



FOR ACTIVE INCLUSION AND RIGHTS OF ROMA
WOMEN IN THE WESTERN BALKANS III

STRENGTHENED TO ALTER BAD HABITS AND BUILD A BETTER SOCIETY

FAIR III FOR YOUTH



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Association of Roma Women Osvit



IMPRESSUM

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PUBLISHER:

Association of Roma Women Osvit

CIRCULATION:

500 copies

PRINTING COMPANY:

Control P

This brochure was created within the regional project "For Active Inclusion and the Rights of Roma Women in the Western Balkans III" implemented by CARE International Balkans, and financially supported by the Austrian Development Agency.



With funding from


 Austrian
Development
Cooperation

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I SHORTLY ABOUT US



The Association of Roma Women Osvit is a civil society organization founded in 2005, which implements its work programs in Nis, in the south of Serbia, but also at the national and regional level. We are a licensed provider of local social service SOS hotline for women and children victims of domestic and partner violence in Romani and Serbian language. In addition to basic activities and work on improving gender equality, we implement programs intended for young people.



Based on the identified problems of youth, the Association Roma woman Osvit is the holder of the project "FAIR III for Youth" within the regional project "For Active Inclusion and Rights of Roma Women in the Western Balkans III" implemented by Care International Balkans and funded by the Austrian Development Agency. This project is implemented in Republic of Serbia, Montenegro and Bosnia and Herzegovina.

II RESEARCH ON THE POSITION OF ADOLESCENTS

The adolescent (aged 14 to 18) is no longer a child, but he/she is not an adult yet. This transitional age also includes countless problems of a young person. Adolescence through puberty leads to intellectual, emotional and social maturity. The Institute for Public Health of Serbia "Milan Jovanović Batut", in cooperation with the World Health Organization, conducted a research on children's health behavior in 2017.



86
PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS INCLUDED IN THE RESEARCH



3.267
STUDENTS PARTICIPATED IN THE RESEARCH



50%
OF FIFTH GRADE STUDENTS CONSUMED ALCOHOL AT LEAST ONCE



12%
OF STUDENTS SAID THAT THEIR INAPPROPRIATE PHOTOS WERE SHARED ON THE INTERNET



15%
OF STUDENTS HAVE PARTICIPATED IN THE ABUSE OF ANOTHER STUDENT AT LEAST ONCE IN THE LAST FEW MONTHS



17%
OF STUDENTS HAVE BEEN VICTIMS OF PEER VIOLENCE ONE OR MORE TIMES IN THE LAST FEW MONTHS

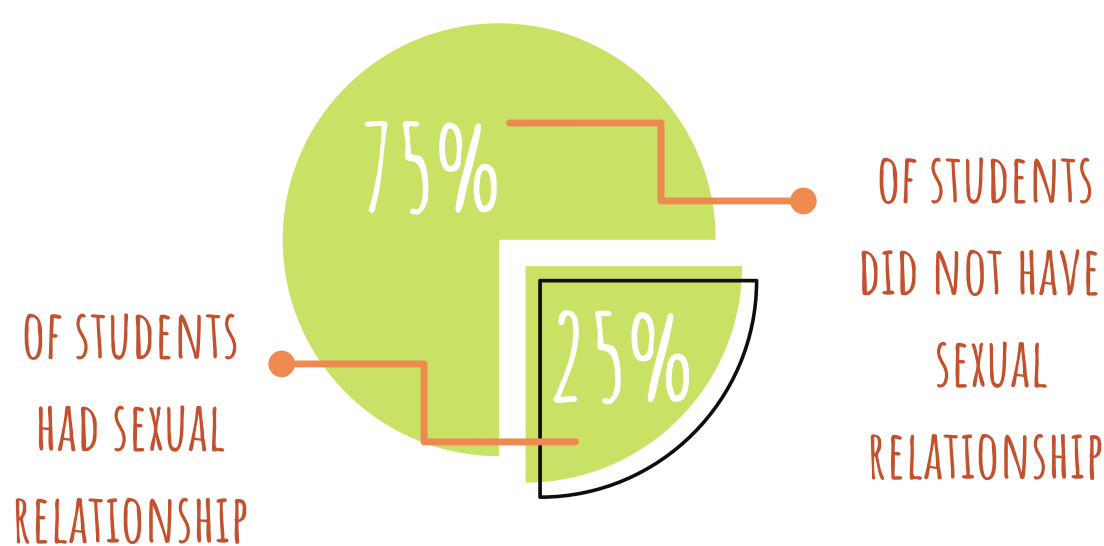


EVERY TENTH
STUDENT STATED THAT HE/SHE WAS EXPOSED TO SOME KIND OF DIGITAL VIOLENCE



12%
OF STUDENTS USED MARIJUANA IN THE FIRST GRADE OF HIGH SCHOOL

SEXUAL ACTIVITY OF FIRST GRADE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS



25%
OF STUDENTS HAD SEXUAL RELATIONSHIP

75%
OF STUDENTS DID NOT HAVE SEXUAL RELATIONSHIP

FIRST GRADE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS WHO STATED THAT THEY WERE SEXUALLY ACTIVE MOST OFTEN HAD THEIR FIRST RELATIONSHIP AT THE AGE OF



BOYS ARE MORE PHYSICALLY ACTIVE THAN GIRLS



EVERY SECOND
STUDENT EATS SWEETS EVERY DAY

During adolescence, young people are faced with new roles, relationships and social situations that require different social skills than those they needed at earlier ages.

