

# INCLUSION LEARNING THROUGH CREATIVE PRACTICES IN YOUTH WORK

**PROJECT TITLE: SUPERHEROES**

**PROJECT CODE: 2022-2-CY02-KA220-YOU-000101622**



Co-funded by  
the European Union



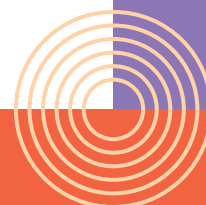
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# 'SUPERHEROES' PROJECT

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## ACTIVITIES:

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- LEARNING TRAINING TEACHING ACTIVITY IN CYPRUS
- WEBINAR
- LOCAL PUBLIC ACTIONS IN PARTNERS COUNTRIES
- MULTIPLIER EVENTS

## PROJECT OUTPUTS:

- COMIC BOOKS
- BOOKLET
- GOOD PRACTICES VIDEOS FROM PARTNER COUNTRIES

## Project Partnership:

The project is implemented in 3 partner countries:

- Youth for Exchange and Understanding Cyprus from Cyprus.
- CENTAR ZA MLADINSKI AKTIVIZAM CMA-KRIK & Monikom-Trejd Katerina DOOEL Uvoz Izvoz Skopje from the Republic of North Macedonia.
- Fondazione Don Giovanni Zanandrea Onlus from Italy.

'Superheroes' is a Erasmus+ funded project aiming to:

- Encourage young people to promote social inclusion through identifying the positive examples of their communities.
- Create innovative practices for educators, teachers, parents, and other staff connected to the education and upbringing of young people.
- Create new practices in social inclusion education and increase the inclusive practices in youth work.

The project develops a new methodology for youth workers, focusing on a new approach in youth work artistic expression – comics.

The methodology provides tools and skillsets for youth workers to use, but also encourage young people to create new educational comic books. In this way, young people will learn and have the chance to artistically express themselves. Comics are not something new, but the process of intertwining comics with non-formal education, creating educational comic books that youth workers can use in their daily work with young people, thus a guidebook that will provide the skills and knowledge on how to produce one is something that is not yet present in youth work methodology.



Co-funded by  
the European Union

Project Duration: 24 Months

## COLLECTION OF LOCAL GOOD PRACTICES

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Through the 'Superheroes' project we were looking to feature good practices on a local level which can become sources of inspiration for new methodologies in youth work. The project among others aims is to contribute to diversity and inclusion, as well to showcase art as an evident tool for social transformation and youth work. This toolkit is based on the interviews we had with youth workers using these methodologies and lays out a set of guidelines for other professionals who would like to use them.

## WHO IS THIS FOR

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This booklet is addressed to youth workers, educators and other professionals working with youth, and anyone who seeks to use artistic mediums as a means for inclusion.

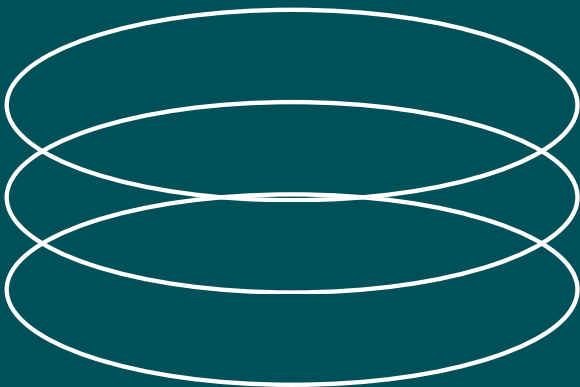
# ABOUT THIS BOOKLET



## WEBINAR

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The present booklet was first presented in the Webinar "Inclusion Learning through Creative Practices in Youth Work," which took place on the 19th September 2024. You can watch the webinar [here](#).



**INCLUSIVE  
LEARNING  
THROUGH  
CREATIVE  
PRACTICES  
IN YOUTH  
WORK**





# COMIC BOOKS

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## Short description of the methodology

Comics are a form of visual storytelling that combine and compose visual art displayed in chronological sequences combined with narrative text. Comic books have evolved significantly since their appearance, becoming a major cultural phenomenon and a new medium for storytelling. Comics' visual language is widely understood by most people, and it has been long used as a tool for expression making them more than just a source of entertainment but also as an educational tool. Their ability to raise awareness and spread information situated them as an effective teaching method that can significantly enhance reader engagement, memory retention and conceptual understanding.

## The Use of Comics in Youth Work

Youth work is a dynamic field in a constant innovation to meet youth's evolving needs. Young people, in particular, are frequently overlooked when it comes to personal support, self-awareness, and education outside of formal settings. Comics present a powerful tool in youth work. They offer a unique way to facilitate understanding of complex and sensitive issues, serving as an engaging preliminary activity and a means of extending learning through visual narratives. When used effectively, comics and graphic novels can bridge cultural, linguistic, and social divides, fostering empathy and understanding across diverse groups. By incorporating comics into youth work, youth workers can create more inclusive, creative, and effective environments that resonate with young people's needs.



## Methodolgy

Comics can address social issues within youth work through a thoughtful, step-by-step approach that blends creativity with the main objective to open a broader discussion and guidelines for social challenges. Here are the steps in which a comic should be developed:

### 01.

#### RESEARCH

- **Step one** of the whole process of creation of comics is conduction of a thorough analysis of the topic, to understand the social issue and the target group. It is useful if possible, to start with conduction of a survey, interviews or focus groups to gather more insights - for example, if the goal is to raise awareness about the rights of the persons with disabilities, the organization that is creating the comics should speak with people with disabilities, caregivers, educators, and professionals to understand the core challenges and misconceptions surrounding the issue. In addition to this, it is very important to conduct a deep desk analysis of available primary and secondary resources such as case studies, reports, documents for public policies and other scientific or non-scientific documents, that will assist to shape the comic itself. This phase will help the organization that is creating the comics to understand the target audience's need, the literacy levels and also the cultural background before staring.

### 02.

#### STORY DEVELOPING

- **Step two** is to transform the gathered insights into a compelling story. The beauty of comics lies in their ability to explain complex issues into simple, relatable and readable stories. The best way for this step is to collaborate with experts and artists - writers and illustrators to craft the storyline. Usually, at this step the artists create a storyboard to visually map out the comic's flow. This way, the organization can be ensured that everything is in line with the objectives of the project as well. The characters should be thoughtfully developed, representing the diversity of the community while avoiding stereotypes. These characters can become symbolic of real-world issues, helping readers identify with their challenges, but also successes. Depending on the audience, the comic may need to be written in simple language or translated into local dialects which will make it more accessible.



## 03.

### ILLUSTRATION

- **Step three** follows after the story and characters are all set. This step will bring them to life through illustrations. Visuals play a key role in making the comic both attractive and effective. NGOs typically collaborate with illustrators or local artists who understand the community's cultural context. This ensures the visual elements like clothing, symbols, and or other characteristics are authentic and resonate with the audience.

## 04.

### PILOTING

- **Step four** is the process of piloting the comics. Before the comic is published and distributed, it's essential to pilot it with a small group from the target audience. This allows the NGO to gather feedback and make any necessary adjustments. The pilot phase will help the organisation to collect feedback through interviews, focus groups, or surveys. Based on this input, the comic can be refined to ensure it is well-received.

## 05.

### PROMOTION

- **Step five** is publication and distribution once the comic is ready. The process of distribution can take multiple forms depending on the community's preferences and the NGO's resources. For example, printed copies of the comic can be handed out during public events, at schools, or in different other events. Additionally, it is very important to have digital versions that will be share through all of the online platforms and channels: websites, platforms, social media etc. If the organisation is partnering with other local organisations, umbrella organisations, schools or universities this will help for a bigger reach.





## 06.

### EVALUATION

- **Step six** is measuring the impact after the comic has been distributed. For example, how many copies were distributed? How many people viewed the digital version? More importantly, did the comic spark discussions or lead to any visible behavioral change? Most used monitoring tools such as follow-up surveys, social media engagement, or interviews/focus groups can provide insight into how well the audience understood the message. In some cases, it may be useful to revisit the community after a few months to see if there has been any noticeable shift in attitudes or actions related to the social issue.



