

Approaching mental health in youth (information) work



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Webinar Agenda and Presenters

Diamando
Zisimopoulou
Project Officer – CYC

YIMINDS/
14/12/2023



YiMinds Project



- ❓ **YIMinds** = Youth Information minding young people's mental health
- ❓ **Aim:**
 - provide tools to help youth work professional identify mental health distress among young people
 - provide first hand support
 - ensure an effective collaboration with mental health services
 - fight stigmatisation
 - give some tools for young people themselves



YiMinds Consortium



? **Coordinator:**

European Youth Information and Counselling Agency (Luxembourg)

? **Partners:**

- IASIS (Greece)
- HARIDUS-JA NOORTEAMET (Estonia)
- COMUNIDAD DE MADRID (Spain)
- CYPRUS YOUTH COUNCIL (Cyprus)
- BUNDESNETZWERK ÖSTERREICHISCHE JUNGENDINFOS VEREIN (Austria)
- DE AMBRASSADE (Belgium)

? **Associated partners:** YoungScot (UK) & Eurodesk



Webinar Agenda



- ❓ The YiMinds Project

- ❓ Presentations:
 - **Survey Results** on youth (information) workers' mental health literacy
 - **Guide** "Mental health literacy in youth information work"
 - Mental Health Stigma: A Barrier to Wellness
 - Mental Health Intervention and Support
 - **Good Practices** from Austria, Estonia and Belgium

- ❓ Q&A



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YIMinds project

Survey results youth (information) workers' mental health literacy

Charlotte Simon
Project Manager - ERYICA



YIMinds Project



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- KA2 Erasmus+ project 2022-2024
- Aim:
 - provide tools to help youth work professional identify mental health distress among young people
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YIMinds Project



- Coordinated by ERYICA
- Partners:
 - Harno (EE)
 - Centro Regional De Información y Documentación Juvenil de Madrid (ES)
 - Jugendinfos (AT)
 - De Ambrassade (BE)
 - Cyprus Youth Council (CY)
 - IASIS (GR)
 - Associated partners: YoungScot (UK) & Eurodesk



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Youth (information) workers' mental health literacy

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Survey results



Survey on youth (information) workers' mental health literacy



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Survey objectives

- Better understand the relationship between YIW, prevention, and support for young people in situations of mental health vulnerability or risk
- Collect data on the level of mental health literacy of YIW and the resources they have
- Identify deficits in the development of abilities, skills, knowledge, as well as good practices
- Support the design of resources foreseen in the project to better equip YIW and promote well-being among young people



Survey on youth (information) workers' mental health literacy



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About the survey:

- Results analysed by an expert, Ajo Monzo
 - 14 questions – 7 languages
 - Open from April 6 to May 24, 2023
 - 369 responses – 2 focus groups - 15 countries
-
- Demographics
 - Contact with the youth information service
 - How these issues are addressed
 - Resources, knowledge and skills needed to improve interventions



Profile of participants

- 50% Youth information workers
- 37% Youth workers
- 7% Other profiles
- 6% Youth organisation representatives



