



The Science of Sexuality Education and Youth Work

Czech Republic

from Paper to Practice Report



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The Document

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Consortium



P1 CENTRE FOR ADVANCEMENT OF RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT IN EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGY LTD- CARDET - CYPRUS



P2 KYPRIAKOS SYNDESMOS OIKOGENEIAKOU PROGRAMMATISMOU -CFPA- CYPRUS



P3 KENTRO MERIMNAS OIKOGENEIAS KAI PAIDIOU-KMOP- GREECE



P4 EUROPESE CONFEDERATIE VAN ORGANISATIES VOOR JEUGDCENTRA ECYC VERENIGING- BELGIUM



P5 The Rural Hub CLG- IRELAND



P6 Motion Digital s.r.o.- CZECH REPUBLIC



Project Information



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Introduction of each partner and how it connects with the project

Since 2019 Motion Digital supports children, youth and adults to care for their individual and community wellbeing in an inclusive, respectful and caring way and to inspire them to engage in meaningful ways to build wellbeing for the world. We aim to support organizations, civil society, youth workers, and youth clubs engage in active advocacy in their local communities.

Motion Digital connects experts in the fields of youth work, wellbeing, resilience, mindfulness and social-emotional learning. We also cooperate closely with local external experts in the field of psychology, education, social work and digital learning.

The topic of sex education is currently very relevant and necessary in the Czech Republic. Under the auspices of non-profit organisations, new manuals for teachers are being created and there are efforts to push for changes in the teaching of sex education within the compulsory school curriculum. We at Motion Digital are very excited to be able to help this change through the outputs of the Safe Youth project by targeting another important group - youth workers.

Focus group overview

The focus group took place on 15.7.2022 in Prague. Among the 9 participants were lecturers and teachers of leisure activities for youth, coordinators and directors of education, social service workers, psychotherapist, students and teachers and czech key stakeholders in the topic of sex education and LGBTQ+ represented by two organization (Karolína Křížová from Konsent, Mgr. Karel Pavlica Ph.D. from PraguePride).

Duration of the combined focus group was 1 hour and 30 minutes. The focus group was facilitated by Jana Netíková from Motion Digital. The atmosphere was pleasant and relaxed, with all participants equally involved and contributing valuable insights from their practice and expertise to the discussion.

Questions that were asked to the participants:

1. How do they experience the current situation regarding sex education and do they think there are gaps, if so what are they?
2. What would you like to change about the current situation and whether this could be linked to the project?
3. Difficulties they face and whether they can suggest anything, perhaps best practices?

All participants were aware of **the low level of sex education in the Czech Republic**. From their own experience, they still remember well the minimum information they received on this topic at school or at home. This minimum was mostly only on the topic of reproduction, menstruation, condom use and the existence of AIDS. These topics are usually discussed either in high school biology classes or as part of a prevention programme. The choice and quality of information depends on the individual choice of each school. Therefore, the students' experience and knowledge of sex ed varies from school

to school. One school may be progressive and open-minded in sex education, while another may be very conservative. Fortunately, this is slowly changing, thanks to non-profit organizations such as Konsent, PraguePride and Nesehnutí, who are coming up with a modern and comprehensive approach to sex and health education. Their programmes are mostly funded by European programmes and are thus offered free of charge to schools (but in limited numbers). The positive thing is that demands and initiative from schools themselves are starting to increase. Perhaps this is also because there are louder pleas from the students themselves for better sex education in schools.

Among the above mentioned, Freya, an organisation that works on the systemic implementation of sexuality work, also deserves a lot of attention. Freya offers education, professional social counselling, methodological support and other activities in the field of sexuality of adults and youth with disabilities, seniors and senior women.

Other sex education providers in the Czech Republic include primary prevention organizations and individuals from the ranks of psychologists and therapists who work with the topics of intimacy and sexuality, emotions and trauma, femininity, women's health or manhood.

From the perspective of representatives from **youth workers in the Children and Youth House (in czech DDM- Dům dětí a mládeže) or other youthclubs**, they are trying to get sex education into their programmes. But it always depends on their own initiative and the support of the supervisor/director. In this environment, sex ed is especially important for children from Roma or socially weak families, where parents do not talk about sex with their children at all. Most often, however, youth workers respond to requests and needs that come organically and individually from their youth clients. The biggest advantage of youth workers is that youth have more trust in them than in teachers at school or sometimes in parents.

