

Guidelines for the development of a general action plan of residential youth care homes dealing with crisis situations/support crises in the care of young people aged 13 to 18 Focus: Cooperation with adequate external persons and facilities

(Created by R. Enzenhofer/K. Mahrer, based on experiences of Tartaruga, a residential crisis intervention facility for young people, Graz, AT)

In acute crisis situations of young persons aged 13 to 18 (YP 13/18), as individuals or in groups, and in regularly repeating care crises, it is important to prevent, as far as possible, further escalation or a massive worsening of the current development of the young person. The employee on duty and the primary care team should/must be able to decide, in a target-oriented and prompt way (e. g. without a need to research actions or support options), on the principles applying for all relevant (internal and external) levels of responsibilities in this particular case and on the steps that need to/should be taken (cf. Unit 3.2).

Therefore, it is very useful for residential youth care homes (RYCHs) and care units (groups) to have appropriate **guidelines for action for commonly occurring problems** (e. g. addiction, drug abuse, psychiatric crises, escalation within the group) readily available. Ideally, these guidelines are developed by the care team itself; otherwise the responsible staff must be well-acquainted with the situation on the ground.

The **essential factors for the development and the content** of such guidelines for action are:

- a) the **organisational structure** of the **facility itself or of the care team** (allocation of tasks, e. g. between management, carer on duty, attachment person) and the internally provided **communication forums** (e. g. service handover, team meeting) **and regulations** (e. g. obligatory information in case of ..., documentation)
- b) the structure of the **executing organisation** - hierarchies and resulting responsibilities (are there any overriding 'professional services', such as social worker or psychologist, which must/can be contacted; when do supervisors have to be informed ...)
- c) the regularly involved **external persons and institutions in the care context** or, the options that are basically available (cf. regional network)

The following aspects should - a bit different according to topic - be generally elaborated and be available in every facility and every team as a basis for creating the guidelines and steps for action in the actual crisis situation/care crisis:

- ✓ **Perception** of the crisis situation/care crisis: Concretisation of the problems and risks; also, considering existing resources!
 - Who, internally, needs to be informed?
 - When should this happen?
 - Who needs to chair the relevant meeting?
 - In what communication forum?

- ✓ **Based on the crisis situation/care crisis, decision** of the team/the responsible person(s) on the (short-, medium-term) goals to be reached, deducing and deciding the next steps (Attention: The known/existing care goals also need to be considered!)

- ✓ Communicating **the necessary information to external persons/facilities:**
 - Who informs ...
 - ... whom ...
 - ... about what ...
 - ... in which form ...
 - ... when?
 - Documenting the course and the results (who, where, in what form) and ...
 - ... internally passing on information on this (to whom, further steps, ...)?

- ✓ Agreeing **on a necessary meeting with external persons/facilities:**
 - Who agrees ...
 - ... with whom ...
 - ... in which form ...
 - ... when ...
 - ... where?
 - Documenting the course and the results (who, where, in what form) and ...
 - ... internally passing on information on this (to whom, further steps, ...)?

- ✓ Communicating the **results of the conducted meeting:**
 - Who gives information ...
 - ... to whom ...
 - ... about what ...
 - ... in which form ...
 - ... when?

To be considered during and after the meeting with external persons/facilities :

- ✓ **Agreement on evaluation** of the implementation of agreed steps and results/goals:
 - In what time frame?
 - Feedback to ...
 - If required: adapting the goals, steps, etc.!!!