



BYMBE

Bringing Young Mothers back to education



SUPPORT PACK BYMBE 106

Erasmus+: KA2 – Cooperation for Innovation and the Exchange
of Good Practices – Strategic Partnerships for adult education
[Agreement N° 2017-1-AT01-KA204-035007]



Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
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Summary

INTRODUCTION & RATIONALE	4
SUPPORT PACK FOR YOUNG MOTHERS	6
HOW TO MAINTAIN CONTACT WITH THE YOUNG MOTHERS	8
1. ACCOMPANYING ACTIVITIES	10
1.1. INDIVIDUAL COACHING	11
1.1.1. <i>Fundamental skills of the professional during the sessions:</i>	12
1.1.2. <i>Positive reinforcement</i>	13
1.1.3. <i>Subsequent sessions</i>	14
1.1.4. <i>Guidelines to follow in the appointment:</i>	14
A) <i>Monitoring</i>	15
B) <i>Evaluation of the possible problem</i>	16
1.2. ACTIVITIES MOTHER-CHILD	17
1.2.1. <i>Feedback</i>	19
1.2.2. <i>Creation of parenting models</i>	22
1.2.3. <i>Positive reinforcement mother-child</i>	25
1.2.4. <i>How to face failure in school</i>	27
1.3. PEER SUPPORT	29
1.3.1. <i>Mutual support group</i>	30
1.3.2. <i>Activities implemented in the group</i>	31
A) <i>Leisure and free time</i>	31
B) <i>Relax and stress control</i>	33
2. EMERGENCY SUPPORT ACTIVITES FOR YOUNG MOTHERS	35
2.1. INTERVENTION IN CRISIS	35
2.2. PROFESSIONALS THAT WILL INTERVENE	37
2.3. POSITIVE REINFORCEMENT IN THE INTERVENTION	38
2.4. HOW TO INTERVENE IN CRISIS SITUATIONS	38
2.4.1. <i>How to intervene in crisis situations related with dropping out her studies</i>	38
2.4.2. <i>How to intervene in crisis situations related with personal issues</i>	40
A) <i>Gender violence</i>	41
B) <i>Familiar crisis</i>	42
C) <i>Psychological crisis</i>	42
3. SUPPORT WHILE SEARCHING FOR A JOB	43
3.1. LABOUR GUIDANCE	43
3.1.1. <i>Activities of Labour Guidance</i>	44
A) <i>Curriculum Vitae</i>	44
B) <i>Cover Letter</i>	47
C) <i>Job Interview</i>	49
3.2. INDIVIDUALIZED SOCIAL INSERTION ROUTES	51
3.3. LINKEDIN PROFILE AND EMPLOYMENT NETWORKS	51
3.3.1. <i>Job enquiry through new technologies</i>	51
3.3.2. <i>Profiles in social networks: LinkedIn</i>	52
3.3.3. <i>Other employment networks</i>	52

3.3.4.	<i>Tips about what we share in our online profile when job searching</i>	53
4.	STATE OF THE ART: TOOLS TO SEARCH FOR A JOB	55
4.1.	PARTICIPATORY VIDEO	55
4.2.	VISUAL STORY.....	56
5.	ANNEX	59
5.1.	MUTUAL DIRECTED SUPPORT	59
5.2.	SELF-ESTEEM ACTIVITIES.....	59
5.3.	EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE ACTIVITIES	60
5.4.	EMPOWERMENT AND MOTIVATION	62

Introduction & Rationale

This Support Pack for young mothers with young children has been developed by the project *Bringing Young Mothers Back to Education – BYMBE*. The project BYMBE has been approved by the European Commission in the framework of the Erasmus+ Programme – KA2 – Strategic Partnerships for Adults, and will produce training tools in support of the work of social workers, teachers and trainers for the purpose of sustaining young NEET (Not in Education, Employment, or Training) mothers between 15 and 25 years old in re-entering education or training and the labour market.

A key focus of the BYMBE project is to support women in order to ensure they stay within the educational system after they have gone back to education. Therefore, it is essential to carry out a follow-up process of each of the participants and to make them feel supported throughout the process in order to prevent a new drop-out.

One of the aims of the project is to create a core support tool to encourage motivation, face possible crisis, offer individual coaching and avoid new drop-outs, so that the participants stay in school, complete their education and, therefore, increase their chances to access the labour market and improve their quality of life.

This manual will include the necessary tools and mechanisms, as well as the lines of intervention that are needed in order to achieve this aim.

To be able to carry out an effective intervention it is necessary to know the economic environment and the socio-familiar context in which these women live.

In general, these are women with few economic resources, in most cases they are already socially excluded or they are at risk of social exclusion and have little or no family support at all. As a general rule, their families do not value education, as they do not consider it as a fundamental tool for the future, and in addition they usually do not have the support of their closest social circle.

For this reason, when implementing the project, all stakeholders have to take into account that, in most cases, the professionals working with these women will not be able to

count on their inner circle as a facilitating element or as support, on the contrary they will probably be an opposing force or an element of disruption.

The professionals involved in the project, taking into account these factors, will need to support the participants to prevent further drop-outs and to address the difficulties that may arise at the early stages. They must also intervene in crisis situations that may rise during the course of their studies.

The starting point in this regard should always be the premise that each person is the protagonist of her own process, her actions and her decisions. For this reason, the actions must always be consensual between the professional and the participants. The autonomy of the participants must be encouraged at all times and their decisions must be respected.

The relationship between the professionals and the participants must be horizontal, based on mutual respect. It should never be a hierarchical relationship in which the professionals try to impose their criteria.

The Spanish partner in this project, MAGENTA CONSULTORIA PROJECTS SLU, has been implementing the activities related to this project and it is in charge of drafting this Handbook.

Magenta Consultoría Projects SLU has a wide experience in social intervention regarding people who have been socially excluded or who are at risk of social exclusion, as well as experience developing trainings inside formal and non-formal education and paying especial attention to VET and adult education.

Thanks to our experience, we are well aware of the difficulties we may encounter when implementing this kind of intervention practices and measures and we know which resources are available to try to solve them.

SUPPORT PACK FOR YOUNG MOTHERS

This handbook has been designed to be a practical guide describing some of the activities and intervention guidelines that can be carried out to support young mothers once they have re-entered the education system and to support them in order to prevent drop-outs when crisis may appear.

It includes the different actions and lines of action that will be carried out in order to intervene in cases of drop-out, so as to motivate that they remain in the programme and complete their studies.

The actions are divided into **3 different areas** that complement each other.

- Accompaniment Support Activities: Individual Coaching
- Emergency support in different situations of crisis.
- Support in the search for employment

These three areas are considered important due to the specific context in which the young mothers live and the consequences that can result from the difficulties they can face regarding behaviour, empowerment and self-esteem (as it has been mentioned in the previous manuals). That is why this guide, and all the previous ones, aim to offer a holistic approach to the situation experienced by young mothers, trying to work not only with them but also with the specific environment in which they live.

In this sense, professionals must work with a systemic approach, which considers individuals (in this case, mothers) as people immersed in a social environment, where interrelationship that emerge can mark the course of the individual path, so enhancing possible escape routes and support is essential for the proper development of the person. The systemic approach arises from the synthesis of various fields of research, in psychology it is materialized in the analysis of communication patterns and their consequences for the lives of individuals, with the aim of interrupting the circuit of failed solutions attempted within the core of coexistence and to modify the frame that has been made of a problem.

In this aspect, the creation of an environment in which the adolescent feels comfortable to ask for help and that it will be given to her in case she needs it, besides feeling understood, becomes essential.

Pregnancy in adolescence represents a change in the usual development of adolescent life, which is why it is a crisis that must be faced. All this will lead to a rethinking of her goals, her being-in-the-world, changing roles, herself-image and a change in her environment and her relationship with your family. All this leads to an alteration at the psychological level that although it has gone well tackle in the Empowerment Pack (IO5), needs to be constantly reinforced while social support allows her to create new coping strategies.

From a systemic perspective, it is also intended to work with the adolescent and her support nucleus, to generate possible ways to favour the acceptance of motherhood by the adolescent and her family, reduce levels of anxiety and family conflict, promote agreements and dialogue, as well as establishing strategies and guidelines for action in certain situations that may arise. The idea is that, although there may continue to be a figure of support from the social worker or people carrying out the social intervention, the idea is that both the adolescent and her family members, create a mechanism of self-regulation that favours their autonomy in the resolution of intra and interpersonal conflicts.

For this, it is necessary to take into account the environment in which each adolescent in question is immersed: it may will be that she still lives with his family, that she lives on her own or that she lives with her partner, adding to the situation of teenage pregnancy the habitual problems that can occur, as well as socio-economic problems, among others. It is also necessary to take into account that the family nucleus has to adjust to the new situation, which will entail a certain period of adaptation that may involve a distancing between the adolescent and the people with whom she lives, or excessive overprotection, as well as possible criticisms and ideas about what is supposed to be the correct way to act.

For all this, those who work with teenagers have to be aware of all this phenomenology to successfully carry out their access and maintenance in the educational system, always taking into account their needs, which are addressed in this handbook through different actions. Also, the activities implemented in this guide will be carried out

using a flexible methodology and they will be adapted to the skills, needs and personal interests of the participants.

