pre-adolescents to improve their communication, cooperate and build tolerance among each other and towards others from different backgrounds and views.



Activities Section

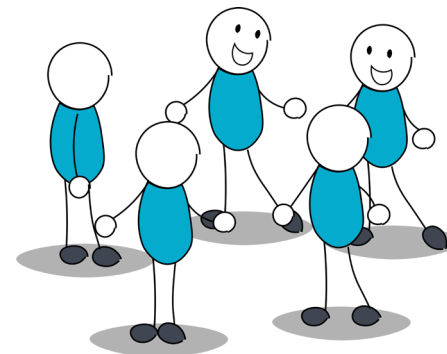
ENCOURAGE ACTIVE LISTENING

Activity 15-20 minutes

Instructions The coach or trainer puts every two participants in a group and instructs them to ask each other open questions. Open questions are questions that need further clarification, and that start with who, when, where, what, why, how. Each person must build on the other person's questions, and stay on the same topic. The trainer gives the children and pre-adolescents about 4-5 minutes to ask each other the questions, and challenges them to see how long will the discussion stay. Some examples of the first question can be: Which destination would you choose for a vacation? What is your favorite food? So the challenge is to keep the conversation going as long as possible, with the aim to build children and pre-adolescents' listening skills.

Discussion

This activity focuses on the active listening skills and developing questioning and communication among the children and pre-adolescents. To follow-up on this activity, the coach or trainer can ask the children and pre-adolescents: What did you learn from this activity? How did you find it? Could this help during a conflict situation? What did you feel was most important to you when asking questions? Was the person in front of you listening to you?



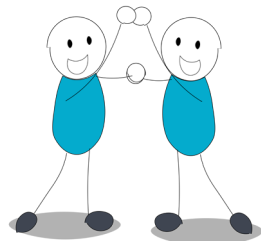
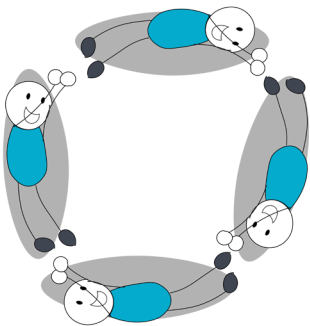
THE GROUP FIGURES SIMULATIONS

Activity: 35-40 minutes.

Instructions The trainer divides the entire group of children or pre-adolescents into sub-groups of 4 to 6 children. The trainer then tells the groups that the goal of the activity is for them to build various structures using only their bodies. Allow each group a maximum of five minutes to construct an animal, building, a motorcycle, a fruit.... Every member of the group should be able to participate with their body with the other members of the group to form the figure. For the older pre-adolescents, the activity can be more challenging by asking them to form figures representing a certain emotion: Sorrow, joy, anger, frustration

Discussion

Was this activity challenging? How did you feel when you were working together on forming a figure? How did you communicate with each other? Is it difficult to listen when somebody disagrees with you? Did you reach an agreement at all times? What do you think about the other groups' work?



I'M ALL EARS

Activity 15 mins

Instructions Through this activity, the coach asks children and pre-adolescents to choose a comfortable place to sit. The trainer then requests that the children and pre-adolescents relax and close their eyes while imagining that they can hear on different levels, like a radio. The trainer can start with asking children and pre-adolescents to listen to the farthest sounds they can hear, and gives them enough time to focus on that. Then the trainer asks them to listen on a different level, focusing on their bodies and listening to their breath then heartbeat. The trainer should speak in a very calm manner and allow the children and pre-adolescents to focus on each part on its own. The focus can be shifted afterwards to another level, into the room or the space where the children and pre-adolescents are sitting... Ask the children and pre-adolescents to open their eyes once you feel the children and pre-adolescents are ready.

Note: This activity will help the children and pre-adolescents focus on the current moment, understand the environment around them and tune-in.

Discussion

How do you feel after this activity? What did you feel when you were concentrating? What was the best and what was the hardest part of the exercise? Do you often listen to the sounds around you? Why is it important to listen? Do you think you would do this activity often, and why?



THE CIRCLE OF IDEAS

Activity 35-40 minutes

Instructions The trainer asks the children and pre-adolescents to form a circle, and begins reading statements from a previously prepared sheet. When someone relates to any of these statements, this person steps into the inside of the circle. The trainer gives the children and pre-adolescents a moment to look around and see who stepped in. A discussion must follow this activity to reflect on what the children and pre-adolescents felt and how they perceived the results. The exercise will allow children and pre-adolescents to find the connections among them.

