

A large, stylized blue hand graphic is positioned in the background, with fingers spread. The hand is rendered in a light blue color with a darker blue outline. The background is a gradient of light blue to white.

David Herrera

The guide for volunteers

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A mind opener full of ideas



Erasmus+

ASOCIATIA
**Young
Initiative**



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ABOUT THE AUTHOR



David Herrera Rivero is an EVS (European Volunteering Service) volunteer from Spain. He did his project for one year in Bucharest, Romania, in the NGO “Asociatia Young Initiative”. He worked with homeless and abused kids and teenagers in different centers. He developed English and Spanish

languages clubs over Bucharest and he imparted workshops in high schools and libraries.

Before his project, David Herrera studied Business Administration for 5 years in Spain. Then, he worked in a bank for a year. He became a teacher in an academy, teaching economy, mathematics and English. That last period motivated him to teach and help young people to improve their skills and motivation, so he decided to do volunteering in a foreign country.

While doing his project, he noted some special needs not only for the kids, but also for the volunteers. He realized that volunteering is both motivation and skills, when working with determined target groups. That’s why he decided to study different sources to improve his activities and, afterwards, share them with other volunteers, who could have the same needs than him.

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SPECIAL THANKS

To my family, my friends, my students, and to all the special people who influenced me, doing this project and this year the best experience of my life.

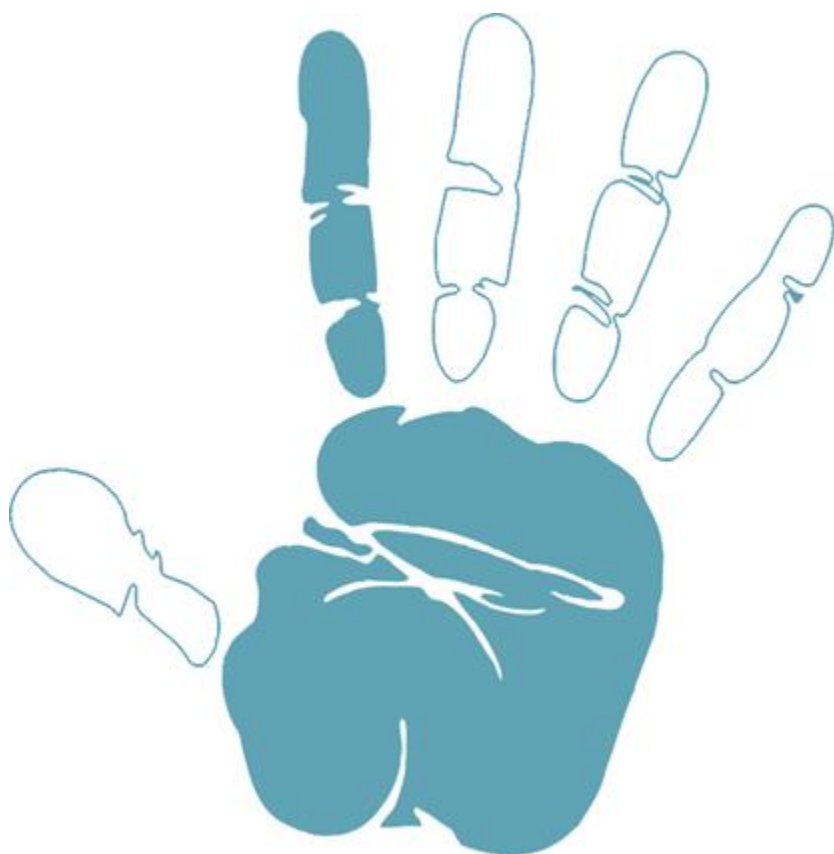
Special thanks to you, reader of this book or part of it. I hope you become even more enamored and inspired about volunteering, and I wish you lot of success in your future!

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ABOUT THE BOOK



1.1. WHY THIS BOOK?

There are plenty of **differences** about volunteering and a professional job. However being a volunteer doesn't mean not to be a professional in what you do. Most probably, you have been chosen by a NGO after a selection process and plenty of interviews. Maybe your profile fits perfectly with the activities that your NGO does, or you already have lot of experience in volunteering. Or even better, maybe both of them! But, what if it is not like that? What if this is the first time that you do volunteering? Or you want to improve your skills? Did you do volunteering in other countries? This has been my first **experience** with volunteering and in a different country. What I did before was teaching to kids and teenagers, and working in a bank. Maybe it fits for an NGO that works with young people and organizes seminars and events, but coming from abroad to do volunteering changes your target groups, their needs and the methods that you have to use.

Finally, we have to adapt and a new experience begins. But starting new projects and experiences is great. What we need is to get the **knowledge** as soon as possible, to develop our activities correctly from the beginning. My needs were to know what kind of activities could I do, when, with whom, how to work with my **target group** and how to deal with many **situations** when I don't know the **language**. After searching for more information about volunteering, I found plenty of books destined for NGOs about recruitments, fundraising, seminars... or manuals for trainers & facilitators. What I couldn't find easily were books destined for **volunteers**, with ideas, activities, advices and basic information about safety and psychology. That is what I needed! And this is what I offer.

1.2. WHAT THIS BOOK IS AND WHAT IT IS NOT

The **aim** of this book is to provide you, as volunteer, basic information, resources, tools and **ideas** to put them in practice with your target groups. Reading this book will help you with planning, team management and safety at work. It will also add an extra **motivation**, new and fresh ideas to your activities. If we have the knowledge and the skills as high as our motivation, our target groups will be much more benefited, and this is exactly the first result that we are looking for. Also, after improving your skills and the situation of your target group, you will **contribute** to improve and promote volunteering as well. With your activities you will motivate and teach other volunteers or potential volunteers, increasing the chain of volunteering.

However, this book isn't a big thesis full of theory and it doesn't pretend to be a manual to be followed word by word. It provides you, ideas and resources that were useful to me and I consider them useful for you. It can't cover all the information you need in this limited space, but you will be ready to **continue** your research after reading it. It will be on you to use, change or **adapt** them in every form in order to obtain the best results.

