



OCTOBER 2020

# FICE INTERNATIONAL NEWSLETTER

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE INTERNATIONAL  
FEDERATION OF EDUCATIVE COMMUNITIES FICE

## FEATURED IN THIS NEWSLETTER:

News and updates from FICE International  
The COVID 4P Log project

News from FICE African Network

Special report about the situation of  
refugees in Greece

Article - Art Therapy in Alternative care  
during COVID 19 Pandemic (Israel)

News from FICE Croatia

News from himaya, Lebanon

News from FICE Romania

News from FICE Serbia

News from the Mulberry Bush UK

News from FICE West Africa

NACCW South Africa - infographic

FICE India - Sponsorship request

## NEWS FROM FICE INTERNATIONAL

- Special issue with articles from the 34th FICE Congress "Better Future Opportunities for Children and Young People in Multicultural Societies", is published in the CYC-Online Journal, Issue no. 259. The Editorial Board has decided to divide the contributions into three thematic categories: Innovative programs in child and youth care in various countries, care leavers, and residential staff related issues. Altogether there are 8 contributions involving authors from 6 different countries: Austria, Australia, Israel, Latvia, Netherlands, and Scotland. Two more special issues are coming very soon in the The International Journal of Child, Youth and Family Studies (IJCYF).
- FICE International is one of the key partners in the project COVID 4P Log App, initiated by the Institute for Inspiring Children's Futures at the University of Strathclyde. COVID 4P Log App aims to gather information about child and youth care workers' experiences and lived realities during the COVID-19 pandemic by asking one question a day over 8-weeks. The COVID 4P Log applies a children's human rights framework of **Protection, Provision, Prevention, and Participation** to this pandemic context
- FICE International held 2 **FICE Covid-19 Café meetings** - informal online events, where members meet to exchange information and good practices about dealing with the effects of pandemic on children and young people, share innovations and potential project ideas, discuss the common challenges of the pandemic that child and youth care workers are faced with. Read about the first COVID-19 Café



#COVIDLog4P #InspiringChildrensFutures

## COVID-19 has affected children and impacted on those supporting their wellbeing.

If you work supporting children's wellbeing, please share your lived experiences with us through the **COVID 4P Log**.

Download from the App store or Google play stores



## SAVE THE DATES



International  
Care Leavers Convention  
2020



**November 23 - 25, 2020,**  
each day from 10.00 am CET / 11am EAT / 1.30pm IST

Organized by:



Donor Partners:



Technical partners:



# COMING SOON

## TWO SPECIAL ISSUES WITH ARTICLES FROM THE 34TH FICE CONGRESS IN ISRAEL

Coming soon  
in the International Journal of Child,  
Youth and Family Studies  
<https://journals.uvic.ca/index.php/ijcyfs>







Prof. Emmanuel Grupper



Rolf Widmer

*Dear readers of FICE International newsletter,*

*In April 2020 we decided to postpone our Federal Council meeting planned to take place in May in Belgrade. We were very optimistic then and thought that by September the Covid-19 pandemic would be over...*

*Therefore we planned to postpone the Federal Council meeting to September 2020 with the hope that it would be possible to meet face to face. Unfortunately, we had to face the reality that face-to-face meetings are not possible until there is a radical change in the pandemic situation. However, we learnt that this new era has opened new ways of on-line communication. This could enable us to continue the active life of FICE International as an international organization. We decided to organize a first FICE Live Forum with more than 35 participants that shared the meeting. The second FICE Live Forum is already planned to take place in October 27 th. Another important on-line activity is the FICE CAFÉ Meetings, focused on covid-19 experiences in out-of-home care. These meetings were organized and moderated by Martine Tobe from the Netherlands and Katy (Katerina) Ivanova from Bulgaria. Three meetings had already been carried out, all of them were very successful.*

*More than that, this FICE International newsletter, edited by our dynamic and dedicated technical assistant Katy, is another most important way of communication. This is highly important especially in these days when flights and overseas physical communications have become very complicated for most of us. We hope that each and every one of you would appreciate the quick adaptation we are making to the new realities. We would like your collaboration by forwarding the newsletter to your members and supporters and also by contributing information about your activities and challenges for the next newsletter planned for December. We also expect to see you all (on-line), sharing the on-line meetings we are planing. All this, would give each and every one of us the good feeling that our FICE family is active and continue to be meaningful for our members, even in this unusual situation.*

*Thank you so much, dear Katy for having put this newsletter together and to all those who sent their important inputs for the newsletter to share with all of us.*

*Enjoy your reading!*

*Yours,*

*Prof. Emmanuel Grupper and Rolf Widmer Co-Presidents of FICE International*

# THE COVID 4P LOG APP WHAT IS IT? HOW TO USE IT? WHY DOWNLOAD IT?

by Katerina Ivanova\*, FICE Technical Assistant

## What is COVID 4P Log App?

The COVID 4P Log App is a mobile phone application, initiated by the Institute for Inspiring Children's Futures and a number of Key partners worldwide (among whom, FICE international). The aim of this research project is to gain a deeper understanding of the ways COVID-19 is impacting professionals' and practitioners' efforts to support children's wellbeing, in their practices, services and policies. By learning about the innovations and challenges faced by those working to protect children, provide for their unique needs, enable their participation in decisions that affect them, and prevent harm, at different stages in the current pandemic, the partners can learn how they can best support children's wellbeing.

