

# DKN - think, move, don't be afraid.

## **Name of the organisation**

Nīcas jauniešu centrs

## **Website of the organisation**

<https://jauniesi.nica.lv/>

## **Location of the organisation**

Skolas iela 14A, LV-1010 Nīca, Latvia

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## **Good practice aspect(s)/themes of youth work**

- Non-formal education/-learning
- Inclusion
- Mental health and well-being of young people

## **Good practice category**

A practice of processes and methods

## **Good practice aim & purpose**

The aim of this good practice was to create meaningful opportunities for young people in rural areas (South Kurzeme region) where there are fewer youth activities, 2 youth centres, and fewer opportunities for personal development. The practice was created to bring activities closer to young people's homes so they could participate without financial or transport barriers. The main goal was to support young people's personal development, mental wellbeing, creativity, and involvement in the local community.

Through this practice, we wanted young people to become more confident, more open, and more motivated about their future. We also wanted to help them discover new interests, talents, and skills such as creativity, teamwork, communication, and self-expression. Another important purpose was to create a safe environment where young people could meet, talk, share ideas, and feel that they belong to their community.

The practice also aimed to strengthen cooperation between the NGO, local school, and municipality, showing that youth work can be developed through cooperation between different local stakeholders. In the long term, the goal was to create regular youth activities in rural areas and encourage young people to become more active in community life, projects, and local initiatives.

## **Good practice description**

This good practice is a youth activity programme implemented in Dienvidkurzeme municipality, mainly in rural areas (Nīca) where young people have fewer opportunities to participate in youth activities. The practice was created after noticing that many young people in rural areas do not have regular access to workshops, youth events, creative activities, or personal development opportunities. Because of transport problems, financial barriers, and distance from cities, many young people spend their free time passively and do not participate in activities that could help their development. Therefore, the idea of this practice was to bring activities directly to young people in their local environment.

The practice is implemented as an 11-month project where activities take place regularly every month. Each month there are 1-2 activities, depending on the project plan and the needs of young people. Each activity lasts around two hours. The activities are not only educational but also interactive, creative, and practical so that young people can learn through experience, not only through listening.

So far, several activities have already taken place. One of the first activities was improvisation theatre, where young people learned to express themselves, react quickly, work in teams, and feel more confident speaking in front of others. Another activity was recycled clothes designing, where young people redesigned old clothes and learned about sustainability, creativity, and reuse of materials. We also organised two lectures and discussions with a coach about personal values, motivation, future choices, and personal development. These activities helped young people think about their future, understand themselves better, and discuss important life topics.

Participants were involved through cooperation with the local school, youth centre, and social media. Participation was voluntary and open to all young people from the local area. So far around 30 young people have been involved in the activities, and the number is growing as the project continues.

The project is implemented in cooperation with the NGO “Keep the Change” and the local school, which help with organisation, communication, and involving young people. Trainers, a coach, and youth workers are also involved in leading activities. This cooperation shows that youth work can be successful when different local stakeholders work together.

The practice is also connected to the municipality because it supports youth development, youth participation, mental wellbeing, and community involvement. It helps the municipality provide more opportunities for young people, especially in rural areas where youth services are limited.

Overall, this good practice shows that regular small activities in rural areas can have a big impact. By creating a safe environment, offering creative and educational activities, and listening to young people’s needs, it is possible to increase youth participation, confidence, skills, and community involvement. This practice can inspire other municipalities and organisations to create similar youth activities in rural areas.

### **Good practice result & concrete effects**

The concrete effects of this good practice can already be seen in the young people who participated in the activities and in the local community. One of the main results is that more young people have started to participate in local activities. Some of them had never participated in youth activities before, but because the activities were interesting, creative, and organised close to their homes, they decided to join.

Another important effect is that young people became more confident and more open. During improvisation theatre, workshops, and discussions, they learned to express their opinions, speak in front of others, and work in teams. Many participants discovered new interests such as creativity, design, theatre, or personal development topics. Some young people said that the lectures about values and future helped them think more seriously about their goals and future choices.

The activities also improved young people's wellbeing because they had a place where they could meet friends, talk, and spend meaningful time together instead of feeling bored or isolated. The project also strengthened cooperation between the NGO, school, and local community. Overall, the practice increased youth participation, confidence, motivation, and involvement in local community life.

### **Good practice chapter of the European Charter on Local Youth Work**

Organisation and practice