



PROCHILD

PROTECTION AND SUPPORT OF ABUSED
CHILDREN THROUGH MULTIDISCIPLINARY INTERVENTION



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NEWSLETTER

TACKLING VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN

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IN THIS ISSUE

- *Prochild Project*
- *Project Updates – Developing a multidisciplinary training course for professionals involved in violence against children*
- *Participate in the multidisciplinary training in:*
 - Germany*
 - Finland*
 - Greece*
 - Italy*
 - France*
 - United Kingdom*

PROCHILD PROJECT

The PROCHILD project seeks to create a multi-professional, integrated model of cooperation with stakeholders involved in response to violence against children. The project will tackle underreporting and fragmentation of services and implement a joint approach based on complementary competences and the child's best interest.

BACKGROUND

Child abuse affects all social classes and ethnicities, and it features a variety of characteristics, such as the age of the victim, violence type and severity, the context where it takes place and relationship between the victim and the perpetrator. This phenomenon is difficult to identify and monitor due to the cultural mechanisms of minimisation and denial. Child abuse is often repeated and victims get protection and rehabilitative, social and psycho-emotional treatment at a later stage. Clinical

evidence and research have shown short, medium, long-term consequences of violence on health highlighting how physical and psychological damage require early, integrated and specialist treatment.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The specific objectives of the project are to:

- Protect fundamental rights of children
- Promote early detection and reporting of abuse/mistreatment cases;
- Adopt a multi-professional model of protection & care of child victims
- Develop integrated and shared protocols among Social and Health Services, Educational Agencies, Police, Judicial Authorities
- Increase the skills of professionals for an early identification of the phenomenon
- Search for viable and appropriate ways to make victims of violence and their families/caregivers, an active part of the assessment and improvement of protection and support services.

EXPECTED RESULTS

The outcome expected from the project includes:

- An e-learning platform for professionals and students that will host training materials,
- Awareness-raising on what child abuse is, and what to do to give/receive support, targeted to families, minors, school staff, social and health professionals, police and judicial authority,
- Completion of local/ national protocols contributing to the creation of an integrated intervention model for early detection of abuse/mistreatment, reporting and protection of child victims,
- Starting the dialogue for the creation of an Italian epidemiological registry on violence against children that will enable data analysis and intervention.

THE CONSORTIUM

PROChild is a transnational project involving:

- Alma Mater Studiorum, Università Di Bologna, Italy
- Terveyden Ja Hyvinvoinnin Laitos, Finland
- La Voix De L'enfant, France
- IARS International Institute, United Kingdom
- Katholische Fachhochschule Nordrhein-Westfalen, Germany
- Institouton Ygeias Tou Paidiou, Greece



PROJECT UPDATES

DEVELOPING A MULTIDISCIPLINARY TRAINING COURSE FOR PROFESSIONALS INVOLVED IN VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN

Within the framework of the EU Commission funded project PROCHILD, the partnership has developed a modular e-learning system for child protection professionals under the guidance and direction of our Greek partners, the Institute of Child Health. Originally planned as in-person trainings, the results of the project work are now being processed in an innovative online training due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Previous research results of the PROCHILD project illustrate how child protection is mainly achieved

through multiprofessional cooperation, but insecurities regarding the identification and intervention possibilities often hinder the procedure in cases of suspected child maltreatment. Due to the delicacy of the topic, many professionals worry about making the wrong decisions and are unable to protect the children sufficiently.

The PROCHILD e-learning course addresses these difficulties and is available to all professionals who work with children and parents/guardians. This includes professionals from health care, social work, education, law enforcement and judicial authorities. While some professionals regularly deal with suspected cases of child abuse and/or neglect (e.g. medical child protection professionals in hospitals or social services), these situations are often exceptional for other professionals, such as educators.

The new modular e-learning distils essential results of the current state of research and teaches skills for the protection of children that are tailored to the respective professional routine. In addition, it enables participants to get to know the

structures, capacities and responsibilities of other care areas, to recognise interfaces, and thus, improve interdisciplinary cooperation.