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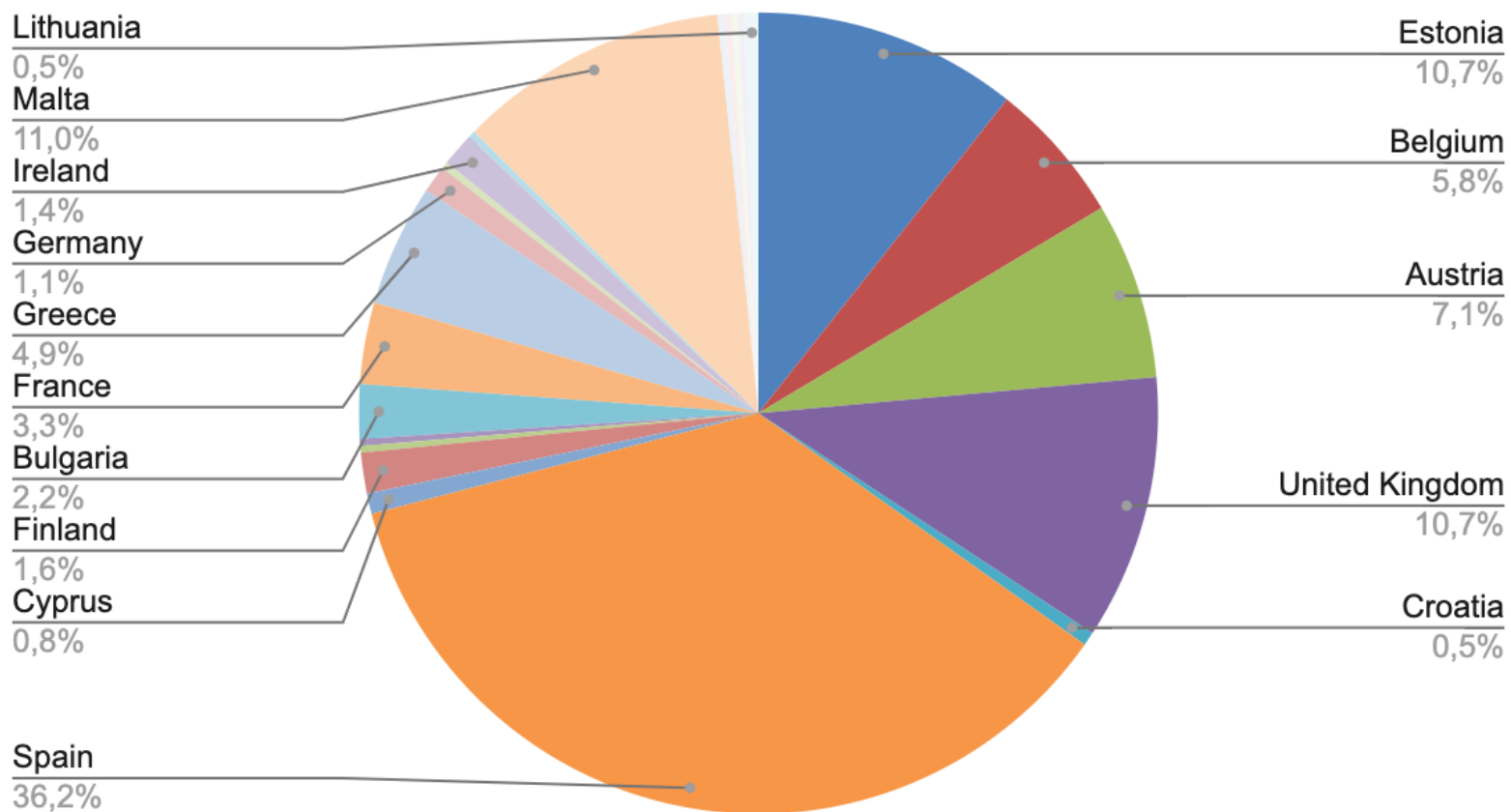
Countries



