YCM

YOUTH CENTRES' MEDIALAB

Arci Solidarietà Onlus is an NGO located in Rome, Italy. It is born in 1995 with the mission to combat the social exclusion and to promote values as coexistence, inclusion and extension of the rights for all. In more than twenty years, we have realized national and international projects aimed to social promotion, addressed to the more fragile groups of people of the social fabric, promoting innovative methodologies of intervention. Through our projects, services, collaborations and events, we have acquired an extensive experience in the following areas of intervention: Youth and Childhood; Roma and Immigration; Citizenship and Social Inclusion.

Arci Solidarietà Onlus develops EMP project in **peripheral areas** of the city involving its Youth Centres network. Youth centres are attended by **preadolescents and adolescents (11-18yo)** at risk of social exclusion and school drop-out. The Youth Centre offers study and learning support, creative workshops, psychological help and organizes mutual help groups and circle times between pairs in order to create positive and educational relationships and to encourage autonomy. Our work involves families and school teachers, in activities such as family support, mediaton between schools and families and between families and social services.

Arci Solidarietà involved in Medialab activities psychologies, youth workers, educators from its staff, helped by technicians from its network, experts in ICT, filming and video editing, in order to strengthen our expertise.

OBJECTIVES

- Improve teenagers' ability to use media and social media
- Improve teenagers' technical skills
- Improve teenagers' autonomy and freedom of speech and expression
- Encourage interactions between Youth Centres, using social media and communication skills
- Promote a safe, aware and responsible use of ICT and New Media
- Increase online interaction of the Youth Center with the outside, thanks to Medialab activities
- Increase teenagers' perception of safety in the MediaLab
- Increase peer support and peer education

ACTIVITIES

PHASE 1: SPINALAB @ I RAGAZZI DEL MURETTO (SEPTEMBER '17-FEBRUARY '18)

The project officially started in November 2017 with a first experimentation in **"I Ragazzi del Muretto"** Youth Centre, one of the youth centres Arci Solidarietà manages in the city of Rome.

SpinaLab is the name we gave to the MediaLab in the Youth Centre (from the name of the neighbourhood of Rome Spinaceto), a series of **activities, meetings, workshops related to media, communication and use of ICTs.** SpinaLab took place in the Youth Centre, during its regular activities in order to encourage teenagers' participation and to foster the pedagogic continuity. SpinaLab's specific activities are:

During **September and October 2017**, teenagers and Youth Centre's educators created a short horror video in order to test teenager's attitude towards media creation and towards the use of ICTs and creativity in a resilient way: the idea of the video came to the educators seeing teenagers continuously running and screaming in the corridor!

Teenagers realized the videos and directed the scenes. Educators edited the video in the final version, in order to show the product to teenagers and increase curiosity and media skills.

In **October 2017**, educators organized a workshop for the realization of "polaroid storyboards" about a smartphone stolen in the Youth Centre in September: using a Polaroid, participants try to imagine what

happened to the smartphone and "elaborate" the episode that caused problems and suspects in the teenagers' group.

Nov '17-Feb '18:
Circle time and group discussions about social media, digital identity and the development of a sense of privacy. Periodic groups with participants to discuss topics related to adolescents' use of communication technologies, smartphones, social networks.
The main objective of these groups is to encourage the creation of a "digital identity", a new form of awareness of digital contents (pictures, videos, Instagram "stories" and "posts") that teenagers create and share on the internet.
This "digital identity" needs to be clear and defined and teenagers need to keep it under control, in order to reduce unwanted exposure leading to cyberbullying and other forms of abuse.

Nov '17-Feb '18:
Social media communication. Take pictures and videos of SpinaLab and Youth Centre activities, select the appropriate ones, create small communication campaigns and share on Facebook and Instagram accounts.

Dec '17-Jan '18:
Workshops for the realization of a self-promotional video of the Youth Centre.