The e-learning platform will be available in six languages, and it will include the following modules:

- The project's identity
- Fundamental issues on child abuse and neglect
- Child Protection Policy
- Specific procedures and protocols
- Principles for reporting and intervention

The platform will also offer specialised modules for:

- Social workers and welfare professionals
- Mental health professionals
- Health professionals
- Law enforcement professionals
- Judicial authorities
- Educational professionals

The PROCHILD partnership will be launching the e-learning platform in December 2020, and **the platform will be available here: <https://www.prochildproject.org/training/login/index.php>**

PARTICIPATE IN THE MULTIDISCIPLINARY TRAINING IN: GERMANY

The German Institute for Addiction and Prevention Research under the direction of Prof. Dr. Michael Klein are delivering a number of training sessions, which include the following modules:

- Live online discussions on December 15th and January 19th answering concrete practical questions based on case studies
- Basic knowledge and theories on child abuse and neglect
- Definition of important terms
- Information on risk and protection factors
- Presentation of current research results
- Presentation of established guidelines and protocols on child protection

Subsequently, further optional modules are available, which cover subjects that are specific to a professional field. These include:

- The specifics of forensic assessment of children,
- Opportunities for affected children and their families to participate in the child protection process,
- The long-term psychological/physical consequences of child abuse and neglect & therapy approaches,
- Prevention strategies in various contexts,
- Dealing with parental mental and addiction disorders,
- Identifying affected children in the school context.

Participation in the e-learning course is free of charge and the modular structure allows German participants to use even shorter time slots and, after interruptions, to continue working where they left off. The individual modules are around 30 to 90 minutes in duration, and they are concluded with a short multiple-choice test.

If you and your colleagues are interested in participating in the online training, or you would like to receive more information, please contact Dipl. Psych. Michelle Rohde (m.rohde@katho-nrw.de).

FINLAND

THL is organising a webinar series called "Non-Violent Childhoods". Each webinar consists of a two-hour training session on various different topics, and the webinars are led by speakers who are experts in their fields. The webinars are also recorded, which allows professionals to take part in the training at their convenience.

Part I of the webinar series was held on the 28th October 2020, and it covered risk factors and protective factors of violence in small children. Part II will be held in the beginning of December 2020 and it will cover risk factors and protective factors of violence in school-aged children. Parts III and IV are to be held in January 2021.

More information in Finnish on the webinar series and dates can be found here: <https://thl.fi/fi/tutkimus-ja-kehittaminen/tutkimukset-ja-hankkeet/protection-and-support-of-abused-children-through-multidisciplinary-intervention-prochild-/vakival-laton-lapsuus-webinaarisarja>

GREECE

In an effort to disseminate the activities and to promote the goals of the PROCHILD Project, The Institute of Child Health participated in an online conference organised by the Third Regional Center for Educational Planning of Attica and addressed professionals from

the educational sector on 6 November 2020.

The first part of the presentation delivered by the Institute of Child Health referred to the aims and objectives of the PROCHILD Project and informed the educators of the training activities that are going to take place so that they can apply to attend the training. The second part focused on awareness raising regarding the role of educators in the handling of Child Abuse and Neglect cases. More specifically, the presentation aimed to inform educators of how they can identify a possible child-victim at school, focusing on the relevant indicators, and how they should respond to such suspicions, or even to disclosures made by the children themselves.

In addition, ICH organised a Press Conference and issued a press release on 19 November titled: "Journalists and the protection of minors - Child Protection and Media; Appropriate management of child victims in accordance with the Convention on the Rights of the Child". The Press Conference was co-hosted with Ms. Theoni Koufonikolakou, who is the Children's Ombudsman in Greece.

In terms of the multidisciplinary training, several training sessions are going to take place over the next months. The first session will be addressed to professionals working in the educational sector and it will take place on 2 and 3 December 2020, while the second one will be addressed to professionals from the sectors of Social Welfare and Mental Health, and it will take place on 14 and 15 January 2021.

