



BOYS* AND CULTURE OF CARE

A SUPPORTIVE ENVIRONMENT TO FACE SEXUALIZED VIOLENCE

4 NEWSLETTER

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FLORENCE FINAL INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

INTRODUCTION

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Florence, December 2018

The final international conference of the Culture of Care project was held on December 14 in the city of Florence, at the Istituto degli Innocenti, around 50 people attended it from different European countries that were very interested in knowing the results of the project and in sharing views and experiences on the issue of sexualised violence on minors and boys specifically.

In the morning the Culture of Care team presented the main project products and results, such as the needs assessment, the capacity building programme, the awareness raising campaign and the handbook for professionals working with children and adolescents (the so-called "First Points of Contact") where they can find tools and information on the issue of sexualised violence in boys, to better prevent it and support boys victims of violence. The project partners also presented the website where to download all the products, such as the national and transnational needs assessment reports and the awareness raising materials as the poster, the flyers and the cards.

Subsequently three workshops were carried out where it was possible to discuss in small groups and thus to deepen some aspects that had been touched upon in the initial presentations: How to create a culture of care? How to use the materials and to transfer the project methodology and deliverables to other European countries? And what policy recommendations can be drawn from the project?

In the afternoon, Peter Mosser, an independent German expert with more than 20 years of experience in the field of sexualised violence against boys, as psychologist and trauma therapist working in a counseling center for male victims of sexual and domestic violence (KIBS, Munich), gave his keynote speech on where the emphasis should be on ensuring a culture of care and preventing sexualised violence against boys.

The international conference ended with a round table where five experts from different European countries and from international organisations presented their experiences linked to the topic of the conference and how to address the issue of sexualised violence against boys.



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WORKSHOP 1

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

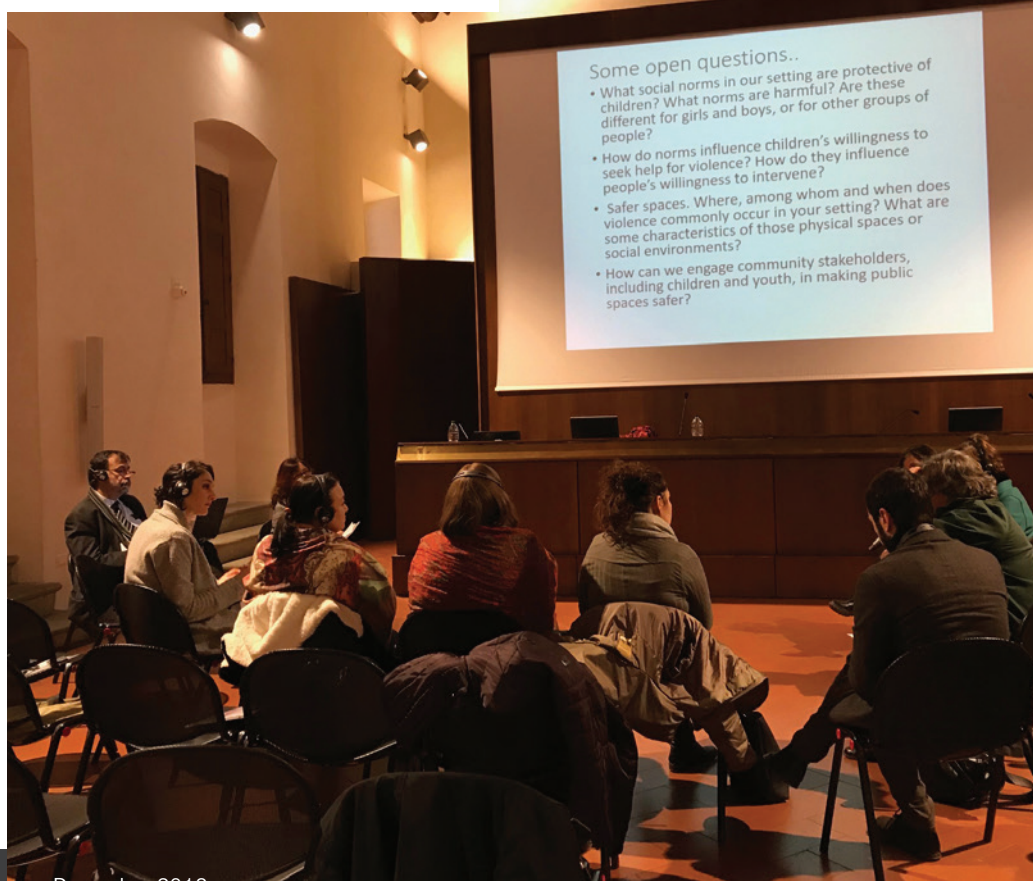
The workshop was facilitated by Donata Bianchi (Istituto degli Innocenti) and Marina Angelova (ANIMUS). The discussion was introduced by a brief summary of the main outcomes of the two-year project relevant for **policy recommendation**; in particular, the facilitators underlined critical issues related to **knowledge and training, professional skills, multidisciplinary teamwork and awareness raising**.