The objective of this activity is to improve teenagers' self-advocacy and self-promotion skills through ICTs.
In the first phase of this activity (Nov-Dec 2017) teenagers took pictures and videos about regular activities and MediaLab activities, keeping them in an archive.
In a second phase (Jan 2018), teenagers meet an expert in three meetings:

o They selected together the appropriate contents, based on: quality of the video/picture; attention to authorizations – parent privacy agreements and teenager's agreement to be represented in the video; general attention to the privacy topics was discussed in the groups (no frontal pictures videos of minors are preferable); narrative (if a video is appropriate or not for the general content of the final product);

o Expert and teenager programmed the video editing, choosing: category (music video); music (selection of songs based on what teenagers like and the song's characteristics adaptable to editing like tempo, beat, chorus etc.); video cutting style (based on downbeat/upbeat, linked/not linked to the music beat, emphasizing of some characteristics etc.);

o expert completed the short demo of the video, presenting the editing style and collecting general opinions, reactions and feedback. The expert gave to teenagers tips and suggestions about the filming material to be produced in the next months: longer videos, in order to enlarge the editing opportunities; horizontal orientation of the mobile phone; preference for group scenes; attention to privacy.

PHASE 2: YOUTH CENTRES' MEDIALAB (MARCH '18- JULY '18)

After the experimentation with SpinaLab, starting from March '18, Arci Solidarietà implements Medialab activities also in other Youth Centres it manages in peripheral areas of Rome:

- "**Luogo Comune**" in the neighbourhood of Corviale;
- "**Muncraft**" in the neighbourhood of Tufello;
- "**Caleidos**" in the neighbourhood of Garbatella;

After a training course given by Youth workers from "I Ragazzi del Muretto", who implemented the first phase of the project, Arci youth workers started to perform similar activities in the other youth centres: **Circle time and group discussions** about media, **Social media communication, photography workshops** and **Workshops** for the realization of self-promotional videos and material and

In addition, we organized **inter-youth centres activities**, involving youngsters from all the centres:

May-July '18
ICT workshops in collaboration with **Fondazione Mondo Digitale,** an organization committed to the creation of an inclusive learning society in which innovation, instruction, inclusion and fundamental values are all combined to work together.

Workshops were hosted by "Luogo Comune" youth centre and attended by young people from the five youth centres.

- 21 May '18: **Coding**
- 1 June '18: **Robotics**
- 6 June '18: visit to the **Fablab**, in the headquarters of Fondazione Mondo Digitale
- 6 July '18: **Advanced Coding**

June '18
Inter-youth centres events in Caleidos (19 June '18) and Luogo Comune (28 June '18)
The events were organized with the collaboration of the youngsters and promoted on the web through the social media channels of the centres. These events permitted to bring together young people attending different youth centres and living in distant areas of the city.

RESULTS

The prototype was built to reach EMP projects main goals:

SHARE: During activities youth workers fostered the team-work between the group and the "peer to peer" support. As result, the helpers interacted with the learners and the learners sought help to their peers without adult intervention.
SAFE: Young people consider the Medialab a safe place, during the Medialab activities, young people spend time together working without adult intervention and they feel free to propose activities and to express their opinion. The project promoted a safe, aware and responsible use of new media and social media and helped young people to develop a "sense of privacy" on the web.
OPEN: Thanks to medialab activities, youth centres improved a better interaction of the Youth centers with the territory, online and offline.
EVALUATION: Participants liked the Medialab and participated to its improvement
MOVEMENT: The project is coherent with the other projects developed by Arci Solidarietà, and has successfully entered into the Youth centers' activities. The project strengthened the youth centre's network. The network was born, during the last years, to share experiences and good practices among youth workers. The main innovation brought by Medialab activities is that it brough together, online and face-to-face, young people attending different youth centers. It helped young people to overcome the physical gap between the suburbs and the different peripheries, putting them in touch with other people from distant areas of the city.