1.3. STRUCTURE

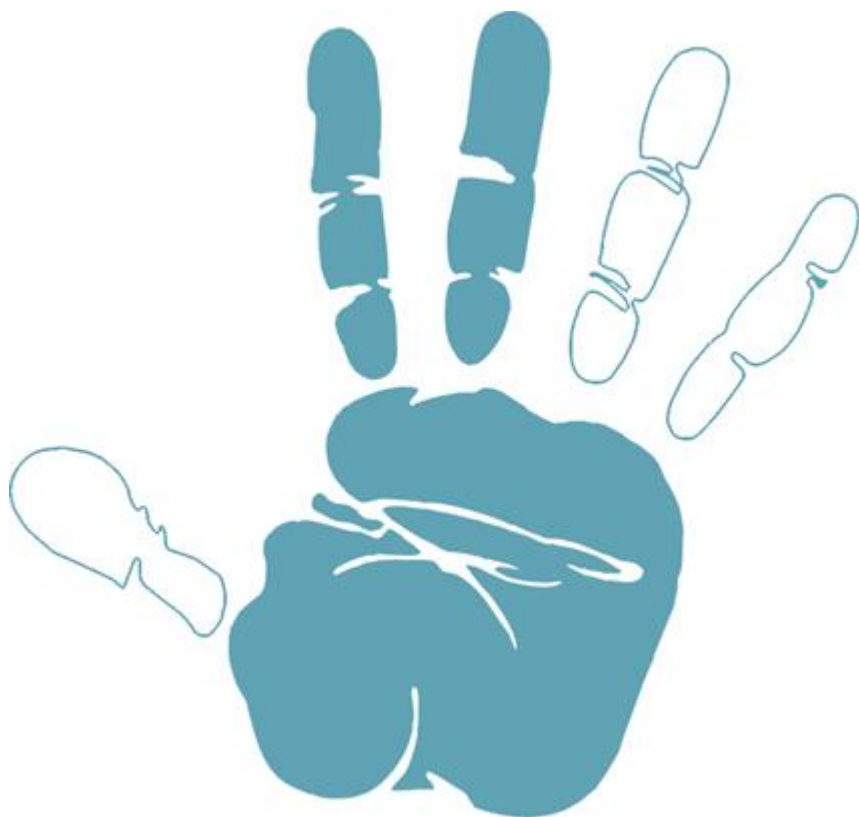
The book is structured in **4 main parts**: “ready?”, “steady?”, “go!” and “finish?” In the first part “ready” you will find tips and advices for your schedule, time management, team work, team management, working responsibilities and safety at work. Also, you will find information about different target groups and how to deal with some special situations. This chapter finishes with topic ideas for your workshops, like gender equality, respect, creativity etc. The objective in this part is to provide the base of theory that we should know before starting our activities.

In the second part “steady” we will focus on the previous preparation needed for the activities. We’ll learn how to set objectives and how to make a plan. Additionally, we will check out some tips, in order to prepare the activities correctly (use of materials, budget...). The objective here is to fulfil our learning process and be able to start with our activities.

The objective of **the third part, “go!”** is to provide you a big selection of games and ideas for your activities. But it will be on you to adapt them to your target group. First, we’ll start with a list of icebreakers, team buildings and energizers. Then, you’ll find educational activities for writing, reading, mathematics, general culture and creativity. We’ll finish with a big list of games for entertainment.

In the final part **“finish?”** we will consider other options to do while volunteering, like promotion, fundraising or different ways to continue your contribution to the society after your volunteering period.

READY?



2.1. YOUR SCHEDULE

You might have some fixed working hours, travelling time, preparation time and free time. As the fixed hours and travelling depend on your project and activities, we will focus on your preparation and free time with some recommended tips:

TIME MANAGEMENT TIPS

1. Use an **agenda** and organize it frequently and properly with daily, weekly and monthly routines.
2. Select your **aim**. What do you want to reach and how much time do you need?
3. Set short term **objectives** with regular deadlines.
4. Don't mix **free time** with working time. Set both properly considering an extra time at work for unexpected moments (traffic jam, more time spent in an activity...).
5. Don't consider **Facebook** as extra time!
6. Not everything is working time or free time. Remember that you have other **responsibilities** in your life, as most probably you aren't living alone (cleaning, groceries...). Set and respect them.
7. **Prioritize!** Do tasks in order of importance. Complete one before going to the next.
8. Keep your working space **organized**. You will work more efficiently and you won't waste your time searching for things.
9. Be **sedulous**. Take a positive attitude. You will reach your aim easier.
10. Take **regular breaks**. For instance, 10 minutes every hour.

11. Share tasks with your team.

12. Review your progress. Make an evaluation of your schedule and edit it if needed.

2.2. YOUR TEAM

As volunteers we are working together and for a target group. This means that we will be rarely alone. Before starting your project and your activities, you may have a team to work with. But a team is not only a group of people working together. A **team** is useful when its effect is better than the sum of individual people. This is called **synergy**, and to reach it, your team has to be formed carefully with rules and common goals. Afterwards, each team member has to respect them and to assume clear **responsibilities**, related with his or her skills. This is the key to avoid frustrations when misunderstandings or when something fails, and to build the base of a future team since the beginning.

Dr. Meredith Belbin, researcher and management theorist, studied team-work for many years. He considers that people in teams tend to assume different "**team roles**". He defined a team role as "a tendency to behave, contribute and interrelate with others in a particular way". This means that skills aren't the only important thing but also the respect and the relations between members. Belbin also suggests that, by understanding your role within a particular team, you can develop your strengths and manage your weaknesses as a team member, and so improve your contribution to the team. Teams can become unbalanced if all the members have similar roles or behavior. For

example, if team members have similar strengths, they may tend to compete rather than cooperate. To form a balanced team, make sure that all its needs and roles are covered.

Once that the team is **running**, you should have regular meetings for evaluation and briefings. However, this doesn't mean to meet somewhere to talk about something just because it is mandatory. As a team member, be open and honest, and never forget the rules and the respect to the others. Finally, as **Henri Ford said: "Coming together is a beginning; keeping together is progress; working together is success"**. Here you have a few principles of successful team work:

10 PRINCIPLES FOR TEAMWORK

1. The ideal **number** of members will depend on the objectives and needs. The team would be unbalanced if there are too many members (some of them won't work), or if there aren't enough members (too much work).
2. **Get to know** each other, better in relaxed environments.
3. Decide the **rules**, rights and responsibilities. Accept and respect them.
4. Make a clear distribution of **roles**, according to each member competences (creativity, practical, problem solving...)
5. Set time for **evaluations** and useful feedbacks.