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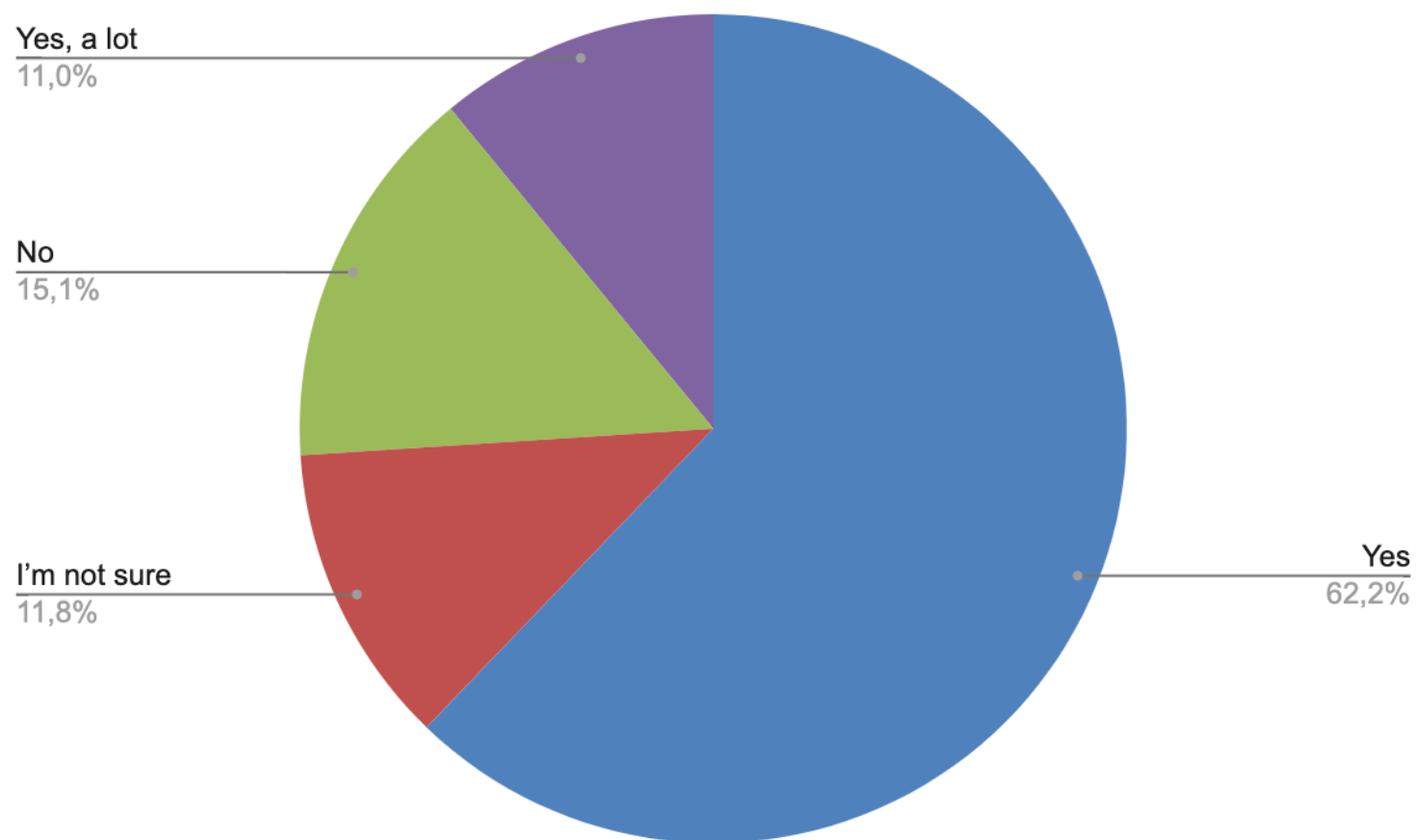
In which country do you work?



More mental health-related inquires since 2020?



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Signs and causes according to the survey



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- 74% have accompanied young people who show signs of health distress
- Most common signs (significant majority):

Sadness, depression, hopelessness, anxiety, stress, anguish, feeling helpless

- Most common causes:

Insecurity about the future, low self-esteem, anxiety, addiction to screens, social isolation, school pressure, loneliness and family problems.



