

“ZANNEIO INSTITUTION FOR THE PROTECTION AND TRAINING OF CHILDREN”

The Director’s report of the “Zanneio” Institution, in reference to the training and education of his staff, using the “ACT/ Young and Adults Together Against Violence” (ACT/MMME-Bias) Program of the Association of Greek Psychologists (AGP).

In the framework of training and education of the teaching and professional staff of the Zanneio Institution, during the months February, March and April of 2009; a group of 10 Educators, 1 Social Worker and the Director of the Institution, attended the Program for the protection of young children: ACT/ Adults and Children Together Against Violence, (ACT/MMME-Bias).

The ACT/MMME-Bias Team members who taught our staff, were Mr Pantelis Proios, Mrs Aliko Georgakopoulou and Dr Artemis Giotsa, and were also members of the AGP.

The timing of the ACT/MMME-Bias program was ideal for our staff, as it happened at a period when the staff’s relationship with the teenager residents of the “Zanneio” Institution were at a very critical stage.

The resident-student’s oppositional and adverse reaction to any behavior rules; the challenging of staff’s authority; the educational problems; the violent behavior and the damages of the Institution’s property, were at their daily agenda, while the staff was worried and very much distressed.

At that time, we were using the quality standards of the program “Quality for Children” (1), and we were absolutely convinced that we had to invest continuously towards the support and the acceptance of the youngsters (residents); also towards the understanding of their behavior and the build up of the relationships between the staff and the youngsters; and the use of techniques for improving the negative image our youngsters were showing in the community outside of the Institution.

For all these issues, we were in dire need for appropriate instruments so that to empower our interdisciplinary staff team, in order to be able to face all the above problems.

These additional tools came on time through the ACT/MMME-Bias program, which contributed greatly and enabled our staff to respond to its duties in the best and ideal ways.

(1) www.quality4children.info: *Quality standards that refer to procedures that must be followed with children who are raised away from their family environment.*

The ACT/MMME-Bias trainers' team was efficient enough to adapt-adjust the Program in such a way that it appeared so appropriately designed to deal with our problems. The real life paradigms and methods of the seminar helped us so, to fully understand the problems we had to face. At the same time, gave us all the necessary tools to deal with crises.

We adopted all these tools during the Program's group meetings, and that helped us, in such a great degree, so that to make the right decisions and use the appropriate methods in order to deal with difficult situations where the children were involved.

I also want to mention that, the fact that the trainers had first hand personal understanding of our problems and the fact that the training Program worked for us as a form of group psychoanalysis, and as such, had a beneficiary impact on all of us at this specific time.

The positive results and the benefits that our attendance of the ACT/MMME-Bias program had, was reflected at the spectacular improvement of the behavior of the children, which we believe, it was due to our adaptation to the problems that we had to deal. The continuation of other practices that we used, the adaptation and implementation of the new knowledge that we gained from the Program, had an immediate result that changed the whole landscape at 'Zanneio' Institution.

So, we can now deal with the problems that emerge in a different way, with actions that have a positive result.

I want to stress my personal opinion that, that particular Program is ideal for professionals who are working with children. But also, it is absolutely appropriate for parents as a useful tool in dealing with difficulties arising from their children's behavior.

Attached are some indicative comments of the Zanneio staff-educators who attended the ACT/MMME-Bias Program.

With Respect

Menelaos Tsaousis

Director of the "Zanneio" Institution