IN THE ACQUISITION AND MASTERY OF THESE ABILITIES, THE PEER GROUP HAS A KEY ROLE AS A NEW FRAME OF REFERENCE, WHICH IS EQUALLY IMPORTANT, OFTEN MORE IMPORTANT THAN THE PARENTAL ONE.

Within the peer group, adolescents can experiment with a variety of roles:

- They identify with the group
- They are more susceptible to group pressure
- Trying out different behaviors in order to gain experience and skills, which can help them define new social roles and not feel anxious and threatened because of it

The peer group is important as a reference group, i.e. support for the adolescent in his/her search for identity and as an introduction to heterosexual behavior. Peers also serve as a source of validation for some important, but at the same time trial beliefs and values.

III PROGRAM Y

Using a gender perspective, this program deconstructs some of the challenges that boys and girls face in adolescence. This program seeks to build the skills needed by young men and women to develop healthy relationships based on gender equality, to understand their physical, sexual and emotional development, and to address all forms of violence in everyday life. The holistic approach, on which Program Y is based, defines an interactive methodology that is integrated into all activities and contributes to the realization of the overall goal through strengthening students' knowledge (cognitive development), adoption of new and strengthening existing life skills (behavioral development) and through change/adoption of attitudes and values. Program Y workshops and activities are based on a experiential learning model that encourages young people to re-examine and analyze their experiences and lives, with the goal of understanding how gender can maintain unequal powers in relationships and thus make both young men and women vulnerable. Most importantly, the activities engage participants to think about how they can make positive changes in their lives and communities.

IV ABOUT THE PROJECT "FAIR III FOR YOUTH"

THROUGH PEER EDUCATION ABOUT HEALTHY LIFESTYLES, NON-VIOLENCE, GENDER EQUALITY AND HEALTH, WE CAN MOST EASILY INFLUENCE THE POSITIVE FORMATION OF A YOUNG PERSON AND SOLVE CURRENT PROBLEMS OF YOUNG PEOPLE.

LONG-TERM GOAL:

Contribute to increasing the capacity of Roma civil society organizations, youth and other key actors in the community to implement and promote gender equality, health, healthy lifestyles and non-violence using tested models and approaches.

SPECIFIC GOAL:

1. Train 20 young people from Niš and Aleksinac for TOT trainers (Training of Trainers) according to the YMI (Young Men Initiative) program.
2. Meet 200 young people from 5 high schools from Niš and Aleksinac according to the LSE (Life Skills Education) program, who will continue to promote it among young people in their communities.
3. Introduce 20 adult Roma leaders, teachers and representatives of institutions from Niš and Aleksinac with the Program Y in order to continue to apply it in their work.

THE TARGET GROUP:

Our direct target group are girls and boys of the Roma and majority population, from 15 to 18 years old, leaders of Roma non-governmental organizations, teachers and professional services of high schools in Niš and Aleksinac.

The project included 3 high schools, 3 primary schools and a group of young people from the Roma community, the media, 200 young people, 20 teachers and Roma representatives.

ACTIVITIES:

1. Creating conditions for project realization through meetings with relevant actors at the local level
2. Training of 20 peer educators according to the YMI program
3. Training of 20 professors and representatives of professional services of involved schools according to the accredited program of the Center E8 for Y program according to the LSE manual
4. Realization of 12 thematic workshops on healthy lifestyles for 200 students and young people from the Roma community
5. Organization of 6 public events / campaigns
6. Organizing a panel discussion with high school students about a local and national youth documents
7. Regional and national youth camp
8. Regional conference - exchange of experiences and examples of positive practices

WE THANK THE PRINCIPALS AND TEACHING STAFF OF THE SCHOOLS INVOLVED AND ALL THE COLLABORATORS ON THE PROJECT FOR THEIR ACTIVE PARTICIPATION AND EXTREMELY GOOD COOPERATION.



