



# COMUSYC

Connections through comics and music for the social integration of the disadvantaged Youth

## REACTIVATE

A creative and flexible toolkit for the valorization of informal learning through music therapy and visual arts

Erasmus+ Strategic Partnerships- Key Action 2- Sector: Youth  
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# What is COMUSYC?



Comusyc project aims to develop a comprehensive and cross-sectoral strategy that will increase the intercultural and transnational dialogue between young people, using creativity and art as fundamental tools for mediating and building bridges. A high number of reports and studies reveal how social marginalization continues to represent a widely diffused phenomenon in contemporary Europe, in particular in the Mediterranean region. Young individuals who are struggling to find a pathway in their transition from study to work tend to loosen their ties with their communities, becoming uninterested in the economic, social and political reality of the country and continent where they live and losing any trust in the possibility of becoming active members of their society.

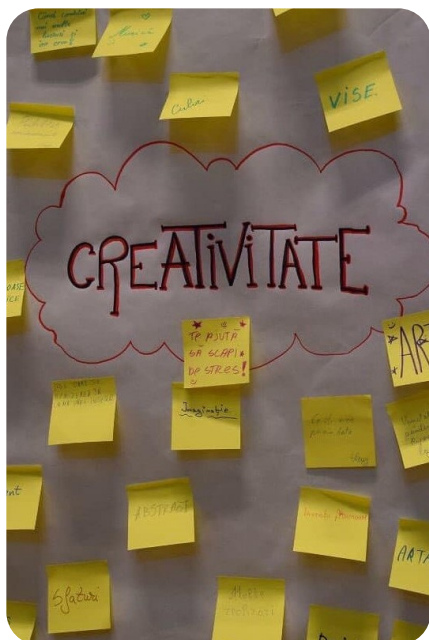
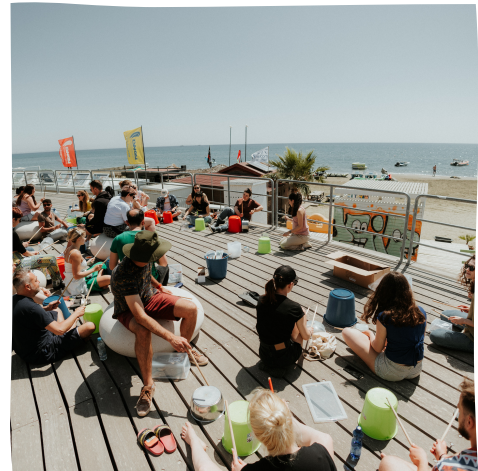




# What is COMUSYC?

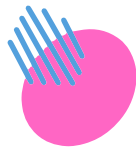


Comusyc aims to play an active role in fighting against the risk of social exclusion, providing tools and strategies for keeping open the lines of dialogue with marginalized youth, helping them in expressing their fears, and valorizing their key competencies and skills in an open Europe. The use of creativity allows these young people to become active members of a democratic Europe, supporting them in rethinking their possibilities to find new opportunities in the labour market



Comusyc partnership aimed to develop an “integrated” approach, joining the efforts of 7 organizations from 5 countries that have different profiles and backgrounds and a common proven track record of supporting young people (and NEETs) into active citizenship and participation. A similar multiplicity of focuses and ranges of action has guaranteed an advantageous sharing of experiences and expertise, creating a consortium able to develop transnational methodologies for the valorization of informal learning approaches to address social exclusion.





# Introduction



This toolkit includes problems faced by youngsters, especially those who do not experience success in the work nor in the academic contexts, alongside with suggestions on how music and the arts can help them overcome these problems.

During the first phase of the project, all CoMusyc partners organized the so-called “Actiworkshops” at their headquarters, involving marginalized young people at risk of social exclusion. The workshops were conducted in 5 different European countries with a total of 100 youngsters.

A series of difficult and frustrating daily situations that the participants in the workshops face in their life were identified and expressed through what was called “scenarios of activation”. A total of 50 scenarios of activation were collected, but, after reviewing them, it was clear that, despite the cultural and geographical differences, many of the identified problems overlapped. The repeated ones were eliminated, giving a final total of 24 scenarios of activation. These 24 scenarios were organized in four different categories according to the nature of the problem.





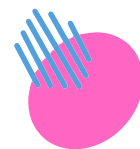
## The scenarios



The four categories in which our scenarios of activation have been grouped are:

1. **Intrapersonal and interpersonal communication difficulties:** these include difficulties in expressing oneself verbally, which can manifest in family contexts, or with friends and peers.
2. **Self-confidence issues:** these include problems related with self-esteem and self-concept, which manifest in work and/or academic contexts.
3. **Cognitive and emotional difficulties:** these include issues such as anxiety, fear, anger management, lack of attention, lack of critical thinking abilities....
4. **Trauma and abuse issues and their consequences:** these include issues such as loss of some *loved one*, *facing past traumas*.

