



ASK-project 2001-2003

# Executive summary



MLL  
THE MANNERHEIM LEAGUE  
FOR CHILD WELFARE

acciones  
integradas  
de desarrollo

# 1 The starting points of the ASK-project

## 1.1 Aims and target groups

ASK is a drug prevention project funded by European Commission. The objective of the project was to develop a youth training programme that contributes healthy ways of living and prevents intoxicant abuse. The project started on December 15th 2001 and it ended on March 2003.

The main goal of the ASK-project was to prevent drug dependence and intoxicant abuse of young people. The goal was separated to the following aims:

- to activate youngsters to participate in the project as executors and seekers for solutions
- to teach youngsters social skills and problem-solving skills
- to strengthen youngsters' self-confidence
- to activate school, parents and authorities cooperate more closely
- to support and to develop parental skills and encourage parents to form a network or peer-group
- to offer new working-models for teachers, school nurses, youth workers and other adults working with children or young people

The target population of the project were young people aged 12-20 and the strategic target group were parents, teachers, youth workers and other adults in the near community.

The project has developed two training models that activate the participators and strengthen their well-being in the community. **The participatory training for young people** aims to activate the youngsters to make an action plan to increase the well-being of the near community. **The peer group training** gives the youngsters group leading abilities and encourages them to organize alternative free time activities.

By these two training models the project has taught youngsters social skills and problem-solving skills, strengthened their self-confidence and given them ways to use their abilities and develop their personal skills. The project has developed and piloted new methods for youth trainings. The main idea in the youth trainings was to apply participatory methods in training programmes and to activate young people to have an effect on their environment and community.

Another important goal in the project was to activate school, parents and authorities cooperate more closely. The project has offered new working-models for teachers, school nurses, youth workers and other adults working with children and young people and encouraged the schools to cultivate parent activities. The models are gathered in the training material **Tips for parent evenings**.

**The main principals of the project were:**

**Participation.** The whole idea of the trainings is based on the knowledge and motivation of the participants (young people). Instead of telling them what to do, they were activated to develop the actions themselves.

**Learning by doing.** In stead of theoretical lectures or “school teaching” the things were taught in different kind of activities, discussions and teamwork.

**Holistic view.** In stead of just talking about drugs, the trainings focused on well-being and supporting the “protective factors” (good social skills, self esteem, problem solving skills etc.) that protect the youngsters against drug abuse and drug related problems.

The Ask-project has been accomplished by the co-operation of three European countries. The organization responsible for the project is a Finnish non-governmental organization Mannerheim League for Child Welfare. The partner-organizations are Acciones Intergradadas de Desarrollo (Spain) and Protasi (Greece). The participatory training for young people was planned and accomplished by all the partners, the peer group training and parent activities took part only in Finland.

In this final report of the ASK-project the national and transnational activities of the project are reported. In the chapter 1 the partners are presented and the management of the project is construed. The Chapters 2-4 look into the activities and experiences of the project both in national and transnational levels. In chapter 5 there are views about the results and dissemination and finally in chapter 6 the conclusions of the project are stated.

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