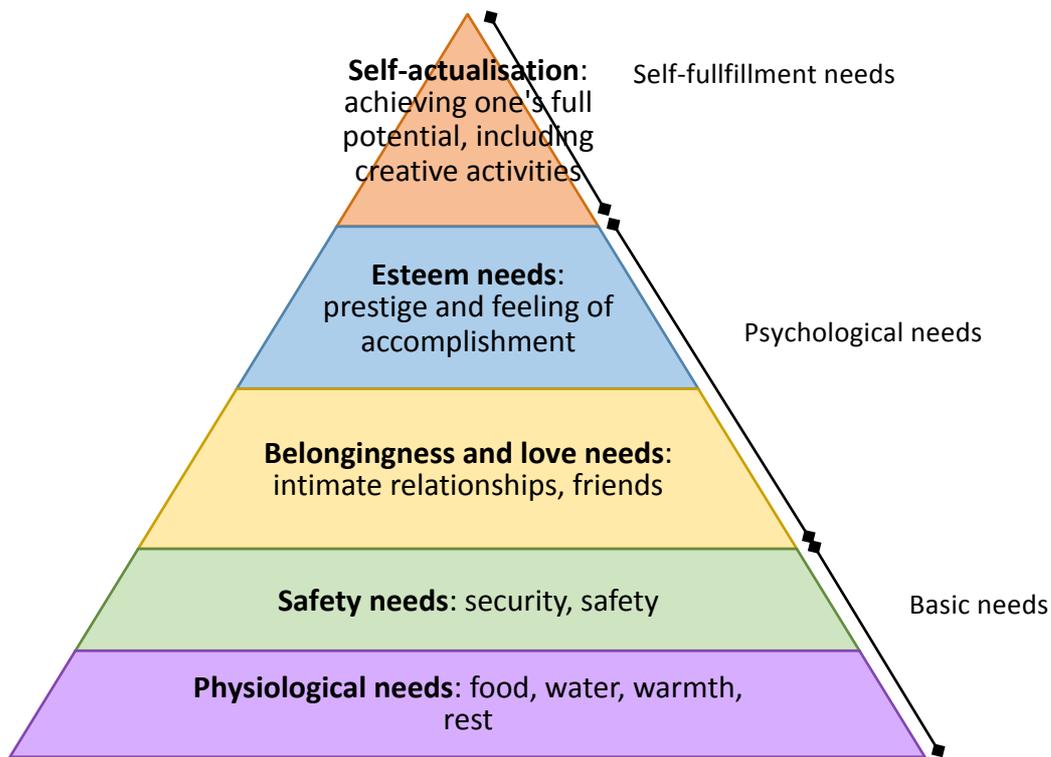


Figure 1 - Maslow's hierarchy of needs

How to maintain contact with the young mothers

The main idea is to integrate the methods to their daily lives, in this sense, the adolescents with whom the professional is working, like the rest of adolescents, use their mobile phones as a means of communication, in this aspect WhatsApp, Telegram or Facebook Messenger or another type of similar apps has become an everyday tool in their lives.

Professionals can make use of these communication tools in a way that facilitates contact among young women after having worked with them and with their social worker, both in a group and individually.

The integration and use of this type of tool should not be strange for the worker, since the idea is to adapt the working methods to the reality of the young people. These kind of messaging applications are the usual way they communicate and therefore, the most direct channel to be in contact with them.

Steps to follow by those who work with them:

1. Fix a meeting with the girls for a specific day.
2. In this meeting, explain the need of creating a messaging group to be in contact, either among them (even one of them can be appointed as the person in charge of supervising if there is some kind of problem) or as an emergency tool with the reference professional (for this you will have to give them a contact telephone number).
3. Establish a series of face-to-face appointments, between 1 or 2 a month for 1 year (after this period the evolution will be assessed, and the need or not of its extension will be evaluated).

1. ACCOMPANYING ACTIVITIES

The first section that will be reviewed in this handbook it is considered a priority action: “Social Support Measures: Accompaniment”.

Social accompaniment is defined as “the temporal professional intervention process, with varying intensity, based on the right of citizens to receive assistance or individualised social support. This support must be built from a proactive and trusting relationship and through the design of individualised itineraries incorporating the corresponding objectives according to the specific needs of the individuals involved”.

The intervention process must be aimed at the development of each individual’s skills and capacities and the discovering and re-interpretation of the situation from the point of view of implementing a change, being this the main factor.

Social accompaniment, as a social intervention methodology, facilitates the personal development of the participants and fosters their autonomy in the change process.

These elements have been previously addressed in other IOs¹ but it is essential to have them in mind:

Basic elements of social accompaniment

Support	Negotiation process	Autonomy of the participants	Recognition of the abilities and the potential
Continuous support in the change process, so that women feel that there is someone beside them encouraging them to continue studying.	Horizontal relationship must be established between the professional and the participants. Each woman is the protagonist of her own process of change.	Autonomy must be respected at all times. Professionals should not foster dependence in the participants.	Encouraging these abilities and the changes they make will boost their confidence.

¹ Please refer to IO3 “Set of Intervention Methods to Involve Young NEET Mothers” and IO4 “BYMBE Orientation Pack” for further information

Limits to the accompaniment

Paternalism	Unequal relationship - Imposition	Control of the participants	Invisibility	Excessive empathy
It generates dependence and restricts the autonomy of the individuals, which contradicts the objective of fostering autonomy.	Professionals cannot impose their criteria. They must advise, negotiate, guide... but never use their position to impose anything because it will create mistrust and make the participants move away.	Professionals cannot control the participants' lives or manipulate them in any way. Professionals can only accompany the participants in the process, guide them and support them.	Professionals should never act as if the participants were not there, as this may make the participants feel inferior and thus lead to a unwillingness to talk and properly involve herself in the activities.	Professionals must clearly know the limits of the relationship with the participant. It must be clear that the woman is a "client", not a "friend"

In this handbook, accompaniment is carried out following **three implementation lines**:

- Individual coaching on demand
- Activities Mother-child
- Peer support

1.1. Individual Coaching

One of the key pillars of the actions specified in previous manuals² is the individual coaching sessions, where an interpersonal relationship between professionals and participants has being created. In this part, we are going to concentrate in the maintenance of this relation in order to support them.

The objective of these sessions is to create a space for reflection where participants can ask all of their doubts, fears, needs, questions... and where small objectives agreed with the participants will be established.

² Please refer to IO3 "Set of Intervention Methods to Involve Young NEET Mothers", IO4 "BYMBE Orientation Pack" and IO5 "BYMBE Empowerment Pack"

In this sense, the work of the professional working with them targets the following:

As mentioned in the previous point, the young women will have a messaging group where they can maintain contact, and it will serve as a platform in case of need of help from a professional. This can also be of great importance in relation to the section that we will see later on what to do in cases of emergency.

Individual	Temporary	Number meeting per month
coaching	1 year	1 or 2

After having established the dates of the possible appointments, we continue with the aspects covered in the sessions. The idea is to monitor the situation and to give tools and methods that allow them to face possible obstacles.

1.1.1. FUNDAMENTAL SKILLS OF THE PROFESSIONAL DURING THE SESSIONS:

- Professionals must use a clear and simple **language**. It is important to maintain good communication with the participating women and it is vital that they understand what the professionals are saying and are trying to convey. If professionals use technical terms or words that the participating women do not understand, a two-fold situation will be created: on the one hand, the woman will be placed in a status of inferiority; and on the other hand, due to the fact that the woman cannot clearly understand the professional working with her, she will not feel comfortable, and this will hinder the creation of a bond of trust between them. In the end, the woman may want to leave or stop the intervention programme.
- **Empathy**: The ability to put oneself in another's place. It is fundamental that the professionals empathise with the women so they understand them and can put themselves in their place to achieve better and quicker changes in the process, as well as to better support them.
- Maintain an **active listening (as specified in IO3³)**: It is essential in order to identify and gather the information the professionals need. Active listening does not consist in

³ Please refer to IO3 "Set of Intervention Methods to Involve Young NEET Mothers" for further information regarding active listening.

hearing what the other person is saying; it means to really focus on what the other person is saying, paying maximum attention to understand what they are trying to convey. Active listening requires empathic and cognitive skills.

Another very important aspect of communication is the **location** where the exchange of information is going to take place. It must be a quiet environment (without noise) where there are no interruptions and participants feel comfortable. If the meeting is going to take place in an office, all papers on the desk must be removed, as it may give the impression that we are not focusing on the other person. In addition, there should be good light and good ventilation.

The work should be methodical, dynamic and flexible.

Throughout the individual coaching sessions, motivational activities should be carried out and positive reinforcement should be used.

1.1.2. POSITIVE REINFORCEMENT

Positive reinforcement is a technique that uses pleasant stimuli in order to endorse a specific behaviour with the aim of recognising achievements and stimulating the repetition of such behaviour. The reinforcing stimulus makes it more likely that the behaviour will occur again in the future. In other words, positive reinforcement is "awarding some kind of price or gratification which favours the repetition of a specific behaviour".

The implementation of all these techniques has a direct effect on the participants being supported, it will increase their self-esteem, it will make them feel more supported, it will help them take better decisions, and it will stimulate their motivations.

Some of the advantages of using positive reinforcement are:

- ✓ It can be used to increase the frequency of certain behaviour successfully; this behaviour can be positive or negative.
- ✓ It can be used to produce new behaviours.
- ✓ It can be used effectively to help participants identify their strengths. It can also help build a solid self-esteem, which will help participants to learn to cope with failure and deal with frustration.

- ✓ It helps built a greater self-confidence among participants and to generate confidence to face problems.
- ✓ It improves receptiveness.

1.1.3. SUBSEQUENT SESSIONS

During the next sessions, work will be developed using questions that professionals will ask participating women, but it is also necessary to leave space for the person to talk about what worries them, about their interests and concerns.

The professional's questions should try to unearth the blocks and obstacles in her life, in order to try and find alternatives to those obstacles and to identify their strengths, qualities they can use to modify those obstacles and turn them into opportunities and potential⁴.

Apart from asking questions, professionals can carry out exercises, interactive activities and tests with the participants in order to achieve the intended purpose.

The number of sessions needed cannot be set in advance, since it will depend on multiple factors, such as: the pace at which the participant communicates her needs, her questions, her confidence... Therefore, professionals must assess the development and needs of each participant at each session.

1.1.4. GUIDELINES TO FOLLOW IN THE APPOINTMENT:

In IO3 “Set of Intervention Methods to Involve Young NEET Mothers”, specific techniques and tools were analysed to guide professionals to actively engage, support and guide young mothers back into education and to create and individual learning plan. In IO4 “BYMBE Orientation Pack”, individual coaching was implemented with the aim of improving social cognitive skills, self-control, conflict resolution and planning.

Here, in IO6, the sessions focus on maintaining a support system to ensure they stay within the educational system. These sessions are essential to make them feel supported throughout the process in order to prevent new drop-outs, as well as a tool to prevent and face possible crisis, and help them complete their education. Through these sessions,

⁴ Please see IO4 “Orientation Pack” and IO5 “Empowerment Pack” for tools and mechanisms covering such issues.

participants will be able to voice their fears, doubts and questions and professionals will be able to guide them, follow-up their evolution and put in place preventive measures when necessary, continuing the work of the previous IOs. These sessions will also offer individual labour guidance with the objective of helping their transition to the labour market after they have completed their studies.

The following steps should be carried out:

A	Monitoring the situation to see if everything is going well or if possible obstacles are being encountered.
B	In case of finding a possible problem, professionals should evaluate what it is about. For this they can make use of tools previously used in the previous IOs, depending on whether they are problems related to involving young mothers (IO3), orientation (IO4) or empowerment (IO5). Also, you can find further tools in the annex of this document.

A) *Monitoring*

In order to continue with the individual sessions, it is necessary to make an analysis of the objectives achieved so far. For this purpose, the next activity is useful to work this issue with them.