## How to read the toolkit



Each page of this toolkit contains one scenario.



The lightbulb symbol indicates a way in which music and art can help teenagers cope with the problem identified in the scenario.

All the pictures in this toolkit have been created using MidJourney, an AI software that creates images from written prompts. We experimented with different styles, trying to resemble those used in comic strips.

# Intrapersonal and interpersonal communication difficulties



## Family problems

These include broken families, single parent homes, family violence, etc. Young people react in many different ways: they can grow up too quickly and take on the role of adult/partner; react with anxiety, depression or emotional detachment; become aggressive; have academic problems or drop out of school; use dysfunctional coping strategies



## *Creating and sharing a music playlist/mixtape*



By creating a playlist that reflects on experiences, emotions and/or views towards life, individuals can participate in self-exploration as well as express themselves to others in a way that is fun and non-intrusive. This offers youngsters who have difficulties in expressing hardship an opportunity to convey their emotions in ways that are not explicit, yet relatable.





# Intrapersonal and interpersonal communication difficulties



Difficulties coping with friendships and social life

They include issues such as: anxiety, frustration, feeling of loneliness, peer rejection, peer pressure, uncomfortable social situations, abusive behaviour

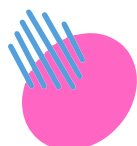


*Participate in group singing/choir*



Group singing offers the opportunity for individuals to form bonds based on a common interest, while also requiring them to face their fears of singing and thus allowing them to learn the skill. Singing also promotes relaxation and energizes individuals through the use of breathing techniques, thus helping them build confidence and motivation.

# Intrapersonal and interpersonal communication difficulties



Difficulty in putting feelings into words and verbalizing emotions



Marginalized youth are often non-verbal. They have difficulties in expressing themselves, which leads to frustration. This alienates them from society.



*Nonverbal communication through music and painting*

Listening to music can help a person to bring out emotions, whereas drawing and painting can be a vehicle for expressing them in real time, avoiding the filters of thoughts, social norms, fears of being judged and verbal language. This combination is a way of expressing deep feelings visually, and also of registering them, allowing further interpretation, identification and understanding.



# Self-confidence



## School problems (academic pressure, inadequate education)

Young people have concerns related to studying, exams and academic failure pressure. Moreover, in some cases the education system lags significantly behind the needs of modern youth. Conservatism, rigidity and lack of sufficient modern forms of education cause children and young people to lose curiosity and interest in the learning process from an early age.



Songwriting



Songwriting offers individuals the opportunity for personal expression and discourse. Through writing poetry or songs, individuals can take a step back and later view their difficulties, analyze their strengths and weaknesses, and thus take a constructive approach towards finding solutions.



# Self-confidence



## Body image issues

They include:

- Eating disorders: anorexia, bulimia, emotional eating
- Obsessively thinking about body and appearance; too much investment in the "facade"
- Being ashamed of the way one's body looks

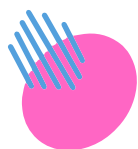


## *Music and progressive muscle relaxation*



It can help individuals be aware of their own body and aids them in coping with a distorted self-image. By gaining awareness and observing the body in a non-judgemental way, one can also begin to work towards self-acceptance.

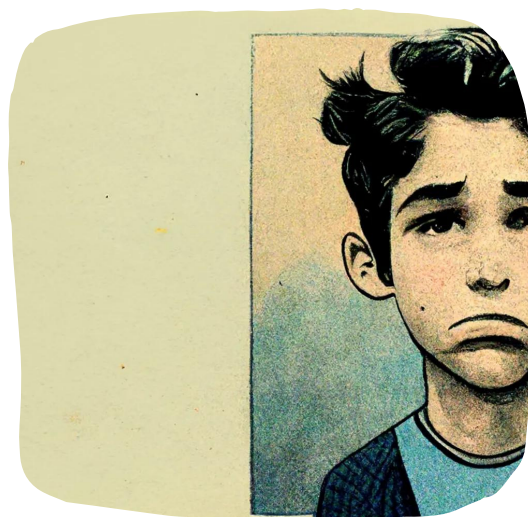
# Self-confidence



Insecurity, fear of failure, low self-esteem, "I am worthless"

Low self-esteem in teenagers is not uncommon and can cause problems with peers, and in decision-making, and is associated with anxiety and depression.