Primary school "Vuk Karadžić" Niš

Primary school "Ivan Goran Kovačić" Niška Banja

Primary school "Radoje Domanović" Niš

Gymnasium "Svetozar Marković" Niš

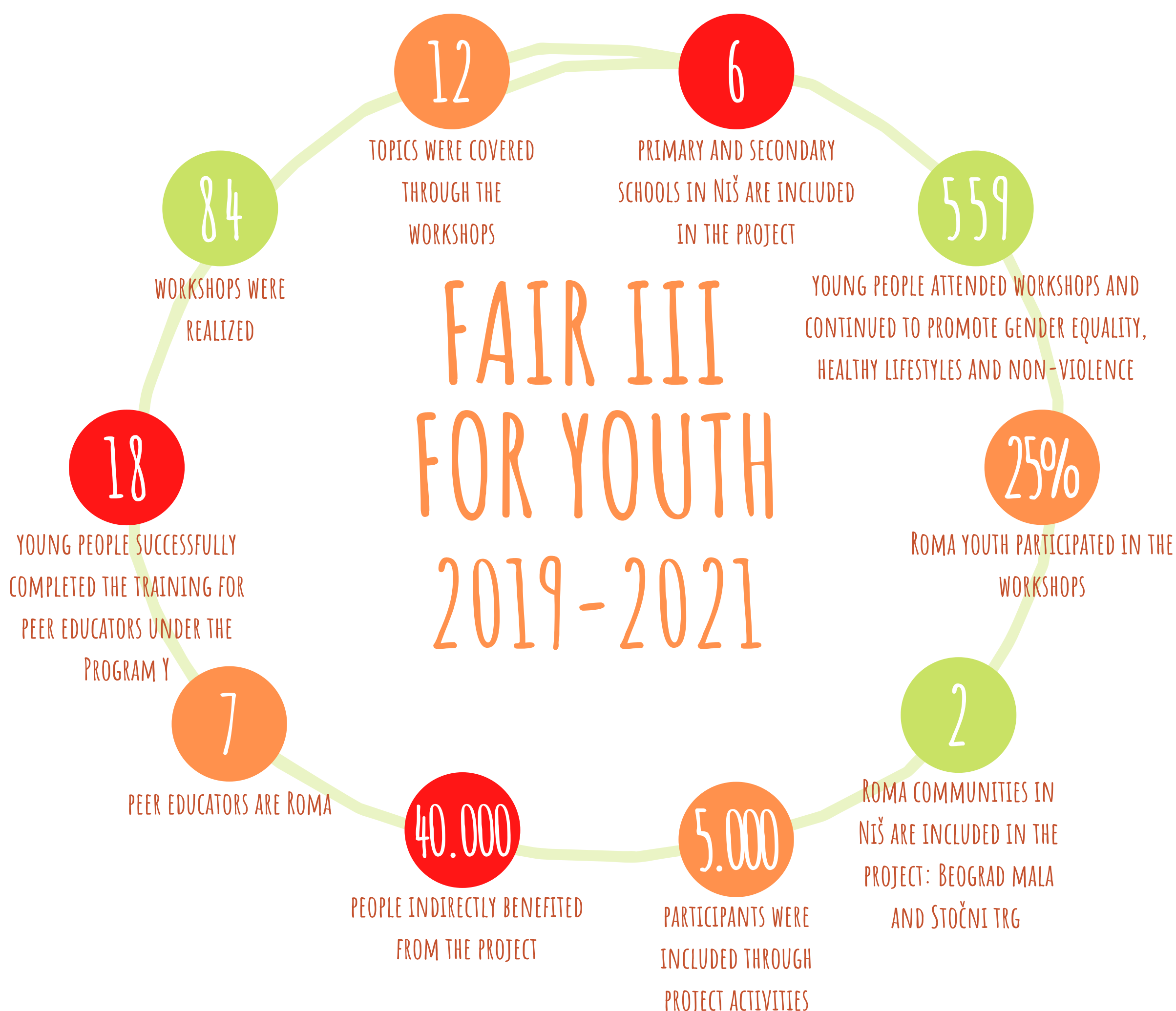
School of Fashion and Beauty Niš

Biotechnological school "Šumatovac" Aleksinac

School administration Niš

The local media

V RESULTS



WORKSHOP TOPICS:

1. What is gender?
2. What would I like to do with my life?
3. What is violence?
4. A living fool or a dead hero
5. Labeling
6. Scenes of relationships
7. Aggressive, passive or assertive
8. What are drugs?
9. Talk about alcohol and alcoholism
10. I risk when...
11. Health, STIs, HIV and AIDS
12. Men as guardians

The total number of girls in the workshops was 372, of which 90 were Roma nationality and 187 were boys, of which 48 were Roma nationality. In each school, during the implementation of workshops, one to two representatives of the school's professional staff were present. In the conversation with them, we were informed that they are satisfied with the realization of the workshops, that they find them interactive, well designed and that the students were looking forward to each new workshop.



14 female teachers and 6 male teachers, of which 7 are Roma nationality, attended training under the accredited Program Y. They continue to implement the program in their schools and communities.



Through media promotion, we jointly designed and implemented six public regional campaigns with partner organizations The Citizens' Association for the Promotion of Roma Education "Otaharin" from Bosnia and Herzegovina and Center for Roma Initiatives (CRI) from Montenegro, through which we included and educated young people. The campaigns were realized in the sign of international celebrations of important dates:

TITLE OF CAMPAIGN	DATES
1. "HUMAN RIGHTS"	DECEMBER 10 TH : THE INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS DAY
2. "YOUTH FOR WOMEN"	MARCH 8 TH : THE INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY
3. "ARE YOU OK?"	OCTOBER 10 TH : WORLD MENTAL HEALTH DAY
4. "STOP THE VIOLENCE"	NOVEMBER 25 TH – DECEMBER 10 TH : INTERNATIONAL CAMPAIGN „16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM AGAINST GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE “
5. "OUR SUPPORT, YOUR FREEDOM"	JUNE 26 TH : INTERNATIONAL DAY IN SUPPORT OF VICTIMS OF TORTURE
6. "BE A MAN, TAKE CARE OF YOUR HEALTH"	JUNE 15 TH – JUNE 21 ST : INTERNATIONAL MEN'S HEALTH WEEK



After the realisation of debate with the youth, cooperation with the Youth Office of the City of Nis was established and several actions were realized. As part of the cooperation, one of our peer educators is included in the working group for the development of the Strategy for Youth of the City of Nis 2021-2026.



