

Writing Letters

Creativity applied to loneliness (Activity 2/12)

DESCRIPTION

This activity is based on some experiences of the Caring Homes and some initiatives that were implemented usually during Christmas, during some actions and also in the pandemic period: the young people (usually teenagers) wrote letters to the seniors. This activity may require cooperation between the caring organization and a youth organization, volunteers or a school and usually need a coordinator. To make the letters exchange very simple and structured the idea which was implemented in a small town in central Poland in a form of a game may be applied: the group of seniors from the caring home and a group of young people from the sociotherapy institution were exchanging cards every week. On a card they asked 3 questions, then received answers and again 3 questions. The organizers of this initiative are very satisfied of the effect of this action also in terms of reducing loneliness and building intergenerational connections.

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this activity are to reduce the feeling of loneliness and build an intergenerational connection. The additional goals are:

- Reducing sadness, and
- Increasing motivation.

RESOURCES AND MATERIALS

All is needed is a sheet of paper, a pen and some time.

However, modifying a basic idea seniors and young people can exchange postcards or other kinds of decorated cards. Cards may be also made by themselves (decorated, colorful, with photos).

IMPLEMENTATION - INSTRUCTION

1. The cooperation between the seniors' carers and youth (school, youth organization) may be done on the institutional level, or – e.g., while it is a home caring – individually.
2. The first letter should be written by the young person. The letter doesn't have to be long. It may be a postcard. In many cases that were reported as successful and with a positive effect on seniors the action/activity stops here – the letters are delivered.
3. The carer writes with the seniors the reply letter if they wish to. Even just receiving a letter should have a positive effect on reducing the feeling of loneliness but writing may also be a nice activity.
4. The letters exchange may last some time on a regular basis, but it's with remembering that for many reasons it may stop, so it's important not to build over expectations on the duration of correspondence.

POSSIBLE MODIFICATIONS

The interesting modification is the game mentioned above: seniors prepare cards with 3 questions to the young people, then it's delivered and then – replied with 3 answers and 3 questions back. The exchange lasts a given time (e.g. month, once a week), and may be repeated.

EXPECTED RESULTS

- Reduce the feeling of loneliness
- Bridging generations
- Reinforcement of motivation