## How to use the mobile app?

The mobile application needs to be downloaded on a mobile phone or tablet. It is available on Apple and Android. Then you are asked to answer only 1 question a day, which will take you about 2 minutes. This video will give you more technical details on the use of the app, but basically it is very user-friendly and easy to navigate!

Once you start, you can set daily notifications, so you don't have to remember - the app will remind you to fill in your daily reports.

## Why download it?

By participating in this research project you will contribute to the gathering of global knowledge about how professionals and practitioners are dealing with the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic. The collected data will be used to better our understanding, informing thematic Learning Reports to support and better prepare policymakers and practitioners to respond to children's rights, needs and opportunities, in future stages of this pandemic, and in the event of future pandemics.

For more information about the app, check:

<https://inspiringchildrensfutures.org>



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\***Katerina Ivanova** is the technical assistant of FICE International since 2015. She has over 5 years of experience in international projects in the field of child wellbeing. She is currently occupying the position of Communications Liason on behalf of FICE International for the COVID 4P Log App project.





## FICE AFRICAN NETWORK\* IN THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

FICE African members recognise the Covid-19 pandemic that has created chaos globally. The members had an opportunity to share the status of their national sections at a meeting held on the 1st October and the previous meetings since the outbreak. The reports have shown a lot of commonalities as far as the pandemic challenges are concerned. The international precautions of Covid-19 are being practiced in all countries which include regular hand washing, sanitizing and social distancing. It was also discussed that as a workforce for children we have a responsibility to teach and share information far and wide and encourage adherence. National chapters initiated creative models to respond to the various including various ways of educating community members.

The latest meeting held in October focused on various issues that support the development of FICE Africa and growing a supportive network that provide services to children. The continental section appreciated the attendance of the West African representatives who shared the progress of the up-coming congress to be held in Senegal in 2022. The importance of ensuring that the conference is a representative of Africa was agreed to be very crucial. The congress gives Africa an opportunity to once again share the talents, beauty and culture and heritage of the continent. FICE Africa platform will be used to provide strategic support to the preparation of the congress.

Members were informed of the four Working Groups that are discussing the future of FICE International looking at various strategic areas.

Africa's participation was encouraged in order to ensure that all the interest, ideas and aspirations of the continent are included in the future development of FICE International.

The support of FICE International through the participation of Katerina Ivanova is highly appreciated. Members have thanked her for her time and regular attendance to the FICE Africa meetings.

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\***FICE African Network** is one of the two active continental networks of FICE International. Active participants in FICE Africa are: Zambia, Kenya, South Africa and Lesotho. The following countries are also part of the networks but have not been participating regularly: Ghana, Uganda, West Africa and Ethiopia, Zimbabwe and Namibia

## EUROPE HAS BEEN ARGUING ABOUT THE RIGHT REFUGEE POLICY NOT ONLY SINCE THE DEVASTATING FIRE IN MORIA

by Rolf Widmer\*, FICE International Co-president and Treasurer

The conditions for refugees in Greece are in line with a policy of deterrence, as the camps are not only in Lesbos but also on the other islands, where the number of refugees is five times greater than the capacity. This means that each person in these camps has 1.2 m<sup>2</sup> at their disposal. Within this radius they have to eat, sleep and spend their daily lives without occupation.

Many people have been living in these conditions for years. The children are particularly suffering. There are currently around 4 500 unaccompanied children and young people in Greece. Greece itself has accommodation suitable for children for about 1000 children, all other minors are accommodated in the refugee camps, and as they are often badly treated by their flatmates and supervisors, it is now found that over 1000 children live on the streets of mainland Greece. Some of these children, who are registered by the police, are placed in police stations and prisons for lack of other places.

35% of minors currently residing in Greece have family members in Europe, but the administrative hurdles in Greece and the host countries are so cumbersome that the UNHCR and the NGOs in this field are rarely able to implement family reunification.

Only a few European countries have so far accepted minors. In Switzerland, we wanted to accept children who have a family connection in Europe, so that they could be safe and well prepared for their future life. But although many cities and organisations have signalled their willingness to accept these children, the federal decision-making authority refuses to accept children in Switzerland.

The [Tipiti association](#) and [ISS Switzerland](#), together with their Greek partner METAdrasi, are now planning three projects:

1. Building a small centre to prepare children specifically for family reunification and to accelerate the process in cooperation with family tracing supported by ISS
2. Emergency shelters for street children for 100 children
3. Training centre for informal practical activities for children who will stay in Greece

In my view, the current situation is unworthy of a life in Europe and cannot offer children in Greece neither security nor perspectives. We believe that the European countries should support Greece in this respect in the short and medium term and work to ensure that the rights and basic needs of children are respected everywhere and at all times, through targeted relief measures on the ground, but also by accepting children in our country.