6. **Process** is even more important than the objectives.
7. **Mistakes** are a chance to learn, not to fight.
8. **Trust** in and support your mates.
9. Take new **challenges**.
10. A team is formed in both formal and informal ways. Team work is also **fun**!

Adapted from: Pohl, M & Witt, J. 2000.

2.3 YOUR TARGET GROUP

Once that your team is formed and your working time scheduled, it is time to **get in known** with your target group and their needs. This is really important, as we want to provide them the best learning. Then, we can perform the best activities with the right **methodology** to satisfy them. Their **needs** depend on their age, background, social situation, education, skills, motivation, personality... Here you have an approach about the general profiles and needs by different **ages**, adapted from *Jean Piaget, Bazán Carreras* and *Rojas Acosta*.

AGE	CHARACTERISTICS	ACTIVITIES
0-2	The kids use their senses to know the world.	Related with the 5 senses (colors, sounds...) Affection
2-6	They learn the language. The communication has to be fluent and relaxed for them to understand better. They develop their personality and autonomy.	Language activities. Creativity Music Cohabitation rules (respect, sharing...) Habits (hygiene, schedule...) Affection
7-11	They can use logical and rational concepts to understand the difference between right and wrong behavior. Some difficulties appear while learning.	Numbers (cardinal, ordinals) Basic mathematics Languages Music Sports Teamwork Practical workshops like carpentry, sciences, creativity... Affection
+12	They can learn how to make the difference between hypothesis and real life. Difficulties appear while learning new and more complicated things.	Logical challenges Mathematics Ethic topics Society & values Politics Learning reinforcements

	<p>They don't use to express their emotions and feelings.</p> <p>They use to search risky situations without thinking on the consequences.</p>	<p>Motivation games</p> <p>Cooperation games</p> <p>Practical workshops</p> <p>Empathy & respect</p>
+18	<p>If your target group is composed of university students, they use to be accustomed to memorize.</p> <p>For them, reading is something mandatory for the exams, and not as entertainment.</p> <p>They are afraid of failing exams.</p> <p>They have a huge potential.</p>	<p>General culture</p> <p>Learning from mistakes</p> <p>Languages</p> <p>Initiative & entrepreneurship</p> <p>Motivation & self-confidence</p> <p>Problem solving</p> <p>Habits</p> <p>Sociability & cooperation</p> <p>Curiosity</p> <p>Personality development</p>
+50	<p>If you are working with elder people, especially if they don't work, they use to have so much free time, but they can't do what they like.</p> <p>They don't have enough resources.</p> <p>They think it is too late to do things.</p> <p>They don't have lot of friends.</p>	<p>Meeting people</p> <p>Informatics</p> <p>Dancing</p> <p>Tourism & travelling</p> <p>Theatres & museums</p> <p>Activities for & with other target groups.</p> <p>They will feel special & useful</p>

Adapted from: Jean Piaget, Bazán Cabrera & Rojas Acosta.

Please, remember that their needs don't depend only on the age, as there are other **factors** like background, education, motivation, personality... and even every person has specific needs. These are special cases that should be **studied** and developed by a professional, so here we will only get an approach of what should be important to work with them:

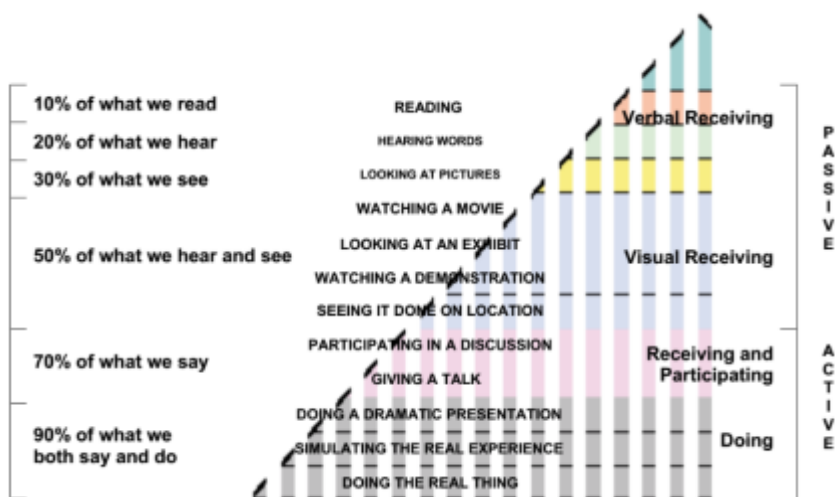
TOPICS TO WORK IN SPECIAL CASES		
Abused children	Educational needs	Lack of motivation
<p>According to James, Gil, Barudy and Green, their special needs are mainly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Respect ■ Safety & protection ■ Integration ■ Confidence ■ Motivation ■ Rules and routines ■ Games ■ Humor ■ Creativity ■ Cooking ■ Nice environment 	<p>Depending on their special needs, the activities should be focused on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ School subjects ■ Homework ■ New study methods ■ Rules, habits and routines ■ Time management ■ Motivation ■ Self-confidence. 	<p>Activities adapted to their hobbies.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Positive reinforcement. ■ Integration in a motivated team. ■ Habits and routines (to sleep and eat better). ■ Self-confidence. ■ Support their ideas.

As you may have seen, there are plenty of different needs to be covered, from affection until homework. This means that, depending on the needs and kind of activity, we can use different **methodologies**, as there are different kinds of learning too. We learn from our family, friends, at school, camps... All these contexts can be organized in:

- **Informal education:** Whereby we acquire values, attitudes, skills or knowledge from our environment (family, friends, mass media...). It focuses on our experiences.
- **Formal education:** Structured learning from school to university. It focuses on our mind.
- **Non-formal education:** We learn from experiences without excluding theories. For example, when learning a language, there are plenty of books full of grammar. Nevertheless, we will learn better if we can practice that grammar in a good environment in a group of friends, while learning values.