The discussion highlighted the following aspects as priorities:

- Teachers and practitioners need a wider knowledge and training on sexualized violence against children in general, and in particular against boys
- Training should emphasize the gender perspective on the understanding of sexualised violence against minors
- Training is needed also as regards the role that each actor should play for the protection of children and for the prevention of sexualized violence
- The existing laws and possible protocols of action should be known
- Organizations should have clear mechanisms for reporting and for helping professionals themselves because they can be exposed to burnout
- The participants underlined also the necessity of a more effective cooperation among all relevant actors

Other issues that were raised during the discussion were:

- The prevention of sexualized violence against boys should take into account also the special needs of particularly vulnerable groups such as adopted or disabled children
- An effective action on sexualised violence against boys should take into account also a better understanding of the perpetrators' motivations and behaviours
- Prevention must involve actively also highrisk sectors such as sport associations.



WORKSHOP 2

HOW TO USE THE MATERIALS AND HOW TO TRANSFER THE PROJECT METHODOLOGY AND DELIVERABLES?

The workshop **‘How to use the materials and how to transfer the project methodology and deliverables?’** was facilitated by Pedro Unamunzaga and Rafa Soto (AHIGE). In order to get started a cognitive and emotional map was produced by the participants when questioned about their thoughts and feelings about sexualised violence against boys. The main needs of the male survivors of sexualised violence and of the professionals working with them were mentioned when a case is detected or a boy discloses the violence.

In response to how to use the materials and under which conditions these materials should be used by professionals in their work with boys, the following aspects were highlighted:

- Take into account the importance of the Handbook as a reference for First Points of Contacts (FPCs, i.e. professionals working directly with minors)
- FPCs should previously take a training on sexualised violence, as the Capacity Building Programme developed within the CoC project
- The materials would be more comprehensive for boys if they are part of an emotional and sexual education programme
- In the event of a lack of previous knowledge or training by the professionals a careful reading of the Handbook developed within the CoC project would be required.
- Experts' support or a network should be available if a case of sexualised violence is detected while using the materials.

The second question that was discussed was how to transfer the deliverables at an European level. First of all it was pointed out to take into account each country situation for the dissemination procedure. Participants also highlighted the following:

- The use of teenagers social networks such as Instagram to reach minors
- The importance of different networks to disseminate the results and deliverables via European Projects networks and European Networks of social workers, teachers, coaches, pedagogues, psychologists, counsellors, health professionals, etc.
- The involvement of key role models for boys, such as famous sport players, musicians, etc. in campaigns.



WORKSHOP 3

HOW TO CREATE AND DEVELOP A CULTURE OF CARE?

The workshop **'How to create and develop a culture of care?'**, facilitated by Elli Scambor (VMG) and Peter Mosser, started with an exercise followed by a discussion, in which supportive conditions for a Culture of Care were discussed. In order to get some imagination about the conflicting feelings boys may have concerning their possible disclosure of sexualized violence, the workshop participants were invited to think about a current secret they have. With a current secret in their mind, they had to imagine to be forced to tell someone about their secret. Through this the participants got in touch with feelings of shame, guilt and fear and, most importantly, thought about supportive factors during the disclosure process. All the participants' comments were clustered by the workshop facilitators into four dimensions characterizing a Culture of Care: competence, sensitivity, safety and disclosure as an offer.



THE PANEL

George Nikolaidis, Chairperson of the Lanzarote Committee of the Council of Europe.

Ramya Subrahmanian, Chief, Research on Child Rights and Protection at UNICEF Office of Research.

Noemi Pereda, professor of victimology at the University of Barcelona and researcher in the area of child abuse in the Spanish and Latin American context.

Jan Reynders, from the international network Men Engage.