How they intervene



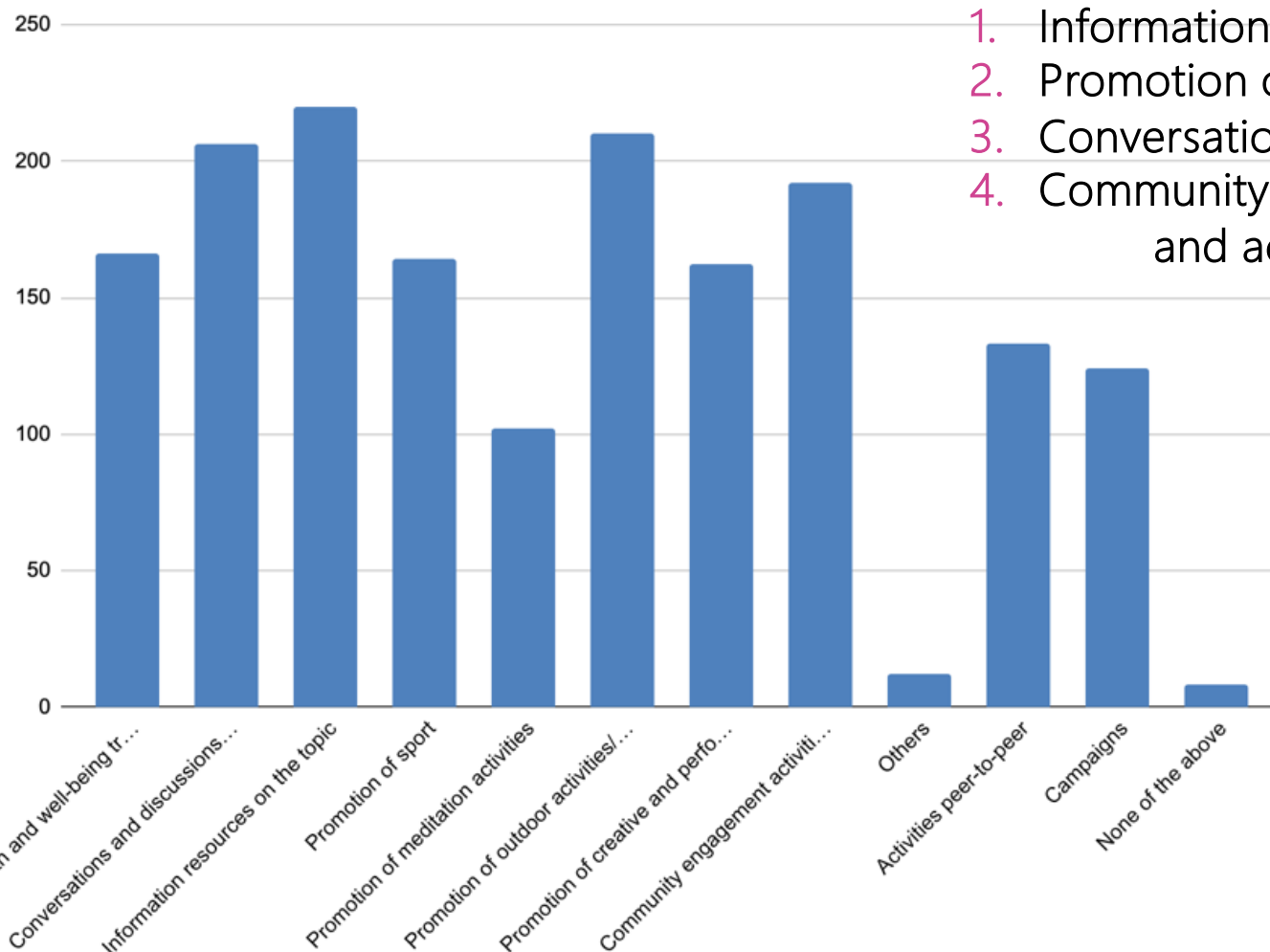
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- Information resources on the subject and the offer of activities of the service itself
- 1/3 have some sort of protocol, the rest do not - 1/3 do not have it and believe it is necessary
- 31% can follow up on the process after referring it to other services
- 28% want to but it is impossible