## 07.

### SUSTAINABILITY

- **Step seven** and final step is ensuring sustainability of the comic. To ensure lasting impact, the comic can be adapted or expanded into second or third part. For example, it could be translated into multiple languages or modified for different cultural contexts, allowing it to reach new audiences. Sequels or spin-offs can also be created to explore different aspects of the same social issue or address related topics.



## OBJECTIVES

- **Raise Awareness and Educate Youth:** The main objective is to capture young people's attention and to educate them on important social topics using comics as a tool which can develop characters that they can relate to. The comics use language, visual elements and storytelling that can easily resonate with youth, making complex issues more approachable.
- **Provide Accessible Educational Resources:** Another important goal is to make comic books freely and easily accessible to young people and educators, beyond traditional institutions like libraries and schools. By addressing topics such as disability rights, gender inequality, climate changes in a simple and accessible way, comics can serve as a valuable and creative teaching tool.
- **Reach Diverse Audiences and Break Stereotypes:** The comics are designed to be inclusive, reaching a broad audience across different ages, literacy levels and cultural background, including people with disabilities. Comics can deconstruct different stereotypes and harmful narratives while - at the same time - they can foster empathy, inspire actions and influence advocacy efforts.





## 01.

### UNDERSTANDING THE ESSENCE OF COMICS

- **Key Principles:** Comics break down important social topics into understandable narratives that often use characters and stories which encourage empathy and connection with young people. They also serve and can be used as an accessible tool that can raise awareness and encourage inclusion.
- **Key techniques:** Combination of visual and narrative, development of relatable characters, development of stories respectful of cultural contexts and storytelling easily accessible to people with different literacy levels and disabilities.

## 02.

### TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

- **Collaboration:** Partner with illustrators, writers and youth workers to maximize the impact of comics as an educational tool.
- **Workshops:** Attending workshops focused on storytelling, cultural sensitivity and inclusivity where youth workers will experience and enhance their skills. Through ongoing learning, youth workers can creatively apply comics in workshops, campaigns, and projects to inspire social change.

## 03.

### PLANNING INCLUSIVE ACTIVITIES

- **Clear and simple language:** The language used should be clear and simple. Simplified language ensures that readers with varying educational backgrounds, including those with lower literacy levels, can fully engage with the content.
- **Visual Adaptation:** The comic should include visuals that are not overwhelming. To ensure inclusivity, visual elements should include large, clear fonts, high contrast between text and background, and simplified illustrations.
- **Simplified Layouts:** The comic's layout should be clean and easy to follow, avoiding clutter and complex page designs that could confuse the readers.



## 04.

### INCLUSIVE CURRICULUM DESIGN

- A comic-based curriculum should incorporate characters and stories that resonate with the diverse backgrounds of the participants. This means representing different cultures, genders, abilities, and socio-economic backgrounds to ensure that all participants feel seen and included. By addressing social issues that are relevant to their lives, the curriculum can foster a deeper connection between the content and the learners.

## 05.

### CELEBRATING DIFFERENCES

- **Showcase Events:** Comics provide an excellent platform for organising events that celebrate diversity and inclusivity. These events offer the opportunity to highlight a wide range of characters and experiences, allowing participants to present their own stories. Through comic storytelling, individuals from different backgrounds can share their stories.
- **Empowerment:** Youth work programs can use comics as a tool for self-expression, helping participants to recognise and celebrate their differences while building confidence. Empowering participants to create their own narratives fosters a sense of ownership and pride in their personal stories, and this approach encourages inclusivity and mutual respect among all participants.

## 06.

### PROMOTING PARTICIPATION AMONG PEOPLE WITH FEWER OPPORTUNITIES

- **Outreach Programs:** Comics can be an effective tool for reaching underserved and marginalized communities through targeted outreach programs. By providing free comics and educational resources to low-income communities or rural areas, youth work programs can engage individuals who might otherwise have limited access to such materials. This approach helps ensure that these groups are included in important discussions and learning opportunities.



- **Partnership:** Collaborating with local organizations, schools, and community centers can greatly expand the reach of comics in youth work. These partnerships can help to distribute the comics more widely, ensuring that they reach diverse audiences. By working together with community stakeholders, youth work programs can create a more inclusive and supportive environment for learning and participation.

## 07.

### UTILIZING TECHNOLOGY AND RESOURCES

- **Assistive Technology:** Digital tools such as screen readers, speech-to-text applications, and interactive formats can make comics more accessible to individuals with disabilities. By incorporating assistive technologies, organizations can ensure that people with visual, auditory, or cognitive impairments can engage fully with the content.
- **Resource Materials:** Providing additional materials that can be used as instruction can be of great help. These materials can be in a form of instructional videos, step by step guides and accessible digital formats, that allow for a more enriching and engaging experience with comics. These materials can support different learning styles and enhance understanding, making the content more interactive.

## 08.

### SAFETY AND WELL-BEING

- Comics should be designed with care to avoid causing harm or discomfort. Youth workers need to ensure that sensitive topics are handled respectfully, with appropriate support for participants. Creating a safe space for discussions and providing emotional support are essential for promoting well-being in youth work activities involving comics.



## 09.

### STRENGTHS

Comics excel at breaking down complicated social issues into digestible, relatable stories. By blending visuals with text, they allow for a more accessible explanation of topics such as inequality, climate change, or disability rights. This makes it easier for a wide audience, including people with different educational backgrounds, to understand and engage with the subject. Some of the key strengths of comics are:

- Comics can be distributed through a variety of formats: print, digital, webcomics, or even animations.
- Comics can be used from social media to educational materials as a powerful tool for campaigns, workshops, and community outreach.
- Comics can have a lasting impact and can increase the likelihood of behavioural change or sustained awareness of the issue.
- Comics can be adapted for greater accessibility. Visual storytelling helps convey messages without relying solely on text. This will make it accessible for people with cognitive or intellectual disabilities to understand complex topics. The use of images, symbols, and simplified language will make it more interesting for this target group.
- Alternative formats such as audio-described comics, Braille versions, or interactive digital formats with sound can make the content accessible to individuals with visual or auditory impairments

## 10.

### EVALUATION AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

- **Participant Feedback:** Gathering feedback directly from the participant is a curtail step towards the comic's effectiveness. Organizations and Youth workers can use surveys, social media engagement, focus groups to understand how well the comic communicates with the audience. This feedback helps identify strengths and areas for improvement, ensuring that future editions of the comic are more engaging and relevant to the needs of the target audience.
- **Reflective Practice:** Continuous improvement relies on reflective practice, where organizations revisit the community and assess the long-term impact of the comic. By analyzing feedback and insights from diverse groups, organizations can refine the content and approach of future comics. This practice ensures that the comics remain relevant, effective, and aligned with the evolving needs and expectations of the audience.

By integrating these guidelines, youth workers can start to effectively use Comics as a powerful tool to enrich their expertise and create an inclusive and accessible environment for all participants.

### Background documents and further reading :

- [Methodology on inclusive youth work through comics](#)
- [COMIC BOOKS as a tool for Social Inclusion | 'SUPERHEROES' project](#)
- [Children and young people's engagement with comics in 2023](#)
- [The Use of Comics to Promote a Community-based Peer-support Intervention among Young Refugees in a Camp in Greece](#)

## Video: The Use of Educational Comics in Youth Work - Education, Representation and Empathy



## Video: The Use of Educational Comics in Youth Work - Connection, Inclusion and Breaking Stereotypes



## Video: The Use of Educational Comics in Youth Work - Benefits, Skill Development and Cooperation





## Video: The Use of Educational Comics in Youth Work - Key elements, Topics and Content





# **PAINTING WITH PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES**

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## **THE CASE OF “DIVERSAMENTE ARTISTI”**

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Short description of the methodology

Diversamente Artisti is a charity auction of paintings created and presented in collaboration with people with disabilities. This workshop is born from a shared passion for art. The idea was implemented by some youth workers of the daily center managed by the Zanandrea Foundation, with the aim of promoting the work of the people that - on a daily basis - operates in this reality.

