



Accompagnement Lieux d'accueil Carrefour éducatif et social

'GRAIN OF SAND'

The 'Grain of Sand' tool is a global programme of **prevention of violence against children**. It aims to improve the detection of risk situations, to break the silence of abused children and to encourage taking initiative. It also allows for the identification of reliable adults in the environment of each young person.

The name comes from the grain of sand that stops the machine and prevents it from bogging down. It is an appeal to everybody to prevent violence against children from being thrown into gear.

The tool is based on a video. It shows approximately 10 scenes of teenagers at risk (such as those subject to manipulation, peer pressure, bullying, lack of communication in family, sexual abuse, etc...) where their integrity and ability to say 'no' are in danger. These fictional scenes take place in school and family settings. This video is shown to youth from 10 to 14 years of age (in schools, youth clubs, district centres, etc...). An adult (youth worker or teacher), who was previously trained on the presentation methods, coordinates the meeting. The scenes are first shown altogether; they are then shown one by one. After having seen the movie, young people talk about what they saw and work together to find solutions to change the situations so that they end positively. (The method also works with the 'picture-language' approach – pictures of the scenes shot-). For adolescents from 14 to 18 years of age, the prevention work is performed through a theatre debate. In 4 acted out scenes, 1 or several characters role-play in a situation of silenced abuse. The audience is invited to intervene in the scene in order to change the initial context by proposing their own solutions.

At the same time, the method aims to raise awareness of reliable adults who are in regular contact with youth (teachers, supervisors, youth workers, etc...). They undergo training on violence against children and afterwards receive a 'grain of sand' badge that they stick on the door of their office or their bag. This sign allows them to be identified by youth as 'resource persons' to whom they can talk about situations of violence that they face in their life. The adult is then able to refer them to competent authorities or organisations if needed.

The tool has been replicated and adapted in 2004 by a Ukrainian organisation in Lvov (video produced by the organisation itself in Ukrainian language).