\***Rolf Widmer** is currently occupying the position of FICE International co-president (since 2018). He is a long-term member of the Executive Committee and Treasurer of FICE. Rolf Widmer currently manages the Tipiti Association in Eastern Switzerland. In previous years he occupied the positions of President of the Swiss Foundation of International Social Services and president of the Swiss section of FICE International. He has long-term experience in the field of children's rights and child and youth care, particularly with minor asylum seekers/unaccompanied minors and refugee children.



## ART THERAPY IN ALTERNATIVE CARE DURING COVID 19 PANDEMIC

Rachel Ravid Horesh Art Therapist at "Ahava"\* an alternative residential care, Israel

*Listening / T. Carmi*

*It is very hard for two seashells to converse a real conversation*

*Each one draws an ear to her own sea.*

*Only the pearl diver or the antiquarian*

*Can assert without hesitation: same sea*

I have taken the liberty to translate this beautiful poem as I felt it was relevant to our situation now-a-days and to therapy specifically. Humans who had been given the fruit of knowledge, the secret of fire and the ominous awareness of being temporary on this planet are sharing now another common challenge.

As art therapists in alternative care we recognize the specific needs of each of our clients and groups and we try our very best to adjust art materials and experiential work accordingly. Each Child in alternative care comes from a different background, has a specific familial situation and their special personality that require us to be attuned to and accommodate ourselves as needed.

However, we also see the similarities in mankind. We all want and need to be seen and be loved. We all need a safe haven as an anchor from which pacing to and fro is viable. We all wish to achieve meaningful accomplishments throughout our lives, and we all hope to feel good and healthy.

COVID 19 Pandemic forced us, humans, to acknowledge how tiny we were compared to the immense universe. Still, only we had been given the privilege to choose how to cope with this painful comprehension. Change is constant but another constant is that human relationships matter!

The pandemic challenged me at my work on several levels: Some of the children went back home and we kept in touch online. Some of the kids stayed on residence and we have met onsite with masks on and at a required social distance. Mothers group had to be revised as parents were not allowed entrance to residence due to quarantine.

I knew that on the one hand I had to be flexible minded, go with the flow, and act intuitively to keep therapy going. On the other, I had to watch boundaries to remain ethical, professional and provide valuable art therapy sessions to my clients. Hard task indeed!

I would like to share with you few of the adaptations that had to be taken at my work-some for the better some for the worse:

1. The potential space had been expanded and stretched sometimes beyond interstate.
2. Reflecting and reframing have turned visual when I and my clients could see our own images on screen and sometime hear ourselves in delay due to poor connection.
3. Mothers group evolved into a video conference group from our homes. I could never believe a mum to 8 children at home could take part in such an endeavor. Surely, my own boundaries on what was possible and what not, have expanded.

4. Working with my countertransference has been taken to next level when I have literally stayed with myself "on hold"; while WIFI communication was restoring.

5. Staying in alternative care due to state quarantine felt different to children staying on residence. It was not their family incompetence but rather a cruel legislation and a very bad virus that kept them apart from home. Splitting was possible - family good - authorities bad.

6. The term Good Face coined by Maria Aarts extended its meaning in interactions on Zoom. We see our faces enlarged in front of us and cannot avoid it. We must look nice and inviting otherwise it would be hard to stay with us.

7. The Setting had been completely intruded when clients enter my home meet my cat and children on screen, but who said we were the only ones who could intrude privacy of children in care visiting them in their rooms?

8. The terminology of being seen has gained an extra depth on online interactions. Literally, seeing each other and making communication has become concrete. To feel connected, we first have to virtually be connected (online) and to feel seen, we need to see and hear each other and get a feedback communication is on. I pose, smile, sit up and speak to microphone and yet, every time I get a response, I am surprised. I am actually seen!!

9. I was surprised with how creative children were regarding to making art online enjoying copycat games, guessing and drawing games and continue a scribble games. Online connection and artmaking were possible!

10. In between lockdowns, I had a chance to run an onsite workshop to the residence carers, to get them familiarized with the profession of art therapy and its attributes. In the experiential work, they each drew a tree and wrote about it in first person.

Issues of caring, responsibility and competence in an era of great uncertainty have been aired out.

11. Lastly, I have been experimenting in creating footage of handy simple art projects that I have delivered online for children to watch and create on their own time.

Below is an example in Hebrew (click on the photo):



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\*Ahava children and youth village is a member of FICE Israel. FICE Israel is one of the founding members of FICE International since 1949. FICE Israel is a National platform where residential educators, professionals, directors, academics and research people, persons involved in training and decision makers can meet without looking at their administrative or governmental affiliation.



## FICE CROATIA WILL RECEIVE TECHNICAL SUPPORT FROM EUROCHILD

Following its flagship campaign to reform child protection and develop family and community based care for children in alternative care under the Opening Doors for Europe's Children campaign, Eurochild continues to drive reforms with the support of **Martin James Foundation**. Recognising the potential for reforms in the Croatian child protection system, Eurochild will provide technical assistance to FICE Croatia as part of a **14 month-long technical assistance programme** offered through the MJF partnership to Poland, Croatia and Greece.