### Objectives of the activity

- Give visibility to the work carried out by youth workers and young people with disabilities (pwd)
- Raising funds aimed at various specific objectives
- Encourage creativity
- Make pwd feel included in the community to which they belong and valued for what they can offer



# GUIDELINES



## 01.

### PAINTING AS A HEALING PROCESS

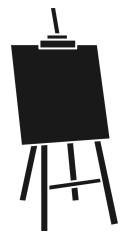
- **Research:** Art provides a way to communicate experiences when individuals lack verbal skills or when words are insufficient. Humans evolved artistic expression as an imaginative tool for adapting to changing conditions and solving problems.
- **Painting together with a person I know and for a specific purpose:** Inside the daily center there is a special room dedicated to painting activities and more generally to activities that involve the use of various materials that can be put at the service of art. Within this place, people with disabilities know that they have the time and knowledge of youth workers who put their passions to create with them some art work. Spending time painting and therefore collaborating together in the creation of the same work of art instills a sense of empowerment and active participation in the person with disabilities, which few other activities do, especially in people with severe cognitive impairment.

## 02.

### TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

- **Passion and innate talents:** The "Diversamente artisti" project was born from the passion of two youth workers for art, both on a theoretical and practical level. There is therefore no specific training to do if one is already passionate about drawing and painting.
- It is still advisable, though, to develop implementing knowledge in the educational and relational fields to ensure effective interaction and communication with people with disabilities. This will allow them to develop new passions and foster a sense of satisfaction that follows the creation of something beautiful and admirable.





## 03.

### PLANNING INCLUSIVE ACTIVITIES

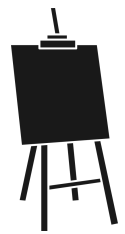
- **The auction:** The most important moment of inclusion of this project is the auction, during which the paintings are sold. Every single work, every single canvas, is auctioned. Each edition of "Diversamente artisti" takes place during the local fair in Cento, when the city is full of life, events and people from all over the province, usually in a very central and spectacular location. The community has so far responded with a very high level of interest and participation.
- **Interaction with the public:** Since people with disabilities are on stage to present their paintings, they can actually participate to all the phases of the auction, and learn about a fun way to buy and sell something.

## 04.

### INCLUSIVE CURRICULUM DESIGN

- **Explain to the participants the project and what objective you want to achieve with the funds raised.** For example, the purchase of a new means of transport, or some new technological devices that they can - later on - use.
- **Decide on the theme of the auction.** Covers of famous music albums were chosen for the first edition of the project. The following years, the themes of the auction were: "cult films", "vintage advertising", and "comics".
- **Decide how many canvases you want to auction.**
- **Tailored instruction:** Recognise that different participants may require different approaches. Tailor the teaching methods to meet these varied needs, ensuring everyone can participate fully.





## 05.

### TECHNIQUES

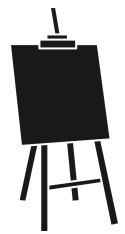
- **Painting techniques.** The technique used to make the canvases is a very simple one: acrylic on canvas. The canvases are already prepared with the drawing, which is done by youth workers/ local artists with crayons and coloured pencils. Then, youth workers direct and support people with disabilities to execute the acrylic technique by pressing the acrylic paints, which are then diluted with water.



## 06.

### INVOLVE DIFFERENT SERVICES AND PROJECTS

- **Develop creative links between different projects.** For example, since this year the theme of the auction was comics, the Zanandrea Foundation decided to present, in a new and inclusive way, some of the comics created within the **Superheroes project**. Some young people with disabilities that benefit from the Zanandrea Foundation's services were asked to try their hand at English, dubbing and reading the dialogues, while the images of the corresponding comics were projected on the screen.

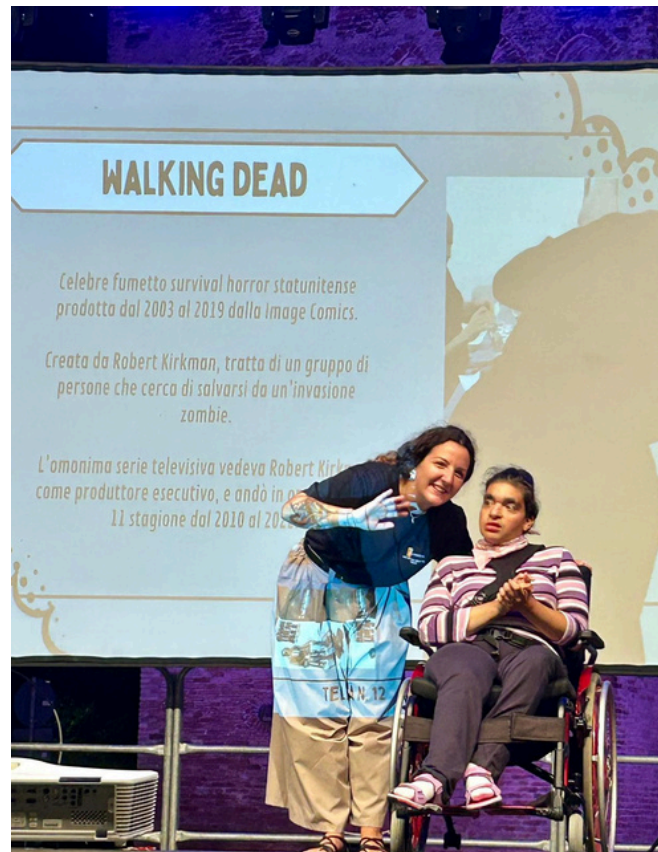


## 07.

### UTILIZING TECHNOLOGY AND RESOURCES

- **Assistive Technology.**

Technology can be helpful both during the research part - to decide the main theme, which famous posters can be reproduced and so on - but also during the presentation of the canvases, by presenting the paint with some video or images telling the story of the original image.



## 08.

### EVALUATION AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

- **Some important feedback to pay attention to are:** the number of people who participate to the auction every year, the amount of money gained, the degree of interest and involvement of people with disabilities during the preparation of the canvases, and the level of satisfaction expressed by everyone involved in the process.

By integrating these guidelines, youth workers can start to effectively use Painting as a powerful tool to enrich their expertise and create an inclusive and accessible environment for all participants.

#### Background documents and further reading :

- [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Creativity\\_Explored](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Creativity_Explored)
- [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Persimmon\\_Blackbridge](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Persimmon_Blackbridge)
- The book "Art Therapy and Disability: Theoretical and Clinical Perspectives" from Donna Betts (2012)
- The book "Art Therapy and Learning Disabilities: 'Don't Guess My Happiness'" di Andrea Gilroy e Gerry McNeilly (2000)

#### Video: "Artistic Practices in Youth Work" - Get to know “Diversamente Artisti” & Fondazione Zanandrea



# INVOLVING PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES IN CARNIVAL PARADES

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## Short description of the methodology

The involvement of people with disabilities (pwd) in creating carnival floats is based on inclusive approaches like co-design, participatory workshops, and the use of assistive technologies. These methods ensure the active contribution of pwd while promoting personal growth and social integration. Participation in the Carnival parades enhances visibility and fosters a strong sense of community: marching alongside others helps break social barriers, promotes inclusion, and strengthens collective identity, encouraging recognition and integration within society.

## Objectives of the activity

- Social inclusion
- Individual empowerment
- Community integration
- Visibility and awareness
- Collaboration and networking

In this booklet, we will explore the local case of the Cento Carnival.





# GUIDELINES



## 01.

### UNDERSTANDING THE ESSENCE OF THE CARNIVAL

- **Background:** The **Cento Carnival** (IT) offers an interesting sociological perspective as it is fully part of a local, recurrent and collective ritual event. In this context, all key community actors have the opportunity to interact within a diverse network of meanings and multiple realities. The giant papier-mâché figures - made of "pounded or pressed paper" - are still crafted today by the expert hands of the papier-mâché masters. These artisans voluntarily dedicate their passion and time, from one Carnival to the next, to the ideation, design, and construction of the allegorical floats and their complex mechanical movements. The extraordinary, towering, and vividly colourful moving figures, preceded by large groups of performers in equally colourful costumes, are pulled by powerful tractors and parade along the narrow streets of the historic town center.
- **Key principle:** To create an environment where people can meaningfully and visibly participate in cultural and artistic activities, not as passive audience but as active contributors.

## 02.

### TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

- No specific training is required. Usually volunteers coordinate the creation and the choreography of each float.
- There are several associations that collaborate in the creation of carnival floats. The one we present here, "I Toponi," has for years opened registration to many people with disabilities.
- Before the parades begin, it is important to participate in the choreography rehearsals, which are held once a week, where the floats start to take shape.