The learning process can be well defined by **Confucius**: *“I hear and I forget, I see and I remember, I do and I understand”*. To go deeper in this, check out the Cone of learning, by **Edgar Dale** and developed by **Bruce Hyland**:

Cone of learning



Edgar Dale, Audio Visual Methods in Teaching (3rd edition). Hone, Rinehart and Winston (1969)

2.4. YOU

As you may have noticed, there are many important aspects that we, as volunteers have to face and deal with. When working with determined cases, we need to give our best perform, overall with special target groups (abused kids, students with bad behavior...). Let's take a look to some difficult **situations** with some useful solutions to face them. Please, note that this list isn't prescriptive. You may face other difficult situations. Furthermore, we, as volunteers, have limited **responsibilities**, and we must have the support of our coordinators and assistants.

SITUATION	SOLUTIONS
	TIME
Not enough time to finish the activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ When preparing the activity, think on some points that may be omitted if needed. ■ Go faster or skip not important steps while doing the activity. ■ Check the time constantly and make sure that you follow the schedule. ■ Don't take too much extra time. The participants will be exhausted and frustrated. ■ If you take extra time, compensate it in the next activities. ■ Stop the activity in a point and return in the next session. ■ If there will be only one session, send information by email. ■ When planning, make a better schedule.
Activity finished too early	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Have extra activities prepared for "just in case". ■ Don't set huge periods of time for an activity just to spend more time. Finally the participants will finish and they won't have anything to do. ■ Let the workshop finish earlier. ■ Play some funny games if everything went fine and the participants are in the mood. ■ When planning, make a better schedule.

**Not enough time
to prepare an
activity**

- Improvisation is a skill gained with experience, lot of work, and a bit of personality and motivation.
- Anticipate to the situation.
- Have some ideas written to “emergency cases”, like easy activities or games.

PARTICIPANTS

**Interruptions for
unpunctuality**

- Compensate the punctual ones.
- Talk about the importance of punctuality.
- In extreme cases don't let unpunctual people join the activity.

**Lack of attention
with
interruptions/noi
sy participants**

- Be calm. Don't yell at them.
- Raise your hand.
- Use curious objects or sounds to catch their attention (little toys).
- Use colors (red, yellow or green) to describe the level of noise in the room and set rules and reactions for each color.
- Pass them a ball, it will interrupt their topic.
- Create silent competitions.
- Give positive reinforcement to the ones who pay attention immediately.

**Lack of attention
when the activity
is not interesting
enough**

- Check out what motivates them.
- Prepare your next activities according to your target group.
- Ask them to make an effort to understand the activity and give them a positive

	reinforcement after it.
Hyperactive/ dominant	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Give them physical responsibilities and personal challenges.■ Have a one to one or group discussion to change their attitude (self-reflection).■ Don't let the team become unbalanced. Don't forget about the others.
Aggressive	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Set the rules at the beginning together with them.■ Avoid shouting them.■ Take them out of the group and have a calm but solid discussion.■ Keep them out of the group until they are calm again.■ Give them positive reinforcements when they are calm.
Lack of motivation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Break a group of non-motivated participants.■ Discover what motivates them.■ Give them positive reinforcements.
Less participants every time	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Ask them for a feedback.■ Recheck your activities and methodology.■ Set a long term objective, for example to obtain the medium language in a course.■ Set shorter term objectives, like a list of assistance.■ Offer a physical prize, like a certificate.

LOGISTICS

Big groups

- Break them into smaller groups in the same activity.
- Segment groups and replace them in different hours.

Small places

- Reorganize the place.
- Check if it is possible to move out some objects.
- Consider on using other places (going outside, to the hall...).

Inadequate places

- Check always the place before using it.
- Bring materials to make it more adequate.
- Try to adapt your activities.
- Have other activities or places prepared.

Lack of materials

- Great moment to promote sharing resources.
- Adapt your activities.
- Think on games that don't require materials.
- Create or read a story
- Give objects a new use!

Miss understanding of different languages

- Learn as soon as possible the local language.
- Prepare your speech before.
- Write on a big flipchart the main ideas and explanations.
- Make drawings.
- Use your body to communicate too.

YOUR PERFORMANCE

Forgetting ideas/procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Write on a paper the main ideas and explanations. ■ Take your time to recheck them. ■ If it happens often, study and practice better your speech.
Not allowed to answer some questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Be honest and say that you can't answer some questions... ■ Or say that you don't know the answer and change the topic.
Unable to answer some questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ If you really don't know an answer, say that you will search information about it (and do it). In the next session they will note that you cared about it. If the activity is only once, you can send the answer by email, Facebook... ■ Don't try to invent a fast answer, they won't trust in you anymore.
Lack of ideas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Don't worry, best ideas come in unexpected moments. ■ Don't think on complicated ideas. Think on easy and basic things. ■ Search for information, pictures or videos to get inspired. ■ Experience the creativity! Have a walk, take pictures, draw a picture, build something... you will face new situations, problems and solutions.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Write down all your ideas, sometimes we just forget them.
Miss understanding explanations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Prepare different explanations.■ Search for more information.■ Make drawings.■ Never leave someone without understanding your explanations.■ Don't worry about the time you spend.■ If it will take too much to explain everything again to someone, do it after the activity ends, or by email.
Bad feedback received	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Accept it. Each person has a different perception and every feedback is valid.■ Improve those fields with bad feedback (unpunctuality, boring activities...).
Lack of authority in an activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Recheck the responsibilities with your team.■ Restudy how to deal with special participants.■ Don't forget: authority means respect and real leadership, no fear.■ It may happen when you are nervous, check the situation below.
Getting nervous	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Think on it as something normal. Who is not nervous when talking or acting in front of people?■ Believe in your speech and in the activities that you prepared.■ Trust more in you. Self-confidence!

ENVIRONMENT**Unhelpful
assistants/
coordinators**

- As volunteers, we have limited responsibilities. They should help.
- Ask them for help.
- Ask for a meeting with the team and the project manager.

**Bad
temperatures
(hot/cold places)**

- Try as much as possible to keep a good environment in the place.
- Open/close doors or windows when needed.
- Adapt your activities to the temperature (if your participants are getting cold, do an energizer!

**Bad weather
conditions**







- Check the weather predictions.
- Always have a plan B (place and activity).
- If it is impossible to perform the activity, explain the reasons and think on the solutions together with the group.