What they offer



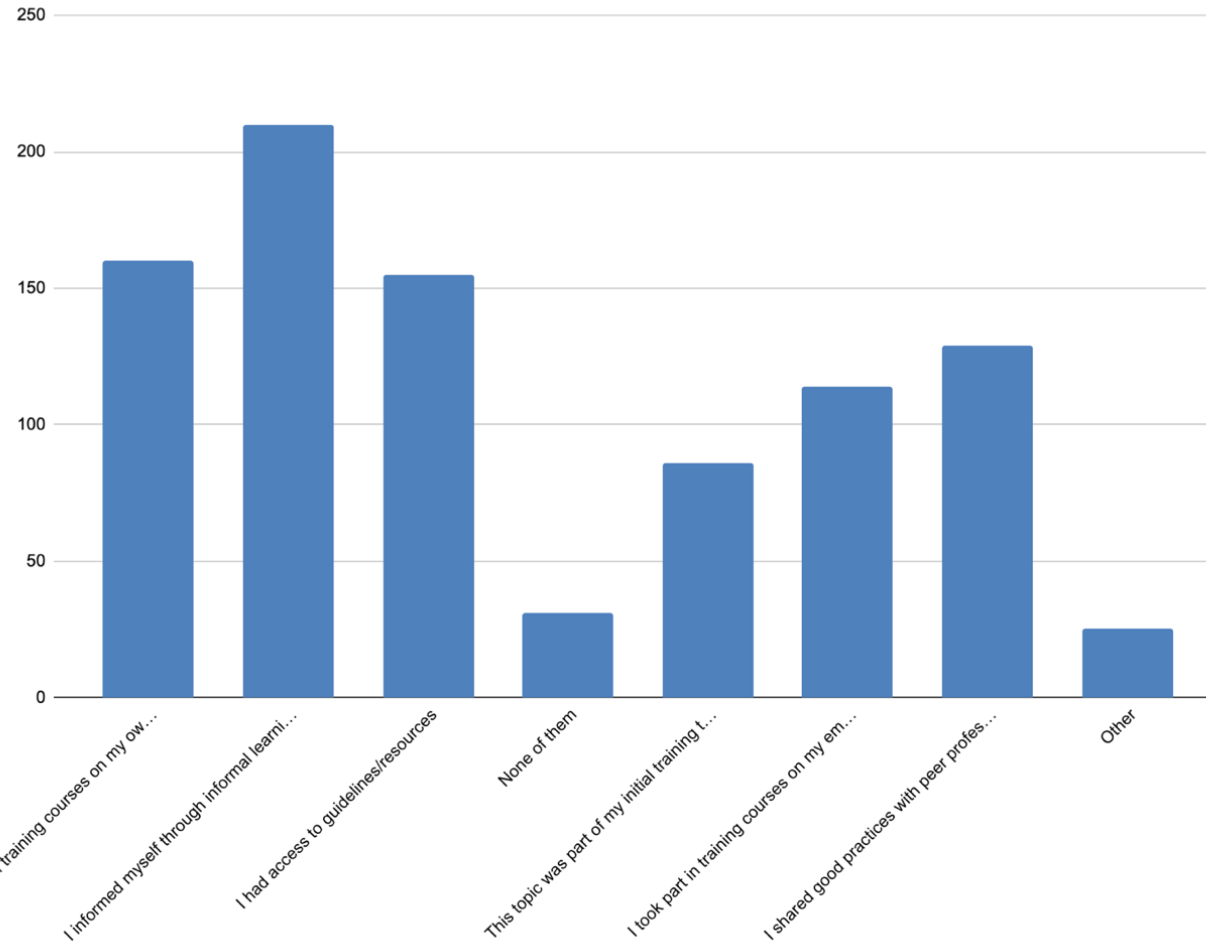
1. Information resources on the subject
2. Promotion of outdoor/nature activities
3. Conversations and debates on emotional well-being
4. Community involvement activities, volunteering and active citizenship



How they are trained on mental health



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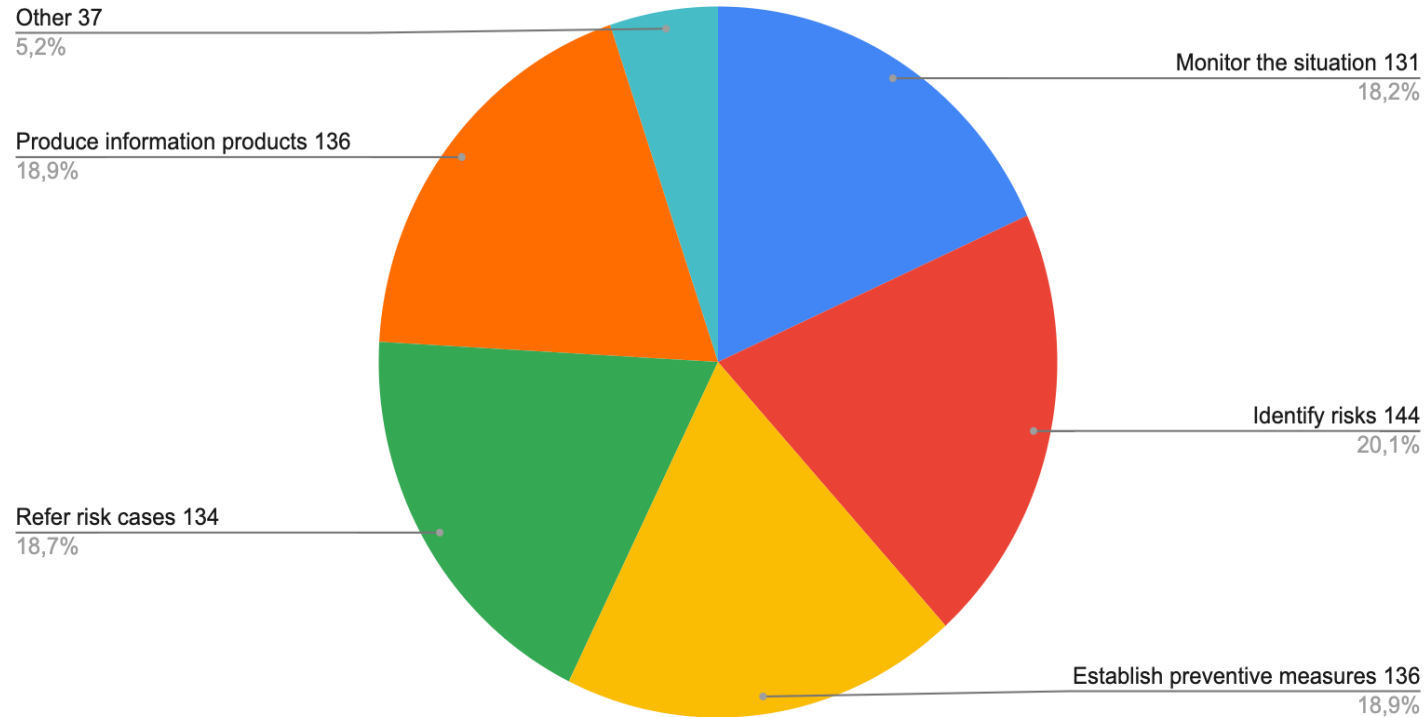
1. Informal learning/documentation
2. Participation in courses on own initiative
3. Resources and guides available