## 03.

### PLANNING INCLUSIVE ACTIVITIES

- **Be open to the community:** Collaboration with local associations guarantees accessibility and empowerment in cultural events. In our example, the association Toponi, after many years of activity, felt the need to further engage with the community. They began organising recycling workshops in schools, bringing papier-mâché and working with children and teenagers in various classes. They also started visiting residential facilities for people with disabilities and the elderly to offer greetings and bring gifts. This reaching effort has caused great enthusiasm and a strong willingness from the Cento community to collaborate directly.
- **How to get involved:** People with disabilities can be involved in the actual production of the float, typically working alongside someone who can offer support, both in shaping the papier-mâché and painting it, but especially during the Carnival parades. Since it is a competition between different associations, with the most beautiful float winning, all participants are highly motivated to do their best for the duration of the Carnival. Everyone works together to entertain and excite the large audience that this event attracts.



- **Plan regular activities:** The associations, mostly made up of volunteers, meet almost every evening from April to January to brainstorm, design, and then physically build the floats that will parade in February. From December to January, in addition to the artisans and machinists, also the group of dancers gather once a week to work and train on the choreography. People with disabilities can be involved both during the creation of the float and during every parade by performing the choreography in front of the audience.



## 04.

### CELEBRATING DIVERSITY

- **Empowerment:** All the activities proposed allow the creation of a group and a strong sense of belonging. To this end, it is essential to allow everyone to collaborate in the creation of the carnival floats, in the preparation of the choreography, during the Sunday parades, and to share powerful moments such as the excitement before arriving in the main square and performing, the victories, defeats and awards.
- **Public performance:** Usually people with disabilities get to choose if they prefer to stay and dance on the float, or if they want to perform the choreography in front of it. In this context, people with disabilities can share a key role, along with professional dancers.
- **Feedback from the community:** For the entire population of Cento, but above all for those who come from all over Italy, and beyond, to participate in this important event, the carnival undoubtedly represents a great moment of inclusion, in which the strange, the bizarre, the different is put on stage and artistically represented in many spectacular aspects.



## 05.

### WHAT IF THERE IS NO CARNIVAL IN MY COUNTRY

The Cento carnival represents an excellence of the territory and has an ancient and well-established history. However, it is possible to organise a parade of floats involving people with disabilities within each local festival and event, in which associations and volunteers are possibly involved.

Then, of course, the guidelines included in this booklet should be adapted to each reality and to the opportunities that the territory presents: for example, the floats may be smaller and the costumes less elaborate; the groups of dancers can be smaller and the choreographies very simple. What matters is the sense of belonging to a group that has created something artistic and unique, starting simply from water, paper and iron, and to present this art work in a situation that is deeply felt by the community itself.

By integrating these guidelines, youth workers can start to effectively involve people with disabilities in carnival parades and other local festivals and events, as key opportunities to create an inclusive and accessible environment for all participants.

### Background documents and further reading :

- <https://www.zarabaza.it/2024/02/01/un-carro-inclusivo-nelle-sfilate-di-carnevale/>
- <https://www.carnevalediputignano.it/home/2023/02/17/carnevale-per-tutti-un-progetto-per-allargare-la-festa/>
- [https://www.academia.edu/94228116/Revelry\\_Inclusion\\_and\\_Disability\\_in\\_the\\_Street\\_Carnival\\_of\\_Rio\\_de\\_Janeiro](https://www.academia.edu/94228116/Revelry_Inclusion_and_Disability_in_the_Street_Carnival_of_Rio_de_Janeiro)
- <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/americas/rio-de-janeiro-carnival-2015-happy-ambassadors-performers-with-disabilities-are-bringing-variety-to-the-brazilian-party-10050033.html>

### Video: "Artistic Practices in Youth Work" - Get to know the famous Carnevale di Cento and the Toponi





# **DRAMA THERAPY WITH PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES**

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## Short description of the methodology

Drama therapy is the use of theatre techniques - such as improvisation, story-making, music and movement - to allow everyone to express themselves in an artistic, unconventional and non-judgmental setting. Drama therapy workshops are open to a wide variety of individuals, groups and organisations who experience significant difficulties, including people with disabilities. In drama therapy people can bring up the issues they wish to address, explore or to seek support with and thereby significantly enhance their personal growth and their mental health.

## Objectives of the activity

- Strengthening emotional self-awareness and self-esteem
- Fostering social skills
- Acceptance of the body, getting in touch with one's limits
- Processing one's own life experiences, both positive and negative, and giving them a different interpretation
- Bringing personal life experiences to the stage in order to share them with a wide audience

# GUIDELINES



## 01.

### UNDERSTANDING THE ESSENCE OF DRAMA THERAPY

- **Key principle:** In Drama Therapy the Body, any Body, can get involved, claiming its right to communicate, without feeling judged.
- **Key techniques:** Drama therapists can use a wide range of dramatic techniques in verbal and non-verbal ways, such as: speech, gesture, sound, improvisation, story-making, embodiment and movement.

## 02.

### TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

- Drama therapists often have a background in theatre, health, or education and can be found in many varying settings such as schools, mental health care and in the voluntary sector.

## 03.

### PLANNING INCLUSIVE ACTIVITIES

- **Plan regular activities:** Usually, a cycle of workshops of Drama Therapy has an extended duration (9 months) and a regular frequency (1 session per week lasting at least 1 hour and a half). This provides people with disabilities with a sense of continuity in the workshops and creates a fixed point of reference in their routine, enhancing their commitment and participation. The number of participants depends mainly on the type of disability involved but ranges from a minimum of 10 to a maximum of 15.



- **Find the right place:** For Drama Therapy workshops, it is important to have an easily accessible, warm and light space with suitable floor. Drama therapists and trainers should check the space and try to adjust it to fit or remove as many obstacles as possible.
- **Start from self-reflection activities:** The first sessions of Drama Therapy should focus on self-reflection activities, such as guided meditations, body exploration and emotional expression exercises. These activities should be followed by brainstorming sessions and collective discussions with the aim of bringing out the central themes that will shape the final performance. Such workshops are an excellent opportunity for people with disabilities to express themselves freely and process their experiences. For example, participants can explore their feelings of anger and frustration over their living conditions and - through workshop activities - begin a process of awareness-raising. It is important that those with sensory difficulties (i.e., people with hearing or visual impairment) are also involved at this stage, offering them alternative ways and greater support to express themselves.
- **Strengthen self-expression:** Theater-therapists (or the persons leading the workshop) should be carried away by what is being experienced at the precise moment and be influenced by what the group is sharing. During the workshops, the theater-therapist makes suggestions and - based on the creative responses of the participants - modulates the activities.
- **Develop and prepare the final show:** Based on the themes that emerge, a play is collectively developed under the guidance of the theatre therapist. In subsequent workshops, the participants rehearse until the final performance is prepared and staged.



## 04.



### INCLUSIVE CURRICULUM DESIGN

- **Storytelling:** Drama Therapy offers people the unique opportunity to express themselves and to transform their personal experiences into true artistic processes through the privileged channel of creativity, by using the most varied means of expression: movement, speech, gesture, sound.
- **Embrace the limit:** In the Drama Therapy workshops, participants have the opportunity to accept and recognise their own limits, times and methods. It is important that the drama therapist always guides the activities very carefully, without ever forcing anyone. There is no need to make people do at all costs, to make them do immediately. It takes time, it takes patience, it takes respect. For oneself and for others. Drama Therapy is both an individual and a collective work, based on building awareness and thus acceptance of one's own limits and the limits of others. In this context, the limit can even become an asset: for example, the limit of the wheelchair can be transformed into an innovative dance with the arms.
- **Embrace vulnerability:** These workshops often touch on issues that are complex, intimate, and difficult for participants. The performances speak of the experiences of people with disabilities, and it can happen, both during rehearsals and performances, that participants encounter difficulties, resistance, or even moments of crisis.
- **Individual tailored support:** An additional element of difficulty may be the non-homogeneity of the group. Theatre therapy workshops often include mixed groups of able-bodied people and people with disabilities, and the latter may experience very different difficulties in terms of physical movement, comprehension, and expression. Therefore, it is crucial to prepare a performance that allows everyone to express themselves according to their abilities and to ensure, during rehearsals, the support of able-bodied people and/or volunteers.





