



**2nd Annual Conference of the Cities for Children Network
May 6 and 7, 2008 in Stuttgart City Hall**

Meeting of the Working Group 3 Health May 7, 2008

Moderation: Lubica Tomasova, City of Presov

Participants: Ibrahim Evrim, City of Gaziantep
Gisela Lasartzyk, European Health Foundation
Sirje Kree, City of Tartu
Ankica Perhat, City of Rijeka
Marie-Paule Barruche, Deputy Mayor, City of Limoges
Jean-Pierre Laucournet, City of Limoges
Pavel Hagyari, Mayor, City of Presov

The session began with a brief introduction of the group members and the most important activities done in their own cities regarding health prevention. Participants agreed to choose “health prevention measurements” as the main topic and the moderator, Lubica Tomasova, asked everybody to share their experiences so that it would be possible to think about how to develop future common projects among the cities.

The representative of the city of Rijeka said that, based to the Mayor’s interest in this subject (health prevention), they are willing to host the next meeting in Rijeka. Mr. Evrim, from Gaziantep, also proposed his city as future meeting place. Further, the City of Athens informed the Coordination Office that they wish to take over the moderation.

Future cooperation among the cities aims at developing common projects on a long term. At the last meeting, the participants agreed that common programs might concern correct nutrition, dental health and addictions prevention, among others. The goals achieved by a municipality should serve as an example for other cities; for that matter, next time, participants wish to hold a brief presentation of the projects developed in the time between now and the forthcoming meetings, which shall provide more information to set up a common campaign.

Because of the different sub-topics related to health prevention, the moderator thought it was important to define the most significant issues for the next meeting. The proposed topics were the following:

- **Creation and supervision of kindergartens.** Children are vulnerable and need protection from the very beginning. This activity involves not only children and teachers, but also parents, doctors, nannies and nurses.
- **Prevention of addictions.** In the city of Gaziantep, there is a project regarding the prevention and treatment of addictions of children and young people. The idea is to help children on a voluntary basis, which means they can quit the program whenever they want. The municipality operates this programme in close cooperation with medical institutions. The campaigns are developed on scientific grounds that aim at defining the causes for addictions and the activities that help children most during the treatment or the prevention phase. Mosaïque painting, for example, has proved to be very useful.
- **Not only illegal drugs are a problem.** Children and teenagers start drinking alcohol and smoking at an early age. The consumption of these two products depends on cultural variables. In Limoges, some children start to drink alcohol at the age of ten. In Turkey, it is not common to find ten years old children drinking alcohol but smoking is becoming a frequent habit among young people. Health prevention measurements are related to a large range of topics beyond health. The prevention of alcoholism, for example, is also a helpful for the prevention of car accidents.
- **Obesity prevention.** Specialists and professionals should control the preparation of meals. In Limoges, for instance, there are already campaigns seeking to get children to taste new healthy food. The representative of this French city is willing to make a presentation about this campaign for the next meeting. In Tartu, a good nutrition is also promoted in schools, where it is forbidden to serve sausages more than one time a week.
- **Physical activities between lessons.** In different schools in Tartu, physical activities are being promoted in order to improve health and prevent physical and mental problems. Sometimes, pupils of one school visit another one to perform their activities which include dancing, painting and sports in general.

Health prevention is often not the main issue for the municipality. However, there are a lot of NGOs focused on this topic. These organisations can provide data and useful ideas for the construction of common projects. It is important to collect the information of these organisations and share it at future meetings. In order to develop appropriate strategies in the field of health prevention, municipalities must also take into account the principles of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, held by UNICEF in 1990.

The definitions of health are wide different and it is important to limit the field. For the next meeting, the topic “health prevention” is going to be treated according to the ages of children.

At the end of the session, participants agreed to choose two topics in the field of health prevention for the next meeting: **drugs/alcohol prevention and supervision of kindergartens in regards to health prevention.** In all cities, alcohol and drugs seem to be an important issue, especially among young people, which requires the

creation of projects that allow finding out the best way to fight this problem. It is important to work with kindergartens because early prevention has a durable impact on children. It is easier to prevent a lot of problems when children learn about them at an early age.

In order to exchange ideas rapidly over the Internet, it is necessary to use the website www.citiesforchildren.eu or to establish a contact person who would be in charge of receiving the ideas, projects and suggestions and distributing them among the members of the group.

Protocoll: Andrés Ruedes, for the City of Stuttgart