A special feature of this project is the regional camp that was held from July 5 to 9, 2021 in the ethno village Sunčana reka near Banja Koviljača. Throughout the game, we strengthened the leadership and coaching capacities of the camp participants from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and the Republic of Serbia for 5 days. After the regional one, national camps were held in all countries where peer educators passed on newly acquired knowledge and skills to young people from their communities.



ADDITIONAL, NON-PLANNED RESULTS

10 peer educators were trained to conduct online workshops with young people, of which 8 girls and 2 boys.



During the pandemic, 7 young peer educators and 5 activists provided assistance to 102 people (49 males and 53 females).

6 primary and secondary schools received humanitarian aid in the form of protective means by which we increased the safety of about 1.000 students.



Through the volunteer work of our peer educators, we managed to distribute humanitarian aid in the form of food, hygiene packages and protective equipment for 450 Roma families, about 1.000 members of the Roma community, in the most difficult moments of the COVID-19 epidemic.

100 Roma families, about 400 Roma people, will improve their quality of life by transferring the newly acquired knowledge of their family members about healthy lifestyles.

VI YOUTH STORIES



As an evaluation of the realized workshops and finding out whether and to what extent they had an effect on changing the behavior of young participants in the workshops in a positive context, we envisaged a conversation between Osvit's psychotherapist and young participants in the workshops. Our psychotherapist worked on collecting stories from young people related to the topics of the workshops. After the realization of all workshops, she repeated the meetings. Based on the interviews, 15 collected stories show whether and to what extent the newly acquired knowledge about healthy lifestyles influenced the change of their attitudes. The stories were collected with the consent of each interviewee.

E.R.

"I am an elementary school student, I am 14 years old. I had experience with peer violence. I was sitting on a bench in the school yard one day when I saw a commotion of children in the corner of the school yard. I saw that several boys gathered and surrounded one girl, who is otherwise very shy person and does not hang out with others. I heard them shout: "Where are you, dirty Gypsy!" You're all like that, dirty, awful, huh? "They started pushing her, yelling at her, insulting her. I saw that the girl was scared, white with fear. No one from the school reacted. Luckily, the bell rang and the children went to the classroom. The bell saved that girl, none of the adults, none of the friends, that's awful. I saw that girl later, in the school hallway, and I was very sad, because I knew that she was very scared and that there was nothing she could do against them. She all alone and so many of them, and they are boys. I was also very sad and angry that they are insulting her and I don't know how to help her and avoid attacking me. I think everyone has the right to live their own life and look after their own business."

AFTER

E.R.

"I am now a first year high school student. I enrolled in the school I had always wanted. I want to tell you that I am a different person now, I don't think the same way now as I did two years ago when we talked. Through the program we worked with you, I learned some things and decided to react differently now. After the workshop "Aggressive, passive and assertive", I had a similar situation as in the story I told you earlier, but now the boy was a victim. I saw a boy in the park, when his friends were teasing him. They were very rude, and I recognized his fear. Then I approached, met those boys, talked to them and said that they should not behave like that, that they are not so strong but on the contrary they are weak and that they have to change something. One of them wanted to react rudely, because I got involved. It was not pleasant for me, but I tried not to show it. Two of them stopped him and asked me what do you want? I said that I wanted them to think about what it would be like for them to be in the place of a boy that they mistreat. Then we all talked a little together, so the boy relaxed and in the end they started playing together. I was very proud of myself for helping him. Now, when I see such situations, I no longer run away but try to solve the problem I see. "

BEFORE

L.I.

"I am a student and I am 13 years old. I am a good student. Many times I have suffered insults and belittling by other children because I am a Roma woman. They called me derogatory names, gave me ugly nicknames, I was afraid to come to school alone. Whenever they see me in the school hallway, they keep telling me, "Where are you, gypsy? Did you take a bath today? Wanna hang out a little closer, Gypsy women like that? Get away from her, look, she has lice!" That always scared me. When we do something at school in groups, many times I was left without a partner because no one wanted to be with me in a team because my skin is dark. It's a very bad feeling, I didn't choose my skin. When they heard that my cousin was married, and that she was 14 years old, they started telling me that they will find a husband for me and told me how I would also get married young and have children. I felt very bad then, I was unhappy, alone, depressed, I didn't want to come to school. I didn't dare to tell anyone, I thought, if I told them they would punish me. I was afraid to go down the street alone, my mother had to take me every day, because I didn't want to go to school because of teasing. I would like us all to hang out and help each other, not to insult each other.."