Interdisciplinary collaboration to...



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1. Identify risks
2. Establish preventive measures
3. Produce information material
4. Refer risk cases
5. Follow up on the situation



What they need



- **Training on mental health:** preventive role, preliminary detection of signs of vulnerability and risk, steps to provide primary support, how and when to refer
- **Networks with other professionals and institutions** – effective and personalised support – follow-up after referral
- Action **protocols** within the service
- **Practical guide** including definitions, skills development support, information resources, advice, examples of good practice and protocols
- Other resources and prevention and destigmatisation campaigns



Speaking about the guide...



We based our work on the guide according to this analysis

To learn more about it, stay with us!

Thank you!

<https://www.eryica.org/publications/yiminds>

Charlotte.simon@eryica.org



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Presentation of the Guide: Mental Health Literacy in Youth Information Work

Eric Kota
Manager of RnD –
IASIS NGO

YIMINDS/
14/12/2023



Empowering Youth: Mental Well-Being Guide



- The vital role of youth workers: First line of support, promoting healthy habits
- Guide's purpose: Equipping youth workers with strategies and tools
- Not a clinical manual, but a practical resource for supportive environments



Holistic Mental Health and Guide Development



- Holistic view: Beyond absence of illness, fostering well-being & resilience
- Development through research, expert consultations, and youth worker experiences
- Focus on evidence-based practices and real-world case studies



Guide's Impact and Our Collective Goal



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Chapter No.	Chapter Title
1	Understanding Mental Health in Youth (Information Work)
2	Identifying Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing in Young People
3	First-Hand Support Techniques
4	When and How To Bring In Help
5	Youth Perspectives
6	Motivation and Well-Being: Twin Pillars of Youth Information Work



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Mental Health Stigma: A Barrier to Wellness

Maria Peyioti
Resident Psychiatrist / General Hospital
of Corfu

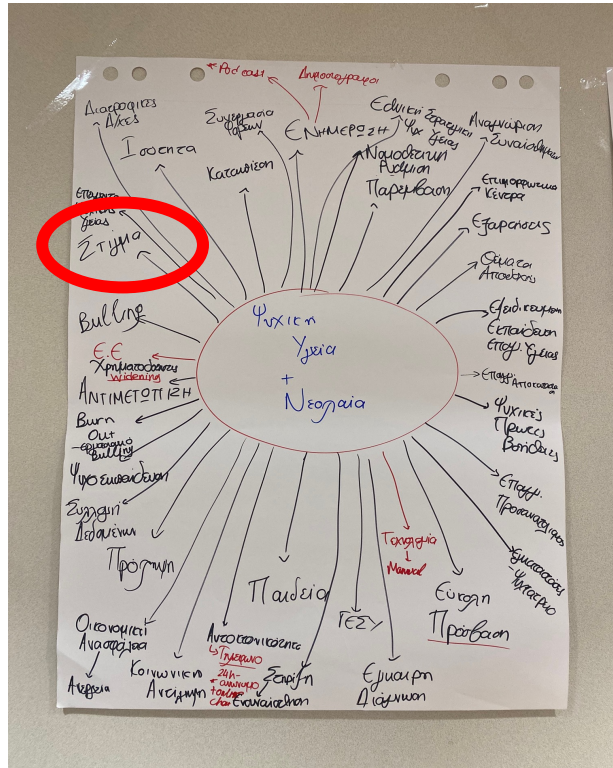
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Parliamentary Health Committee of the 6th House of Youth Representatives – “Youth Mental Health”



