

# Schools of Support

**Programme for wellbeing,  
mental health and emotional  
resilience in schools**

**Ivana Ćosić  
Ana Munivrana**



**Škole podrške**





Škole podrške

## Why Schools of Support?

**01**

**Everybody participates: headteacher, teachers, students**

**02**

**School as a point of healing and resilience for teachers and students**

**03**

**Additional support for students at risk**



**FORUM ZA  
SLOBODU  
ODGOJA**

**unicef** 

za svako dijete



Škole podrske

## Teacher PD

Series of teacher trainings

## Supervisions

After trainings to check in on  
progress in school

## Workshops

As stand-alone classes or  
integrated



FORUM ZA  
SLOBODU  
ODGOJA

unicef   
za svako dijete



Škole podrske

## Analysis

- Teachers say they feel they increased their socio-emotional competences
- Students enjoy workshops and talking about emotions and human relationships
- Students are more empathetic to teachers and to other students



FORUM ZA  
SLOBODU  
ODGOJA

unicef   
za svako dijete



Škole podrške

## Results

<b>COUNTIES</b>	<b>• 3 (Sisak-Moslavina, Medjimurje, Varazdin)</b>
<b>• SCHOOLS:</b>	<b>• 72</b>
<b>• HEADTEACHERS:</b>	<b>• 39</b>
<b>• TEACHERS:</b>	<b>• 793</b>
<b>• STUDENTS:</b>	<b>• 11,742</b>





Škole podrske

What does it look like in practice?



Škole podrške

## In first interviews with the schools, teachers wondered...

- *How can I support students if I am also in distress?*
- *Should we talk about difficulties topics and emotions or avoid them in the classroom?*
- *How will I deal with students' emotions and demanding life situations?*
- *My school does not even have a psychologist, how will we provide psychological "first aid"?*



FORUM ZA  
SLOBODU  
ODGOJA



za svako dijete





Škole podrške

## The Schools of Support: first support the teachers





Škole podrške

## *Protresi!* (Shake it up!): a collection of teaching plans for the development of emotional resilience and coping with crisis

- The Manual in the field of **personal and social development**
- 20 workshops or lesson plans
- **Coping with stress, anxiety, anger, sadness, loss, isolation and loneliness, shame**, how to communicate with others in non-violent way...





Škole podrske

## Workshops methodology





Škole podrške

## Each topic starts with a „story”

### To talk about emotions we used stories:

- they can be from class subject, literature, film, comics, music, pop culture...
- we also used short original video works of students that they sent to the **“Paint the world”** competition of the Forum for Freedom of Education: available on the Youtube channel of the FSO.
- they can serve as additional inspiration and insight into children's view of the topics.







Škole podrške

## Each workshop allows expression

### Workshops encourage:

- students' voice
- creative writing
- drawing, painting
- role play
- conversation
- brainstorming ideas
- ...



*„You are not alone, we are by your side.”* High school students, Sisak, Croatia



Škole podrške

## Feeling secure: no “wrong answers”

- **the context of the educational system:** children might fear judgment and assessment, therefore it is important to create pressure-free environment
- **no right or wrong answers**
- **creativity and freedom of expression**

*What you shared with us is very original,  
I would never have thought of it.*

*Be free, be creative while preparing,  
there are no right or wrong answers.*



**„It's OK not to be OK sometimes. We must allow ourselves to feel because this is the way to save our mental health and stay human.”** Primary school student, Mala Subotica, Croatia



Škole podrške

## The skills of leading the group process

**The workshop leader makes sure to:**

- create a pleasant and safe environment
- ensure the space for each member of the group (according to his or her capabilities and age)
- use inclusive and interactive methodology
- encourage good relationships and communication
- demonstrate appropriate level of personal disclosure
- recognize and respond to children's basic needs (belonging, competence, freedom, fun...)
- be flexible with the processes in the group: recognize what children need to process today.



**FORUM ZA  
SLOBODU  
ODGOJA**

**unicef**   
za svako dijete



Škole podrske

## Knowing our limitations

- taking care of our own mental health and emotional needs
- asking for help and collaboration
- knowing when we've reached our limits
- creating a supporting network (social services, school expert team, headteacher, mental health services...)



FORUM ZA  
SLOBODU  
ODGOJA

unicef   
za svako dijete





Škole podrške

## Learning support for children belonging to disadvantaged groups

- **empowering weekly workshops for targeted groups of children belonging to disadvantaged groups.**
- **collaborative teaching and stimulating environment** through a series of methods and techniques of the **Reading and writing for critical thinking (RWCT)** philosophy.





Škole podrške

## Whole-school approach: Headteacher Academy

Academy **training for head teachers** was organized through 5 modules (55 hours) in order to empower their school management competencies with a special emphasis on creating a **comprehensive school approach for mental health**.

### Modules:

- SCHOOL MANAGEMENT WITH A CLEAR VISION
- RELATIONS AND COOPERATION
- SCHOOL CURRICULUM
- INCLUSIVE AND SUSTAINABLE SCHOOL
- VISIBILITY OF THE SCHOOL



## More publications

- 22 IDEAS FOR RESILIENCE - **collection of lesson plans** for developing emotional resilience and dealing with crisis.
- „**Your Superpower: A Collection of Teaching Cards** for Developing Emotional Resilience”
- Creative **notebook for students:** Worksheets for students in the form of a „diary”
- Leaflet for parents "**We are here for you**"



22 IDEJE ZA OTPORNOST

22 na nastavnih listica za razvoj  
emocionalne otpornosti i suočavanja s krizom  
- za primjenu u nastavi i u obitelji -



Tvoja supermoć

22 karta nastavnih listica  
za razvoj emocionalne otpornosti



KREATIVNA  
BILJEŽNICA



Škole podrške



# More publications

- 22 IDEAS FOR RESILIENCE - **collection of lesson plans** for developing emotional resilience and dealing with crisis.
- „Your Superpower: A Collection of Teaching Cards for Developing Emotional Resilience”
- Creative **notebook** for students: Worksheets for students in the form of a „diary”
- Leaflet for parents "We are here for you"





Škole podrške

## Schools of support: conclusions

- **Headteachers: ensure collaboration and recognise mental health and emotional resilience in school documents**
- **Teachers: lead by example and promote wellbeing and mental health for all**
- **Students: trust, participate, voice**
- **Parents: important partners for success**

# Thank you!

Ivana Ćosić  
[icosic@unicef.org](mailto:icosic@unicef.org)

Ana Munivrana  
[amunivrana@fso.hr](mailto:amunivrana@fso.hr)



Škole podrške