The reforms process started in Croatia in 2011 when the State endorsed the deinstitutionalisation plan for transformation of social welfare homes and other legal bodies providing social services in Croatia 2011-2016. Overall transition from institutional to family-based and community-based forms of care shows slow signs of progress. Of the 6,256 children, 5,437 are children with disabilities who were still growing up in institutional care in 2018 in Croatia. This is mainly due to a lack of commitment from the State, a lack of know-how in the area of community-based social services by the state providers, prejudices against foster care and inefficient use of EU funding to support reform.

The long expected **law on foster care** came into force in January 2019 with ambition to promote development of family based-care including increasing a number of family-based care placements. In 2018 there were 2,276 children living in foster families compared to 2017 when 2,263 children were placed in foster care.

Unfortunately, neither the legislation nor the UNICEF campaign promoting foster parenting (which ran in August 2018) have increased number of foster parents.

It requires more coordinated and efficient approach at national level with leverage of international players such the EU and others.

Eurochild technical assistance in partnership with Martin James Foundation is meant to leverage the influence of the EU as well as to connect and learn from others to push for deinstitutionalisation reform in Croatia. FICE Croatia will conduct an assessment of needs of the institutions and individuals involved. They will also conduct peer-reviews and meet foster families to understand challenges and opportunities of being and becoming a foster parent, which will be further utilised in recruitment strategies. Nation-wide training for social workers and relevant ministries representatives will take place online in September.

FICE Croatia hosted a discussion for foster parents and experts on 18 June 2020 in Durdevac, a Croatian town with a long tradition of foster care. This event was organised in cooperation with the Forum for Quality Foster Care for Children.



\***FICE Croatia** is an associate member of FICE International since 2017. FICE Croatia aims to improve the quality of life for children, youth, families but also professionals and communities. Special focus of its work is on children and youth at risk, as well as children and youth in alternative care. Through activities of support, experience and knowledge exchange, networking and advocating, FICE Croatia tries to strengthen and improve social services.



## NEWS FROM HIMAYA\*, LEBANON IN 2020

Following Beirut's tragedy, himaya went beyond their day-to-day work and mission to respond to the emergency.

During the first phase of their response, and further to the very much needed psycho-social support provided to children and caregivers, we also assessed the needs of the community members, to be able to provide them with whatever need they required most.

Himaya also worked hard on building solid partnerships with local and trusted actors, working hand-in-hand to better respond to the emergency crisis.

### DAY 1 & DAY 2 POST-BLAST

37 team members living in close proximity from the blast, were immediately contacted by himaya's HR department.

10 out of 37 team members suffered material damages, 1 team member was injured and 4 had either injured or missing relatives.

All team members affected either directly or indirectly by the blast, were encouraged to consult psychotherapists to try and cope with the situation.

Himaya's Regional teams from Tripoli, Zahle, Baalback and Saida, immediately mobilized themselves to support the teams of Beirut and Mount Lebanon. Later on, a study of the material damages experienced by affected team members, was put in place for himaya to look into and to support financially within its capacity.

### DAY 1 & DAY 2 INITIAL ASSESSMENT

12 hours following the traumatic event, himaya conducted an assessment prioritizing their intervention.

They called their beneficiaries and partner community centers who live within the affected localities, making sure everyone was safe while assessing the needs and damages caused by the explosion.

Out of the 130 ongoing families they were following up with in the Beirut-Mount Lebanon region, 43 families were in need of direct support in consequence of the blast, noting that the 130 families have more than 2 children among them.

### DAY 1 & DAY 2 ON-GROUND RESPONSE Looking after the community

Within 48 hours following the blast, himaya responded to the urgent need of the community and more than 100 of our team members and community groups volunteered to clean-up affected houses and streets, while doing the necessary needs assessment and referral of cases when needed.

After dedicating the first few days following the explosion to cleaning and supporting with the initial assessment, the Prevention team along with a group of 35 trained animators and volunteers headed to the field to provide community-based psycho-social support to children who were affected by the blast.

Settling in two gardens, Jesuite in Geitawi and Karm El Aaris in Bechoura, Beirut's team along with members from himaya's offices across Lebanon headed down to Beirut to assist in delivering focused psycho-social support sessions and recreational activities, reaching children and parents from Bechoura, Geitawi,



Khandak Al Ghamik, Ras El Nabeh, Burj Abi Haidar, and Ashrafieh. Through interactive activities and fun games, children who witnessed this traumatic event had a safe space, where they could freely express their emotions of fear, anger, and confusion by validating their experience and developing a healthy acceptance of their feelings.

1200 child benefited from recreational activities and specialized group interventions, focusing on key messages about coping with distress, managing emotions, conflict and stress management, online safety, and more.

33 parents and caregivers also got support through parenting sessions that the team delivered in collaboration with partnered CBOs, covering topics on how to personally cope with distress and help children to cope with their feelings, managing and expressing emotions, self care, and more.