AFTER

L.I.

"I am a student of the eighth grade of elementary school. Then, when we talked, I was a good student, now I am even better. Now I am an excellent student and I am preparing to enroll in a school for cooks, I always want to be that. I liked your program, because I recognized myself. Among the workshops we did with you, I liked everything, but I liked the topic of discrimination the most, that's where I completely found myself. I am no longer a victim, I will not be that anymore. I explained to my parents how I felt, they understood and supported me and now I am going to school on my own. I found a common language with the boys, we are actually very similar. I started sharing things with some of them and hanging out with them outside of school and now I like school, now I want to go to school and it's nice to be there. And now sometimes it happens that someone insults me, but I don't pay attention to them and I'm not afraid anymore. Now I understand that it doesn't matter what skin color you are, but how you behave."

N.N.

"I am a student. I am 17 years old, I am a Roma young woman. I live in a foster family. My mother left me when I was 8 years old and I changed several foster parents. She went with another man and left me. I could never forgive her for that. She could have chosen a man, but why did she leave me. When I hang out with other girls, I am ashamed to say that I am in a foster family, because it is like all Roma children are cared for by foster families. I did not experience anyone insulting me, but my friend was raped. She was with a guy who is not Roma. She did not want to sleep with him, it is forbidden in our culture before marriage and he raped her. She did not want to report him, because she was afraid that they would blame her, she did not report him even today, only I know about that. She was very ill after that, she also took medication. Then she met a much older man than herself, she didn't like him, but since her parents agreed to marry her, she married him. She was afraid that no one would marry her after the rape, in order to hide the truth, she got married. She didn't like him at all, but if she had told her parents they would have given her up, then it would be even worse. I'm very sad about that, I think she was wrong, that she should have reported him. She told me "Who will believe a Gypsy girl, we get married early anyway!"

AFTER

N.N.

"I am now a fourth-year student. I am now 19 years old and finishing high school. I am still in a foster family, which takes care of me as its own child. Now it is easier for me to accept being with a foster family. When I finish school, I will try to get a job. I liked the workshops and they were interesting. I like that our friends also taught us. Through the workshops, I only confirmed that I was right about my friend, that I should have convinced her to report that bully. She is fine now, but she is different. I feel bad that I didn't understand it better, that I let her do that. Now I understand that there are people who can help us, regardless of the fact that we are Roma women. That's not right. We have the same rights and there are laws that protect us. If that happened now, I would take my friend by the hand, I would go to professionals, for her to tell what happened and he would have to be punished. I wouldn't let her get hurt like that, without blaming him. I actually realized it wasn't her fault and I told her that and we hang out more now. I wish we had more workshops like this, we would learn more things that are important to us in life."

BEFORE

A.P.

"I'm a student and I'm 17 years old. I enrolled in school to work with people. I had personal experience with threats, but not peer violence. I was on school break and standing with my friends when an older man passed by and started talking to us. I turned around and wanted to leave, when he stood in front of me and started asking me something. I angrily told him to leave me alone and he then started insulting me and saying abusive words. To call me with ugly names. He said, "Come little one, let's hang out a little bit" and showed an ugly grimace! I was really scared, especially since he was older than me. For a moment I thought that if he caught me I would not be able to escape from him so easily. I think that there should be no violence, but I saw that even when something happened to me, no one helped me. Now, even if I saw something, I would just move, I would not help anyone."

AFTER

A.P.

"I'm in my final year of high school now. I'm a different girl now. I have a boyfriend, it's new and he's very good. He's protecting me now, and I'm different. That fear changed me, when that man was violent. Through the workshop "Aggressive, passive or assertive", I realized that I was passive, because of fear, that I did nothing. That made me very angry, I was stupid. I went to our psychologist and she helped me a lot to get stronger. Not to be afraid, to be able to protect myself. I learned through your games how to be assertive, to get what I want, without being violent. I'm sorry that we had just a few such things, that's where I learned the most, it helped me a lot that I can now explain to others and help them. I like that the most."

BEFORE

I.M.

"I am 12 years old. I live in Nis and I go to school here. When we talk about topics like this, I am afraid that the same thing will happen to me. I don't like it when I see someone drinking, I am very scared. There is a man in my neighborhood who drinks constantly and shouts a lot, only when I think of him my stomach tightens. I see and hear constant shouting and quarreling in their house, because our houses are very close. I hear him arguing and beating his wife and children. When they pass through the street, they just pass quickly, because they are afraid that someone will ask them what is happening with them. I see both the woman and the children with bruises. They are often hungry because their father spends everything on alcohol. They are not regular at school either because they go to the streets with their mother and collect old things, which they then sell at the Niš market. The whole neighborhood is moving away from them, because they don't want to have problems with him. I'm actually so fearful that I couldn't help anyone, not even myself, and I wouldn't know who to turn to for help."

AFTER

I.M.