## 05.

### CELEBRATING DIVERSITY

- **Empowerment:** Every body has its own beauty, given by what it has experienced, by what it carries within. Beauty is understood as the uniqueness and exceptionality that every body inevitably possesses. Even and especially those bodies that are usually defined as 'different' have a bursting strength, an explosive capacity to take back a dignity too often denied and become protagonists on stage.
- **Public performance:** What is undoubtedly an added value of theatre therapy is the possibility of realising a final performance and thus allowing people with disabilities to put themselves on the line, literally "expose" themselves and be able to present and narrate their experiences in front of an audience. In this context, the applause becomes therapeutic, and it can generate a significant sense of satisfaction and self-esteem. The performance also allows for public and media exposure of life stories that often remain invisible to most, succeeding in deconstructing many of the taboos related to disability.

## 06.

### SAFETY AND WELL-BEING

- **Warm-Up exercise:** Incorporate proper warm-up exercise to prevent injuries. An example of a warm-up involves free movement in space: the trainer asks participants to follow the music and let go of their thoughts. It is advisable to start with an individual warm-up and then ask the participants to approach and meet each other, first with their eyes and then with body contact.

## 07.

### EVALUATION AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

- **Participant Feedback:** Drama therapists should regularly collect feedback from participants. In particular, for people with intellectual disability, this can be done by carefully observing and getting to know the participants both during rehearsals and during the performance, and by noting the level of involvement and frequency with which they participate in the workshops.

By integrating these guidelines, youth workers can start to effectively use Drama Therapy as a powerful tool to enrich their expertise and create an inclusive and accessible environment for all participants.

**Background documents and further reading :**

- [Drama therapy](#)
- [What is drama therapy?](#)

**Video: "Artistic Practices in Youth Work" - What is the 'theater not-theater'**



# THEATRE & PERFORMING ARTS FOR CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE

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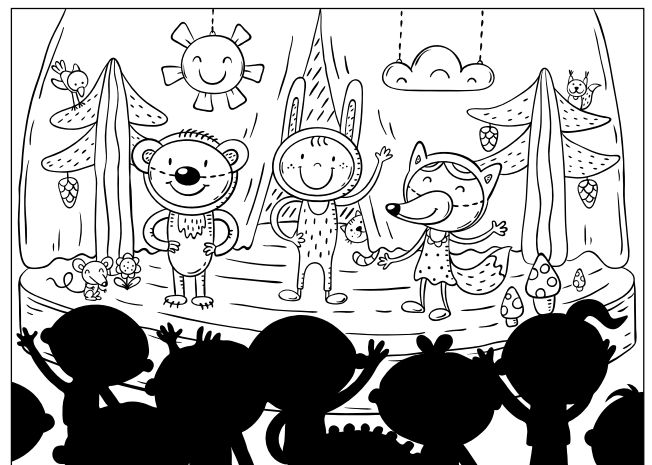


## Short description of the methodology

Theatre and the Performing Arts for children and young people refer to practices dedicated to the artistic, cultural and educational development of children and young people across the globe. These practices introduce young audiences to various forms of performance, including drama, dance, and music, fostering imagination and emotional intelligence.

## Objectives of the activity

- Encourage children and young people to express their creativity in a safe environment
- Foster a deeper appreciation for the arts, making it a vital part of the youngsters' education and personal growth
- Develop confidence and interpersonal relationships
- Strengthen collaboration and teamwork skills



# GUIDELINES



## 01.

### UNDERSTAND THE ESSENCE OF THEATRE & PERFORMING ARTS FOR CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE

- **Creative Expression:** Encourages self-discovery and imagination, allowing young people to express their thoughts, feelings, and ideas in diverse ways.
- **Emotional Development:** Fosters empathy and emotional intelligence by helping young audiences understand and relate to different characters and experiences.
- **Confidence Building:** Provides opportunities for public speaking and performance, boosting self-esteem and confidence in social situations.
- **Collaboration:** Promotes cooperation and communication skills as participants work together in productions, learning the value of collaboration.

## 02.

### TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

- **Classes & Workshops:** Attend classes and workshops to get a hands-on approach. Participants can gain firsthand insights, ask questions, and build potential future partnerships.
- **Collaboration:** Partner with theatre groups, professional actors, and educators.
- **Open discussions:** Provide open space for new ideas generation, especially from youth representatives.

## 03.

### PLANNING INCLUSIVE ACTIVITIES

- **Diverse Representation:** Ensure that the stories told and the people telling them reflect a wide range of backgrounds, experiences, and perspectives. This includes casting actors from various racial, cultural, and socioeconomic backgrounds.
- **Accessibility:** Ensure venues are physically accessible to everyone, including those with disabilities. This can include wheelchair ramps, accessible seating, and assistive listening devices. Consider offering performances with sign language interpretation and audio descriptions.



## 04.

### INCLUSIVE CURRICULUM DESIGN

- **Community Engagement:** Involve local communities in the creation and presentation of work. Host workshops, open forums, and feedback sessions to hear from diverse voices and incorporate their stories and ideas.
- **Diverse Hiring Practices:** Implement hiring practices that prioritize diversity in all areas, from actors and directors to technical staff and administrative roles.
- **Education and Training:** Provide training for artists and staff on inclusivity. This encourages awareness and sensitivity to the needs of all participants and helps create a more welcoming environment.
- **Critique and Feedback:** Establish platforms for critique that highlight issues of inclusivity and representation in the arts. Encourage dialogue about these topics within the community.

## 05.

### PROMOTING PARTICIPATION AMONG PEOPLE WITH FEWER OPPORTUNITIES

- **Outreach Programs:** Collaborate with charities and community centers to provide free access to classes, workshops, and shows to populations with fewer opportunities.
- **Partnerships:** Explore potential partnerships with Government bodies such as the Ministry of Education and Culture to include more art-related disciplines in the school curriculum.
- **Funding:** Take advantage of national or international funding opportunities to develop projects for young people with fewer opportunities.
- **Shape the Narrative:** Build a mentality that the arts address contemporary issues of daily life and can thus help children on their personal development.



## 06.

### SAFETY AND WELL-BEING

- **Clear Policies:** Develop and communicate clear policies regarding code of conduct, child protection and safety protocols. Ensure that all staff, volunteers, and participants are familiar with these guidelines.
- **Safe Environment:** Create a safe environment by conducting regular safety assessments of rehearsal and performance spaces. Ensure all areas are free from hazards, and provide proper equipment and materials that meet safety standards.
- **Open Communication:** Encourage open communication between children, parents, and staff. Create channels for reporting concerns or incidents, and ensure that children feel comfortable discussing any issues related to their safety and well-being.
- **Training and Background Checks:** Require background checks for all adults working with children and provide training on child safety, first aid, and emergency procedures. This fosters a safe and trustworthy environment.



## 07.

### EVALUATION AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

- **Participant Feedback:** Regularly collect and analyze feedback from participants to identify areas for improvement.
- **Reflective Practice:** Reflect on your own practices and seek ways to enhance inclusivity and accessibility continuously.

By integrating these guidelines, youth workers can start to effectively use theatre and the performing arts as a powerful tool to enrich their expertise and create an inclusive and accessible environment for children and young participants.

**Background documents and further reading:**

- <https://assitej-international.org/advocacy/world-day>
- <https://www.assitej-cyprus.com>



**Video: ‘Artistic Practices in Youth work’ - Get to know ASSITEJ Cyprus**







# INCLUSIVE PERFORMING ARTS FESTIVAL

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## Short description of the methodology

This approach centers on making performing arts accessible and inclusive. It encourages active participation from individuals of all backgrounds and abilities, integrating universal design principles and inclusive practices to ensure everyone can engage, either as an audience or a performer. Key elements include collaborative learning, empathy-building, creative expression, and flexibility to adapt to diverse needs.

## Objectives of the activity

- Promote inclusivity in the performing arts
- Raise awareness of accessibility needs in the arts
- Highlight diverse role models in the performing arts
- Foster creative expression and empathy



# GUIDELINES

## 01.

### UNDERSTAND THE ESSENCE OF PERFORMING ARTS

#### **What is Performing Arts in an Inclusive Context?**

Performing arts can be a powerful tool for self-expression and social change, especially in inclusive settings. Emphasizing creativity and emotional expression, performing arts allow participants to share stories, express identities, and connect with others.