Activity 1: Supporting session (Individual)

First step

It is essential to create a climate of trust and relaxation, facilitating communication and the exchange of ideas, feelings, troubles, etc.; thus making participants feel comfortable and at ease. Professionals must adapt the intervention process to the pace of each woman, and not vice versa (*it is useful to use some of the activities addressed in the previous IOs⁵ in order to facilitate this*).

Guidelines

The participants must be allowed to express themselves freely. Women should be allowed to speak without interruption, except to re-orientate the interview, if needed.

⁵ Please refer to IO3 Set of Intervention Methods to Involve Young NEET Mothers and IO4 “Orientation Pack” to review the activities.

It is important not to ask closed-ended questions, although professionals will need to ask concrete questions in order to complete the analysis of the situation and to know the participant's social environment and their situation.

Professionals must act without making value judgement. Participants come freely and voluntarily, and professionals must guide them and help them throughout the intervention process, without judging or prejudging.

In addition, professionals must adapt their language to that of the participants. They must not use technical terms or vocabulary that the participating women do not understand. It is also important for professionals to adapt their vocabulary in terms of cultural differences, so as to avoid any kind of cultural miscommunication that may end up in the woman feeling insulted, attacked, or uncomfortable.

B) Evaluation of the possible problem

1	Clarify and analyse the problem <i>Can do I do anything?</i>
2	Think about possible solution <i>Out of the box thinking</i>

Activity 2: My current situation

This exercise will help participants to find out which of the below-mentioned four areas of life are more important for them at the present time. The goal of this activity is for them to elaborate objectives, activities and needs in order to make changes to their current situation in each area.

To carry this out, the trainer will hand in a questionnaire to help participants analyse different aspects of their life.

Questions

- 1 How is my current life in relation to myself?*
 - 2 How is my current life in relation to my family?*
 - 3 How is my current life in relation to my work*
 - 4 How is my current life in relation to the world?*
-

After considering each question, professionals will guide participants to analyse the answers given by the participating young mothers, in order to evaluate and identify the aspects that need to be changed and how to do it and achieve their goals.

1.2. Activities mother-child

Family constitutes a key feature in the sociocultural context for the development and the education of children. It is within each family that the values, norms and rules of coexistence are transmitted.

Each family is different and the characteristics of the family in which a person is educated will highly mark their future. It is therefore very important to establish patterns of communication and behavioural rules to reinforce the behaviour that the children perceive within their own families.

Family plays a key role during child development and childhood in the following areas:

- a) **Emotional development and self-esteem.** Different researches and studies have confirmed that the quality of family relationships is more important for the well-being of children than the size or composition of the family. The family is the setting where children are developed into adults, with a defined self-esteem and a sense of self that provides a certain level of psychological well-being to face daily life, conflicts and stressful situations. No matter the composition of the family, the members can build strong, positive relationships that promote family welfare and support the mental health of the children. It is, therefore, within the family that this sense of self concept starts to take form, as well as the evaluation of one-self that derives from that idea (self-esteem).
- b) **Psychological maturity and personality development.** These two elements are considered key tools for their everyday life. During the course of their life, they will need to face challenges, as well as to assume responsibilities and make commitments,

and these tools will help adults to have a fruitful life, full of projects and accomplishments and they will be integrated in their social community.

- c) **Transmission of values and culture.** These elements help build a bridge between the past (the generation of their grandparents and great grandparents) and the future (their children). The main bonding elements among the three generations (grandparents, parents and children) are, on one hand, the affection they feel for each other and, on the other hand, the values that rule and guide the life of the members of the family, serving as inspiration and guidance for their actions.
- d) **Emotional support.** This is a key element that helps them face the different difficulties and obstacles in their life. It is important for the mother to be emotionally available for her child, and to know how to manage her child's feelings and the concerns her child may have. Professionals can focus on teaching the participating mothers how to manage this and how to react to different situations that they may need to face with their children.

Based on all these elements, it is possible to conclude that family plays a central role in a child's education.

The youngest tend to repeat the patterns they identify in their surroundings and their family environment. If a child is educated within a context in which formal education is not important or necessary, or in which it is not considered a means for a better future, that child will not – as a general rule – make an effort to get good grades. Moreover, if their environment considers it normal or even mandatory that young children start working at an early age in poorly paid jobs that do not require professional formation, they will abandon their studies as soon as they complete compulsory education.

Most of the participants taking part in this project have been educated in this kind of environment and culture. For this reason, their return to the education system will be a positive reinforcement for their children, they will set an example and they will be a model to be replicated by their own children.

It will also be a driven force to produce change in their environment. The participants of the BYMBE project will motivate their progeny to not abandon the education system as they did. They will inspire them to study and they will encourage them to obtain positive results. They can also talk to the child and tell them their own experience, explaining what led them to drop out of school and what that meant to their personal life. Thus, the child can, on the one hand, establish a good and close relationship with the mother; and, on the other hand, get to know first-hand the situation and how it may affect their future if they decide to drop out.

In order to reinforce this feedback, it is important that both mothers and children, carry out joint activities. These activities will produce common benefits for both and they will strengthen their bonds.

During these activities, they will be working on the following aspects:

- a) Feedback;
- b) Creation of Parental Models;
- c) Positive Reinforcement Mother-Child.

1.2.1. FEEDBACK

The active participation of the mothers in the education system favours a higher self-esteem of children and youngsters, and encourages better school performance, better relationships between parents and children. But most importantly, a more positive attitude towards school. The return of participants to education will increase their involvement in the education of their children: they will carry out a more thorough follow-up of their school life and will monitor the completion of homework. Furthermore, the participants will make sure that their children carry out the tasks assigned by the teachers, that they behave correctly and, having gathered more knowledge, it will be easier for them to help their children with school homework.

Everything mentioned previously is very important because it will increase the motivation of these women to continue with their own studies, but they will also acquire more knowledge and improve their self-esteem. Their self-concept will grow because, by

helping their children with their school activities, they will feel more useful, capable and valued by them.

Activity 1: “Let’s do homework!”

This activity is to be carried out individually by mothers and their children.

When their son or daughter has to do homework, the mother should sit with them and try and help them or guide them.

This will make mothers feel useful and motivated, which will in turn improve their self-esteem. The children will see that their mothers worry about their studies and that these are important. This will motivate them as well to try harder and better.

It is also recommended for the mother to sit next to the child and study alongside him or her, so both focus on their education and bond together. This can encourage a better relationship between mother and child, as well as strengthening trust and start seeing the mother as someone they can reach for help, instead of seeing her as an authority figure that becomes distant or someone who does not understand what the child is doing.

Some tips about how to study together:



Activity 2: “Reading, listening and drawing”

This activity is to be carried out individually by mothers and their children and this activity is especially useful when children are small. Reading and listening: If the child is still an infant or is too small to do homework, the mother can read the lesson she is studying out loud and record it. The voice of the mother will soothe the child, who as he/she is still too small to understand will not be bored. By reading out loud her lesson, the young mother will spend time with her small children, and soothe them, and by recording that reading, she will be able to listen to that lesson while she is busy with other tasks (such as house chores or when they are commuting to school).

Drawing: If the child is too small to do homework, the mother should explain that she is doing something very important, and that he/she can help her. She can then ask them to draw something related to what she is studying. For example:

- If the young mother is studying history, she can ask her child for “help” by asking him/her to draw her a picture of a king, queen or castle. She can also describe a brief scene and ask the child to help her by drawing it.

- If she is studying technical drawing or arts, the mother can ask them to draw the same thing she is drawing.
- This activity can also be modified to include different materials and activities such as: colouring, to ask the child to write words in different colours, to use different type of cardboards, cards or even a board and building blocks.
- Another variation is to ask the child to look for related images in his/her own reading books. For example, if the young mother is studying music, she can ask her child to look for images of instruments and arrange them and to show her later.

This way, children will feel motivated because they are “helping” their mother with something important, they will stay entertained while the young mother studies and it will set the grounds for when they are older and start doing homework.

Activity 3: “Let’s build a study wall”

This activity is to be carried out individually by mothers and their children. It can be carried out with small children and older children.

The mother should explain that they are going to build a study wall, that is, a place where they are going to place what they are studying that week. They should make space in a wall where they study and clear that space of everything. If they can, they should place a corkboard on the wall where they can stick the items, notes and charts. If it is not possible to place a corkboard, they can use tape to place the items, notes and charts directly on the wall.

Each week, the young mother should make sure to update the wall with anything she needs to learn in the following days, exam dates, presentations, or projects and stick them in the wall. If they child is small, the mother can ask him/her to draw something related or colour an item and place it in the wall. If the child is old enough to do homework, the wall should include what he/she is studying as well, and make him/her an active participant to keep track of what they are studying that week. They can also use flash cards as they are great for visual learners and for an active learning process.

1.2.2. CREATION OF PARENTING MODELS

By the creation of a parenting model, it is expected that mothers will become an example to be followed by their sons and daughters.

Young children learn by watching the world around them, and at an early age children are especially vulnerable to adult modelling, and even at a later age, pre-teens and teens still observe and learn from watching adults and mimic them. As mothers are a reference for their children, they should encourage their children to study. It is, therefore, very important that

children see that their mothers regularly attend classes at the learning centre, so that they continue studying at home.

Therefore, mothers must:

- Dedicate time to study at home.
- Get involved in the educational aspects of their studies and show interest.
- Attend the learning centre regularly.

This will create a pattern for their sons and daughters to follow and imitate. It could be interesting to discuss in group whether these women have their own place and time to dedicate some time to their education. If they have to take care of the children, this may be difficult. By discussing this, the professionals will get to know the situation of the women and can help them adjust their everyday life in order to find a way to balance their motherhood with their studies. Some of the recommendations professionals can make to help are:

- Make sure to have a routine and plan ahead. Routine is a way to establish normalcy, to get things done and to create a sense of security for children. Also, routine is extremely important for infants as it will help them and their “body clocks” with many daily basics, such as naps, sleep, meals, bowel movements and such. Also, children often fear the unknown and a normal routine brings comfort and consistency to a child’s life. Furthermore, when the mother includes elements into her daily life, she is letting her child know what matters. When a child knows what to expect and notices regular family activities, they begin to understand what’s important. This strengthens shared values, beliefs and interests. However, it is important to create a routine that works for the mother and her family and to her specific environment and needs.
- Use time blocking. Time blocking is the practice of scheduling out everything in your entire day, including meals, study time, work, chores and personal time in order to better manage time and discover where precious hours are either being wasted or underutilized and to plan better. This schedule should include for example: the time to get ready in the morning, bath times, mealtimes, naptimes, bedtimes, housework, cooking and cleaning schedules, study time, play time, family time and outdoor play. If the specific needs or the environment of the mother makes time blocking impossible, it is important to at least

ask her to set a time to study each day. She should choose a time that matches her needs, for example, after having a light snack in the afternoon after school, or it can even be early in the morning before her children wake up, or late at night, after the children have gotten to bed. What is important is that she sets a time every day to study that is realistic and tailored to her needs.