UNEXPECTED CHANGES**Changing
schedule, topic of
the activity,
target group,
place, team...**

- Be proactive, efficient and fast.
- Always have a plan B. Other activities and places for “just in case” moments.
- Readapt your activities. For example, if you planned an activity about cutting and coloring pictures but unexpectedly you find a younger group, change it to only use colors.

2.5. SAFETY AND PROTECTION

Depending on your project and target group, you will work in different places, like centers, classrooms, libraries, parks... take in consideration this general tips about **safety** at work and adapt them to your activities. Think on the place where you will work, then, **identify** possible risks and how you will prevent them. Don't forget that risky situations can happen also while working at home with the computer, or while going to work.

BASIC TIPS FOR SAFETY ACTIVITIES	
	Find all the plugs and avoid activities near them.
	Identify risky points: corners, tables, wardrobes, doors...
	Don't leave dangerous objects near the kids. Use always materials adapted to their ages and needs.
	Small fallings could happen. Stay alert and prevent them (activities on carpets, running carefully, not staying on high points)...
	Have always near a first aid kit in your working place.
	While going to work, respect all the signs. Leave home with enough time and keep your phone charged.

	<p>Stay in a good position while working with your computer, studying or reading.</p>
	<p>Remember. In any emergency situation, always call a professional.</p>

2.6. TOPIC IDEAS

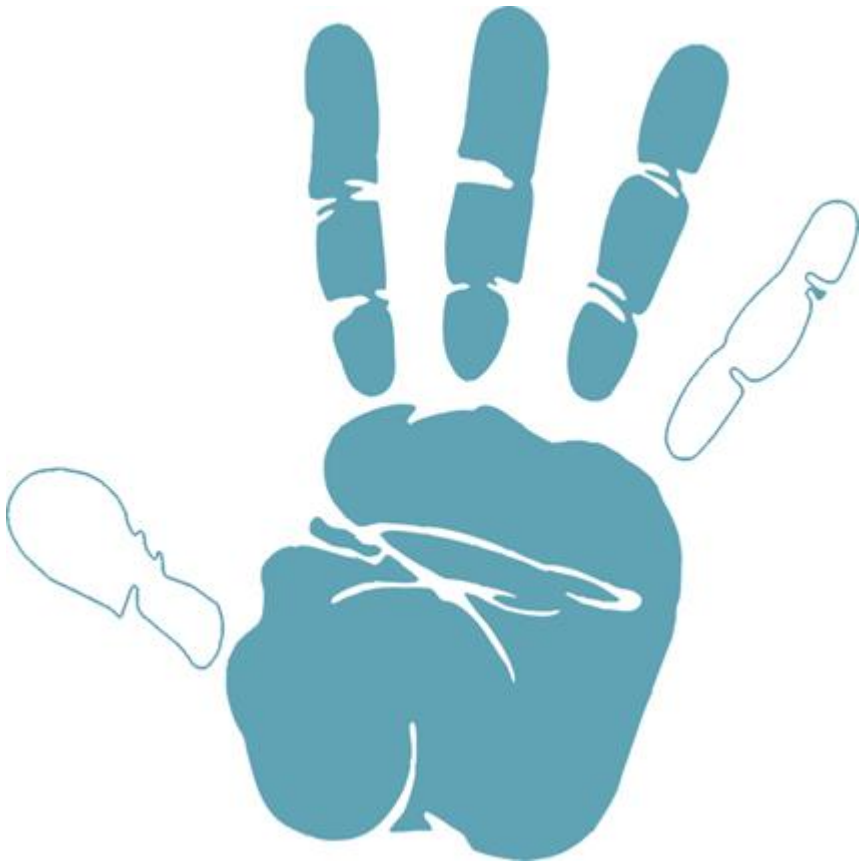
Here you have some important topic ideas to work through your activities. Some examples are given here. For more information and ideas, please, check out the chapter 4 “go!”

1. **Animal rights:** For all ages. Situation and importance of animal care.
2. **Board games:** Adapted to learn languages, teamwork...
3. **Bullying:** Especially for young people and teenagers.
4. **Citizenship**
5. **Computer skills:** Especially for kids and elder people. Activities to learn how to use internet, write documents, make presentations..
6. **Cooperation**
7. **Creativity**
8. **Curriculum vitae:** Ideas for teenagers. Tips about how to make a proper CV.
9. **Dancing**
10. **Debates & discussions:** Role playing in different situations to learn how to respect other’s arguments.

- 11. Entrepreneurship:** For teenagers. Different options to start a new project (law, hobbies, creativity, people's needs...
- 12. Environment care**
- 13. First aid**
- 14. Fundraising**
- 15. General culture**
- 16. Gender equality**
- 17. Geography**
- 18. Healthy food and habits**
- 19. History**
- 20. Hobbies and jobs related:** Ideal for teenagers.
- 21. Homosexuality**
- 22. Human rights**
- 23. Hygiene (shower, teeth):** Practice it! Bring tooth paste, water and glasses. Explain the process and the importance. Brush your teeth together!
- 24. Interaction with local people:** Invite local people to your workshops. They can talk about their selves and be an example for your target group.
- 25. Job interviews:** Tips about how to perform in a job interview, (clothes, frequent questions with possible answers...).
- 26. Justice**
- 27. Languages**
- 28. Mathematics**
- 29. Memory games**
- 30. Motivational**
- 31. Music**

32. Peace**33. Politics:** For teenagers. Actual information about politics.**34. Possible studies****35. Prejudices****36. Racism****37. Reading****38. Recycling:** Information and learning habits to recycle. Practice it!**39. Routines and rules****40. Safe sex:** Especially for teenagers.**41. Safety at school and home****42. Science****43. Searching for a job:** Useful websites and how to apply.**44. Sports****45. Sustainability****46. Teamwork****47. Theatre****48. Tips to study better:** Time management.**49. Traditional games****50. Tolerance****51. Tourism:** Local, national and international places to visit, food...**52. Volunteering promotion**

STEADY?



3.1. OBJECTIVES AND PLANNING

When setting the objectives for your activities, try to follow the SMART model by **G.T Doran** (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time lined) or the SPIRO model by **J.E Jones** (specificity, performance, involvement, realism and observability).