It can also manifest itself in the teenager as difficulties/problems in creating friendships, isolation, low motivation, earlier sexual activity, drinking alcohol and/or taking drugs to feel better, unrealistic perception of the body, high self-criticism, underestimation etc.



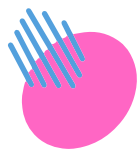
*Group music therapy and/or theater*



It offers individuals the opportunity to collaborate with others in success-oriented activities. Here individuals can find a sense of purpose and worth, since activities require all participants to contribute in different ways to reach a common goal. In the case of theater, individuals perform distinct roles which are all independently vital for the success of the group as a whole.



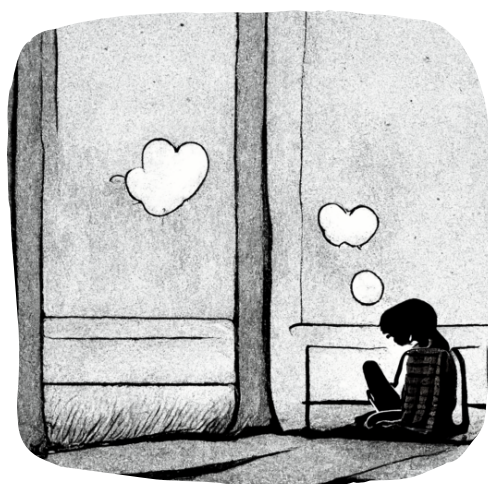
# Self-confidence



## Difficulty in developing one's own personality (uncertainty, "who am I?")

Young people like to define their personalities. They are developing their personality. They are on a quest to find themselves.

In recent years, the young people's uncertainty and confusion, difficulty and impossibility to reach an answer to the question "Who am I" have been more pronounced.



*Create a DJ-set to share in a group setting*

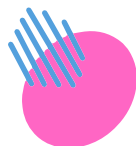


Musical preference, or one's musical identity, typically has a direct link to personality. By conceptualizing a DJ alter ego and creating a set to share with others, individuals can explore different aspects of their identity, express them to their peers and thus form bonds with others.

When involved in group discussions of songs and musical choices, youngsters can also better develop a more cohesive sense of personality. They can relate to music and its cultural and societal references, as well as the lyrical message, while directing it outwards.



# Self-confidence



## Societal pressure

The world in which young people live today places constant demands and pressures on them: pressure to fit in, to look good and cool, to be sexually active, to understand and manage their future, to be successful and not to make mistakes, to achieve quick material success, etc.

The effect of this is: stress, anxiety, depression, overcriticalness, competitiveness, unrealistic self-esteem, longer identity crisis, self-harm

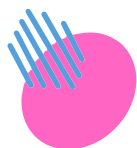


## Music and imagery



It can aid in stress and anxiety management associated with societal pressures. By visualizing their ideal role or place within society, individuals must also take a solution-based approach. While forming these images, individuals are faced with their ideal and the question of how to get there.

# Self-confidence



## Unemployment and financial instability

These issues cause depression, anxiety, lower self-esteem, loneliness and sadness, lack of motivation, idleness, deteriorated mental health, frustration, irritation, and low energy.

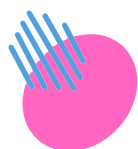


*Participate in call-and-response style songwriting such as the blues*



By constructing lyrics around a problem/solution style format, participants are able to express their fears and conflicts, while also analyzing their strengths and weaknesses. In this way, they can learn to cope with the burden of financial instability through problem-solving and brainstorming.

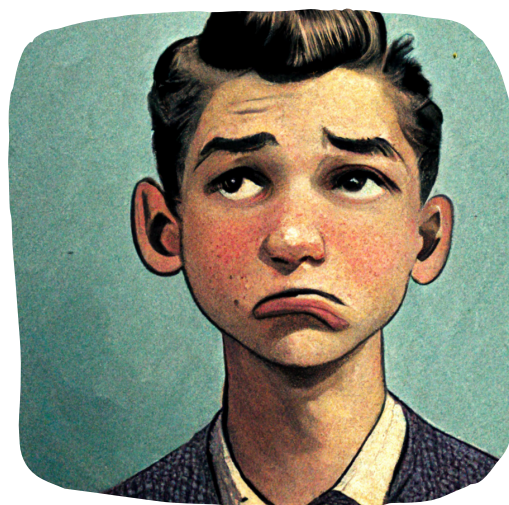
# Self-confidence



## Lack of initiative/boredom and monotony

Lack of initiative manifests itself in isolation and in the difficulty to face daily challenges, as well as in the ability to make decisions independently.

Boredom and monotony cause lack of illusion in the day to day, frustration.