#### **Inclusive Expression:**

Participants should feel they can fully express themselves, with facilitators offering adjustments (such as sensory-friendly music, simplified movement for dance, or visual storytelling techniques) to accommodate individual needs.

## 02.

### TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

- **Facilitator Training:** Provide facilitators with tools and techniques for accessible, empathy-driven teaching and adaptability to address the participants' needs.
- **Participant Skill Development:** Focus on adaptive movement, storytelling, and public speaking to boost confidence and expressive abilities.
- **Accessibility Tools:** Use support tools like captioning, large print, and tactile props to enhance accessibility for all participants.

## 03.

### DIVERSE ROLE MODELS

- **Reflect Diverse Abilities and Identities:** Feature individuals who use adaptive techniques or accessible formats in their performances.
- **Inspire Through Storytelling:** Include stories that illustrate overcoming barriers, celebrating uniqueness, and embracing inclusivity.
- **Create Relatable Pathways:** Present role models who have successfully navigated the performing arts industry, inspiring participants to pursue their interests in the arts confidently.

## 04.

### PLANNING INCLUSIVE ACTIVITIES

- **Inclusive Formats:** Incorporate accessibility tools in performances, such as sign language interpretation, audio descriptions, and subtitles to ensure engagement for deaf and blind audiences.
- **Incorporate Universal Design:** Ensure wheelchair accessibility, adaptable seating, sensory-friendly options, and multiple communication formats (e.g., visual, verbal, tactile).
- **Design Flexible Activities:** Support adaptive performances and collaborative group work, allowing participation in varied forms.
- **Celebrate Contributions:** End with a presentation or celebration to acknowledge and honor each participant's involvement.

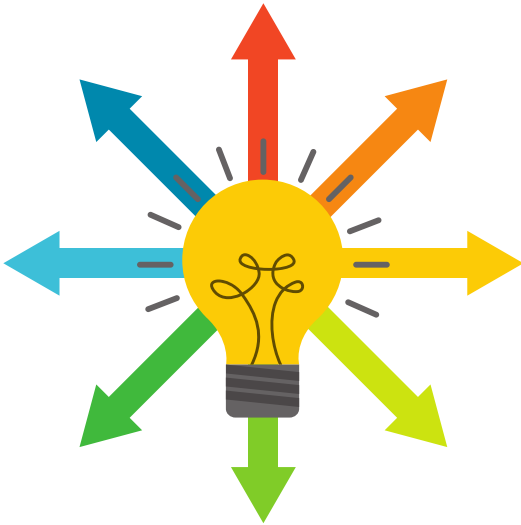
## 05.

### INCLUSIVE CURRICULUM DESIGN

- **Collaborative Design:** Engage with accessibility experts and the disabled community to provide feedback on performances, enhancing authenticity and ensuring the work meets diverse needs.
- **Set Accessibility Goals:** Establish clear objectives for accessibility, considering necessary modifications in space, sensory needs, and communication.
- **Adaptive Teaching Methods:** Acknowledge the diversity of participant needs by customizing instructional approaches to support full participation from all attendees.
- **Feedback-Driven Improvement:** Consistently gather feedback from participants, allowing for adjustments in activities and practices and ensuring the work continues to evolve inclusively.

## 06.

### CELEBRATING DIFFERENCES



- **Collaborative Creation:** Involve disabled and non-disabled artists in the creative process and provide a space for diverse perspectives to shape the performances and allowing participants to share their unique talents and viewpoints.
- **Supportive Environment:** Provide accessible accommodations, safe spaces and actively seek the audiences feedback in order to promotes a welcoming environment that values and respects the unique experiences of each participant, enhancing the sense of community.

## 07.

### UTILIZING TECHNOLOGY AND RESOURCES

- **Multisensory Engagement Tools:** Incorporate technology such as audio description, sign language translation, and subtitles to make performances accessible to people with disabilities.
- **On-Stage Accessibility Features:** Feature live audio descriptions and on-stage sign language interpreters to allow all attendees to fully engage with the content.



## 08.

### SAFETY AND WELL-BEING

- **Engage with the Community:** Actively involve individuals with disabilities in the planning and rehearsal processes. Their insights can help shape performances and ensure that their needs and preferences are met, promoting a sense of ownership and belonging.
- **Train Staff on Disability Awareness:** Provide ongoing training for staff and volunteers on disability awareness and appropriate accommodations. This training should focus on communication techniques, emergency procedures, and the importance of inclusivity in the performing arts.



## 09.

### EVALUATION AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

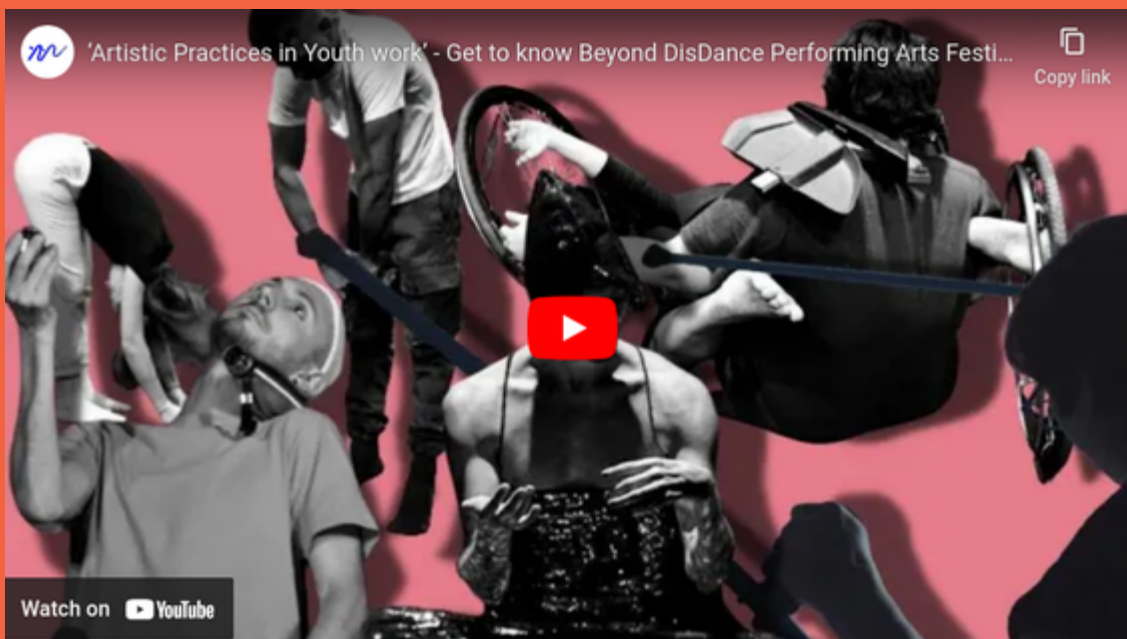
- **Involvement of the Community:** Engage with the community by incorporating their feedback during rehearsals to adjust practices and make performances more accessible.
- **Reflective Practice:** Seek opinions and feedback from attendees, particularly those with disabilities to assess the effectiveness of accessibility measures and gain valuable insights for future events ensuring ongoing improvement and responsiveness to audience needs.

Youth workers can foster inclusivity by applying these guidelines to create safe and welcoming spaces for all young individuals, while adapting programs to address diverse needs and ensure equitable access for everyone.

### Background documents and further reading:

- <https://www.thinknpc.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/Arts-Engagement-Report-2019-web.pdf>
- [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yIp79XtW\\_WE&ab\\_channel=EricMackall](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yIp79XtW_WE&ab_channel=EricMackall)
- [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oCgLLxTSB64&ab\\_channel=AngelShed](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oCgLLxTSB64&ab_channel=AngelShed)
- <https://theaterforinclusion.org>

### Video: 'Artistic Practices in Youth work' - Get to know Beyond DisDance Performing Arts Festival



# HIP HOP AND STREET DANCING

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## Short description of the methodology

Hip-hop is a cultural and artistic movement that emerged in the South Bronx of New York City during the early 1970s. **It has deep roots in the socioeconomic challenges faced by marginalized communities in the city.** Hip-hop served as a form of creative expression and a means to address social issues through music, dance, and visual art. It can be a powerful tool for youth and social workers to promote inclusivity and justice. Its elements offer both expressive outlets and themes for critical reflection.