"I'm a high school student now. I enrolled in the school I wanted. I used to be very scared, but that's what my mother taught me and had scared me all the time. When I went to school, I saw that some children are not afraid, that they are braver. The workshops we did with you explained some things to me. I didn't know that we could change, that we could be braver. The friend who held the workshops is my good friend. I learned a lot next to him. He explained everything to me nicely and helped me not to be afraid for everything. He explained to me what violence means, how through healthy lifestyles we can be healthier, stronger and feel better. Through the workshop on alcoholism and drugs, I understood the neighbor's behavior, but also that the neighborhood should react and protect his family. I realized that it is important for me to finish school in order to live better, and I enrolled in high school. My friend is very important there. Then he taught me what aggression and violence mean, how to recognize them and what I should do to protect myself, but also how to help others. "

M.M.

"I am 13 years old and I go to school. A month ago in the school yard I saw how the children gathered and how they were teasing a small girl. She tries to defend herself, but there are many of them and she just watches them. They took her schoolbag. They took off her jacket, so they talked to her and called her a small hoyden. They told her ugly words, teased her, called her ugly names just because she had nothing and lived with her grandmother. It's visible that she is poor. She is always withdrawn and alone. I thought that only Roma children were teased, but this girl is not a Roma girl. I was very sad about that and I wanted to help her, but there were a lot of them, I didn't dare to approach. Afterwards, I saw her crying and she went home alone. I didn't report it to anyone, I didn't dare, so that they wouldn't attack me as well."

M.M.

"I'm 15 now. I'm in the eighth grade. I'm a very good student. I learned some things and some I didn't. When I realized that it was important for us girls to be pretty, I thought that was enough, but I was wrong. I have learned in these two years that it is important to be brave and to learn and know a lot. I met that girl, she explained to me that she was also beaten at home and that she was very scared. That she is poor, that she lives in the countryside and has no expensive things, that she carries clothes that others give her, those that they do not need. I told her how she should not be afraid, how she should talk to teachers, psychologists and other adults to help her. They don't tease her anymore, at least I haven't seen it. And yes, I told her she had to be diligent and study, so she can cope with this. Your workshops were very interesting to me, mostly because we also gave answers, asked questions, and you explained to us and we learned a lot through the games."

BEFORE

D.A.

"I am in the third year of high school and I am an excellent student. I would like to enroll in the Faculty of law because injustice affects me very much. There are more and more bullies and aggressive people. We were at a friend's party, she was celebrating her birthday in a cafe when a couple of guys, much older than us, came in and started teasing us and laughing at us. I watched them from the side, I wasn't in the focus of jokes, but then they started to be more and more aggressive and annoying, to determine our music and whether a girl will dance with a guy or not. Our friends objected, told them to go, but they attacked them. I think they were drugged, that group is known for distributing drug. I was terribly angry and furious, because we always suffer because of others, who are bad and spoil our celebration. That's why I want to be a judge and I would put everyone like that in prison, because I am so angry. The security in the cafe just stepped back, which was terrible. They know them and they are there in the cafe every day and no one is allowed to discuss with them, so we went home, even though the party wasn't over."

AFTER

D.A.

"I am now a student at the Faculty of Law. This year I enrolled in studies, I made my wish come true. The workshops were very educative for me. We constantly have such workshops in our school and I definitely attend them. The party we talked about was very distinctive to me, but even more impressive was the behavior of my friends who were just silent observers. The workshops influenced me and my friends to unite and try to change some things in society now that we have more knowledge at the faculty. As a high school student, I did not think that there is so much of it in our environment, that so many people are aggressive, violent, that they use force for personal interests. Now I know that this must be changed. I would include people who think the same and I would like to make a movement that will change something and affect better social relations."

A.S.

"I am a second-year high school student and I live in Nis. I am a very good student. I live with my mother, because my father abused and mistreated us. They divorced 3 years ago, so that harassment decreased, but I am traumatized by their quarrels and disagreements, and I am very afraid of men. My father beat me for no reason, he shouted, I was afraid at night when he came drunk and started shouting at me and my mother. I think all men are violent and if it weren't for my aunt who accepted us I think he would have killed us too. Because of that experience, I just hang out with girls and I don't let boys approach me at all, I hate them. I am most afraid when I see someone drinking and shouting, because they remind me of my father."

A.S.

"I am now a final year high school student. I can tell you that many things have changed in my life. Through learning, through the program through which you led us through, I realized that our situation is very difficult at home and that it must be changed. Your workshops on assertive behavior have influenced me to change my behavior and no longer be a victim. I told my mom about workshops on violence and alcoholism, what we do and how, and together we teamed up to report my dad. My aunt helped us place him for treatment and now the situation is different. I am still a little afraid of men, but I decided to overcome and change that in myself, with the support of psychologists. I have not yet strengthened enough to forget everything and move on, but I am working on myself to overcome it."

BEFORE

I.D.