- Other recommendations should be given depending on each specific case, for example, if she does not attend the study centre regularly, the professional should investigate the reason behind that behaviour: it may be family related, it may be that she cannot travel to the study centre, it may be because she is being bullied or that she feels out of place. Depending on the needs of the young mother, the professional should refer to the different IOs⁶ and offer advice or solutions accordingly.

However, the ideal would be to get someone in their circle to help these young mothers with the care of the children during a few hours so that they can entirely focus on their education; but it is necessary to keep in mind that this is not always possible.

Activity 4: "Commitment"

Mothers should commit to attend the reunions with the teachers of their children, as well as meetings with other parents and individual appointments with teachers if required.

Mothers will also be motivated to participate in the activities proposed by the centre.

These meetings with other parents can be a good way to meet other mothers and fathers and to feel integrated in the student's community. Furthermore, if they create bonds with other parents, they may establish a weekly-schedule so that children get together to study and do their homework. This will help children to see that doing homework is important and to realise it is important to other children and parents as well. It may also give extra time to the other mothers to focus on her studies. The ideal thing would be for example to rotate turns, so everyday a different mom would take the kids. This can be proposed by the professional and discussed with the mothers depending on the specific circumstance of each participation woman, or it can be discussed in group.

⁶ Please refer to IO2 Handbook for Outreach Awareness & Motivation Strategies, IO3 Set of Intervention Methods to Involve Young NEET Mothers, IO4 Orientation Pack and IO5 Empowerment Pack for further methodologies.

In any case, it is important that the mother attend every meeting and discuss the performance of their children with their teacher, as it is important for children to see that their mothers have an active presence inside the school programme.

1.2.3. POSITIVE REINFORCEMENT MOTHER-CHILD

Positive reinforcement strengthens the probability of the creation and occurrence of behaviour. It is very important, therefore, to use positive reinforcement throughout the entire programme, both transversally and directly.

Activity 5: "Action/Reward – The Contract"

One of the activities proposed is "Reward actions". These are joint mother-child actions in which they will carry out an activity that both want to do:

- Go to the park
- Go to the beach
- Any other leisure activity that they both like to do.

This activity must be performed during their free time and always as a reward for something related to education: for passing exams, for doing homework actively, or for an improvement of their behaviour in the classroom for example

This reward must be established in writing by means of a contract and must be respected if the agreement/action in which it is based is complied with.

An example of the contract is the following:

Contract	
We, _____ and _____	
undertake that if the following exam _____ is successfully passed,	
we will go to _____ as a way to recognise such an	
achievement.	
Signature:	Signature:

This contract can be modified according to the achievement expected and the personal interests of every child.

1. Motivate them

Before engaging in this “Action/Reward” Contract, it is important to be able to make children understand how important it is to study and to make them stay motivated regardless of any reward or prize.

2. Pay attention to blackmail

It is important to avoid promising a gift in exchange for a specific goal, which can be very good grades, promotion or "have all [8/10] [A or B]" because, although parents do so with all good intentions, rather than encouraging to engage in study, they are blackmailing. It is important to reward them with activities and actions that they can do together in order to reinforce their bond and spend quality time together, and not offer material things.

3. Reward the commitment, not the result.

Children should be encouraged and rewarded because of the commitment they have shown and the efforts they have made. If there is to be an award or a reward, it is important that it be about the way the child has approached study and school, which does not always correspond to having a high grade.

- Having faced obstacles and not giving up on the first difficulties;
- Being on time for school;
- Being polite, respectful and friendly with teachers, staff and schoolmates;
- Being responsible and avoiding distractions or giving up on a fun activity to meet school duties.

These are all reasons for child to be proud and important aspects of growth.

4. Offer a symbolic prize.

If parents decide to offer a gift as a reward, it is important that the prize has a symbolic value rather than it being money or something costly or that the children have explicitly asked for. It is better to focus on organizing an outdoor activity, an activity that the child would like to do, a concert or a day to spend together or with his friends. In short, a different

way of sharing something pleasant and fun, as a reinforcement to close the school year in a positive way and then start again with more determination.

1.2.4. HOW TO FACE FAILURE IN SCHOOL

It is important to underline that personal value is not based on the marks obtained. In case a child fails in school, it is important to explain to them that that doesn't mean they are a complete failure in their lives. It is important to speak with the child and analyse what has gone wrong and why, as well as possible ways of improvement and how to do better next time.

When a child gets low grades or fails in school, parents usually tend to react with anger, express disappointment and distrust children and then use punishments and restrictions, such as seizing smartphones or video game consoles.

This is something which risks to make children associate school with failure, undermine their self-esteem and to generate in them feelings of guilt and shame for failing to meet the expectations of mom and dad.

When facing either positive or negative situations, it is important to underline that personal value is not based on the marks obtained. This is something relevant for both, children and mothers. Young mother need to understand that they are not a failure because they dropped out of education, or they fail when they go back to study, and they also in turn should support their children if they happen to fail in school.

In order to face this situation, communication is crucial. Mothers need to speak frankly and honestly with their children when something doesn't work, they should talk with them to understand the reasons that led to the "failure", without attacking or belittling but by being encouraging and express that their love is unconditional.

Guidelines to face failure

Remaining calm is critical in addressing the problem. When parents read their children grade reports and see they have failed some subjects, they are usually angry, disappointed and afraid. The reason for so much concern lies in the fact that parents believe that grades are a signal that indicates the direction our children are taking in life. It is important to remain

calm and not get angry. If the young mother is angry, it is better to postpone the talk until the anger is gone or subsided. It is also important to not dramatize the situation.

The second step is to talk calmly with the child in a quiet and safe environment. The young mothers should ask their children why they think they have failed and listen to them. Children may blame the school, their family, themselves, their study time It is important to offer strong arguments and to try to identify the true reasons behind the failure: they did not study enough, they did not understand something, there are learning difficulties, there was a medical reason behind it, there were problems with classmates, there are external factors hindering their study... etc.

When speaking to the child, young mother should take into account the following:

- Usually, a grade is the result of how you did on a particular exam on a certain day at a specific time, regarding a fixed topic. Therefore, a grade does not really reflect the learning process of the child and does not mean that he doesn't know anything or that he is a failure.
- If parent reduce the child to a grade, if we label him/her based on that grade, either 0 or 10 we will be damaging the child's self-esteem and we will be putting at risk the secure bond the child has with us.
- Do not judge, label or humiliate the child.
- Value their abilities and aptitudes: not everyone is the same. The difficulties and strength of each student are not generally taken into account in the school environment but the criteria are the same for all unless there is some learning disorder involving an individualized plan.
- Value the effort made. If the mother identifies that her child has put an effort, it is necessary to encourage him/her to continue making an effort in addition to adding some other measures or reinforcement in the study.
- Value the evolution. Even if the child is failing, it may be obvious that he/she has improved and the learning process and knowledge has grown. It is important to recognise that, even when adding support measures.

If necessary, mother should speak to the school as it may help to identify the problem in order to be able to find the solution to the academic problem.

Then it is important to make a plan to face those problems. It is important to include children in the elaboration of this plan, and not to impose on actions single-handle. If the child engages in the solution, he will take steps more actively. Punishments should be avoided. It is not a question of punishing children and taking away liberties and things they like. Defiant and disproportionate punishments cause children cognitive and emotional disturbances such as hostility, nervousness, and personality problems in children and reduce efficiency in school. On the other hand, setting up corrective measures and speaking of “consequences” instead of “punishment” have some beneficial effects: they more quickly restore emotional bonds, reinforce assertive behaviour and stimulate the pursuit of an end.

Lastly, the young mother must express her support and make it clear that she trusts her child. This will improve the commitment and the confidence of the child.

If the mother finds herself in a situation where she is failing in her studies, she should follow these steps herself. It is important that she recognises her own effort, her evolution and not relate herself with the grades obtained. She should also analyse the situation and take proactive measures to solve the problems, such as: set longer study periods, attend tutoring periods, speak to the teachers, ask for supporting reading materials, turn in extra work...

1.3. Peer support

Eventually, the professional can promote group meetings in order to reinforce the bond among the women.

By support it is inferred all the actions that are used to respond to a need.

Peer support is fundamental to improve the welfare of the people who are part of the support group, their emotional and social well-being and to help them achieve their established objectives.

Two lines of action are going to be carried out:

Line 1	Mutual support group
Line 2	Activities implemented in the group

1.3.1. MUTUAL SUPPORT GROUP

This program aims to create a support structure organized as a network, where women can participate autonomously so they can have their own space to address fundamental issues to them, share their doubts, fears, problems... which might be similar to different people, avoiding abandonment.

They will address, self-control, responsibility, decision-making and autonomy, in addition to the topics that each one wants to contribute with.

The frequency of these meetings shall be established according to the needs and characteristics of the participants. It is recommended to carry out at least one group meeting every month. However, if the professional identifies good synergies, a stimulating environment and an enhanced support amongst the participants, the professional can re-structure the meetings to make them more frequent (twice a month). However, if after the initial sessions the professional identifies the young mother are more independent and they are assimilating the methodology well, he could schedule the group meeting further apart from each other (for example, every 5 or 6 weeks). It is very important to be flexible with these meetings and schedule them according to the group's needs, synergies and specific learning process.

This group of support or mutual help will establish a shared leadership to avoid protagonists and individualisms. That is to say, participant women will all have the same status and the meeting shall not be led by them. A professional (social worker, counsellor or trainer) shall oversee the meetings and should discourage any behaviour that relates to the superiority of some participants over others.

Activity 1: The Disturbing Word

Through this exercise, the group is expected to reflect on the issues that influence their reality, either positive or negative. It is an activity to promote self-reflection. This activity will offer young mothers the possibility to reflect on the factors influencing their lives and

circumstances, it will make them more conscious of their reality and therefore it will give them the opportunity to identify which are the things they can change or modify and over which factors they have power. It will also give the chance to share different thoughts and opinions on the selected topics amongst peers, so that they can see they are not alone.

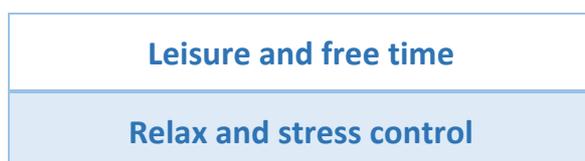
1. Divide the group into two subgroups.
2. Each group will be asked to think up 3 or 4 words that they consider important or influential in their life and write it in a piece of paper.
3. Afterwards they will create a slogan using the word they wrote and including a brief explanation of how it influences their daily life.
4. Debate: each group will present their work to the general group. All the members of the group will reflect about what is written on their pieces of papers.

