

Applying Safe Behaviours: Preventing and Responding to Peer Violence Amongst Children and Young People

<u>Organisation(s):</u>	The project is led by SOS Children's Villages International (based in Austria) and is being implemented by SOS Children's Villages member associations in Bulgaria, Italy, Romania and Sweden and Terre des hommes Lausanne in Kosovo. Technical support with the scoping and development of training materials within the project is provided by Terre des hommes Hungary – Regional Office for Europe. The project is also supported by the following Associated Partners: European Social Network (ESN – based in Belgium); International Society for the Prevention of Child Abuse & Neglect (ISPCAN – based in USA); SOS Children's Villages Kosovo; and SOS Kinderdörfer weltweit – Hermann-Gmeiner-Fonds Deutschland (Germany).	
<u>Country:</u>	"Applying Safe Behaviours" is currently being implemented in Bulgaria, Italy, Kosovo, Romania and Sweden. The initial project (2021-2023) was implemented in Belgium, France, Italy, Romania and Spain.	
<u>Contact:</u>	Train4childrights@sos-kd.org policy@esn-eu.org (we will function as an intermediary between you and interested organisations who want to learn more about the practice)	
<u>Theme:</u> Choose at least one option	☐ Ageing & Care ☐ Asylum & Migration ☒ Young People ☒ Support for Children & Families ☐ Community Care ☐ Integrated Care & Support ☒ Co-Production ☐ Disability ☐ Housing & Homelessness ☐ Artificial Intelligence ☐ Digitalisation ☐ Quality Care	☐ Labour Market Inclusion ☐ Social Inclusion ☐ Technology ☐ Workforce and Leadership ☐ Social Benefits ☒ EU Funding ☐ Social Services' Resilience ☒ Mental Health ☐ Person-Centred Care ☐ Research & Use of Evidence ☐ Management & Planning ☐ Other, please specify:
<u>Principles of the European Pillar of Social Rights:</u> <i>Which principles does your practice cover? Check the 20 principles here.</i>	☒ 1. Education, training, life-long learning ☒ 2. Gender equality ☒ 3. Equal opportunities ☐ 4. Active support to employment ☐ 5. Secure and adaptable employment ☐ 6. Fair Wages ☐ 7. Transparent employment conditions ☐ 8. Social dialogue ☐ 9. Work-life balance ☐ 10. Healthy, safe work environment	☒ 11. Childcare and child support ☐ 12. Social protection ☐ 13. Unemployment benefits ☐ 14. Minimum income ☐ 15. Old age income and pensions ☐ 16. Health care ☐ 17. Inclusion of people with disabilities ☐ 18. Long-term care ☐ 19. Housing and assistance to homeless ☐ 20. Access to essential services

<u>Current status of the practice:</u>	☐ Concept and Design Phase ☐ Testing or pilot phase ☐ Temporary practice that has terminated ☐ Temporary practice that is ongoing and has a termination date ☐ Established and ongoing practice ☐ Scaling Up and Transformation Phase ☒ Other (please specify): This follow-up project builds upon the initial “Applying Safe Behaviours” project that was implemented from 2021-2023. This phase of the project will run from April 2025 to February 2027.
<u>Summary:</u> Please summarise the practice in maximum 3 sentences. This will be the disclaimer of your project on our website. Example here.	Through the “Applying Safe Behaviours” project, SOS Children’s Villages and Terre des hommes aim to support children and young people from vulnerable backgrounds to be active agents in creating a safe environment for themselves and their peers, and to enable professionals who work with and care for children and young people to respond appropriately to peer violence.
<u>Context/ Social issues addressed</u> Please explain the problem you attempt to solve with your practice.	Peer on peer violence is one of the most common ways that children and young people experience violence: in Europe, almost 1 in 3 students report being bullied at school. For children and young people from vulnerable backgrounds, the risk of experiencing peer violence is even higher than that of the general population. Unfortunately, despite its prevalence, the adults and professionals who care for and work with children and young people often experience challenges in responding effectively. More education is needed for adults, children, and young people to understand peer violence and how to better prevent and respond to it.
<u>Objectives:</u> Please provide a maximum of three objectives in bullet points.	1. To make children and young people from vulnerable backgrounds active agents in creating a safe environment for themselves and their peers. 2. To enable professionals who work with and care for children and young people to respond appropriately to peer violence amongst them.
<u>Activities:</u> Please describe the activities put in place to achieve the objectives (maximum 400 words).	1. Delivery of peer-to-peer workshops for children aged 11-15 years old to learn more about what peer on peer violence is, why it happens, ways it might be prevented, and what they can do to help protect themselves and their peers. The workshops are led by young people aged 17-24 who are trained as Peer Trainers. 2. Design and implementation of change projects by children in each of the peer-to-peer workshop groups, to bring what they have learned to others in their community to help raise awareness and contribute to the better prevention and response to peer violence. 3. Delivery of face-to-face trainings for professionals who care for and work with children and young people to equip and empower them to prevent, identify, and respond to peer violence amongst children in a balanced, safe, and caring manner, ensuring the best interest of every child.