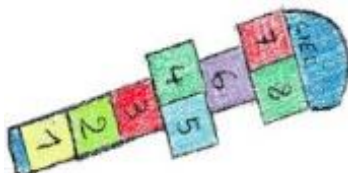
SMART MODEL	
S	Specific: What do you want to accomplish, where and why? Which is your target group?
M	Measurable: How will you prove that you reached it?
A	Achievable: Think on realistic objectives, if we set impossible ones, we will lose our motivation, as we can't reach them.
R	Relevant: It should have an important impact.
T	Time: Include deadlines, dates and frequency to avoid doing everything in the last day.

E.g.: I will teach Romanian to 5 years old kids in a homeless center for 8 weeks. I will evaluate their progress with the exercises done. In each class we will work with a topic (colors, animals, family...).

Now that your **goals** are defined, it is time to create a **plan** to reach them. Don't take it as something mandatory to be filled or to be "forgotten" in the recycle bin. Fill it **carefully**, overall the objectives and the chronological order of your exercises. It will help you to not to get lost in the middle of the activity and to guide your activity without surprises or wasting time. Consider also to **draw** how you think the activity will be (place, number of kids, space, obstacles...). Here you

have a very simple and already made example of what you should think on and fill in before doing an activity:

ACTIVITY SHEET	
DATA	
Name of the activity: Romanian numbers	Target group: 5 years old kids
Date: 22/07/2016	Volunteers: David and Mónica
Time: 1 hour	Coordinator: Isabel
OBJECTIVES	
What objectives? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Numbers from 1-30 • Motivation & fun 	How? Methods & tools: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Color chalks for hopscotch • Flashcards & pictures • Papers & colors
TIME	
Chronological order of the different exercises, explanations and time required: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Explanation of the activity & rules. 10 minutes. 2. Game: Hopscotch, explanation & rules. (We paint squares with numbers on the floor...). 25 minutes. 3. Color flash cards. 25 minutes. 	



EVALUATION

(To be filled at the end of the activity, together with the other volunteers and coordinator).



- The activity went good and the time management was as expected.
- The kids were able to say the numbers every time that they jumped on a square and it was improved after coloring the flashcards with numbers and pictures.
- To improve: After the 3rd activity, the tables were too dirty. Next time, we will put better papers to protect them.

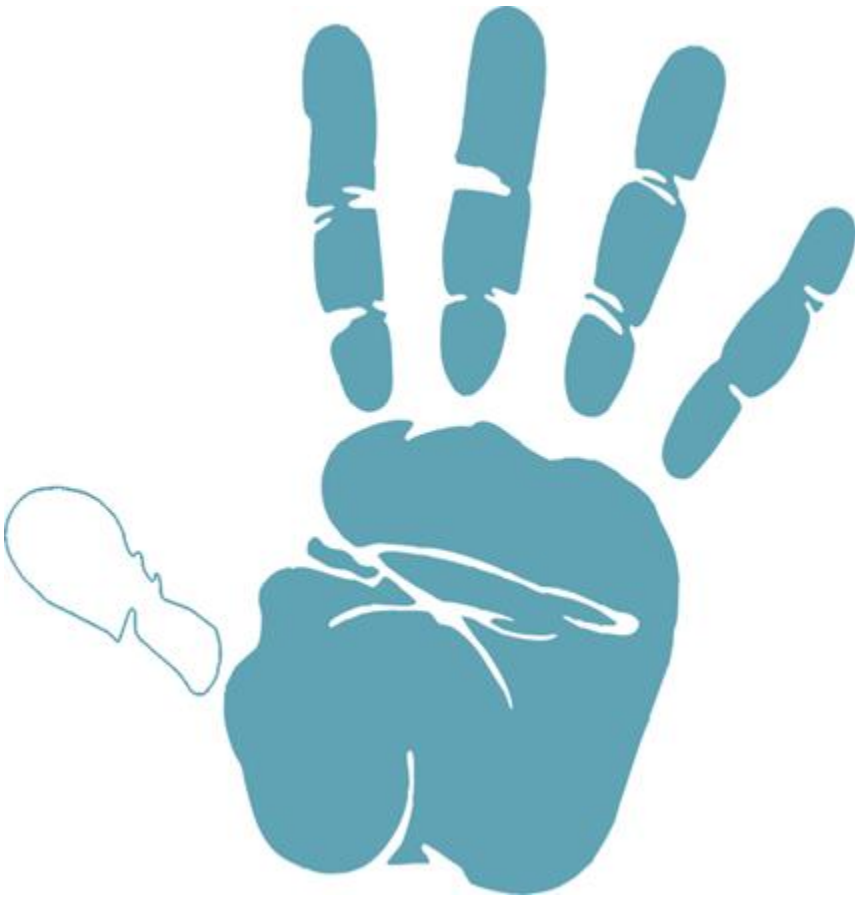
3.2. TOOLS AND MATERIALS

Just one step more! So far, you have your activities scheduled, your team prepared and your target group and its needs identified. You also learnt how to face and prevent some situations and how to plan your activities. Now, it's time to... **prepare** them! According to the planning above, you will need **materials** to do your activities. However, most probably you will have a limited budget. Even if the materials are already provided by the association, we should follow some basic rules to make our activities sustainable. This helps us to save materials and

money for our next activities, and to reduce the impact in the environment. Here you have some tips and principles to consider when preparing and developing your activities, depending on the places where you are:

- | | |
|---------------------|--|
| At the store | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Try as much as possible to buy in local stores. ■ Check and compare all the prices and products. ■ The best way to compare prices is to check the price per kilogram/piece. ■ Choose the best price-quality combination. ■ Choose washable and reusable materials. ■ Always ask for the stamp. ■ Keep all the bills organized. |
| At work | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Set a recycling corner. ■ Use the materials properly and don't waste them. ■ Turn off the lights if not needed and unplug electronic devices. ■ Use doors, windows and clothes to control the temperature instead of heaters/air conditioner. ■ Collect and clean all the materials when finishing the activities (together with all the people). ■ Go to work by public transport, by foot or bicycle. ■ Encourage your team and participants to do the same. ■ Set rules to take care of the materials. |
| At home | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Set a recycling corner. ■ Reduce and reuse. ■ Keep everything organized and clean. ■ Think globally and don't waste resources (water, energy...) |

GO!