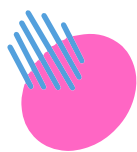
*Exploring artistic ability through learning new skills*



Through exploring one's creativity through learning a new skill (art, music, poetry etc...), individuals can find new ways to express themselves and occupy their time through dynamic experiences. Art as an outlet provides people the opportunity to entertain themselves in healthy ways.



# Self-confidence



## Pressure of 24-hour social networking

While Tik Tok, Instagram, and other social media sites can help young people connect with each other, they can also become toxic spaces that support distorted images of perfection, cyberbullying, and other harmful messages and interactions.



## *Letting oneself go with art to release pressure*

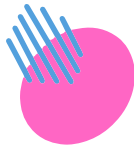


Expressive arts (art, music, dance/movement, drama, and creative writing) can very successfully improve self-regulation. The kinetic-sensory qualities of art, music and movement that include rhythm, movement, touch, and sound have the potential to mediate lower brain functions, such as heart rate and respiration, through specific approaches.

Combining expressive arts in a ludic or in a purpose-free way is also an interesting strategy, that can help to build a positive self-image, self-esteem and confidence. Some examples include writing or drawing anything that comes up to one's mind while listening to instrumental music, or creating a meaningful or cheerful playlist and letting the body move along. It is important that these techniques are implemented in a safe and quiet space.



# Cognitive and emotional difficulties



## Isolation and loneliness

People who do not have strong family ties for back-up or who are not a member of a sports club or other organization often feel lonely.

This causes: sadness, depression, anxiety, decreased energy, decreased motivation, inability to regulate emotions, bad sleep and its consequences, suicidal thoughts

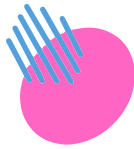


## Joining a musical collective



Joining a musical collective that engages in creative activities (i.e. band, choir, workshops, group classes, drum circles, etc...) requires individuals to overcome fears that lead to loneliness and thus allows them to strengthen social bonds and confidence within a safe environment. One also has the option to participate in various forms of communication, thus relieving feelings of loneliness.

# Cognitive and emotional difficulties



Burn-out, stress, restlessness, overwhelm

Young people can feel burn-out or on the verge of burning out. This causes issues such as:

- Feelings of energy depletion or exhaustion
- Increased mental distance from one's job, or feelings of negativism or cynicism related to one's job
- Reduced professional efficacy
- Lack of self-esteem/confidence
- Lack of feeling accomplished
- Lack of motivation

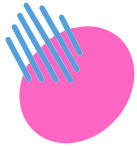


*Dancing*



Movement and music can offer the opportunity to relieve stress by evoking different emotions, images, and memories. By playing a piece of music and dancing to it, one can escape feelings of stress and thus clear his or her mind for a brief moment to address root causes of stress more effectively.

# Cognitive and emotional difficulties



## Anxiety and fear of public speaking

Anxiety of public speaking has negative effects on both the academic performance of young people and their career growth and job opportunities.

Anxiety of public speaking is a very common form of social phobia. Individuals who fear speaking in public may find their career choices limited, as they will not pursue certain careers that would occasionally require public speaking, resulting in considerable personal distress, frustration, and depression.



*Participate in*

*vocal lessons*



Learning to find one's voice not only aids in building self-confidence, but can also teach articulation and pronunciation. Additionally, the breathing techniques and exercises found in vocal coaching can also serve as a crucial tool in stress and anxiety management associated with public speaking.



# Cognitive and emotional difficulties



## Depression

Young people, especially if not surrounded by a supporting family or when they do not take part in any club or organization, often face anxiety and depression. Small problems may seem invincible.



*Participate in group drumming/percussion*



Any form of collective musical participation has the benefit to allow individuals to interact with others in social activities, thus combating self-isolation and antisocial activity typically associated with depression. Drumming also offers the opportunity for light exercise, thus energizing participants and elevating their mood, while also offering the opportunity for non-verbal communication and expression.



# Cognitive and emotional difficulties



Shortage of attention span, attention deficit, distraction, alienation

Some people find it hard to stay focused on their work ( whether studies or job related work). This causes issues such as:

- Feeling restless, agitated, or fidgety when trying to focus on a task
- Complex tasks may seem daunting or impossible
- Trouble reading long texts or watching long videos
- Leaving tasks partially done



*Music, movement and teamwork for focusing*



Playing a percussive musical instrument, including body percussion, is a way of making music that implies a lot of movement. This usually demands the mind to focus on the present moment, blocking out distractions. It can be even more effective if it is included in an activity with a common objective that demands teamwork, such as a musical game, a collective composition or improvisation, etc.

