

# **Stories enhancing Skills – a model for reflection and enhancing professional judgement in child welfare work**

## **Type of project**

Pilot

## **Contractual year**

2006

## **The Challenge**

Professional social work must build on theoretical knowledge and standardized methods. At the same time it's crucial to take advantage of the social workers and the users own experiences. Social workers have to develop their judgement skills and use their discretion in order to handle a wide range of changeable situations. Experiences as well as traditions developed within the practice field are in their own sources of knowledge. But they require methodical investigation through critical reflection. This way knowledge can be passed on in a shape of its own, through stories in which room has been made for nuances and variations. Such forms of competence are the concerns of the project.

## **Short Description of the project**

The project tries out a model named *The Knowledgeing Work-Shop* in vocational upgrade- and further education. The model will be introduced in Spain, Estonia and the Nordic Countries. The model is based on methodology developed in a Norwegian doctor treatise. *The Knowledgeing Work-Shop* is a constructive meeting taking place between practice and theory. A meeting during which the practitioners and the trainer/researcher work jointly on methodically developing their knowledge and understanding of practice. Special attention is given to dilemmas the social workers have experienced. The model includes six gatherings with a trainer during a twelve month period. During the time in between each meeting, practice material and narratives are being revised. This work requires the use of literature as well as written reflections. A special program for trainers will strengthen the process. The project will be evaluated and documented.

## **Aim of the project**

The aim is to achieve a better balance between theoretical and practical knowledge in vocational education and professional work. It's a need for competent practitioners with sensibility and judgement skills in difficult and changeable situations. Stories and essay as a contribution to a more open child welfare care able to describe and state its actions without exceeding the professional confidentiality.

## **Target groups**

Social workers, especially within the child welfare work. The end users are universities, university colleges and other organisations responsible for educational programs. The model also has relevance within other sectors which deal with insecurity. With a few adjustments the model also can be developed to bring forward the experiences of the users.

## **Contractual organisation**

Tromsø University College, BUS-NN, Tromsø, Norway.

## **Project Manager**

Inger Helen Erstad, [inger.erstad@bvunn.no](mailto:inger.erstad@bvunn.no)

## **Participating Countries**

Spain, Denmark, Sweden, Estonia and Norway

## **Partners**

Universidad de Alicante – EU Trabajo Social, Alicante, Spain.

Colegio Oficial de Diplomados en Trabajo Social y Asistentes Sociales de Alicante, Spain.

AMT service & consulting, Alfaz del Pi, Spain.

Nordiska utbildningsprogrammet för utveckling av social service, NOPUS, Malmö, Sweden.

The Council of the Baltic Sea States, Working Group for Cooperation on Children at Risk, WGCC, Stockholm, Sweden.

Danmarks Pædagogiske Universitet, Institut for Curriculumforskning, København, Denmark.

Barne-, ungdoms- og familieetaten, Region Nord, Alta, Norway.

Høgskolen i Agder, Institutt for sosiologi, sosialt arbeid og velferdsfag, Praxix – sør, Kristiansand, Norway.

## **Expected results, and when**

Quality tested model for The Knowledgeing Work-Shop in vocational upgrade- and further education. Guide-lines for the work shop and educational program for trainers. End of 2008.

## **Project web site**

[www.sesproject.eu](http://www.sesproject.eu)