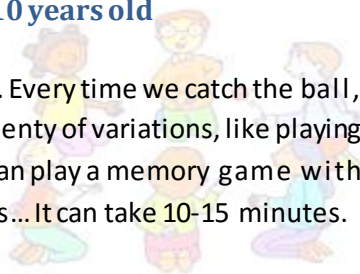


4.1. ICEBREAKERS

Finally, we are **meeting** our target group for the first time! It 'll be important for all of us to **get in known** each other, while having a good time. Icebreakers are also useful to create a base of a future team, especially if you are working with them for more time. Here you have some examples of **icebreakers**, for different ages and group sizes, considering that a **medium size** group is about 10-15 people. Remember that it is on you to **adapt** the idea to your target group and your goals. You can find much more in books or on the internet.

1. Catch the ball: 10-15 kids, +10 years old

In a circle, we pass the ball to the others. Every time we catch the ball, we have to say our name. You can add plenty of variations, like playing faster, slower, shouting or quietly. You can play a memory game with the names, say hobbies instead of names... It can take 10-15 minutes.



2. Impossible word game: Big groups, +15 years old

In a circle, a participant says the first word of his/her name. Then, each participant adds his/her own letter. All the letters are written, forming a word. After 10 seconds, the last person has to read the word, which should be difficult to pronounce. This game is useful to identify their names while with a letter. The time adds the motivational part. You

can change the rules about the time, the letters, the turns, forming teams... It shouldn't take more than 10-15 minutes.

3. Great wind blows... 15-20 people, +15 years old

It's a bit similar to the game **"musical chairs"** that you most probably know. In this game, instead of music, we add the "get to know" part. Put chairs in a circle, looking to the center. People are sat, and there is at least one chair less than the total of participants. One person stays in the middle and says any hobby or characteristic about him/her. If a sat participant also has that characteristic, he/she has to leave the sit and find another one. If a participant can't find a new chair to sit on, he/she has to stay in the middle and repeat the process. The game is funnier when we find common hobbies, so more people are involved.

4. Candy introductions: Small groups, all ages

Prepare a bag of candies with different colors. Assign a question/task for each color. Ask the participants to take a candy and follow the instructions assigned to that color. The tasks can be related with names, hobbies, funny situations, small tasks... depending on the instructions; it can take around 30 minutes.

5. Fabulous flags. 10-15 people, +10 years old

Each person designs a flag that symbolizes who they are and what they like. They can use flipcharts, color papers, markers, objects... every

idea will be welcome! A variation can be to design a flag for the whole group or by small teams. At the end, place the flags on the walls and ask them the meanings. The time required is about 30 minutes.

4.2. TEAM BUILDINGS

After getting in known each other, it is time to reinforce the base of the team. You can make it with some funny games that require **cooperation** in a nice environment. Team buildings are recommended not only in the first meetings, but also after regular periods of time, when the team has performed and some discrepancies may have appeared (and not only between participants, but also between volunteers).

1. Bye-bye fears! & Hello rules! All sizes, all ages

In a circle, ask the participants to share their biggest fears and to write them. In the middle, place a box and put all the papers in it. There are plenty of things that you can do with the box. You can destroy it together with the whole group, or leaving it in a corner,



explaining that there is no life without fears and they will make us stronger. It is a good exercise to promote unity and group cohesion, as people realize that everyone has similar fears. You can adapt it asking them about the most important rules they consider useful for the team, and place them on the walls (instead of destroying them, of

course). Afterwards, you can set a system with points to respect the rules. You can spend easily over 30 minutes.

2. The longest line: Big groups, +10 years old

Make teams and ask them to form the longest line using only their own bodies and any clothing or things in their pockets. You can change the rules by asking them to use other materials or setting different limits of time. It is a very simple but effective game. When different games require small teams, remember to change the components of the groups for the next games. It takes around 10 minutes.

3. Marshmallow challenge: Small groups, +15 years old



Make teams and give each of them 20 spaghetti, 1 meter of tape and 1 meter of rope. They have to build the highest tower, in 20 minutes. The tower has to be stable enough to put a marshmallow on the top. This game is really popular in business (though I knew about it thanks to my mate Henri).

You can find more information and videos on the internet. Adapt it using other materials, changing the time, the rules...

4. Defend the egg: Small groups, +15 years old



Groups have to build a structure to protect an egg from cracking, using limited materials (papers, plastics, tape...). After 30 minutes, you will

drop an egg from 2 meters, and their structures have to withstand the fall. Drop an egg into each team basket and add more awards, like for the best design or the fastest team. It may take over one hour.

5. Shooter Picasso: All sizes, all ages

The whole group have to design a basic drawing (a house, a person...) on a big paper. Afterwards, they make paint balls with sponges or paper, and throw them to the picture to color it, from a considerable distance. It's a very messy but funny activity, so do it outside and take care of the place. As a big paper can be difficult to find and paint can be expensive, you can draw with chalks on the floor or on a wall (make sure that you have permission), and use wet color papers, for example. You can play it for more than one hour.

4.3. ENERGIZERS

Energizers are mostly used to start an activity with **energy** or helping when the group is tired or bored. Note that a similar game can be used to reach other goals (get to know, teambuilding, having fun or even to get **feedback** together with a survey...). You can **adapt** them while changing the rules or mixing with different games or categories.

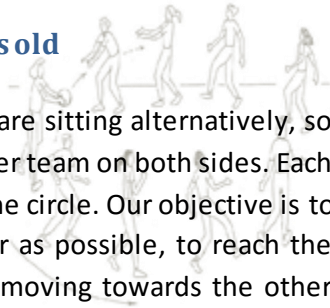
1. Color run: All group sizes, all ages

Each turn, a person says a task. He/she can ask everybody to touch objects with determined color, touch them with different parts of the

body, run to a selected person or every task that may come to your mind. The last person in completing the task is disqualified or says a new task. This game can be useful to learn different languages (colors, body parts, objects...). It can take around 15 minutes.

2. Balls race: Biggroups, +15 years old

We form 2 teams and sit in a circle. We are sitting alternatively, so each participant has people from the other team on both sides. Each team has a ball, in the opposite part of the circle. Our objective is to pass the ball to our team mate, as faster as possible, to reach the position of the other ball, which is also moving towards the other team. Depending on the level of fun, you can play for 20 minutes!