Tips for the facilitator:

1. The facilitator should clarify that words can be positive or negative.
2. Slogans are simply a catchy phrase that includes the word mentioned, as well as what connotations they have for their life.
3. The facilitator can use questions such as:
 - How did you feel talking about it out loud?
 - Does your word you think is negative, positive or have both? Why?
 - What word do you think is the opposite of yours? What transmits / evokes you?

1.3.2. ACTIVITIES IMPLEMENTED IN THE GROUP

Joint activities will be carried out within the peer support group. These activities will be divided into two blocks:



A) *Leisure and free time*

Another fundamental motivational aspect of work for women is to have space for Leisure and Free time, where they can perform activities that are not within their daily

routine and that are not an obligation, but something that they like. These are activities that mothers would do as a reward for their efforts.

It can be said that leisure time is a period in which activities that have nothing to do with work are carried out. The purpose of these activities is to occupy our mind in things that we enjoy and lessen the stress of our daily lives. This free time is the best time to develop creativity, personal attitudes and skills, communication and intra and inter personal relationships.

The same way as leisure and free time activities should be decided by the participants, also these activities can NOT be mandatory or imposed. Participants themselves should be the ones who decide what activity they would like to do. These can be either sports activities, outside trips, or "time for themselves".

Tips: promoting leisure time

Why is free time important? Professionals should motivate and encourage young mothers to do some leisure activity, as well as the importance these activities have in their health and daily lives.

- It allows for a better psychological functioning: knowing that we will perform an activity that is pleasant and that we like allows us to face difficult challenges with a greater motivation.
- It encourages the brain to relax and allows for better solutions to problems: many times a bit of psychological distance allows for a better perspective.
- It also improves physical health, since many people use their free time to play sports, do yoga or carry out activities that release stress and tension.
- Increase motivation and confidence in one-self.
- Leisure activities may include socio-cultural activities (cinema, workshops, travel...) group activities (family time, book clubs, game nights, working out, hiking etc.), individual activities (reading, painting, visiting museums, photographs...), outdoor activities (swimming pool, gym, walks, cycling, etc.), sports, etc. which broaden the mind.

Activity 2: "What I would like is to..."

Always remember that these are voluntary activities; professionals should never pressure or force any of the participants to perform them.

Professionals should carry out the following steps:

- 1) In this activity the participants should write 3 things they would like to do (5 min.)
- 2) Then they will read them one by one.
- 3) The facilitator will write everyone's response down.
- 4) It is possible that some of the activities will be the same for two or more participants.
- 5) They will carry out at least one of the activities they have mentioned.
- 6) Furthermore, it is also advisable that once in a while they all did some leisure activity together.

B) Relax and stress control

Stress is the result of some stimulus from the environment, which generates a response in the individual; the problem comes when the result demands a higher efficiency than we are used to, causing distress in the person.

The response of people can serve to neutralize the negative effects of stress, but it may also not be adequate and may lead to increase its negative effects.

The situation may worsen, producing the effect of accumulation. This effect occurs when a series of unimportant daily events are added to a stressful event which, by producing an additional accumulation of stress, increases the original effect.

It is important for the participants to learn to manage and control stress, as this can negatively impact all areas of their lives and their decisions.

For this purpose, they must get involved in activities that can teach them how to identify what is happening to them, how to face it and learn relaxation techniques.

At the end of the group sessions there will be relaxation and stress control exercises.

Relaxation techniques: identify what happens to them and help them deal with different situations.

Relaxation activities: Jacobson's Progressive Relaxation

Video example

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t3uK039WdaM>

The person in charge will ask the participants to sit in a comfortable position while listening to relaxing music. Next, the following instructions will be given:

1. Let's start with the **forehead**. Wrinkle your forehead as much as you can. Notice for around five seconds the tension that is created there. Begin to relax slowly, noticing how the muscles start to relax and begin to feel the pleasant feeling of lack of tension in those muscles. Relax completely and recreate that feeling of total relaxation for at least ten seconds.
2. Next, close your **eyes** by squeezing them tightly. You should feel the tension in each eyelid, on the inner and outer edges of each eye. Slowly relax your eyes as much as you can until they are half open. Notice the difference between those feelings.
3. Continue with the **nose and lips**. Wrinkle your nose, relax it. Wrinkle the lips, relax them. Make sure that the tension is maintained for about five seconds and the relax phase lasts not less than ten.
4. Do the same with the **neck**. Squeeze your neck as much as you can and keep it tense. Let the muscles relax slowly, concentrating on the difference between tension and relax and enjoy the latter.
5. Raise the **arm, close the fist** as much as possible and make the whole arm as rigid as possible. Gradually lower the arm by releasing it. Slowly open your hand and let your whole arm rest on your thigh. Repeat with your other arm.
6. Do exactly the same with your **legs**.
7. Then tilt your **back** forward noticing the tension that takes place in the middle of your back. Bring your elbows back and tense as many muscles as you can. Return your back to its original position and relax your arms on your thighs. Recreate again the feeling of relaxation for a while.
8. Tense the muscles of the **stomach (the abdominals)** strongly and repeat the sensations of tension and relaxation by distending the muscles.

2. EMERGENCY SUPPORT ACTIVITIES FOR YOUNG MOTHERS

2.1. Intervention in crisis

A crisis is "a temporary state of disorder and disorganization, characterized mainly by the inability of the individual to address particular situations using habitual methods for solving problems, and by the potential to obtain a radically positive or negative result" (Slaikeu, 1988).

A crisis can be divided into two major categories:

- **Developmental or Evolutionary:** These are the events that more or less can be expected to happen. This type of crisis has to do with the vital development of the individual.
- **Circumstantial or Situational:** They are unpredictable events.

Theoretical influences of the concept of crisis

- The theory of Charles Darwin on the evolution and adaptation of animals to their environment: Darwin's ideas led to the development of human ecology, whose characteristic hypothesis is that the human community is an essential adaptive mechanism in the relationship of humanity with his medium (Moos, 1976).
- Positive growth and accomplishment of the individual through motivation and impulse (which may originate in the crisis). Developed by Rogers (1961) and Maslow (1954).
- The influence of Erickson (1963) through the conceptualization of the life cycle and its critical moments.
- In this manual the crisis will be interpreted as a circumstance or situation at individual level, in which the person asks for professional help in a determined institutional framework, not as a collective emergency.

When speaking of **crisis intervention**, we refer to that action that is given in a punctual manner by an isolated event related to an extreme situation, in which an immediate response is necessary.

The crisis intervention is a tool of immediate help and a very efficient one when solving different problems that create situation of tension to many people.

This type of action “is based mainly on the reduction of stress, of the pressure that a person suffers when he/she faces a vital event that destabilizes his/her normal balance, with the objective to help re-stabilize and reorganize this balance by means of the empowerment of his/her adaptive and response capacities” (2⁷).

The crisis intervention covers two major moments:

- a) one aimed at emotional expression and its processing, the evaluation of damage and the activation of social support networks;
- b) the second moment is aimed at integrating the crisis into the life of the person, into the decisions making process and restoring excesses or emotional deficit resulting from the crisis.

Due to the socioeconomic context of the participants, their life development and the absence of family support, will produce along the process different moments in which a specific event might make some of the participants want to leave: because she thinks that she will not succeed, because she might feel overwhelmed, pressured by someone in her environment, unmotivated...

It is in this the moment when it is necessary to perform the process mentioned above, both by the professional and by the group itself.

As mentioned at the beginning of the guide, young mothers will have a messaging group with their colleagues and the facilitator, so in case of crisis it will be the basic

7 "Modelos y Métodos de Intervención en Trabajo Social", Juan Jesús Viscarret Garro, Alianza Editorial, Year 2007., Madrid. Page 130.

communication tool to ask for help. It is necessary to distinguish two possible scenarios and differentiated situations of crisis:

- 1) The first one is a crisis related to the abandonment of studies. In this case, the professional will focus on possible techniques that the facilitator can use to talk to the girl who wants to leave school.
- 2) Other possible crisis situations are those related to personal episodes, this can include a wide variety of situations where the most common can be: gender violence, family problems, psychological problems (stress, anxiety, etc.)

2.2. Professionals that will intervene

Depending on the moment and the situation, the intervention in crisis should be carried out by the reference professional and/or by the support group.

The person in charge must give immediate attention to an urgent need. He/she should help reduce the level of anxiety. For him/her the first crucial thing is that the participant is able to identify her level of anxiety. She must be invited to think about:

- What am I feeling?
- What am I doing?
- What am I thinking?

If necessary, a technique that is used in order to visualize the level of anxiety is carried through graphic examples, such as a drawing a ladder and placing it according to the degree of anxiety. The higher the ladder, the higher is the level of anxiety and vice versa.

Next you have to think about the consequences of continuing to level up or trying to lower the ladder.

Methodology for crisis intervention

- Reducing anxiety;
- Focus on the situation;
- Perceive the reality;

- Provide support.

2.3. Positive reinforcement in the intervention

Throughout this manual, the importance and the benefits of positive reinforcement during the intervention has been mentioned several times. During a “crisis intervention” it is also important to employ this type of reinforcement.

As it was mentioned before, positive reinforcement stimulates the reoccurrence of the wanted behaviour. In this case, it stimulates the motivation of the participant toward the training.

The participant should be helped to understand and appreciate the positive aspects and the benefits brought to her by returning to education.

Likewise, it must be evaluated her future in the medium-long term.

2.4. How to intervene in crisis situations

2.4.1. HOW TO INTERVENE IN CRISIS SITUATIONS RELATED WITH DROPPING OUT HER STUDIES

In case of finding a situation of dropping out of school, the young mother will probably contact the group or the facilitator. In case of transmitting the idea to the group, this can act as a first brake to make her reflect, maybe after talking with the group, she will reconsider and decide to continue with their studies or need a direct contact with the facilitator. In this case, an appointment with her will be arranged and the following activity will take place:

Activity 1: Analysing pros and cons of dropping out education.

- 1) The first thing to do is to relax the person who is suffering the crisis at that moment, since she might be in a state of over exaltation and her only thought might be the abandonment of the educational system (professionals can use the relaxation technique).
- 2) What professionals need to do is to ask them what has happened, what has triggered the desire/necessity to leave, why does she want to leave, and invite her to reflect on it.

- 3) When the person starts to feel relaxed and has provided all this information, she must start to analyse the pros and cons of abandoning her studies. On a sheet it should be written:

PROS

CONS

The professional should leave time for her to reflect on what she wrote down and, once finished, analyse it with her.