### ONLINE AWARENESS ACTIVITIES

Not only did **himaya** have to adapt their work methods to the crisis situation caused by the Beirut blast, but they also had to mobilize their media channels to be able to reach out to more people, respond to the needs of their community and answer their questions and concerns.

Ever since the tragedy occurred, **himaya** has been active on their online and social platforms, with the Communications Department joining forces with a team of psychologists and social workers from the Resilience Program, to develop visuals and a series of short info-graphic videos, to support parents and caregivers with putting words on the traumatizing experience that the whole society has been through.

Developed content was shared throughout **himaya's** online platforms to support caregivers in identifying and coping with their

own emotions to better manage their children's reactions, in the aftermath of the explosion. Watch video [here](#).

They were able to reach more than 1.7 million online users through **himaya's** social media pages and an additional 2 million online users with the support of influencers and the general public.

Children affected by the Beirut explosion needed special care and protection to recover. Whether through media appearances, or online awareness sessions, **himaya's** goal was to reach out to more people and let them know that they are here to support them.

Read [the full report](#), including children's stories.



**\*himaya** is an associate member of FICE International. **himaya** is a Lebanese Non-Governmental Organization dedicated to making child protection a right across Lebanon. **himaya** aims to break the silence and offers children the life skills they need to defend themselves. **himaya** also supports survivors of abuse and gives them the psychosocial support they need to overcome their experiences.

## INTERNATIONAL ONLINE CONFERENCE "EDUCATION AND CHILD PROTECTION, PRIORITIES OF TODAY'S WORLD", ORGANIZED BY FICE ROMANIA\*

In the context of celebrating 30 years of activity dedicated to children, especially the disadvantaged, FICE Romania organized, on September 30, 2020, at 1 pm, with the support of the Romanian Senate - European Affairs Commission, the International Online Conference "Education and protection of children, priorities of today's world".

The lines, main areas of discussion and analysis promoted during the conference were:

- Education and training - directions, challenges, difficulties in the current context and in perspective;
- Public health - prevention and care for children, access to specialized assistance, obligations of decision makers, regulations, initiatives, programs, projects;
- Best practices - concretizations at the level of FICE national sections, experiences to follow at national level, adaptations, evolutions.

The event was attended by specialists in education, child protection, health, teachers, psychologists, sociologists, social workers, doctors, police officers, etc. both from the country and from Israel, Germany, Zambia, Switzerland.

Also, the mayors and other representatives of the local communities who spoke highlighted the role that FICE Romania has had and continues to play in supporting children from disadvantaged communities, those with parents who have gone abroad to work, in preventing child abuse on children

and young people.

It was also pointed out that FICE Romania, as a professional organization, can contribute substantially to the dissemination of specialized know-how, being desirable a more intense presence on the market of continuing vocational training. In this context, the structure and content of training courses and workshops for staff were described, flexibly structured products, which would allow staff to better manage stress at work, respectively the acquisition of coping skills, self-protection against the impact of specific inter-relational or structural stressors, a better maintenance of mental health and implicitly ensuring an adequate quality of psycho-pedagogical interventions.

All participants in the conference wanted to highlight and mark the anniversary, the 30 years that FICE Romania has dedicated to the protection of children in Romania, training of staff in the protection system, inter-institutional collaboration with similar bodies in the country and abroad, with others sections of FICE International.

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**\*FICE Romania** was founded in September 1990 as a non-governmental organization affiliated to the International Federation of Educational Communities (FICE). FICE Romania practices political and religious neutrality and has nonprofit activity in the field of child rights protection.



## « ENSEMBLE POUR NOS ENFANTS » : PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT FOR UNDER- AGED PATIENTS OF COVID-19 a project by FICE West Africa\*

As of June 3, 2020, West Africa had 37,970\*\* confirmed cases\*\*\* of Covid-19 contamination. To cope with the Covid-19 pandemic, West African governments are giving a very important place to prevention, relying on the awareness of the population in its role as citizens, individually or collectively. This approach is especially relevant for countries in which the health care systems are not necessarily adapted to the possible needs of the populations in the event of a disaster.

Today, the management of patients sick with Covid-19 is multidimensional. Beyond the medical care, psychosocial support units for the patients are set up at the country level. The multiplication of registered cases, however, makes this psychosocial care difficult. Indeed, the understaffing of personnel involved in the care of patients is not in favour of holistic patient care. However, the social and psychological burden of the disease seems to be as important in the health of the patient as the physiological aspect of his/her overall health care. Support during the illness and post-illness is moreover as important with regards to stress and post-traumatic stress disorder that some patients may develop, without forgetting the stigmatisation that many of the people treated of Covid-19 are subjected to in their family and reintegration environment. Therefore, mental support is necessary to enable them to cope.

The lack of people trained in psychological support is a reality with which we must adapt and offer specific services capable of

detecting primary traumas and providing keys to individual patient care.