Marina Hughson, Professor at the Institute for Criminological and Sociological Research in Belgrade.

Coordinated by **Erika Bernacchi**.

The panel represented a moment of discussion about the main challenges posed by the project to an audience of international experts coming from the academia, international governmental and nongovernmental organizations working on violence against children and children's protection. The experts were asked to comment on two issues, namely about their experience in relation to the little attention devoted to sexualised violence experienced by boys and what could be done to bring this issue more to the surface and address it more adequately.

The panel, coordinated by *Erika Bernacchi* from Istituto degli Innocenti, was opened by **George Nikolaidis**, Chairperson of the Lanzarote Committee of the Council of Europe as well as clinician, researcher and trainer in projects related to child abuse. Mr. Nikolaidis presented the results of the B.E.C.A.N. project an epidemiological study aiming at mapping child abuse and neglect. He stressed differences based on gender as well as age. He identified three groups: the first composed of younger children where sex is not relevant because perpetrators are attracted by the genderless nature of children, the second made up of adolescents where the percentage of female victims is higher and the third crosscutting group referring to polyvictimised children.

Ramya Subrahmanian, Chief, Research on Child Rights and Protection at UNICEF Office of Research who was previously Executive Director of Know Violence in Childhood, explained that within this latter project -which lasted 4 years and assembled the best evidence on prevention of childhood - only 6 or 8 countries collected data on violence against boys. Therefore the first step in addressing this issue is the necessity of collecting data disaggregated by sex. She also referred to the importance of tackling this problem by using the concept of ecosystem, thus addressing not only the interpersonal

dimension, but also the community and structural ones and to see how different cultural phenomena are related (e.g. genderbased violence and violence against children.)

Noemi Pereda, professor of victimology at the University of Barcelona and researcher in the area of child abuse in the Spanish and Latin American context, presented the results of three metaanalysis and stressed the importance of methodology in surveys concerning violence against boys. In particular, she emphasized the importance of phrasing questions in a way which makes the phenomenon violence emerge. For example it is possible that if you ask children/ adolescents about the occurrence of sexualised violence in their lives they would give a negative answer, whereas if you ask about the happening of specific events (e.g. unwanted touching, receiving sexualized comments, etc.) they could give a positive answer.

Jan Reynders, from the international network Men Engage, stressed the significance of going to the root causes of sexualized violence by addressing patriarchy and making it clear that this is as bad for boys/men than it is for girls/ women. He also emphasized the importance of adopting an intersectional approach which takes into account how gender intersects with other social categories such as race, migration status, class, education etc.

Finally **Marina Hughson**, Professor at the Institute for Criminological and Sociological Research in Belgrade who has published extensively on gender and masculinities, stressed the importance of understanding how the different geopolitical contexts influence gender regimes. She also cautioned about the fact that regression is possible when it comes to feminist and gender equality aims.



THE HANDBOOK

Welcome to the Culture of Care handbook. This handbook aims at providing professionals working with boys* (teachers, social workers, kindergarten pedagogues, scouts, pedagogues, doctors, nurses, psychiatrists, etc.) with information on sexualized violence against male children and youths. to capacitate professionals to prevent violence and support survivors of sexualized violence by creating a culture of care in their working environments. Thus the Handbook aims at improving the situation of male children and youths as (potential) victims of sexualized violence who will be able to find capable first-points-of-contacts in professionals who understand the issue and are able to signpost survivors to specialized support services.

Professionals will find a number of practical tools and methods on how to address the topic of sexualized violence against male children and youths in their working context and how they can support survivors in their basic everyday routines.



For pdf download of this handbook,
scan this QR, or visit:

<https://boyscultureofcare.wordpress.com/handbook>

CREATING A CULTURE OF CARE AGAINST SEXUALIZED VIOLENCE

A HANDBOOK FOR PROFESSIONALS
WORKING WITH **BOYS***



#BOYSCULTUREOFCARE



Culture of Care

Dec 14th 2018

THE WEBSITE

The project has its own website. Find it at:
boyscultureofcare.wordpress.com

On the website you will find detailed information about the project as well as regular updates on partners' activities and relevant news items.

<https://boyscultureofcare.wordpress.com>

PARTNERS



Dissens Institut für Bildung und Forschung e.V. – Germany (Coordinator)
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Institute for Masculinity Research and Gender Studies, VMG – Austria
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