- 4) A good technique to reflect on the situation that triggered the desire to drop out is to tell the woman to analyse the best-case scenario and the worst-case scenario. For example, if she is anxious about not being able to balance her studies with her role as a mother and personal life, the best-case scenario would be that she is able to do it putting an effort in the task. The worst-case scenario would be that she is not capable of doing it and that she fails in one of the two tasks, or even in both. Then, the professional should make her think about the possibilities of these two things happening, as sometimes in times of crisis our brains tend to think that things that are almost impossible could happen. Thus, the woman would see that the drastic decision she is about to make is maybe not the best one. This exercise will also prepare the women for the future.
- 5) The professional must help her understand that the benefits of studying are more positive than the consequences of leaving.

Activity 2: Control of distress

1. She will write a list of irrational thoughts that go through her head at that time.
2. Then she will analyse each thought with the professional to help her understand the irrationality of her thought and the future consequences of carrying it out.

3. It could also be helpful to remind the participating women that everyone has those types of feelings when dealing with a new environment, and even more if this environment is the educational one, since it is a competitive environment and there is a lot of pressure to pass.
4. The professional should make sure that the participating woman is aware that he or she knows how and what she is feeling, and that it is completely normal to feel that way so that she does not feel ashamed.

Activity 3: "My Future Self"

On a sheet of paper, the participant should write "My future self" and what she would like to be like: where would she like to live, where will she be working, what would she like to achieve...

After this an analysis must be done on the steps to follow to achieve this: if there is the need or not for the participant to be trained.

This activity will make them reflect on the importance of education for a better future. However, this activity should be kept as realistic as possible so that the women can set goals that they can actually achieve.

This activity can help participants to orientate themselves on their future, what they want to pursue and what training or path should they take in order to reach their goal. It is a good way to start orientating their life path.

2.4.2. HOW TO INTERVENE IN CRISIS SITUATIONS RELATED WITH PERSONAL ISSUES

Once the young woman has contacted the facilitator or the group, the first thing to do is to relax the person who is suffering from the crisis at that moment, since she might be in a state of over exaltation (professionals can use the relaxation technique).

Then you must determine what the problem is and evaluate whether it is up to us or not to help you. Some of the most **common situations** can be:

A	Gender violence
B	Family crisis

C Psychological crisis: stress, anxiety, etc.

A) Gender violence

In case the adolescent comes in contact with the social worker/counsellor/trainer for a problem related to gender violence, that professional should try to talk to her, evaluate the seriousness of the situation and take the relevant measures related to the protocol established in the country of origin for situations of this nature, related to a complaint in the police or with the application for emergency shelter in a house for women who suffer gender violence. Therefore, the case should be referred to a specialist in dealing with these issues.

In such a situation, it is important to be supportive and kind, show receptiveness and respect, express care, listen actively without judgements, pose respectful questions and act accordingly, explaining how you can help.

Professionals must never question the truth of what the young mother is expressing and must never search for evidence that she is really a victim of a criminal act. Professionals must never confront the abuser. Those actions must be left to those responsible for handling cases of domestic violence, such as the police. Professionals must provide information regarding the programmes available in their locality for help and offer support.

In the following resources, professionals will find a selection of handbooks and toolkits with guidelines on how to act in case they suspect or confirm that a participant is suffering domestic or gender violence.

MORE TOOLS

[Psychosocial support for victims of domestic violence and gender based violence](#) – a handbook created by the Project FIRST (Capacity Building for First Points of Contact for Victims of Domestic and Gender-based Violence), produced with the financial support of the Rights, Equality and Citizenship (REC) Programme of the European Union. Chapter II of this handbook offers further information on how to identify, offer support and act in case of domestic abuse.

Action for Change - Best Practice Toolkit is a handbook about approaches and methodologies to support women affected by gender-based violence, who have had or are at risk of having their children removed.

[SUNIA GEEL 2 - Domestic Violence Response Programme](#) for young people is a training guide providing methods to work with young women suffering gender-based violence. This handout was developed by the Daphne Project with the support with support from the European Commission. It includes guidelines to carry out group meetings and activities.

B) Familiar crisis

Taking into account, in general, the family context that tends to characterize young women (dysfunctional families, family conflicts, little support from the family, etc.), there could be situations of strong family discussion that generates a crisis in the young woman. In these cases, when she requests our help, professionals will try to follow the following protocol:

1. The first will try to relax it to evaluate the situation calmly.
2. Next, you will be asked to explain what happened and an assessment of the situation will be made (using some of the most appropriate IO5 empowerment activities to solve the problem).
3. Depending on the type of problem, you can refer to a more consistent professional to help or use some of the dynamics learned in conflict resolution SymfoS package (IO4 Orientation Pack).

C) Psychological crisis

In the case of an episode of psychological suffering (acute stress, anxiety crisis, depressive episode, etc.), professionals should try to relax the young mother as much as possible, in order to do this, professionals can use the Jacobson's Progressive Relaxation, which will temporarily alleviate the episode. Then it must be evaluated if it is a temporary episode or if there is cause to suspect that the crisis is underlying some deeper problem, and in that case, derive it to a psychology professional.

3. SUPPORT WHILE SEARCHING FOR A JOB

The next important step that follows education is the search for a job. In order to improve her possibilities of employment it is necessary to include them in training sessions, which will allow them to advance in the labour insertion process.

This manual includes, on the one hand, group work orientation actions and, on the other hand, individualized itineraries of social insertion.

Participants should know the employment options that exist based on their training, or in what field they should be trained depending on the job they would like to have or to the position they would like to reach.

This is also a motivational element, because knowing that they can work in a specific position with a certain training helps the person to obtain that qualification.

The topics targeted in this part are:

1	Labour Guidance
2	Individualized Social Insertion Routes
3	LinkedIn profile and employment networks

3.1. Labour Guidance

Labour guidance is fundamental for those who are in an active search for employment to get to know the labour market, resources and methods of self-orientation and adaptation to the professional environment.

In this manual, labour guidance will accompany the training process to provide participants with a broader perspective of the labour market.

Group actions will be developed in which strategies for the effective search of employment will be provided and the main resources that can help them in the search for employment will be announced. In the same way, the development of their social and labour skills will be favoured for their incorporation into the job market.

In a transversal way, social skills, self-esteem, assertiveness and communication will be improved.

MORE TOOLS

Project EPODS - onlinE PrOfessional Development in Second chance Education has developed free online courses on the **SCOODLE** platform (www.secondchanceeducation.eu). **One of the courses is Opening Doors - Improving Employability Skills**, contains a lot of materials and activities regarding: Empowering Young People, Goal setting, Identifying Key Skills and Employability skills, Balancing Dreams and Reality, Exploring Careers, Preparing for work and Looking for work

3.1.1. ACTIVITIES OF LABOUR GUIDANCE

The following group work orientation activities will be carried out:

- Elaboration of a CV
- Cover letter
- Job interviews
- Job search through new technologies: Profile in LinkedIn or job portals

A) *Curriculum Vitae*

The curriculum is fundamental when looking for a job; it is a basic tool in this process. It is an individual promotional document, which must contain relevant information establishing our suitability to perform a job.

In most cases, sending a curriculum will be a necessary condition to participate in a selection process and will be the first contact a person establish with the selecting company.

A good resume should be accompanied by a cover letter. The cover letter should reflect our personal attitudes, abilities, competences and those motivations that we possess and want to highlight, in relation to the job position for which we are applying.

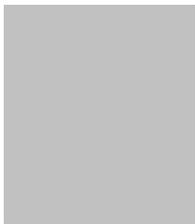
With this activity, the participants will acquire the necessary skills and abilities to prepare cover letters and curriculums.

The participants will be informed on the different types of CVs that exist and which is more suited to their profile. They will be advised on how to prepare a good curriculum. The theoretical part will be combined with the practice so that they can elaborate their own curriculum. The

model to be taught will be the Europass one, since it is the standardized model proposed by the European Union in different countries throughout Europe. This type of Curriculum helps users to present their qualifications, competences and abilities chronologically, in addition to their academic training, work experience and languages. Although the participating women may not have many experience or specific qualification due to their personal situation, it is important for them to learn how to highlight the good things they have in their CV. If they don't have a lot of experience, they can emphasize other aspects that are also good when getting a job like charisma or determination.

Europass Template

PERSONAL INFORMATION



Replace with First name(s) Surname(s)

- Replace with house number, street name, city, postcode, country
- Replace with telephone number Replace with mobile number
- State e-mail address
- State personal website(s)
- Replace with type of IM service

Sex | Date of birth dd/mm/yyyy | Nationality

JOB APPLIED FOR
POSITION
PREFERRED JOB
STUDIES APPLIED FOR
PERSONAL STATEMENT

Replace with job applied for / position / preferred job / studies applied for / personal statement (delete non relevant headings in left column)

WORK EXPERIENCE

Replace with dates (from - to)

Replace with occupation or position held

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Replace with dates (from - to)

Replace with qualification awarded

PERSONAL SKILLS

Mother tongue(s)

Other language(s)

UNDERSTANDING

SPEAKING

WRITING

	Listening	Reading	Spoken interaction	Spoken production	
Replace with language	Enter level	Enter level	Enter level	Enter level	Enter level
Replace with name of language certificate. Enter level if known.					

Replace with language	Enter level				
Replace with name of language certificate. Enter level if known.					

Levels: A1/A2: Basic user - B1/B2: Independent user - C1/C2 Proficient user
[Common European Framework of Reference for Languages](#)

Communication skills

Organisational / managerial skills

Job-related skills

Digital skills

SELF-ASSESSMENT				
Information processing	Communication	Content creation	Safety	Problem solving
Enter level	Enter level	Enter level	Enter level	Enter level

Levels: Basic user - Independent user - Proficient user
[Digital competences - Self-assessment grid](#)

Replace with name of ICT-certificates

Other skills

Driving licence

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

ANNEXES



Another useful tool to design creative CV is Canva (<https://www.canva.com/>) an online web page of graphic design with free templates to develop CV in a creative way. The platform is

very intuitive and easy to use for basic level users. It allows creating creative CVs that differentiate them from the usual CVs.

B) Cover Letter

The cover letter is as important as the CV (or resume). It is the initial presentation to the company, the first thing that they see from us, even before the CV. If the cover letter is not adequate, there is a risk that they discard our CV. Therefore, it is important to know how to write a good cover letter.

The cover letter is the first contact a candidate has with the prospective employer. The purpose of the cover letter is to introduce oneself to an organisation, demonstrate interest in the activities and the work experience opportunity, draw attention to the CV, and improve chances of getting an interview.