In the same way, FICE/ISS-West Africa has the experience of preparing and accompanying vulnerable people to cope with stigmatization to achieve a social quality reintegration. This work of accompaniment begins with protecting the dignity of the person both at the level of his/her basic usual needs as well as in his/her human capacity to project him/herself in a post-illness phase. With children, this is more important. Unfortunately, the specificity of children's needs is often not considered, especially during a crisis. There are very few structures that have "children's quarters" or "children's services"

The objective was to contribute to the mental and social health of the children and young people affected by Covid-19 through an individualized accompaniment in environments favourable to their wellbeing.

The planned initiative involved a partnership between the Department of Child Protection, Dalal Jamm Hospital, and the International Social Service - West Africa. It comprised two major components: psychosocial support for sick children and young people cured of Covid-19 and strengthening the Epidemiological Treatment Centres (ETC).

1. Psychosocial support for sick children and young people cured of illnesses in Covid-19: A sick child remains a child. It is important to ensure that he/she continues to keep smiling during and after the illness. This involves a staff capable of interacting with and supporting him/her, in a suitable and acceptable hospitalization environmental conditions.

A recovered child is a child, he or she is not contagious. In order to bring the families and communities to which these sick and recovered children and young people belong to accept and reintegrate them, it is necessary to deconstruct certain representations related to infectious diseases in general and Covid-19 in particular. The sensitization of communities, their preparation to welcome their child again and the follow-up by mobile teams will guarantee a respect for the dignity of these children and young people.

## 2. Strengthening ETCs

One of the short-term objectives of the project was to come out with an integrated model for managing the care of minor patients. The ETC of Dalal Jamm Hospital, having been identified as a Covid-19 mother-child referral hospital (following advocacy), is the place where the model was tested. The model in question was based on the principle that, beyond the clinical aspects, all diseases, especially pandemic diseases, will have a social and psychological dimension. The effective management of these diseases was integrated. The integrated management model that was set up in Dalal Jamm provided for the development of children's district in the Covid-19 zone, offering them play and listening spaces, the development of a buffer/transit zone where the recovered child would be prepared to return to the family when the team of social workers and community actors (imams, local government monitors, municipal councillors, district delegates, Badjénou Gox, etc.) did the same work with the family and the community as well. The model also addressed the disparities between children and youth from well-off and poor backgrounds. To this end, food kits were made available (snacks, infant milk), clothing (the recovered patient did not go out with the clothes he/she had in the

hospital) and hygiene kits (soap, toothbrush, sanitary napkins, diapers, etc.).

## Results

- 300 young people and sick children with Covid-19, that were hospitalized at Dalal Jamm Hospital, felt psychologically strong enough to fight the disease well.
- 300 recovered youth and children were well prepared to be reintegrated into their families and communities.
- The sick and recovered of COVID-19 were treated with dignity and respect as any member of society.
- Dalal Jamm Hospital's ETC has improved its services for children
- The Covid-19 integrated patient management model is capitalized and promoted as a reference model in pandemic context.

In total there 300 children and youth, 100 families and communities, 50 health workers, 17 social workers and community actors.

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**\*FICE West Africa** is locally constituted as ISS West Africa. It is an international African organization engaged in human development through the protection and support of children, youth, families and communities. The organization is composed of a multidisciplinary team guided by the principles of solidarity and reciprocity and a quality-oriented approach to service delivery in order to positively and qualitatively impact on the rights and lives of children.

\*\*Wikipedia

\*\*\*Data based on tested cases



## NEWS FROM FICE SERBIA\* IN 2020

"FICE Serbia" had great plans for 2020. It began to prepare them since the end of 2019, until the middle of March 2020. Then, as we all know, the COVID-19 pandemic came, which apparently stopped most of the planned activities. In the first weeks of the pandemic, it seemed that it had stopped our everyday life. At least in terms of daily routine, children's laughter, "regular problems", noise and action, which we briefly call **LIFE**.

Our plans included national and international activities. First of all to the Assembly of the Association and gathering members of FICE Serbia with the main goal of exchanging experiences, planning and choosing to participate in the offered activities, secondly our role as hosts of FICE Inter activities, primarily the Federal Council, but also the Assembly of FICE Inter, FICE Europe Assembly, International Conference with main topic: **"Alternative Care in XXI Century: Development of Policies - Good Practices for Children and Families"**... Also, this great international event was planned to end with a visit to some institutions and a field tour of rare historical and natural places in Serbia.

The national activities included participation in projects important for the development of social services in Serbia, a study visit of a group of experts to the Netherlands, the implementation of the **Program "Academia"** in the Foster Care Center Milosevac, participation in the **European Conference of PRIDE trainers in Prague**, trainings for PRIDE Model of Practice, of which "FICE Serbia" is a licensed implementing organization, etc. It is difficult to list the large number of contacts and communications that accompany such events, as well as all the activities of our members, about which they inform and involve us.

Unfortunately, everything was frozen on March 15, 2020, when the COVID-19 pandemic was declared. "FICE Serbia", which has just announced all these events, has canceled, or postponed them. We tried to support our members in the acquisition of competences, and provision of resources, in which we are skilled. We mastered and prepared a **Manual for counseling practice in emergency situations called "Guide for Talking"** - the basics of telephone counseling, which aimed to make it easier for our colleagues to work in a situation without opportunities for direct contact. We distributed materials and beyond, to the health and education system, to everyone who was interested.