# Cognitive and emotional difficulties



Lack of critical thinking skills, having difficulties in designing valid arguments

Young people who are graduating with deficiencies in these skills are more unprepared to think critically once in the workforce. Limited development of cognitive processing skills leads to less effective leaders and inefficient team work, no matter the field of working.



*Creativity for designing arguments*

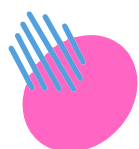


Critical thinking and making valid arguments have a lot to do with creativity.

Improvising with any instrument, and with any kind of expressive arts combined with music, allows to explore other ways of communicating and establishes different and new neuronal connections. Another interesting activity is composing or making one's own version of a song,

especially by changing the lyrics. All these activities can be done individually or collectively, with equally beneficial effects: helping creativity to flourish, connecting words, music and emotions, and therefore, combining the use of different hemispheres of the brain.

# Cognitive and emotional difficulties



## Anger issues and aggressive behaviour

Young people can show behaviours like arguing with colleagues, co-workers or friends, being aggressive, being physically or verbally violent towards others



## Cooperation for controlling anger



Playing music in groups is a way of working on cooperation, listening skills and managing emotions. Body percussion or percussion instruments are especially recommended for this, either within the framework of cooperative musical games, collaborative compositions, or group improvisations.

Specifically, soundpainting is an excellent technique that allows to communicate with movements and gestures, and also to switch between roles that demand more leadership and others that demand listening and following instructions.



# Trauma and abuse and their consequences



Substance abuse (drugs and alcohol, consumed by young people alone or with friends)



Consumption of alcohol and drugs can cause:

- Decreased motivation for activities that were previously interesting
- Easy irritability
- Criminal acts and behaviours
- When substance use started early - difficulty experiencing enjoyment of life



*Searching for a different point of view through dramatization*

A musical dramatization is a way of expressing around a common problem, that involves movements, gestures, sounds, musical instruments, singing, etc. It allows to process experiences and feelings in the way that the individual feels more accessible and suitable, interacting and cooperating with other people in a similar situation, to find an alternative perspective or a common solution for the problem.





# Trauma and abuse and their consequences



## Bullying and abuse

Bullying causes issues like school failure, lack of emotional ties with peers, loneliness and sadness. Another issue is cyberbullying, which happens online and feels like there is no escape: you are attacked everywhere, even in your own home. The effects can be very different and be expressed on a physical, emotional or mental level.



*Role - playing and composition for empathy and co-creation*



Role - playing with musical instruments is also a mixed way of expressing around a common problem, allowing individuals to communicate with each other and process experiences and feelings without using words. It also facilitates to put oneself into someone else's place. Composing music in groups is a way of community creation.

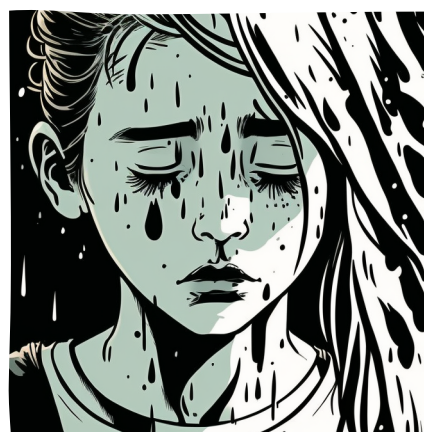
This involves playing an instrument and/or singing. It also implies collaboration, teamwork and complementarity, and therefore helps to increase confidence and equally value each person's input. In general, any cooperative musical activity will help to gain confidence and improve cohesion between participants.

# Trauma and abuse and their consequences



Grief, dealing with loss (death of a loved one or break-up)

Young people are often confronted with a first break-up or the loss of a grandparent or other family member. People feel sad when confronted with a loss, whether it is a break-up or a death.



*The art of feeling, and of wanting to feel*



Two important and related issues can be worked out through music and other arts, individually or in groups: Expressing how the individual feels at the moment, and afterwards exploring how he/she would like to feel eventually. The most meaningful and accessible way of expression can be chosen: from creating different playlists or

using a virtual program such as a garage band, to improvising with the same or different musical instruments, or drawing, dancing, etc. Afterwards, trying to verbalize what has come up is important, in order to start creating bridges through one point and the other and, when the activity takes place in a group, between the feelings of every person.