The cover letter should reflect our attitudes, abilities, competences and those motivations that we possess and want to highlight, in relation to the job position for which we are applying. Cover letters should include: an introduction where applicants mention who they are, why they are contacting the organisation and a little about themselves: their studies and their previous experience. Then, it should include the competences they have, but instead of repeating the information in the CV, it should be displayed in the form of a brief description and why they are a good fit for the position, highlighting only the relevant experience for the post and including two or three points or examples that are relevant and demonstrative. Cover letters should also include the candidate's motivation and should demonstrate why the candidate is a strong fit for the job and the organisation.

With this activity, participants will be shown different types of cover letters available as well as guidelines as to when each model has to be submitted, the contents of the cover letter and the type of vocabulary that must be used.

Types of cover letter:

- ✓ Self-candidacy
- ✓ As an answer to a job offer

- ✓ Motivational
- ✓ Without experience
- ✓ To carry out work practices

It would be helpful to debate which type is the most common one, and the most adequate for the path they want to pursue in their career, so they can practise and thus achieve a better proficiency in writing this type of documents.

Examples of Cover Letters:

Self-Candidacy:

Dear Mr Brown,

I am writing to enquire if you have any vacancies in your company. I enclose my CV for your information.

As you can see, I have had extensive vacation work experience in office environments, the retail sector and service industries, giving me varied skills and the ability to work with many different types of people. I believe I could fit easily into your team.

I am a conscientious person who works hard and pays attention to detail. I'm flexible, quick to pick up new skills and eager to learn from others. I also have lots of ideas and enthusiasm. I'm keen to work for a company with a great reputation and high profile like [insert company name].

I have excellent references and would be delighted to discuss any possible vacancy with you at your convenience. In case you do not have any suitable openings at the moment, I would be grateful if you would keep my CV on file for any future possibilities.

As an answer to a job offer:

Dear Mr Black,

Please find enclosed my CV in application for the post advertised in the Guardian on 30 November.

The nature of my degree course has prepared me for this position. It involved a great deal of independent research, requiring initiative, self-motivation and a wide range of skills. For one course, [insert course], an understanding of the [insert sector] industry was essential. I found this subject very stimulating.

I am a fast and accurate writer, with a keen eye for detail and I should be very grateful for the opportunity to progress to market reporting. I am able to take on the responsibility of this position immediately, and have the enthusiasm and determination to ensure that I make a success of it.

Thank you for taking the time to consider this application and I look forward to hearing from you in the near future.

Yours sincerely

Without experience:

Dear Mr/Mrs/Ms/Miss (insert name),

As a recent graduate/current student, I am writing to apply for the job of (insert position title) advertised on (insert date) through your website/in the shop window/word of mouth.

I am an extremely motivated and enthusiastic person and I have shown this on several occasions, for example (give evidence). My interests in (list interests relevant to job position) I believe will help me in this position and will allow me to work to my best capabilities.

Working with other members of a team such as (give example of when you have done this) and improving my communication skills during (give more examples) has encouraged me to apply for this position and to improve on these skills further.

I believe that I would be a good asset to (enter company name) and would be available to discuss my application further at any time. I feel that I possess the attributes that are required to be a (insert job title) and I look forward to receiving a response. I thank you in advance for your time and effort.

Regards,

(hand printed signature)

(enter full name)

MORE TOOLS

On the SCOODLE platform one of the courses is Broadening Horizons - Engaging in International Mobility. In the section "Preparing the mobility: key information"> "A personal and professional experience" there is a guide regarding how to write a cover letter.

C) Job Interview

The job interview is another fundamental element to access a job. In most cases, it constitutes the gateway to the labour market. As a general rule, all companies in their selection process will conduct interviews to find the candidate that best fits the profile they are looking for.

At the time of the interview, insecurity, fear and especially being nervous can play tricks and turn against us. Therefore, it is important to know some techniques that must be put into practice at that time. Knowing how a job interview takes place, acquiring the necessary knowledge to be able to answer the questions that the interviewer asks us helps to diminish these fears and reduces anxiety.

During this activity the following will be covered:

- What is a job interview?
- Types of job interview and interviewers
- Issues to keep into consideration before the interview
- The attitude during the interview/abilities
- Tools to prepare the interview
- Frequent errors
- Case studies: simulation of interviews

Activity-Role Play: The job interview

A simulation of job interview will be performed. The participants will act as they were conducting a job interview. Two actions will be carried out; an individual interview and a group interview.

Individual:

Role play for each one of them. The rest will watch.

After all the participants go through the process of simulation of job interviews, both the professional people in charge and the participants should reflect and analyse all the interviews: what has been done well, what can be improved, etc.

During the development of the activity the professional should try and include a great variety of jobs, so the interviews are varied as well. Thus, participants will see if there are any conventions that should be applied to a specific interview and get an insight of how they work.

Group:

The activity that is proposed is a group interview by competences. A competency interview aims to get to know you better through the skills or competencies you might have.

During this activity, if the professional considers it is viable, he/she should create some awkward situations in order to teach the participants how to react if something like that ever happens to them. These situations could be an inappropriate question (although never hurting the participant's feelings), asking a question that they don't know how to answer to... This can give the participants an insight on what can happen during these type of interviews and they can learn the best way to avoid difficult situations. The professional can also mention and correct during the activity the participant's attitude or posture in order to improve the image they present themselves with. This activity can also be used to teach the women how to dress properly when they have a meeting or appointment like a job interview, giving them clues and advices on what is best.

MORE TOOLS

In the course **Opening Doors - Improving Employability Skills** there is a section regarding interviews, with lots of materials and activities.

3.2. Individualized Social Insertion Routes

Complementary to the group job guidance activities, individualized itineraries of social insertion will be performed as well, carrying out a series of actions aimed at enriching from a training point of view the possibilities of labour insertion for the users.

It is a custom follow-up process according to which each of the participants will develop a socio-labour itinerary that will help the access to the labour market while providing them with knowledge, strategies and attitudes.

For this reason, individual work with the participants in the following areas will be encouraged according to their current situation:

- ✓ Self-knowledge and labour outlook.
- ✓ Job inquiry techniques.
- ✓ Development of personal traits for employment.
- ✓ Evaluation of qualification, formation and professional experiences
- ✓ Information, orientation and counselling of the labour market

MORE TOOLS

In the course **Opening Doors - Improving Employability Skills** you can find materials regarding additional topics related to employability of young people.

3.3. LinkedIn profile and employment networks

3.3.1. JOB ENQUIRY THROUGH NEW TECHNOLOGIES

Both the Internet and the New Technologies offer a wide range of possibilities and applications that can facilitate access to a job position.

Through this activity, the participants will be able to acquire practical knowledge on computer tools to improve their job search, acquire skills in the management of a general job search portals and to use the main job search pages.

Among these services we can find:

- Access to information about companies, job offers, training... as well as web portals specialized in offering information about how to create a curriculum, a cover letter, how to prepare an interview, how to create a company or where to look for help.
- Job search portals. These are portals that help the relationship between the companies that offer jobs and the people who seek it. They allow the search of employment by zones, sector, specialty, salary... and the application for a job without having to leave your home allowing companies to access curriculums immediately.
- E-mail. It facilitates and accelerates communications between companies and job seekers. The professional can teach the participants how to create an email account and how to use it, given the case that they don't know already.

3.3.2. PROFILES IN SOCIAL NETWORKS: LINKEDIN

LinkedIn is an online job search tool. It is considered the largest professional network in the world. Therefore, it is important for the participants to know this tool and learn how to manage it, in order to carry out an active job search. They will learn about this social network, about its advantages and how to create and use a LinkedIn profile.

Activity 1: My Profile

The participants will create their own profiles in LinkedIn. Then, they will present them to the group and the professional can give advice and opinion about what they did well and how they can improve.

3.3.3. OTHER EMPLOYMENT NETWORKS

The online world is very changeable, so the ways to search JOB online change in short periods of time, so it must always take into account new portals and forms for job search. In addition to LinkedIn, there are other types of more informal networks in the job search detailed below:

- Facebook groups posting job offers: there are different employment groups where Facebook users share information about job offers at local, national or international level. Young women can search for groups in which job offers are published related to their profile or in their own locality.

- Online job portals: depending on the country, there are various job search portals; The facilitator should show which are the most used employment portals in their country and a brief explanation of their operation.
- Mobile Apps: Finding employment through mobile applications is becoming more frequent. The growing use of smartphones has caused the creation of many digital portals to find job, which are easier and more accessible, allowing direct contact with employers.

3.3.4. TIPS ABOUT WHAT WE SHARE IN OUR ONLINE PROFILE WHEN JOB SEARCHING

It is important to take into account when looking for online employment, the online profile that we show and that will be our cover letter to a potential employer. In this sense, it is important to take into account the following aspects:

- *Privacy settings*: it is important to review the privacy settings, what information you share is private access to your contacts and which is accessible to the general public. It is important to ensure what information we want the public to have.
- *Netiquette (net + etiquette)*: this term refers to the rules of general behaviour typical of the Internet, which are equivalent to the interpersonal face to face protocol adapted to Internet interactions. In this sense, it must be taken into account in order to interact with online employers.
- *Public complains*: it is important to pay attention to the type of comments and complaints that are made online, bearing in mind that it can be stored on the Internet forever and in view of anyone looking for our name.
- *Image online*: Take into account what type of images are shared online, trying to avoid those that can give a negative image; likewise, avoid public images drinking or using of drugs.

Activity 2: "Egosurfing"

Individual / group practical exercise: Investigate what the Internet knows about us

The young women will carry out a search by placing their "name and surname" and "city" in the Google search engine. They will find their profiles on social networks, so they can be aware of the information that a stranger, and in this case, possible employer, can access.

The facilitator should guide young women to observe the results obtained, reflect on them and raise awareness of the need to periodically perform this practice to have their digital identity a little more controlled.

4. STATE OF THE ART: TOOLS TO SEARCH FOR A JOB

4.1. Participatory video

Participatory video is a form of participatory media in which a group or community creates their own film. The idea behind this is that making a video is easy and accessible, and is a great way of bringing people together to explore issues, voice concerns or simply to be creative and tell stories.

Through participatory video activities, individuals acquire valuable skills that will help them in their job search and their transition to the labour market. Participatory video helps empower individuals and through this activity transversal skills will be developed, such as communication (both vertical and horizontal communication), team work, empathy, self-motivation, creativity, proactivity and leadership. It also helps develop their technical skills, social skills and social inclusion.