## Objectives of the activity

- Enhance expertise in Youth Work through Hip-Hop Dance
- Promote Inclusivity and Social Justice using hip hop culture (dance element) as a tool
- Encourage Creative expression of all involved



# GUIDELINES



## 01.

### UNDERSTAND THE ESSENCE OF HIP HOP DANCE.

- **Cultural Background:** Learn about the history and culture of hip hop **to teach it authentically.** Hip hop dance is part of a larger movement that includes music, art, and expression. Hip Hop work is social work. (See further reading below)
- **Hip Hop mottos:** 'PEACE – LOVE – UNITY – HAVING FUN' | 'EACH ONE TEACH ONE' | 'ALWAYS A STUDENT' 'ATTRACT WITH ELEMENTS – SHOW THE CULTURE'
- **Key Styles:** Familiarize yourself with the different styles within hip hop dance, such as breaking, popping, locking, party rocking etc.

## 02.

### TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

- **Collaboration:** Partner with professional hip hop dancers and choreographers for guest sessions and mentorship – Good practices.
- **Workshops and Courses:** Attend workshops, online courses, and seminars to get a hands on approach. Besides learning new skills, this will give you an understanding of teaching methodologies, team building activities, and overall behavioral dynamics.

## 03.

### DIVERSE ROLE MODELS

- **Guest Instructors:** Invite hip hop dancers and choreographers from various backgrounds, including those with disabilities, to lead workshops and classes. Seeing role models who share similar experiences can be incredibly empowering for youth.
- **Local Talent:** Highlight local dancers from underrepresented communities. This helps participants see that success is achievable within their own context.





## 04.

### PLANNING INCLUSIVE ACTIVITIES

- **Accessibility Assessments:** Ensure the dance space is accessible to all participants, including those with physical disabilities. **This includes ramps, wide doorways, and accessible restrooms.**
- **Adapted Choreography:** Modify dance moves to accommodate different physical abilities. Use seated dance routines or provide alternative movements that achieve the same expressive goals.
- **Multi-sensory Approach:** Incorporate visual aids, tactile props, and clear auditory instructions to support participants with sensory impairments.

## 05.

### INCLUSIVE CURRICULUM DESIGN

- **Cultural representation:** Ensure the dance routines and music reflect a variety of cultures and experiences. Hip hop is a global movement, and incorporating diverse elements can help all participants feel represented.
- **Storytelling:** Use hip hop dance to tell stories that resonate with the experiences of the participants. This can include themes of overcoming adversity, cultural pride, and personal growth.
- **Tailored instruction:** Recognize that different participants may require different approaches. Tailor your teaching methods to meet these varied needs, ensuring everyone can participate fully.
- **Feedback and adaptation:** Regularly seek feedback from participants and adjust activities to better meet their needs and preferences.
- **Peer support:** Encourage a buddy system where participants support each other, enhancing social bonds and collective learning.



## 06.

### CELEBRATING DIFFERENCES

- **Showcase Events:** Organize events where participants can showcase their skills and stories. These events can celebrate the diversity within the group and highlight the unique contributions of each dancer.
- **Inclusive Competitions:** If organizing dance competitions, ensure the judging criteria and categories are inclusive. Celebrate creativity and personal expression over technical perfection alone.



## 07.

### PROMOTING PARTICIPATION AMONG PEOPLE WITH FEWER OPPORTUNITIES

- **Outreach Programs:** Engage with communities that have fewer opportunities, such as low-income areas, by offering free or low-cost classes and workshops.
- **Partnerships:** Collaborate with local schools, community centers, and social services to reach a wider audience.



## 08.

### UTILIZING TECHNOLOGY AND RESOURCES

- **Assistive Technology:** Employ technology such as hearing aids, speech-to-text applications, and visual aids to support participants with disabilities.
- **Resource Materials:** Provide resources like instructional videos, written guides, and illustrated step-by-step manuals.



## 09.

### SAFETY AND WELL-BEING

- **Warm-Up and Cool-Down:** Incorporate proper warm-up and cool-down routines to prevent injuries.
- **Inclusive Language:** Use language that is inclusive and empowering, avoiding any terminology that could be perceived as negative or exclusionary.

## 10.

### EVALUATION AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

- **Participant Feedback:** Regularly collect and analyze feedback from participants to identify areas for improvement.
- **Reflective Practice:** Reflect on your own practices and seek ways to enhance inclusivity and accessibility continuously.

By integrating these guidelines, youth workers can start to effectively use hip hop dance as a powerful tool to enrich their expertise and create an inclusive and accessible environment for all participants.

Last minute advice: ' Throw Away the Egos' - ' Each generation takes care of the next one'

### Background documents and further reading:

- <https://www.redbull.com/int-en/hip-hop-celebration-day>
- [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Pvf0O\\_9p51o](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Pvf0O_9p51o)
- <https://www.discogs.com/digs/music/hip-hop-history-timeline>

### Video: 'Artistic Practices in Youth work' - Get to know T.E.A.M Hip Hop Collective



# CHILDREN'S ORCHESTRA - SISTEMA

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## Short description of the methodology

Sistema Cyprus is a social-music program founded in 2017, offering **free music education** to youth across Cyprus, including migrants, refugees, and those with fewer opportunities. Through orchestras, it fosters personal growth, empowerment and community inclusion, especially in underserved areas, helping participants reach their full potential.

This methodology empowers young people from diverse backgrounds, including those facing social and economic barriers. Through collaborative learning, mentoring and regular performances, the program encourage personal growth, resilience and a sense of belonging.

## Objectives of the activity

- Ensure all youth, regardless of background or ability, feel welcome and valued in music education
- Support youth in building confidence and collaborative music-making





# GUIDELINES

## 01.

### UNDERSTAND THE ESSENCE OF CHILDREN'S ORCHESTRA

- **Background:** Describe the history and culture of orchestras to provide **music education inclusively**, empowering youth regardless of background. Emphasize values like community, collaboration and musical expertise.
- **Key Techniques:** Through orchestras, young people form a **community** and learn to **express themselves** through the power of music. Foster knowledge about orchestras and set up a comfortable place to practise with musical instruments.
- **Key Principles:** Learning without the pressure of playing alone. Everyone should have the opportunity to learn an instrument and express themselves with their instruments and music. It's a big family where children help, support and teach each other.

## 02.

### TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

- **Training:** Attend trainings to foster **cultural sensitivity** and inclusivity, helping to understand and adapt diverse cultural and social needs.
- **Occasional Performances:** Performances in real-world settings, offers a unique opportunity to develop personally, overcome stage fright, collaborate under pressure and celebrate **collective achievements**.

## 03.

### DIVERSE ROLE MODELS

- **Representation Matters:** Prioritize recruiting mentors and instructors who **reflect the diversity** of the community, allowing youth to see themselves in their role models.
- At **Sistema Cyprus**, teachers and older students serve as role models. Success stories, like music scholarships, highlight the impact of dedication and community support, motivating all members.



## 04.

### PLANNING INCLUSIVE ACTIVITIES

- **Inclusive Activities:** Design activities carefully to be adaptable to various abilities, languages and learning styles. Also encourage peer support to appreciate the strengths everyone brings to the orchestra.
- **Accessible Locations:** By selecting venues that are easily reachable by public transport, wheelchair-accessible and close to the communities, the program removes physical barriers that might prevent attendance.



## 05.

### INCLUSIVE CURRICULUM DESIGN

- **Cultural Representation:** The curriculum includes materials that respect and celebrate **cultural diversity**, acknowledging the rich backgrounds that each member brings. This diversity reflects also in the teaching styles and community events.
- **Engagement:** By using a variety of music genres, the curriculum becomes relatable to a **broader audience**, fostering engagement and interest. The diversity in music styles also enhances cultural awareness and appreciation among participants.
- **Collaborative Composition:** Encourage students to **co-create compositions** or rearrange pieces, giving them control over the curriculum and allowing them to incorporate their cultural influences and creativity into the music.
- **Language Support:** Provide translations, visual aids and **simplified instructions** to help students who may be non-native speakers fully engage with the curriculum.
- **Cultural Exchanges:** Host **musicians from diverse backgrounds** to teach or perform, exposing students to various musical traditions and broadening their understanding of global music cultures.