# Trauma and abuse and their consequences



## Dealing with past trauma

Having experienced trauma in the past has serious consequences:

- Difficulties regulating emotions and sense of emotional numbness
- The young person may alternate between feeling anxious and on edge, irritable and angry or numb and detached, without much control or understanding of his/her shifting moods
- Constant feeling of being stuck in the past and not being able to move forward



### *Making a habit from expressing through art*



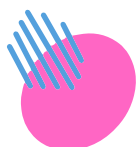
Playing an instrument of your choice can help to bring out and deal with past events and deep emotions. It can be done with total freedom, or by thinking about a specific subject/person. Especially on the piano or keyboard, the participant can challenge him or herself to play only white or black keys, in order to limit options, avoid overthinking, and let deeper emotions be expressed without worrying about how the music is going to sound.

It can be done routinely, for example every morning or night, in order to make it a healthy habit in daily life. It can also be done with other people, as an improvised dialogue.

Exploring other ways of expression, such as painting, dancing, or dramatization with music, is also highly recommended.



# Trauma and abuse and their consequences



## Insomnia

Some teenagers suffer from insomnia, which has a great impact on their general quality of life.



*Slowing down the pace little by little, to sleep better*



Listening to relaxing music may help to lower your heart rate. A personal playlist can be created with this purpose. Applying breathing techniques, such as square breathing, can also contribute.

Some people find it hard to stay quiet or still, and in this case listening to music can be combined with stretching, dancing or singing.

In any case, it is important to progressively change from a higher to a lower volume and tempo in the music, following this with movement and breathing pace. A personal relaxation routine can be created, in order to convert this into a healthy habit to be integrated in daily life. It is also important to try to increase the time dedicated to this routine each day or week.

# Trauma and abuse and their consequences

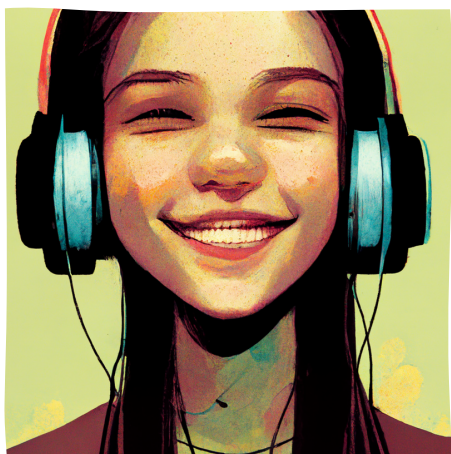


## Physical pain

For different reasons, (illnesses, accidents etc.), teenagers can sometimes experience suffering from physical pain.



*Performing and listening actively, to increase a sense of pain management*



Listening to joyful music, with a positive emotional connection, and, if it is possible, participating in it as a music performance by singing or playing an instrument is a way of releasing dopamine, helping to release tension, to reduce stress and to increase a sense of control and pain management.

In a different way, listening to relaxing music by following certain instruments or voices, letting imagination and thoughts come and go, is a way to reduce anxiety and stress.

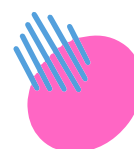
All of these activities may contribute to focus on positive sensations and increase inner wellbeing. Listening to live music could increase even more these positive effects.

# Methodology



This section of our toolkit aims to give a brief overview of the methodology used by CoMusyc's partner organizations during the Actiworkshops. We adopted a Peer Mentoring Methodology, which we will now proceed to describe. Further information on the Peer Mentoring Methodology and the practical activities realized during the Actiworkshops can be found in the document "IO1.2 Tutoring & Peer-Mentoring Methodology through Music Therapy and Visual Arts" that has been uploaded on the project's website.

## What is Mentoring?



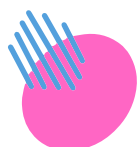
Mentoring has been defined as a collaborative at-will relationship between a more experienced person - the mentor - and a less experienced person - the mentee. The former offers assistance and guidance to the latter to achieve their goals, creating a mutually beneficial state for all parties involved .

In simple words, mentoring is a structured and trusting relationship that brings people together with caring individuals who offer guidance, support and encouragement to develop the competence and character of the mentee.