Furthermore, another benefit of participatory video methodology is the high level of involvement of the participants, its practice dimension and the motivation that generates. According to this, participatory video is especially useful to promote learner's motivation, empowerment and self-esteem. Thanks to the video, learners use a different communication channel which is characterised by creativity. As such, PV can be a highly effective tool to engage and mobilise marginalised people, and to help them to implement their own forms of sustainable development based on local needs. It can also promote social inclusion and social cohesion.

How does a participatory video work?

Participants (men, women and youth) rapidly learn how to use video equipment through games and exercises. Based on group work, the participants will learn cinema technical terms and how to record a film. In a participatory video, the subjects make their own film in which they can shape issues according to their own sense of what is important, and they can also control how they will be represented. Content is much more important than shape or aesthetics. It is also very useful because these women that may feel under-represented due to their social status or race can be present and be protagonists in the video. It can be a way of empowering themselves.

Process of creating a PV:

- Creation of a safe environment where the participants can express themselves freely without any fears of being judged when sharing their experiences and feelings.
- Then, groups produce video material to stimulate dialogue with peers, outside of the immediate group. Storyboarding helps to develop a strong collective story.
- Editing the film is a key stage in the process. An editing workshop also includes learning the basics of digital video editing and producing final versions of films.
- Groups share the films with each other and also plan how to use their films to generate debate and communicate with external audiences.

This activity is also beneficial because many women may find out that they really enjoy cinema, video editing or filming; and they may want to follow their studies aiming in that direction. It is a good way to stimulate them to keep moving forward to achieve their goals.

Regarding job searching, it can be used to improve communication skills in a job interview as well as learn how to create a CV through PV.

4.2. Visual Story

The original definition of Visual Storytelling, as provided by Shlomi Ron (Co-founder and CEO of Visual Storytelling Institute), is “a marketing strategy that communicates powerful ideas through compelling narratives, placing your customer at the heart of the story, delivered through interactive and immersive visual media in order to create profitable customer engagements.” Ideas and emotions are expressed through performance and aesthetics as opposed to dialogue. This is a tool used by businesses and companies that can be applied to the participants as an easier form of communicating feelings, desires and concerns.

Through visual story activities, individuals enhance their communication and interaction skills which are highly valuable when going through a job interview and presenting their qualifications and capabilities. Visual story methodology is a good technique to be use in a job interview or in group job interviews where recruiters ask participants to interact.

In Visual Storytelling most stories follow the path of the hero’s journey:

1. **THE JOURNEY:** The story starts with the hero living in a normal world -- the status quo. Then, something occurs or information is introduced that calls the hero to adventure.
2. **THE TRANSFORMATION:** Once the hero decides to take action, the hero must go through trials and tribulations. The hero truly steps up to take action.
3. **THE RETURN:** After battling through challenges of the transformation, the Hero returns, this time transformed by the adventure they undertook.

Activity

Resources: flipcharts, A3 papers, fully charged cameras (one for each couple) and markers.

Duration: 2 hours.

A preliminary exercise that would help the participants set the mood before creating the participatory video is recalling memories. They have to think about a memory they remember vividly, think about why you remember it like that and try and put it into words, to use it later to depict those memories visually. The next step will help the participants take that memory and give it a visual representation by thinking about 3 favourite films. Then, they can use them as a reference to create their own 'films'. Bearing this in mind, the final and most important steps to create a participatory video are the following:

- 1) **Creating a story (20 minutes):** the duration of the actual video will be 3-5 minutes, make the message of the story as short and powerful as possible. There should be a logical build-up of the video: introduction → core → conclusion.
- 2) **The story board (50 minutes):** It is recommended that the professionals create a storyboard themselves (beforehand), to show as an example. Then, divide the participants in groups, provide them with pieces of paper (if there are flipcharts for every group, then they will use them) and tell them to draw four equally sized boxes in which they will depict the scenes of the video. This will serve as the basis to record the video, so they will also have to bear in mind what kind of audience are they creating the video for. If possible, add the position in which the camera will record each scene.
- 3) **Filming (30 minutes):** Explain to the participants that they are going to film their story board at/around the training venue. It is very important to ask for permission once they want to film and/or interview people. Hand-out the flip camera's and ask the participating women to

film their story board. They can go outside and use materials and environments available and close by. This should not take them more than 25 minutes.

Finally, the film of each group will be screened in front of the whole group. Then, respectfully, they all should comment on the other groups' films and talk about the elements they liked the most. They can even talk about whether they empathised with any of the feelings represented in the films.

This is a very good activity because it requires the participants' involvement from the beginning. They will see how their work develops, motivating them to keep going. The engagement it requires is beneficial in order to prepare them for the labour market, boosting their sense of responsibility and compromise. It also promotes team work and leadership.

5. ANNEX

5.1. Mutual Directed Support

Throughout the support pack, it has been established that aspects previously dealt with in the previous IOs may need to be worked on again. Therefore, the use of new activities to work on empowerment (IO4) and orientation (IO5) are highly recommended; and for that, new dynamics that intend to work on these aspects have been further developed.

The idea is to use of Mutual Direct Support is that the professional in charge of the sessions will aim to direct the session and mark the content of it according to the needs expressed by the participants. In each session they will carry out sessions about self-esteem, emotional intelligence, empowerment, relaxation and stress control, and motivational activities.

5.2. Self-esteem activities

Self-esteem is related to different aspects, such as our way of living, our work, social and family relationships, food, our leisure time or the way everyone deals with conflicts and personal losses. All in all, how we see ourselves, how we are perceived by others and how we interpret the world around us.

Activity 1: Emphasize positive aspects

With this activity it is expected that participants break down the barriers that don't allow them to have a good self-esteem; improving their image through the exchange of comments and personal qualities.

Development:

Write on a sheet of paper:

- Two physical attributes that I like about myself.
- Two personality traits that I like about myself.
- A capacity or skill that I like about myself.

At the end, they all will read out loud what they have written and have a discussion about how those skills help them. It is important for the professional to emphasize and make sure that,

when discussing any attributes, traits or characteristics, the participants never refer to any of their capacities or qualities as being “wrong”, “bad” or negative. When discussing qualities, they don’t really like, they should only be categorized as “improvable”, erasing any negative component.

Activity 2: How could you Change your life?

Help the participants to think deeper about some of their desires and aspirations and what they are doing to achieve them.

Development:

The staff should tell the following to the participants: "Your doctor has informed you that there is only one year to live and you are convinced that the diagnosis is correct. Describe how this news would change your life". Time is given to think about this and reflect about the question asked. They should write a short piece answering this question. However, professionals should remark that the goal and direction they want to give to their life, or any changes, should be realistic and reflect their situation.

Afterwards, the staff continues with the following: “If you want to change your life in that direction, what is keeping you from doing it right now?”.

There will be small subgroups formed and the participants will be asked to comment on their answers.

Then, they will share their opinions and feelings about the exercise as a group.

5.3. Emotional Intelligence Activities

Emotional intelligence is a way of interacting with the world that takes into account feelings, and includes many skills. These configure character traits such as self-discipline, compassion or altruism, which are essential for an effective social adaptation. The deficit of emotional intelligence affects many aspects of the daily life.

According to Daniel Goleman, emotional intelligence refers to the ability to recognize our own feelings, the feelings of others, motivate them and properly manage the relationships with others and themselves.

Through emotional intelligence activities, participants will improve personal skills, creating better relationships with others and enhancing their personal qualities.

Elements to be included for emotional intelligence sessions:

Self-knowledge	Emotional Control	Self-motivation	Recognizing others' emotions
Know yourself	Ability to control emotions	Living with a purpose	Empathy
Knowledge of your own emotions	Taking advantages of adversities	Set goals	Active listening
The relationship with oneself	Solve conflicts	Create a plan	Prejudices
Thoughts and attitudes		Act	Externalization of feelings
Auto-criticism			
Self-respect			

Activity 3: Look me in the face

In pairs, participants will look at each other in the eye. They have to say 2 qualities that each recognizes in the person in front of her and two that she recognizes in herself.

Then they must explain what was more difficult for them.

Activity 4: The letters of your name

With the letters that form their names, participants should write emotions, keeping in mind that there are no good or bad ones. Sadness is as acceptable as joy. It is important to learn to manage feelings. Negative feelings help us overcome vital processes. After that, they can debate why they chose those specific feelings, and talk about what those feelings mean to them in their everyday life. They can share any particulars to the extent they feel comfortable with, and putting no pressure on them or in the feelings they may have.

5.4. Empowerment and Motivation

To empower is to become aware of the inalienable rights that we possess, to recognize our own authority and to trust in that ability to achieve goals. This authority occurs when each woman generates self-confidence, reliability in herself to make her own decisions and to become active.

It is essential to encourage the motivation and empowerment of the participating women so that they can optimally perform and lead all those actions/projects that they will undertake, improving their personal and collective development.

Goals of the Activities

With these activities it is expected that the women:

- Know and reflect on their life objectives: what do they want and how they can achieve it.
- Know their own strengths and weaknesses: how to approach these weaknesses.
- Recognise positive feelings and emotions: learn how to analyse negative affirmation on one self and transform them into new positive, objective and realistic statements...
- Know how to recognize the wrong ways of thinking: identification and modification of irrational thoughts.

Activity 5: Written caresses

A piece of paper is glued to the participant's backs and they are asked to move around the classroom.

All of them must write down on the back of their friends a characteristic/quality that they like.

When everyone has written something on the papers of each other, they can take their paper and read what others think of them. After that, ask the person with the paper written to say whether she recognizes those qualities or not, and whether she has thought about it before or if it is a quality she has just realized she has.

Activity 6: Tell me your experience:

Each participant has to say out loud a difficult personal situation and what did she do to overcome it.

With this activity it is intended that the participants realize that they have overcome difficult situations so they can continue achieving what they want. It can be a way of reassuring them their personal strength, and reminding them what they are capable of. However, this activity should always be carried out from a respectful perspective and never invading the intimacy and privacy of the participant. They should be free to tell their own stories, and the professional should remind them that no story is better than other, they are all good on their own since these stories are their personal experiences.

Debate: Do women have strength as well and can they deal with adversities?

Facilitate the awareness of the participants so they can see the importance of their empowerment when they face the conflicts of their daily life.

Activity 7: Identify and face what is happening

1. Each participant has to write an aspect of her life that she would like to modify, one that affects her when it comes to achieving her objectives.
2. Next up, she will have to manifest how her life would change if she changed that aspect or situation.
3. After that, she will also have to think of a way in which it would worsen her life.
4. Find a balance between the good and the bad.
5. If there is time in the session, this activity could also include the importance of communicating internal thoughts.

Participants should be told how important it is to find someone they trust and talk to them about their concerns and everyday problems, as this is a very useful way to reduce stress and confront problems. This particular person to be trusted can be another woman from the group, a friend, or a family member for example.



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