"I am 12 years old. I am a very good student. I live with my mother, brother and sister. My father is not living with us because he works in another city. My mother also works all day in the markets so that we can have food, so we take care of ourselves. I am the oldest and I take care of my brother and sister. It scares me a lot when it gets dark in the evening. I constantly hear from some people how some children, when they are alone, someone enters their house and I am very scared. And when I go to school, I get scared when I see a group of boys, a lot of them, I think they will tease me and there is no one to defend me because my dad is not there. My friend was intercepted by boys and teased when she went to school and I am very scared. They stole her phone and the money she took for snacks. They told her: "Hey you, Gypsy, you don't need money, give it to us, you can bring even more tomorrow because this is small amount!" When she came to school, I was thinking whether to tell the teacher what happened to my friend, but I thought that the teacher wouldn't believe me because my friend didn't report them, and I don't know those boys, I haven't remember them."

AFTER

I.D.

"I am seventh grade student now. Now I am a very good, near excellent student at school. My mother has accomplished her rights for financial help, so she is not going to the market to work anymore. I am helping her at home. In the meantime, my father changed his job and now he has returned to work here in Nis. We are all together now. It is much easier for me because I no longer take care of my brother and sister. I would love to finish high school and work as a hairdresser. Now I hang out a lot more, I go out with my friends. Your program was very interesting to me, I would like to use what I learned with you somewhere."

BEFORE

M.O.

"I'm 6th grade student. I'm a very good student. I like the Serbian language the most. I like reading books a lot, that's the best thing for me because somehow I don't hang out much with my friends. I was constantly teased by a boy, who is older than me. He took my things, pushed me. I wanted to report it to the class teacher, but the boy threatened me and said if I told anyone he would beat me. I didn't dare tell my mom because I was afraid she would get mad at me and drop me out of school. I don't have a good friend to tell her, no matter how much I tried to be in a group of girls, they all got away. That's why I like to read. Then I'm not afraid. I like songs the most. When I read, it is as if I am in that world, in which I am accepted and where we are all the same. I'm actually afraid that the elders will blame me, because that boy teasing me and that I will be punished, that they will say that I gave him a reason or that it's my own fault."

AFTER

M.O.

"I am now in the eighth grade. I'm getting ready to enroll in medical school. I want to help people. I gathered my courage and told about that boy first to my parents, and then to the class teacher. They warned him, he didn't tease me anymore. The workshop "Aggressive, passive or assertive" led me to tell them what happened to me. I don't want to look like naive and stupid. I thought a lot about everything. When you taught healthy lifestyles and all that about drugs and how they affect, it was the most interesting to me and I decided to help people. To be stronger. I hang out more now, I am inseparable from my best friend and she will enroll in medical school together with me. I learned from her that I have more confidence in people, and she learned to read poems from me."

I.D.

"I'm 18 and I don't go to school anymore. Now I plan to get married. I am already told at home that I am old and that I have to get married. I have a boyfriend, I don't love him much, but I will marry him. It's bad with my parents too, they haven't paid attention for my education. No one is employed, I am not employed either. Where to work without a high school, and my parents didn't let me go to a high school. And many of my friends did not go to high school, many dropped out of elementary school. We don't hang out with other girls, because we're not the same and they certainly wouldn't accept us. So what should I do, I will get married and at least get away from my parents' quarrels. They argue a lot. They are constantly shouting, beating, yelling, I can't stand it anymore. That's why I'm getting married, just so I don't have to listen to them anymore. I also tried to escape, but I had nowhere to go. The police do not come to us Roma people, they say that we are like that. I'm unhappy about it, but I have nowhere to go. I don't know who would help me."

I.D.

"In the meantime, I got a job. One of my neighbors who is the same age as me got a job in a factory and told me that they look for workers. I liked it. I work in Leoni's factory now. The job is not very easy, but I receive a salary. I haven't married yet. I helped my family a little. They are still arguing, but I'm not here that much now, I don't worry as before. I had a boyfriend who wanted me to marry him, but after a while he became jealous, checked my phone, prevented me from dressing the way I wanted, and I remembered what you told us about the abuse and what all the abuse is and then I looked at my parents and I didn't want the same thing for me. I ran away from him, broke up with him. He later begged me to reconcile, but I didn't want to. I don't have anyone now. Maybe it's better. Now I buy myself what I want, I enjoy it."

BEFORE

R.S.

"I am 17 years old and I finished three-year high school. I don't have a job, I tried to find one, but when they see that I am a Roma woman, no one will give me a job. One man laughed and asked me what kind of work I know to do, then told the other man "probably nothing, just to dance!" I felt very bad then, like someone who has nothing, empty. With us Roma, it is true that we sing and dance the best, but I went to school, I studied like the other children, I wanted to find a job later and live a normal life. I wanted to report him, but no one would believe me, they would believe him. He is not a Roma. We don't even get a taxi when we call it, it's even worse with the police. It makes me very angry that someone first sees that I am a Roma woman and only then what and how much I know. I am a human like everyone else, the fact that I am a Roma woman means nothing, we are all people, we only differ whether we are good or bad."

AFTER

R.S.

"I got married and now I work in the same company with my husband. I did not manage to get a job as a cook, which was my wish, but I got a job as a worker in the new factory "Jura" and it is not a difficult job for me. I cook at home for me and my husband, and he likes everything. We separated from our parents and now we live alone. We want to buy a house. I found that one good girl from the neighborhood and we drink coffee together, we hang out. I am very glad that I am not the only Roma woman at work, there are more of us there, and that we can get a job, work and live a normal life. We, Roma people, have a lot of respect for folk traditions, and I would like to change that. Now I'm learning from my colleagues, and it's not difficult for me."