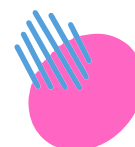
# Methodology



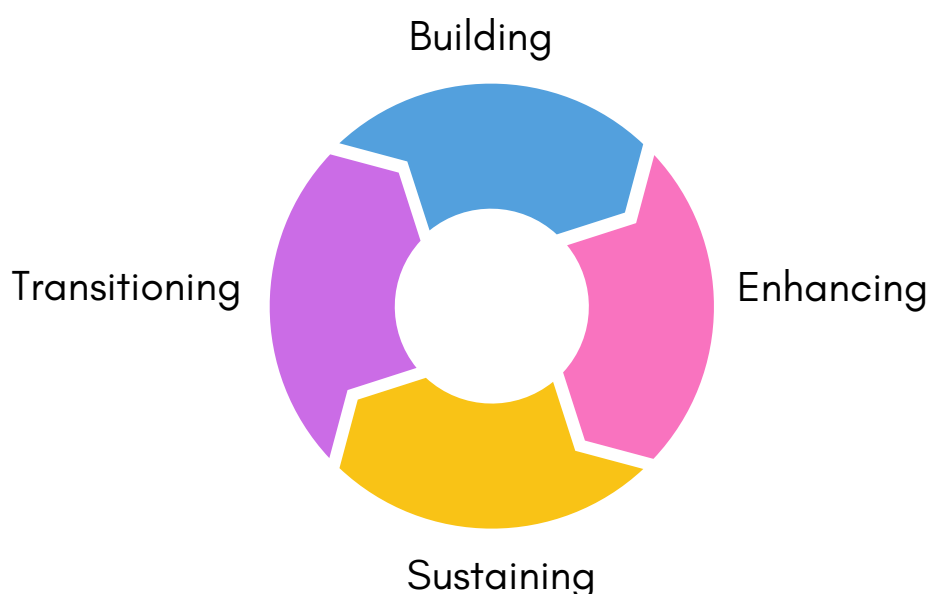
## What is Peer Mentoring?

Peer mentoring involves an interpersonal relationship between two youths of slightly different ages. It focuses on building a strong and trusted relationship between its core components, the mentor and the mentee, and allows the older youth to promote one or more aspects of the younger youth development.

## Peer Mentoring Methodology



In the following pages, we provide a peer mentoring methodology based on the "B.E.S.T Model", with some implementation tips for mentors and some practical guidelines stemming from Actiworkshops that took place in each partner's country in the context of CoMusyc project.



# Methodology



## The B.E.S.T. model

The four stages of the B.E.S.T life cycle are preceded by the early stage of selecting mentors and mentees. The peer mentoring process demands three years maximum age gap between mentors and mentees. It is essential, though, to guarantee that the age difference is great enough for the work to be challenging for the mentee and easy enough for the mentor to support them.

For each CoMusyc ActiWorkshop, 20 marginalised youth aged 18-30 and 1 peer mentor aged 25-35 were selected.

### 1. Building



The first stage of the mentoring lifecycle refers to building the mentor-mentee relationship. At this point, the mentor and the mentee(s) meet each other for the first time, and the trust-building process between them starts.

When mentors introduce themselves to their mentee(s) they must:

- Be confident and smiley.
- Tell their mentees about themselves, their field of expertise and their role.
- Make questions to their mentees and let them introduce themselves as well.
- Be patient, nonjudgmental, and open.
- Be positive.

# Methodology



## Tips for building trust

Trust can be hard to establish, so here are some tips for mentors to build trust between them and their mentees, creating the necessary common ground for effective mentoring.

- **Be consistent:** A mentor must be consistent, ensuring their actions and words match and that they follow their commitments.
- **Listen:** A mentor must actively listen to their mentee(s) interests and concerns. Mentees must feel that they have their mentor's back no matter what.
- **Be a friend:** A mentor must be a friend to their mentee(s), not another authority figure.
- **Be authentic:** A mentor must be original and not play a role in connecting with the mentee(s).
- **Mutual respect:** A mentor must not force the mentee(s) to do things they don't want to. They must always keep in mind that they are different individuals.
- **Have fun:** A mentee must enjoy the whole process. Having fun together with the mentee(s), significantly, at the beginning will help create a stronger bond and help deal with more complex things later on.



# Methodology



## 2. Enhancing

Stage two consists of enhancing the mentoring relationship by setting the mentoring procedure's objectives, exploring its goals and explaining the program and the process to the mentees.

At this point, the role of icebreaker activities is essential in creating a group dynamic by enabling mentees to feel more comfortable with each other.

## 3. Sustaining



At this point of mentoring, trust between the mentor and the mentee has been established, enabling conversation to be more comfortable, personal and open. Now it's the time for both sides to work on achieving goals.

A mentor must give his mentees a voice, letting them tell what they would like to do and express their thoughts and views.



## 4. Transitioning

Peer mentoring is a continuous and ongoing process, so everyone must remember that a mentor-mentee relationship transition is likely to happen: the mentor can become the mentee and vice versa. No matter when (and if) this transition in the mentoring relationship will happen, the mentor must ensure he will give himself and his mentee(s) closure.

That means ending the relationship on a good note and celebrating the time you have spent together!