For more information, please contact avasilakopoulou@ich-mhsw.gr

ITALY

One of the main goals of the PROCHILD project is to provide professionals, who work directly with abused and maltreated minors in Child Protection and Support services, with competences and tools to improve their activity and foster collaboration with other CPS services, in the best interest of children. To this end, the PROCHILD project envisaged several activities, including training, addressed to social, educational and health workers, but also to lawyers, judicial authorities, and policy makers.

In this respect, the University of Bologna has organised a virtual Winter School for professionals and students, aiming to give them a comprehensive training on prevention, diagnosis and treatment of the various forms of child maltreatment, domestic and gender-based violence.

The Winter School runs from January 13 to February 4, 2021, and it foresees different learning modules that will allow attendees to deepen the clinical, psychological, social and legal aspects of the pathways related to cases of maltreatment and abuse, thanks to the participation of several lecturers and experts taking part into the online classes.

The training will also allow a contextualisation of the best practices and procedures at the European level, through the presentation of the PROCHILD project and the participation of international speakers, including the PROCHILD partners.

The envisioned modules for the Winter School are:

- Maltreatment and abuse of minors: introduction to the topic, types of maltreatment and diagnostic tests,
- Domestic violence, violence in pregnancy, post-partum violence,
- The path of the minor from access to the A&E to the activation of the multidisciplinary network,
- Legal protection of minors,
- Short- and long-term effects of maltreatment on the psyche of the minor,
- Prevention strategies.

Lessons will be in Italian apart from the e-learning modules from the PROCHILD partners and international guests.



USEFUL LINKS

Winter School:

<https://www.prochildproject.org/2020/11/28/prochild-project-winter-school-university-of-bologna/>

Registration link:

<https://www.unibo.it/en/teaching/summer-and-winter-schools/2020/prochild-winter-school>



FRANCE

La Voix De L'enfant will be offering a comprehensive set of training sessions in January 2021 via Zoom. The sessions are aimed at two audiences:

1. Students in specialised social or medico social schools / or those in their first or second year of university in the social medical sectors or in specialised vocational trainings / professionals who are likely to come into contact with child abuse situations, but who are not specialists of CAN.
2. Experienced professionals in the field of CAN, who wish to deepen their knowledge and skills, and develop their competencies in the area.

The core and educational modules covered for group 1 include:

- Project's identity, Fundamental issues on CAN, Child protection policy, Principles for reporting and intervention and Procedures and protocols.
- Handling children from high-risk populations for exposure to violence, Early identification of violence at school, Receiving allegations and disclosures at

school, Memory traumatic events and Children with vulnerabilities.

The core modules covered for group 2 include:

A targeted module on competency development for child welfare staff (social workers, special educators, etc.) This module has been designed together with top executives from child welfare sector to ensure that it meets the audience's needs.

The session is a mix of modules from the social services, law enforcement and the provision of fundamental knowledge through expert inputs. These modules will be accompanied by two expert facilitators from social welfare and law enforcement services.

The trainings will be delivered over two days, but they can be adjusted based on the availability and needs of the groups.

La Voix De L'enfant also offers an "à la carte" choice of modules and sub-modules developed by the PROCHILD partnership for participants with more specific needs.

For more information, please contact claudine: burguet@sfr.fr

UNITED KINGDOM

The IARS International Institute are delivering a training session on the 14 January via Zoom from 3 – 6:00 PM. They are offering training that is tailored to the needs of professionals working in the education, social welfare and the third sector. The aim of the training is to increase the skills of professionals to enable early identification of child abuse and to increase cooperation between sectors.

The training will consist of the following core and additional modules:

- Introduction to the PROCHILD Project
- Fundamental issues on child abuse and neglect
- Principles for reporting and intervention; standardised procedures and child protection
- Child Protection Policy
- Specific child protection procedures and protocols
- Violence against children in school settings including peer violence Bullying
- Prevention of CAN in school settings
- Early identification of potential CAN victims
- Handling children from high risk populations for exposure to violence

The training is free and CPD accredited, and certificates are issued after participating. Please register your place to the training here:

<https://zoom.us/meeting/register/tJApf-6hqjgrGNG6X1ZRDpbM6q5fJusGUEmR>

If you would like to know more or book an additional training session, contact Maija Linnala at m.linnala@iars.org.uk





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