

Case study twenty: Austria: Dance out of the Line

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Aims

The project promotes physical and social competences such as teamwork, solidarity, tolerance and fairness, as well as the willingness to invest personal effort in an undertaking. By combining creativity and sport in the schools, young people have the opportunity to become aware of and explore their own motor functions, experiment with movement, and intensify their experience of the medium of dance.

Project outline

This Austria-wide dance project for young people has developed the educational and pedagogic functions of sport and dance on a national level by means of project weeks in

schools, led by professional dancers, choreographers and dance teachers. The basic concept of the project is: Sport = Movement = Dance. The improvisation techniques and work processes elaborated by teachers, students and external partners (dancers, dance teachers, sport institutions, etc.) working in close cooperation during the project have turned the schools into centres of movement and encounter, and have been presented to the public at a grand closing event to be held at the Choreographic Centre in Linz (CCL). In preparation for the school project weeks there has been a meeting of dance experts and teachers in the schools. In addition, a panel discussion on the subject of education, dance and movement has been held in Vienna. A homepage served as an instrument of networking and communication among all the project partners.

Apart from the educational focus in the schools, the project has been rounded off from a theoretical perspective with documentation and evaluation carried out by the Department of Sports Sciences of the University of Vienna. The project promoted a positive attitude towards the body, increased the capacity for cooperation and team spirit, and thus made an important contribution to maintaining a balance between mental and physical activities, at the same time counteracting the widespread problems of lack of exercise and isolation.

Research methods

Interview, questionnaire, focus groups and journals.

Results

Report and detailed documentation will be provided to the concerned departments of local and national governmental organisations and shall enlarge the understanding of the importance of dance education for the physical and psychological health of the students. The project helped the *Choreograficcentre Linz* to establish good contacts to schools in the area of Linz and it helped to open the institution to the public.

The projects helped to build lasting cooperation between artists and schools.

There was a very high impact on teachers. Contemporary dance was experienced. A lot of teachers involved in the project, or informed by colleagues about the project, became very interested in the possibilities of dance and continue to work with it in their classes.

Also the cooperation between artists and teachers were enhanced by this project.

The students were confronted with a form of art, which most of them did not know before. They experienced a new form of dance. Also working with their own body helped them to improve their performance and self esteem.

All artists involved wanted to continue working with schools after this project. The impact of working with students is that the artists have the possibility to reflect their own work and also to enhance their own creativity in working with the children.

The media were very interested in the project and this made the topic of art education, contemporary dance and education visible in public arena.

Main Impact

The main impacts were the children's positive attitude towards the body and increased the capacity for cooperation and team spirit. This made an important contribution to

maintaining a balance between mental and physical activities, and, at the same time counteracting the widespread problems of lack of exercise and isolation.

Main Challenges

Finances