	4. Roll out of awareness-raising workshops for children, young people, and adults, on what peer on peer violence is, how it can be prevented, and how to support children and young people who have been affected by it. 5. Development of practice-based guidelines for local, regional and national social services on how to better identify, prevent and respond to peer on peer violence. 6. Dissemination of national and EU-level policy recommendations on what needs to be changed in the legal framework as well as in practice to ensure that an informed, preventative, combative and responsive approach to peer violence amongst children is embedded into the child protection system.
Outcomes: <i>Please explain what the results were/are so far and how you evaluated this (i.e. statistics, a study, or feedback)</i>	The capacity-building activities in the initial project were evaluated through various actions, which will be replicated and built upon in this follow-up project. This includes pre- and post-training questionnaires, post-activity reflection exercises, and focus group discussions, which will all be analysed within a Training Evaluation Report. From the initial phase of the project, the following impact has been measured. Of the 433 children who participated in all sessions of the peer-to-peer workshops and who participated in the evaluation exercise, 87% rated the sessions as “good” or “very good”. In their feedback, children shared that they enjoyed the experience, learnt more about what peer on peer violence is, have a better understanding of some of the reasons it happens and, ways it might be prevented. Furthermore, they have considered things they can do to help protect themselves and others. Of the 70 young people who were trained as Peer Trainers to deliver the peer-to-peer workshops, 96% rated the course as “good” or “very good”. Peer Trainers also reported that “The course has helped my self-esteem,” and “It [...] helps me to help other young people.” Of the 368 professionals who participated in the full training programme and completed the evaluation forms, 95% rated the programme as “good” or “very good”, and 97% evaluated the training as “relevant” or “very relevant” for their work with children and young people. Through comparisons of the pre- and post-training questionnaires, there was a significant increase in the increase of participants’ knowledge and understanding of the different aspects of peer on peer violence. The same participants were asked, ‘On average how many children and young people do you think you will be supporting in the next 12 months?’. Of those participants who responded, it was estimated they would reach approximately 40,504 children and young people with their learnings from the training. Within the feedback, professionals stated, “The fact that there was information supported by the research done with young people allowed me to consider options that I had not explored before” and “Often we don't stop to think about the initiator ...everything that lies behind the behaviour of an initiator escapes us or was something that went unnoticed. Not now.” For the e-learning course, almost all participants reported an increase in their understanding of peer on peer violence including the causes and ways to prevent it. For example, 99.7% of participants stated that they have a better understanding of how respect for equality and diversity can help prevent peer on peer violence. In addition to the further rollout of the trainings and peer-to-peer workshops that will take place in this follow-up project, the project resources continue to be freely available online, thereby contributing to the sustainability and further impact of the project actions.

	Overall, the findings of the various evaluation actions within the project have shown that the Safe Behaviours methodology and resources have been successful in enabling children, young people and the professionals who care for and work with them to prevent and respond appropriately to peer on peer violence.
Funding Source	EU Funds: ESF+ ☐ INTERREG ☐ ERDF ☐ ERASMUS ☐ RRF ☐ other ☒ ☐ National Government Funds ☐ Regional Government Funds ☐ Local Government Funds ☐ Private Sponsorship / Public-Private Partnership ☐ Financial contribution of People using Services ☐ Other, please define: CERV programme of the European Union
Links to supporting documents: e.g. project website or report of the practice, articles	Project webpage (current project phase – 2025-2027): https://www.sos-childrensvillages.org/applying-safe-behaviours-ii Project webpage (initial project – 2021-2023): https://www.sos-childrensvillages.org/applying-safe-behaviours Practice Guidance: https://www.sos-childrensvillages.org/getmedia/754d8f84-0f5d-4cb7-97df-47b0f9d705c9/Safe-Behaviours-Practice-Guidance_final.pdf E-learning: https://iversity.org/en/courses/applying-safe-behaviours-preventing-and-responding-to-peer-violence (Note: this link will be updated by end-2025) Children’s booklet: https://www.sos-childrensvillages.org/getmedia/b84abfbd-7c07-409d-a507-51b5be9bdd9d/Applying-Safe-Behaviours-children-s-booklet-English.pdf Awareness-raising videos: https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLPIIBHXAYBDjZAUTWvMtepmDpWuzR7yqm EU-level policy recommendations: https://www.sos-childrensvillages.org/getmedia/3b2ad1b4-d9fa-4f4e-8b53-d539ff4dc8b2/Applying-Safe-Behaviours-EU-level-recommendations.pdf Final project publication from initial project (2021-2023): https://www.sos-childrensvillages.org/getmedia/95110ce6-7bd6-46d7-ac5c-b4f47e25c9d0/safe-behaviours-final_publication-A5_final.pdf
Comments and tips i.e. for people willing to implement your Practice in their service	Several awareness-raising materials and capacity-building resources have been developed through the project for children, young people, professionals who care for and work with children and young people, as well as the wider public. The training materials are not freely available online in order to ensure that the training content is used and delivered in the correct way, with consideration of the necessary safeguarding measures that must be in place. In addition, the training has been designed to include the participation of care-experienced young adults as trainers, which again must be done in a safe and structured way.