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STIGMA – DEFINITION AND TYPES



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“The Stigma is a strongly derogatory characterization attributed to someone, from which it is very difficult escape, depriving them of the right to full social acceptance and forcing them to hide the cause that provokes this treatment.”

(Goffman, 1963)

Types of Stigma:

1. Public/Social Stigma
2. Self-Stigma
3. Institutional Stigma

(American Psychiatric Association, 2020)



WHAT CAUSES STIGMA



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Stigma surrounding mental health arises from a complex interplay of societal, cultural and individual factors such as:

- Lack of education and knowledge
- Misinformation / Misconceptions
- Stereotypes
- Stigmatising portrayal of mental health issues in movies, TV series and press
- Fear of the unknown

“Stigma and Discrimination prevent care and treatment from reaching people with mental health disorders”

(WHO–World Health Report, 2001)



THE IMPACT OF STIGMA



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Stigma and discrimination may cause:

- Reluctance to seek help or treatment
- Lack of understanding by family, friends, co-workers or others
- Fewer opportunities for work, school or social activities
- Unemployment or trouble finding housing
- Bullying, physical violence or harassment, victimization
- Poor access to health services
- Lower Self-Esteem – Isolation

(Mayo Clinic, 2017)

“For most people, the consequences of stigma are worse than the experience of the mental disorder itself”



WAYS TO REDUCE STIGMA

- Talk openly about mental health
- Educate yourself and others
- Be conscious of language
- Encourage equality between physical and mental illness
- Show compassion and empathy
- Advocate for policy changes
- Accurate media representation and portrayal of mental illness



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(National Alliance on Mental Health, 2017)



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MENTAL HEALTH CRISIS INTERVENTION AND SUPPORT

Polyxeni Fragkioudaki
Psychologist, MSc- IASIS NGO

YIMINDS/ 14/12/2023



WHAT IS A MENTAL HEALTH CRISIS?



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A **mental health crisis** is defined as an acute disruption of psychological homeostasis in which one's usual coping mechanisms fail, with evidence of distress and functional impairment. It is a person's subjective reaction to a stressful life experience that compromises their ability to cope or function (Ernstmeier & Christman, 2022).



RECOGNIZING A MENTAL HEALTH CRISIS



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Evidence that a person is experiencing a mental health crisis may include:

- ❖ Sudden changes in mood
- ❖ Talking about death or dying
- ❖ Changes in ability to complete daily tasks
- ❖ Withdrawing from typically attended social situations
- ❖ Changes in diet, not eating or eating all the time
- ❖ Self-harming behaviors
- ❖ Sleeping problems
- ❖ Increased substance use

(Crisis Response, 2023)



MENTAL HEALTH CRISIS INTERVENTION PROCESS



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Crisis intervention (usually a single session) aims to help an individual deal with an event that is presently occurring and that is producing emotional, mental, physical, and behavioral distress or problems. Crisis intervention is appropriate for all ages and can take place in a wide range of settings.

People can experience mental health crisis for many different reasons.

- ❖ Risk Assess
- ❖ Plan
- ❖ Intervene
(Halter, 2022)



GOALS OF MENTAL HEALTH CRISIS MANAGEMENT



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- ❖ Ensure the physical safety and emotional stability of the person experiencing a mental health crisis
- ❖ Reduce the intensity of emotional, mental, physical, and behavioral reactions to the crisis in order to avoid further deterioration of the person's mental status
- ❖ Assist in the development or enhancement of more effective coping skills and support system
- ❖ Teach prevention strategies for self-harm
- ❖ Provide assistance and referral for ongoing care
(Halter, 2022)



ETHICAL PRINCIPLES AND CONFIDENTIALITY



Ethical principles are fundamental concepts by which people make decisions. Healthcare professionals follow ethical standards of care at all times, whether or not an individual is in crisis.