All participants agreed that sex education belongs both in and out of school and should take place in the family.

Successes and challenges in the field of youth work

At this point, participants most frequently mentioned the work of several Czech organizations that have made the most significant contribution to the visibility and detabutization of sex education issues in recent years. These organizations include [Konsent](#) and its founder [Johana Nejedlová](#), [PraguePride](#), [Freya](#), [F*era z Nesehnutí](#), [Duo docentky](#) and [Moje tělo je moje](#).

Very successful among young people is the podcast "To Wank a Devil" ([Vyhonit ďábla](#)), which was followed by the TV series "In the Toilets" ([Na záchodcích](#)), broadcast by public television. Other popular podcasts include [Sádlo](#), [Šeptem](#), [Hrama](#), [Balanc](#), [Pod kontrolou](#) nebo [Kvér](#) broadcasted on public radio Czech Radio-Wave ([Český rozhlas-Wave](#))

The first significant and challenging step at the political level has certainly been taken by Konsent, which organized a meeting of organizations involved in the topic of sex ed (the Ministry of Education was also invited). On which results **Konsent is now writing a letter to the Ministry of Education proposing changes to sex education**. Also Mgr. Karel Pavlica Ph.D. from Prague Pride is initiating changes in the school curriculum - he is officially **commenting on the school's new "zero" nonpublic version of RVP (Educational Framework Program)** for sexual education. According to him, the current version is still very outdated, pathologizing and lacking a whole range of LGBT topics. The RVP has yet to undergo public comment before the final Big Revision. Which has its advantages and disadvantages

(even strong conservative initiatives and entities get a say and can significantly influence the resulting recommendations). So the final shape of the new sex education in schools is still to be decided.

Lesson Learned

As very useful, participants were recommending workshops and materials of different czech organization that they consider useful in the field of youth work. Few examples follow.

Konsent is right now contributing to the change of sexual education a big part. They hold very successful workshops and social media compagnes on consensus and prevention of sexual violence for high schools and colleges, teachers, clubs and bars, businesses and parents. They have published methodologies for teaching sex education for primary and secondary schools "**No taboo in front of the blackboard**" (Žádná tabu před tabulí).

PraguePride has been offering variety of workshops and publications specializing in the topic of gender and the specifics of social work that respect gender, sexual and relational diversity.

Also, the organization Freya has already published two books. First one is called "**Let's talk about sexuality**" (Pojďme se bavit o sexualitě) . This year they published their second book, "**How to sex educate children and adolescents with PAS.**"

As far as sex education in Czech families is concerned, the situation again varies from family to family. Fortunately, the Konsent organization also runs workshops for parents and is now realizing a book about sex education. The book is inclusive for different parents from different backgrounds and is called "**Children want to know it as well**" (Děti to chtěj vědět taky).

Conclusions

Since 1989 (after the fall of the communist regime and at the rise of democracy) this situation has not improved significantly in the last few years. According to research **Report of a survey on sex education in secondary schools** ([Zpráva z průzkumu sexuální výchovy na středních školách](#)) by Czech High School Union (Česká středoškolská unie), 40% of high school students know nothing about sex ed. Fortunately, this is slowly changing, thanks to non-profit organizations such as Konsent, PraguePride and Nesehnutí, who are coming up with a modern and comprehensive approach to sex and health education. **The SafeYouth outputs cover these approaches as well, as participants familiar with the project agreed.**

The big challenge in the Czech Republic now is how to get these well-prepared programmes, lecturers and materials into official school and after-school curricula and how to train as many teachers and youth workers as possible to pass on this knowledge. Systemic change is hard at the top as political parties are constantly changing - these issues are still a secondary priority.

Therefor the wish of the focus group participants would be that:

- Ministry of Education would at least strongly supports non-profit organizations that are active in developing and applying sex education in schools and youth clubs
- New sex ed curriculum would cover topics of sexual and mental health, wellbeing, reproductive health, consent etc
- The sex ed materials are no longer heteronormative/ is normative
- No more taboos, the ability to talk openly about sex from a young age
- From kindergarten onwards, implement teaching about the body, about touch, about asertivity
- To have more positive role models for parents and professionals to listen to
- Sex ed and medical materials would use words as vulva, female orgasm, clitoris...
- To learn greater respect for oneself and each other
- Openly talk about the topic of body-shaming
- Respectful communication, listening, take mistake as opportunity to learn and not to be punished