

PSYCHO-SOCIAL MUSIC TRAINING

for teachers and carers of Syrian refugee children in Lebanon

a pilot project, in collaboration with Nai Foundation, Austria, and Sonbola Education Initiative, Lebanon



Objectives

Nai Foundation and Sonbola Education Initiative have identified the need to care for and treat Syrian refugee children displaced to Lebanon using music as a powerful social, educative and therapeutic tool. To this end, there is a necessity to train teachers and social workers to use a psychosocially contextualised pedagogic model of music education within a framework of community health care. Prima Materia aims to deliver this training, and to provide follow-up, supervision and evaluation for a period of 12 months.

Final Report of Preliminary Training, 17th - 22nd November 2014



Trainer: Deborah Parker

Field Manager Sonbola: Dania Yacoub

Translation: Hiba Dabbas

Logistics and Documentation: Ayham Saif

ASSOCIAZIONE PRIMA MATERIA



The course was held for 6 days, and for a total of 22 hours of tuition. A total of 26 people were present at various times during the course, but a nucleus of 12 educators attended the course continuously, including all the teaching staff of Sonbola.

After an introductory day, Monday 17th November, on Tuesday 18th Deborah Parker visited the 2 refugee camps where Sonbola has its schools, spending time with the families and children of the community, and attending some of the morning's lessons. This was very important for understanding the context and conditions in which Sonbola is working.



At the Sonbola centre (Marej, Bekaa), where the training was held, a small group of musical instruments (percussion, 2 violins) was available, together with facilities for listening, projection and documenting.

The group worked through practical workshop experience, group work, discussion and frontal theoretical teaching.



During the workshop moments, the group experimented:

- musical abilities: listening, movement/dance, the voice/singing, instrumental techniques/expression, creativity/invention.
- self development and perception through music.
- Non-directive, semi-structured and structured activities; development of repertoire
- group experience and management

From the theoretical point of view, An very general introduction was given for:

- elements of developmental and relational psychology relevant to the help/education relationship (Stern)
- elements of neuro-biology from understanding of psycho-physical integration (Damasio)
- framework for observation, description and interpretation of musical form and content (Parker 2012)

The practical activity included:

- principles of psycho-social music care and education (Osborne)
- elements of group dynamics (Bion)

Response to the course contents was very positive, with noticeable growth of interest, dedication and commitment to learning about the use of music to attend to the emotional and psychological disintegration of traumatised and stressed child refugees. Although this methodology is totally new to this population of educators, they are convinced that music can help them to communicate better with the children, and can help the children to express themselves where verbal communication fails.



Clear signs emerged of the group's own need to metabolize the trauma and stress affecting the educators themselves. It will be necessary to develop a support system for the educators, in the form of intervision and local supervision for the work they are doing.

An evaluation questionnaire was completed by the participants on the last day. This will be summarized as soon as possible, in order to give structured feedback for future strategy planning.



Future plans

The group will now meet after some weeks to share the first experiences of introducing psycho-social music education in to their school programmes. Questions will be formulated and sent to the trainer, and subsequently a Skype supervision meeting will be arranged for all the group in the Sonbola centre.

Deborah Parker will be present in Marej for on-site supervision and follow-up, Friday 30th Jan 2015 (14.00-17.00) and Saturday 31st Jan (09.30 – 13.00).

Baalbek, 23rd November 2014

Deborah Parker