# Methodology



## Communication tips

For effective communication with the mentee(s), a peer mentor can:

- Ask open-ended questions
- Do active listening, by:
  - Paraphrasing what the mentee said, ensuring that he understood
  - Maintaining eye contact, and making appropriate facial expressions and gestures.
  - Listening carefully to the mentee
- Use body language properly.
- Use “I” instead of “You” statements

## Feedback tips



Feedback is an essential part of the peer mentoring process. Feedback can be defined as an observation or opinion communicated from one person to another; it can be either positive or negative; when done appropriately, both types can be constructive and valuable.

Here are some feedback-giving tips for the mentors to follow:

- Be honest and respectful.
- Make observations instead of evaluations.
- Provide empathy

# Methodology



## Tips for handling tough issues

While peer mentoring, tough issues may emerge, such as abusive, violent and bullying mentee's past experiences, mental health issues, or traumatic experiences regarding puberty, sexuality and relationships.

An open and honest conversation about the different problems between the mentor and the mentee(s) can be a very good initial step towards problems's alleviation. In this case, the mentor takes the role of a trustworthy friend, encouraging the mentee to be comfortable to open up about these issues.

While discussing these issues, the mentor must:

- Remain calm
- Be non-judgmental
- Show his support by using his active listening skills, affirming their feelings and empathising with their struggles.



# Methodology



## Tips for identifying problems

As stated previously, tough issues associated with the mentee's past may occur during the peer mentoring process. Below we provide a list including some of the warning signs a mentor must be able to recognise, enabling him to identify whether or not his mentee has a problem that should be reported and discussed.

### General Warning Signs

- Loss of interest in simple everyday things.
- Spending a lot of time alone.
- Sleeping a lot or very little.
- Engaging in risky behaviors.

### Abuse, Violence and Bullying

- Physical defensiveness; getting jumpy or nervous.
- Sudden onset of compulsive or self-destructive behavior

### Mental health issues

- Becoming withdrawn
- Prolonged sadness; expression of hopelessness
- Severe insecurity
- Unhealthy coping mechanisms - sexual activity, drug use, self-harm, etc.

# Conclusion



In this Toolkit, we presented a series of strategies on how to use music and the arts to deal and cope with the most common problems and difficult and frustrating situations, youngsters 18–30 years of age face in their everyday lives. These strategies are intended to be resources for individuals to be applied autonomously, as well as in formal and informal settings under the leadership of a professional.

The Toolkit intends to contribute to the overall CoMusyc project aim, which is to improve the achievement in relevant and high-level basic and transversal competencies in a lifelong learning perspective.



The material we present is the result of specific workshops that took place in five different countries to strengthen the intercultural and transnational dialogue between young people, using creativity and art as tools for mediating bridges, with the overall aim to decrease social marginalization of youngsters, which unfortunately continues to represent a widely diffused phenomenon in contemporary Europe.



# Conclusion



The activities that took place in the Actiworkshops were art-based. That is, they all were developed from an artistic perspective using the arts (music, dance, visual arts, drama, poetry...) as the main tools. These activities were tailored towards very specific aims, with the stimulation of creativity as a basis, providing competencies such as communication skills, sense of initiative, cultural awareness & expression, and social and civic competencies. The workshops took place in informal settings in the headquarters of each of the project partners. The strategies you find in this Toolkit are based on the perceptions of the participants collected through post-workshops evaluations in which they were able to express how music and the arts had helped them.



It is important to emphasize that, despite cultural differences and geographical locations, it was noted that many of the problems that youth currently face, identified through the scenarios of activation, are the same. So, we feel that this Toolkit can be of use to a large number of youngsters who are in a socially vulnerable position, in a wide variety of cultural contexts, and it is our objective to evaluate it further in the next step of our project in order to formalize the CoMusyc methodology.





# Conclusion



From the strategies proposed, it can be noted that music and the arts are very flexible mediums that allow to address a variety of functional areas and address a broad array of problems. As a summary of the results of the Actiworkshops and supportive literature, we can state that the arts can provide the following to marginalized youth:

- Nurture creativity, expression and artistic talents
- Encourage a participatory and more pragmatic learning style
- Provide opportunities for experiential learning and memory retention
- Build self-esteem, identity and balanced development
- Explore cultural and social discourse
- Foster mental stimulation and problem solving skills
- Promote harmony and social integration

We hope, and this is our sincere intention, that this Toolkit will contribute to a better understanding of how to use music and the arts for supporting marginalized individuals, and will help them to find new opportunities, to develop new skills and to explore their inner potential for a better integration into the current society and an overall better wellbeing.



# Partners



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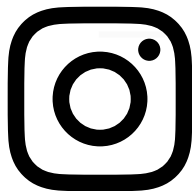
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