BEFORE

M.T.

"I am a high school student, I am 17 years old. I am not from this city, I came from a village near the city of Prokuplje. I live here alone, in a room, with some old women, and it's really hard for me. My parents don't work, they are engaged in agriculture and keep domestic animals, they don't have a lot of money. It's nice for me at school, but I don't hang out with anyone. I don't have expensive things, my parents don't have a lot of money. My friends go out here in the city, I can't afford it every weekend. In my village, we all know each other and help each other. I saw at school that there is not much friendship there, they tease me, push me, no one wants to lend me a notebook, I am alone. It's very difficult for me, I don't even know who I can turn to. When I tell professors, they tell me something just to comfort me, but I see that I can't rely on them. And what kind of professors are they if they can't help me, I don't even expect that from my friends, so the situation is very bad. I would like to return home, but then I will let my parents down and that's why I have to be here like this and wait until I finish the school."

AFTER

M.T.

"I'm the final year of high school now. When we saw each other before, it was it was the most difficult year for me. After the covid-19 came, I was home and since we worked online, two friends helped me to follow the classes regularly, so I won't miss some of the classes and we became good friends. We talked about your workshops, how you work in a different way and teach us to change situations in life. They pointed out to me the mistakes that I had made. They told me that I had withdrawn a lot and that it was not good. They told me that I had to fight a little for myself and try to show how good I am and what kind of knowledge I have. Then I started talking a little more, helping my friends and then they changed too. I realized that it doesn't matter to them whether I wear expensive things or cheap ones, that it actually matters who is what kind of a person. It's easier and nicer for me at school now. We hang out more and go out together, we share things and they teach me what is modern now and how to dress better and how to look better. I'm great now."

BEFORE

M.J.

"I am an elementary school student, I am in the seventh grade and I am 14 years old. I live with my parents and 3 brothers who are older than me. I am the youngest. My father is an alcoholic, he is constantly drunk and he is constantly disturbing my mother. She is constantly ill, sometimes unable to get out of bed and constantly going to the doctor. My brothers forbid me various things all the time, I can't have a boyfriend, in general, my friends can't come to me, and I have to listen to them and work instead of my mother when she can't work in the house. When I was little, my father constantly beat me, now less, it rarely happens. I don't hang out with boys at school because I don't like them at all, they are all looking awful to me and they are all violent. I have just a few friends among the girls, I have the impression that they don't like me or that they are afraid of my brothers, so they won't hang out with me. That's how I spend every day alone and with my cats, I only hang out with them."

AFTER

M.J.

"I am 16 years old now. I enrolled in high school. I enrolled in medical high school to help my mother. She is better now, and my father reduced alcohol because he got a job and he is not allowed to drink at work. I have grown now. Participating in your workshops and the work you have shown us has moved me. I realized that it is important to change, that there are no victims, that we are not victims. Your workshop on discrimination affected me the hardest. It was very difficult for me after that. Then I went to a psychologist at school. She helped me resolve the situation with the brothers. They also got a job and want to help our mother to get better. Although she is much better now since father doesn't drink. I have become a little more confident, I study better and I want to change some things for the better. I wish that there is no more aggressive behavior. That we would hang out and help each other."

T.S.

"I am an elementary school student, I go to the sixth grade and I am 12 years old. I am a Roma girl. My parents do not live together. My mother was 16 when she gave birth to me. My father left her because of another woman. She now lives and works in Germany, she doesn't live with me, my grandma and grandpa take care of me. I have no brothers and sisters. I am alone. I go to school, but I don't like it, the boys touch me all the time. I am bigger than other girls and I have bigger breasts and everyone teases me. I told that to the class teacher and the psychologist, but they told me to just get away, not to hang out with them, but even when I take cover, they chase me, they follow me. Although I have a boyfriend and I think I will get married in the summer, it is better for me to get married than to go to school. My mother got married early, what does it matter, no one cares about me where I am and what I do anyway, this way I will at least be with him."

T.S.

"I'm a seventh grade student now. I didn't get married. I left that boyfriend. He began to be violent. He started threatening me, telling me some strange things, everything that you told us when you were doing a workshop on violence, aggression, everything that falls under aggression. You were all right. He showed it all and I remembered it and I left him. I told my mother that I did not want to get married and that I wanted to finish school, that I wanted to live differently. I don't like the way my mother lives, she made the mistake of getting married young, I won't do it that way. Now I'm going to enroll in high school and study."

VII CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS



The three-year experience of work of peer educators and the results achieved in the project "FAIR III for Youth" show that the model of work young people to young people give the best and fastest results in adopting healthy lifestyles, gender equality and non-violence.

It is recommended to develop and promote the "Program Y" and provide financial support for the implementation of projects that support young people to develop into healthy and successful individuals, because by doing so we are building a better future for all of us.