Periodically, during that period, we wrote to the members with the intention of supporting them, asking how they cope with difficult working conditions, especially in residential care, and what could be the ways of our support. In the last address in September 2020, we reached a preliminary agreement to hold the annual Assembly and the vocational meeting of the Association in the second half of November, of course, online.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, "FICE Serbia" took a part in a series of seminars, conferences and activities of "FICE Inter" and "FICE Europe" and other FICE partners, which were organized online. This has helped us to have a better picture of the situation regarding the protection of children and young people around the world and to contribute to the activities of our regional and international network.

Therefore, we want to place special emphasis in this news on the situation and feelings of children and young people in Serbia who live in the system of alternative care, especially in children's homes, or those who have recently left the social protection system (care leavers).



Despite the state's efforts to create a series of measures related to the residential care system to ensure the safety of all groups of citizens who are under the state's protection and placed in homes, as well as providing funds for protection and prevention of COVID-19, as well as special conditions for employees during the state of emergency, children and young people have found it difficult to bear the restriction of freedom of movement, the lack of opportunities to meet their developmental needs through social contacts, as well as the prolonged physical proximity within the small homes in which they live, since mid-March until early October. Many of the young people aging-out (care leavers group) lost their jobs, apartments and living conditions. Their feelings are mostly related to the loss of important people, ritual events (graduation celebrations, the end of the school year, etc.), as well as basic living conditions, loss of control and loss of power. They say that they feel abandoned...

They became more vulnerable regarding solitude and loneliness, although they are not alone in institutions. Some of them cannot stand the fact that they have no more "private time", actually no privacy at all. On the other hand they have no opportunity to spend time with significant and trusted persons. Physical isolation is really becoming social isolation. Professionals had to pay special attention to those youngsters who are not able to organize their time, because in that situation they become more vulnerable and can become the victims of drug abuse, bad peer influence etc. Simply they, who lost self-confidence and self-respect, cannot fight against bad memories, mostly about difficult past and insecure future, about traumas, experiences... Sometimes they are under real attacks of bad feelings and thoughts, anxiety, fears...

They are losing confidence in their environment... Sometimes the situation is so stressful that they become (auto) aggressive, and again and again they confirm their belief that they are not important...

We hope that some structured programs for supporting young people in alternative care which our members are implementing, and the planned vocational meeting at the end of November will bring new information and proposals for responding to the question we asked professionals in the child and youth care system: **"How to make step forward?"**

Our colleagues, although exhausted from the extraordinary hard way of working for a long period of time, manage to see the needs of children and to respond to at least some of them, often improvising the current practice, in order to meet best interest of the child.

Željka Burgund,  
President of "FICE Serbia"

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\***FICE Serbia** is a full member of FICE International, founded in 2003, with support of the regional network FICE South East Europe - former Yugoslavia countries and FICE International). FICE Serbia is created as nonpartisan, nongovernmental, nonprofit professional association serving to the best interest of children and families



## NEWS FROM THE MULBERRY BUSH UK\*

The Mulberry Bush UK extends its work to families experiencing Domestic Violence and Abuse.

The Mulberry Bush is a UK Charity providing integrated therapeutic services. Their vision is **'To transform the lives of all those affected by childhood trauma, through education, training, research and specialist therapeutic services'**.

During the Covid-19 National lockdown, cases of domestic violence and abuse increased exponentially across the UK. In response to this crisis the Mulberry Bush contacted Local Authorities, to inform them of their desire to extend their work with children and families experiencing domestic violence.

This led to several exploratory meetings with the local Social Services department, and with two local Charities working to provide community and refuge services to families experiencing abuse.

Their offer was to use our newly acquired site **'The Mulberry Bush Third Space'** or **'MB3'** which is a quiet and safe rural site with accommodation, about 1 hour from the City of Oxford to establish a therapeutic service for families. Due to the pandemic, the use of MB3 as an 'events and conferencing centre' had to be curtailed, so the the Mulberry Bush team was keen to find a new use for the site. Their offer was to use the site as a **'haven'** to provide a 1 or 2 day **'planned therapeutic lived experience'** to families experiencing domestic abuse.

The the Mulberry Bush also offered the community and refuge teams free 'reflective group' support , to enable them as 'front line' staff to reflect on the impact of their difficult work.

As a result of this 'reaching out', the the Mulberry Bush was awarded a grant by our Local Authority which enabled us to fund a pilot service - an innovative 1 day 'therapeutic community' for several families, with children with children aged 5- 11, who have experienced domestic abuse.

The Mulberry Bush team is very pleased that their new pilot service will start in October, and they have applied for another significant grant, that will hopefully enable this service to become an established part of their work.