Statement Examples:

The statements can be prepared and changed to suit the objective of the training:

- Ex: 1. Go inside the circle if you judged someone before.
2. Go inside the circle if you ever saw someone being bullied....

Discussion

What do you think after this activity? How did you feel to find out others have things in common with you? How did you feel when you were alone in the circle? Were there times you should have joined but did not and why? Why did we do this exercise? Were you surprised when any of your friends joined in at any question, why? This exercise can help children and pre-adolescents break the stereotypes and learn to accept the different opinions others may have.



Small Activities for Team-Work, Problem Solving & Communication



The Expanding Circle While standing in a small circle, children and pre-adolescents throw the ball to another person in the circle. If the ball does not fall, the whole group steps back one step to expand the circle, and continue tossing. It gets more and more challenging as the circle grows bigger.

The Continuous Line The point of this activity is to get children and pre-adolescents to form a random knot by holding another person's hand across from them in a circle, and not releasing. This may end up in a messy knot as the children and pre-adolescents try to connect the line without releasing a hand.

Two Truths and One Lie the trainer asks each of the children and pre-adolescents to share two true facts about themselves, and one lie. The facts can be something like "I'm afraid of heights" or "I like chocolate ice cream". Throughout the next sessions, children and pre-adolescents will try to figure out which statement was a lie with each other.

Map The aim of this activity is to build a bond between children and pre-adolescents. Ask children and pre-adolescents to create a map by localizing themselves in such a way that represents the place where they come from in the playground or in the room. Every one of the children and pre-adolescents will share a memory they like from that place or an interesting feature of it. Children and pre-adolescents can also share short stories or talk about the customs of the place.

Find the Common Divide children and pre-adolescents to small groups and ask them to find out what they have in common, and what is unique to every person in the group. This activity builds solidarity and cohesion among children and pre-adolescents as they find out that they have more things in common. It will also help them view their differences as strength and an added value.

Collective Story The trainer starts with a sentence for the story, and asks the participants standing on the right to continue the sentence with another sentence of their own. The same thing continues with the rest of the participants. The story ends when all participants add their sentences. The final result can be funny and very engaging.

Silent Lining up Without using a word, have children and pre-adolescents form a line in order of age, length, number of family members, foot size,... Have a discussion afterwards on non-verbal communication and the importance of cooperation.

Team Player Characteristics This activity is more like a discussion. The coach asks the children and pre-adolescents to discuss 10 signs that show a person is a good team player. Children and pre-adolescents will start sharing their thoughts.

Random Number Using sticky labels add numbers to a ball and ask children and pre-adolescents to throw the ball to a person who did not receive the ball yet. The person who receives the ball has to check the number under the right hand index finger, and answer the question corresponding to this number on the questions sheet with the trainer. The questions can be similar to "What is your favorite color?" or "Which country do you want to visit?"

Team Hunt Give children and pre-adolescents a list of topics to confirm with other children and pre-adolescents so they can become acquainted with their peers. You have to set a limited time for them and have them discover individuals with similar favorite color as them, individuals who like dogs over cats, individuals who have similar T-shirt colors as them, and so on.

No Hands Ball Divide the children and pre-adolescents to two teams. While each team forms a line lying on their backs, children and pre-adolescents have to pass a ball to their team members using only their feet, competing to deliver the ball before the other team.

Pass the Hoop Divide the children and pre-adolescents to two teams, and give each team a hoop. Each team has to pass the hoop from the first member to the last while holding their hands in a line.

Complete the Story Start a story with one sentence, and ask one of the children or pre-adolescents to complete it. Then ask another child or pre-adolescent to complete after their peer, and so on until everyone takes part and we get a final story.



Conclusion from “We Rise Through Art”

It is very important to get children and pre-adolescents involved in sports, arts, music, dance and drama to orient them on using those tools and other means to break, transform and resolve conflict and to build a network and a space to communicate and to open new dialogues and with it new opportunities among children and pre-adolescents and children, and as a result within a whole future community. Arts and sports have proved to be effective tools to get children out of stressful situations and help them with the right follow up engage and transform these situations within a safe environment.

This Booklet and its contents were prepared by Peace of Art's team
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"We Rise Through Art" Handbook Summary:

"Peace of Art", a Lebanese NGO, has responded to the aftermath of Beirut's explosion with "We Rise Through Art", a youth-led project supported by UNESCO Beirut as part of its flagship initiative Li Beirut. The project supported children and pre-adolescents from the Karantina area with psychosocial support infused with arts, drawing, music & percussion, sports, dance, drama and physical expression.

Through this project, this handbook was produced to replicate some of the practices that youth can use within their activities.

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