## 06.

### CELEBRATING DIVERSITY

- **Showcasing Culture:** Regular events, such as performances and community gatherings, provide an opportunity to highlight the diverse backgrounds of participants, bringing families and communities together to celebrate each other's cultures through music.
- **Cultural Traditions:** Recognizing cultural holidays and milestones through music, performances and events fosters an inclusive environment where everyone's heritage is respected and celebrated.



## 07.

### PROMOTING PARTICIPATION AMONG PEOPLE WITH FEWER OPPORTUNITIES

- **Removing Barriers:** To eliminate obstacles to participation is essential for inclusivity, whether they are financial, geographic or social. Scholarships, transportation support and flexible schedules can be implemented to address these barriers.
- **Community Partnerships:** Collaborating with local organizations for people with fewer opportunities helps to reach more participants, extends its impact and ensures that no one is excluded from the benefits of music education.





## 08.

### UTILIZING TECHNOLOGY AND RESOURCES

- **Learning Tools:** Providing digital tools allows those with limited resources to continue learning outside of the sessions. Online tutorials, apps and multimedia resources make music education accessible and interactive.
- **Personal Support:** Technology helps instructors to tailor the content to meet the individual learning needs and allows each member to progress at their own pace. Digital tools also enable resource sharing and makes learning more engaging and adaptable.



## 09.

### SAFETY AND WELL-BEING

- **Space Safety:** Ensure that all spaces and equipment used are safe, stable and accessible for participants of all abilities, with regular checks to minimise risk.
- **Emotional Wellbeing and Inclusion:** Create an inclusive and respectful environment, using positive language that values the abilities of each participant and fosters a sense of community and belonging.

## 10.

### EVALUATION AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

- **Periodic Evaluation:** Organize regular evaluations of activities and projects to monitor the achievement of objectives, identify areas for improvement and collect feedback from all participants.
- **Continuing Education:** Implement refresher and training programs for staff and participants, based on the results of the assessments, to improve skills and approaches and maintain high project standards.

By integrating these guidelines, youth workers can start to effectively use the children's orchestra as a powerful tool to enrich their expertise and create an inclusive and accessible environment for all participants.

### Background documents and further reading:

- <https://www.sistemacyprus.com/sistema-cyprus/>



### Video: 'Artistic Practices in Youth Work' - Get to know 'SISTEMA CYPRUS'





# ORCHESTRA WITH PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES - THE CASE OF BANDA RULLI FRULLI

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Short description of the  
methodology

Inclusive Orchestras have the goal to make music accessible to anyone who wants to participate, regardless of the ability level, age and prior musical knowledge. Inclusive orchestras are based on a person-centred methodology that emphasises consultation and collaboration with each individual, in order to remove barriers that prevent musicians with disabilities from performing at their best. In this booklet, we will explore the case of the Banda Rulli Frulli to understand what an inclusive orchestra is and how it works.

## Objectives of the activity

- Developing a sense of rhythm, music and coordination of body movements
- Managing rhythm individually and in groups
- Developing focus and self-control
- Promoting socialisation and inclusion
- Containing and channelling intense emotions and impulses and transforming them into creative energy
- Experiencing both a sense of community and the recognition of one's role in the group

# GUIDELINES



## 01.

### UNDERSTANDING THE ESSENCE OF INCLUSIVE ORCHESTRAS

- **Background:** **Banda Rulli Frulli** was born in Finale Emilia (Italy) in September 2010 from an idea of **Federico Alberghini**, who was a drum teacher at a local school affiliated with the child neuropsychiatry service. His aim was to create a band that played self-built percussion instruments by recycling waste materials, which included boys and girls of different ages and with different abilities levels. Starting from creating together unconventional percussion instruments, the band soon becomes a real promoter of collaboration and sociability, among children, parents, creating strong bonds, solidarity and a sense of belonging.
- **Key techniques:** Music is the tool for being together, creating and breaking down the barriers of difference.
- **Key principles:**
  - "The band is the band." There are no soloists, there are no elements that stand out from others, but we are all equal and everyone gives their contribution with the utmost commitment.
  - 'When we play, work, stay together, there is no barrier between the players, despite their different abilities: this is what wins the hearts of those who meet us and dismantles any preconceived ideas' - Federico Alberghini (director of the Rulli Frulli band).

## 02.

### TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

- **Collaboration:** Partner with professional musicians and technical experts in instrument making for guest sessions and mentorship – Good practices.
- **Regular Performances:** Perform with professional musicians at local festivals and concerts offers a unique opportunity to develop personally, overcome stage fright and collaborate under pressure.



## 03.

### PLANNING INCLUSIVE ACTIVITIES

- **Inclusive activities:** The main activities included in this methodology are: instrument-making workshops, rehearsals and concerts. Design these activities carefully to be adaptable to various abilities, languages and learning styles. Also encourage peer support to appreciate the strengths everyone brings to the orchestra.
- **Communication is crucial:** Give space and voice to different peoples' needs and put a much greater emphasis on planning. During instrument-making workshops, rehearsals and concerts it is essential to share with all players key access information, such as: where the lifts and level entrances are, where the parking is, hotel details. This clarity in communication and attention to every individual's needs allow the performers to focus on music making and perform at the very top of their game.
- **Accessible Locations:** Select venues that are easily reachable by public transport, wheelchair-accessible and close to the communities. In addition, provide for reasonable adjustments, that might include changes to lighting in a show, adapted seating or additional help with travel arrangements. By simply asking players about their needs, the conversation around disability becomes open and any stigma or fear can be reduced.

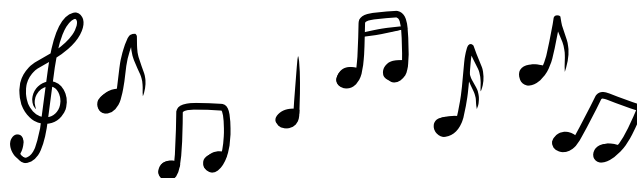




## 04.

### INCLUSIVE CURRICULUM DESIGN

- **Construction of musical instruments:** Building percussion instruments from waste materials enhances skills such as imagination, manual skills and collaboration with others in research and experimentation. This is a fundamental moment to create both new things and - at the same time - a strong bond, dialogue and understanding with others.
- **Harmonising sounds:** Each player is invited to search for his or her own sound, sharing it and making it attuned to that of the others. The orchestra allows each one to seek his or her own original contribution while valuing the inclusion and harmonisation of all diversity.
- **Sharing real-life experiences:** The life of the orchestra consists of rehearsals, bus trips, performances: these provide several opportunities to experience autonomy. The orchestra itself becomes a family, a small community for its members.



## 05.

### PROMOTING PARTICIPATION AMONG PEOPLE WITH FEWER OPPORTUNITIES

- **Outreach Programs:** Engage with communities that have fewer opportunities, such as low-income areas, by offering free or low-cost classes and workshops.
- **Partnerships:** Collaborate with local schools, community centers, and social services to reach a wider audience.



## 06.

### CELEBRATING DIVERSITY

- **Empowerment:** The band constitutes an experience capable of generating well-being, activating hidden or unknown skills, **enhancing diversity** without homologising and standardising. Well-being concerns everyone, without distinction. Playing together is a beautiful and enriching experience - 'It makes me feel good', 'I can express myself to the fullest', 'When you are in the band you can always be yourself' - are some of its members' feedbacks.
- **Public performance:** Performing together 'is always a kind of party' - allowing everyone to easily fit into the group, bonding with new friends, older or younger, more or less capable. Performing together is therefore a moment of great joy and a unique opportunity to **celebrate collective achievements**.



## 07.

### SAFETY AND WELL-BEING

- **Inclusive Language:** Use language that is inclusive and empowering, avoiding any terminology that could be perceived as negative or exclusionary.

## 08.

### EVALUATION AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

- **Participant Feedback:** Regularly collect and analyze feedback from participants to identify areas for improvement.
- **Reflective Practice:** Reflect on your own practices and seek ways to enhance inclusivity and accessibility continuously.

By integrating these guidelines, youth workers can start to effectively use music and the inclusive orchestras methodology as a powerful tool to enrich their expertise and create an inclusive and accessible environment for all participants.

**Background documents and further reading :**

- <https://www.bandarullifrulli.com/>
- <https://www.classical-music.com/articles/disability-in-classical-music-orchestras>

**Video: "Artistic Practices in Youth Work" - Get to know Rulli Frulli, a very original way to do music.**