**John Diamond, CEO.**



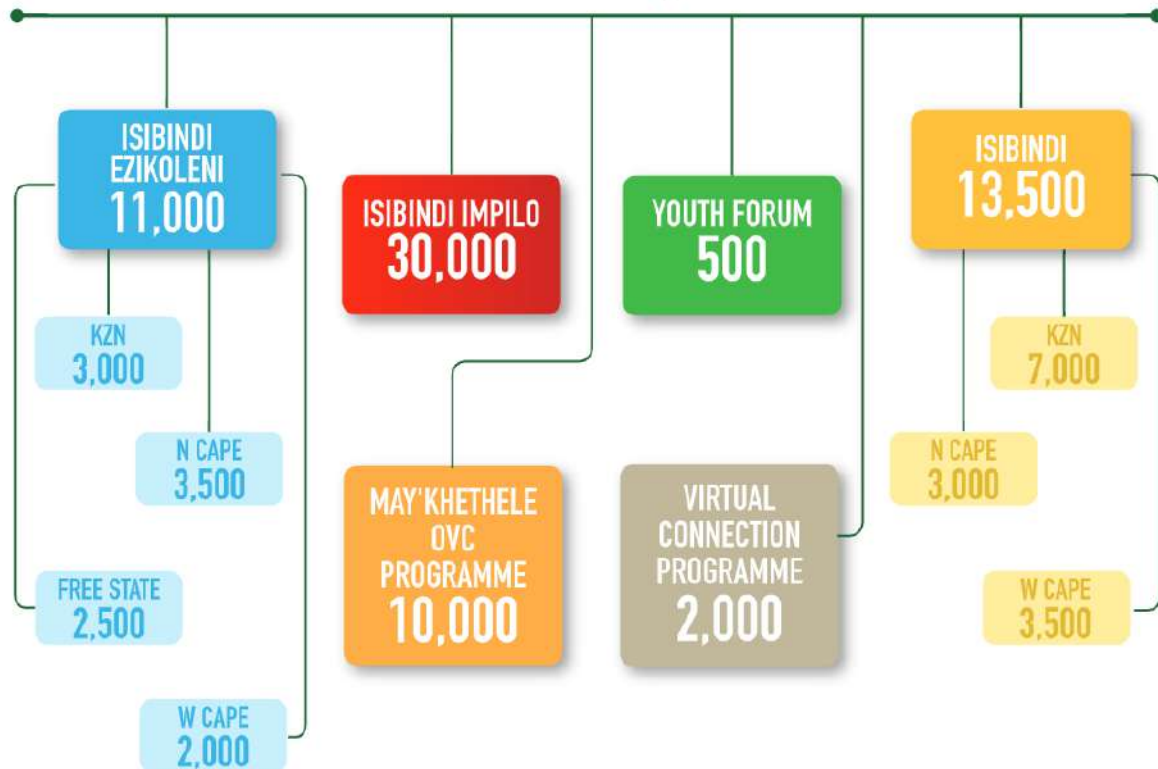
\***The Mulberry Bush UK** is an associate member of FICE International since 2017. The Mulberry Bush is a UK Charity providing integrated therapeutic services.



## NACCW ORPHANED AND VULNERABLE CHILDREN SERVED 2020

January 2020 - August 2020

# Total: 67,000



Approximately 67,000 orphaned and vulnerable children have been served in 2020. Including caregivers and family members, this number increases three times over.



### Services provided include:

- COVID-19 information distribution, discussions and screening
- Referrals to social service practitioners
- Virtual study programmes
- HIV/AIDS adherence support
- Structured programmes (Vhutshilo, Stepping Stones, TADA)
- Celebration of national holidays
- Discussions on social issues such as GBV and substance abuse
- Lifespace counselling
- Educational support
- Home visits and more



\*FICE SOUTH AFRICA is founded in 1993 and is locally constituted as **The National Association of Child Care Workers (NACCW)**. FICA SA provides the professional training and infrastructure to promote healthy child and youth development and to improve standards of care and treatment for troubled children and youth at risk in family, community and residential group care settings.





## REQUEST FROM FICE INDIA\*

Most of the member organizations of FICE India, have been active in supporting street and working children in different areas of India, through the "Open Shelter for Boys or Girls", separately, with the financial support of the Ministry of Women and Child Development and the concerned State Government Agencies.

The Government of India supports 60% of the project cost, the concerned State Government Agencies support 30% of the project cost. The NGO member organizations have raised from the general public and supports 10% of the project cost. Through this program, more than 10 million street and working children are supported by 4000 NGOs, members of FICE India.

In this connection, FICE India is requesting all national sections of FICE international, either through sponsorship or vocational Training Program for the street and Working children aged between 15 and 18 years, for their future career development. It is to be mentioned here that the foreign support can be used by the NGOs with Foreign Contribution registration number only. The Liberal Association is having this kind of registration. There are other FICE Member NGOs having the same kind of registration.

150.00 EURO per annum is necessary for one child's sponsorship and 200.00 EURO is necessary for the total vocational training program and follow-up income generation support.

**Malay Dewanji,**  
President, FICE India.

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\*FICE India is a full member of FICE International since 1997. It is locally constituted as the **Liberal Association for Movement of People (LAMP)**. LAMP is a non-profit making, non-political and secular voluntary social service organisation working for the sustainable development of the Socio-economically backward, culturally oppressed, politically under privileged and disadvantaged group of people of both rural and urban India.