During emergency crisis, management and evaluation must occur simultaneously. Often the individuals are unable or even unwilling to provide a clear history, and other sources must be found and consulted as rapidly as possible. This might include family members, friends, therapists or caseworkers, and medical records. Confidentiality can be waived during psychiatric or medical emergencies.

(Davis, 2020)



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JugendService



Mag.a Nina Krassnitzer
Coach/Speaker –
JugendService Linz

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JugendService Austria/Linz



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- Advice and information center for the government
- Target groups: young people (12-26), parents, schools
- Topics:
 - Work & School, Leisure time (activities, media,...), International (stay abroad, ESK..), Life (housing, money, love/sexuality)





- Workshops (application Training, Learning methods, preventive Workshops...)
- Tutoring and Holiday/part-time **job platform**
- **4youcard** membership (special offers and benefits for youngsters)
- www.Jugendservice.at





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JugendService and Mental Health support

- ✓ JugendService Team: social-and psychological backgrounds, Mental health First Aid-training
- ✓ Mental health **counseling** since 1985
- ✓ **Online advice** starting via mail (2010) to online platform free and anonymous
- ✓ **Preventive mental health-Workshop** (secondary schools since 2022)
- ✓ **"Ich schau auf mich!"** – Mind Yourself Workshop



"ICH SCHAU AUF MICH!" MIND YOURSELF



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Content of the Workshop:

- Duration: 2 lessons (max.15 pax)
- Weather map (Mood parameter)
- Being healthy vs. being sick
- Frustomat: group exercise (case studies)



"ICH SCHAU AUF MICH!"

- Feelings/Emotions, Stress
- Resource Exercises, Positive Affirmations
- Relaxation Exercises
PMR, Breathing, Meditation, Mindfulness...
- Help offers

Thanks for your attention!



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Good practices:
Game 'Stronger as yourself'
& 'Dark thoughts' cardgame

Senne Misplon

Youthwork support – De Ambrassade

YIMINDS/ 14/12/2023



Cardgame: 'Dark Thoughts'



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Wat Wat =
Youth information
platform

The screenshot shows the homepage of the 'Wat Wat' youth information platform. At the top left is the 'WAT WAT' logo. On the right, there are links for 'IK BEN ... JAAR' and a 'MENU' icon. The main header features a large background image of a skateboarder with the text 'STEL JE VRAAG' and a search bar containing 'Wat zoek je?'. Below the search bar is a horizontal navigation bar with 12 categories, each represented by an icon and text: DONKERE GEDACHTEN, CORONA, SEKS, SEXTING, JE LIJF, STUDENTENJOB, RIJBEWIJS, EERSTE KEER, BEGELEID WONEN, STUDIEBEURS, EEN EIGEN ZAAK, VERKIEZINGEN, and WERK. The main content area displays three featured articles: 'Met hoeveel mensen mag ik afspreken?' (Corona | 11-24), 'Hoeveel mensen mag ik uitnodigen voor een feest?' (Corona | 11-24), and 'Hoe zien kerst en oudejaar eruit tijdens corona?' (Corona | 11-24). The bottom of the page shows a partial view of other article thumbnails.

Cardgame: 'Dark Thoughts'



- Part of a social media campaign to raise awareness on mental problems
- Card game used in youth work and school (15-24Y)
 - 38 question to talk open about how you're really feeling
 - Different forms (cards, downloads, IG filters...)



Game Stronger as yourself



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- FOS Open scouting = Youth movement



Game Stronger as yourself



- A game to strengthen (mental) safety in your group in a playful and team-building way



Game Stronger as yourself



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2 phases:

- Awareness of mental well-being through metaphors + debriefing
 - Team-building assignments to help characters lighten their backpacks and assist them
- Groups conversations + debriefing:
 - various characters have challenges around various themes (LGBTQ+, disability, domestic violence, mental health issues, racism)



Game Stronger as yourself



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Impact:

- Discussions about opinions on safety or feelings of insecurity or works around e.g. Bullying Policy
- Valuable game: Local groups re very positive
 - Raise awareness + strengthen safety in your group and map it out
 - Strengthen connection in your group



More information?



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Dark Thoughts game: Watwat.be/donkere-gedachten

Stronger as yourself game: Leander@fos.be

Questions? – Senne.misplon@ambrassade.be