3. Electric wave: Biggroups, +10 years old



In teams, they form a chain holding their hands. At the end of the line, there is an object. At the beginning, the first person starts to

make a wave with the arms, passing the movement to the next person until they reach the object. The fastest team that reaches the objects wins. It is important to have a referee to verify that the wave went

correctly without skyping anyone. Instead of an electric wave, you can pass water balloons, for example. It can take around 15 minutes.

4. Giants, wizards and elves: All sizes, +10 years old

Quite similar to the game that for sure you know “rock, paper and scissors”. In this game, we make 2 teams, divided into separate sides of the room. Each team has to decide a character to become in giant, wizard or elves. **Giants** have to roar and appear big; **wizards** wave their fingers while casting a magical spell; and **elves** crouch down while making a pitched noise. At the count of 3, they perform their character. Giants beat elves; elves beat wizards and wizards beat giants. The winners of each round can capture a member of the other team, so the objective is to capture all of them or to have more members at the end of the game. You can improve this game adding costumes and a big blanket in the center. It can take 20 minutes.

5. Who is the leader? Big groups, +15 years old

One person volunteers to leave the room. The rest of participants are sitting in a circle and have to choose a “leader”. The “volunteer”



comes back to the room and stands in the center of the circle. The leader has to perform different actions like clapping or moving. The rest of the participants have to copy the leader. The person in the center has to guess who the leader is. The game can restart with the last leader going out of the room. You can play for 20 minutes.

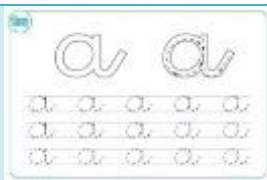
4.4. ACTIVITIES AND WORKSHOPS

So far, in this chapter we have learnt icebreakers, team buildings and energizers, but we can't play them for hours every day. These games are integrated in educational plans that we shouldn't forget. For this reason, we'll focus on 3 important learning categories: **basic education, citizenship and entertainment**. However, you will note that sometimes they aren't clearly defined and we can reach different objectives with the same category.

4.4.1 Basic education

Sometimes, in the first meeting with some of my target groups, I noted that they didn't know some concepts, that at their age, they should know, like **writing, reading, basic mathematics, general culture or art**. This made me think and readapt my activities to improve their skills, while having fun. Here you have some examples of exercises, but there are thousands of them on the internet and in books.

WRITING & READING

**Let's write!**

It's a must exercise. It helps to learn how to write while following the points. You can prepare drawings too.

**Let's feel it!**

It's a great and multisensory exercise. If you don't have sand, you can paint with your fingers.

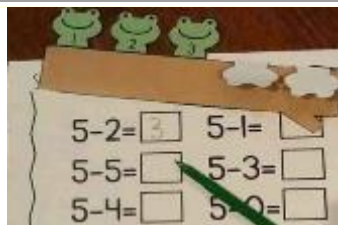
**Read it, build it and write it!**

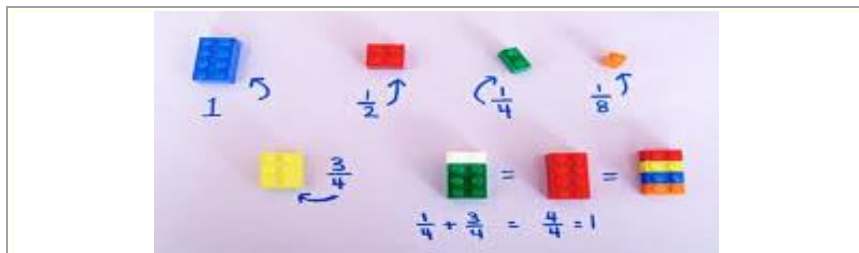
All we need is papers and separate letters.

**But... never stop reading!**

Additionally, each kid can represent a character and read a dialog, doing theater.

MATHEMATICS**Addition with boxes****Addition pancakes****Counting with paper fingers****Recycling packages**

**Solving with clothes-pins****Solving with hangers****The great addition machine!****Subtraction frogs****Different ways to multiply****Pizza division****Learning division with Lego**



Source: حياتي مع ابنائي اجمل: Kids, the best of my life. Facebook page.

GENERAL CULTURE



Geography

Create a puzzle cutting the map of Europe.

Design different flags and relate them with the countries and capitals.

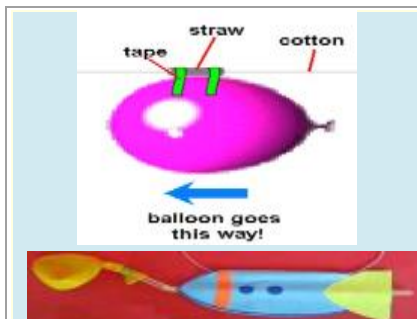
If you like football, relate with football teams!



History & theatre

Write the main events and place them in chronological order.

Relate titles with explanations, pictures, videos and represent events with theatre!



Engineering

Make rockets with balloons, tape, straws and cotton.
Make different designs on the balloons and add flour inside.
Make planets and start a race through the space!



Science

Make soap snakes with a bottle, a towel, soap and paint.



Logic

Challenge your students! For example, ask them to guess the direction of the bus.
Make teams and create a contest!



Languages

Use cards, pictures, videos, music, board games...
Here you have a great way to learn Chinese, developed by **ShaoLan**. The idea is to associate pictures with words. Search for it on YouTube!



Music

Kids and most of us love music! Play it while doing some activities or use it for games. It is great for teaching languages! Sing, dance, learn and have fun!



Biology

Let's plant! In a yoghurt recipient, put cotton, water and some legumes (lentils, chickpeas, white beans...). Take care of it (water and sun).

ART & CREATIVITY

Animals with hands



Animals with numbers



Writing and drawing



Face painting



Pasta jewelry

Costumes with bags

**Planes / ships****Butterflies & fans****Cutting paper****Dishes & fishes****Painted salt in glass****Stilts****Animal balloons****Color clay****Carton cities & characters****Confetti canon**



Paper balloons. Blowing origami!



Bonus entry. I had the chance to meet Flavia, a volunteer, in a workshop. She did these balls with the kids, they wrote nice messages inside and then threw them to the others. Great!

4.4.2 Citizenship

Please, recheck the chapter “**topic ideas**” to find more topics to talk about. As an **example**, I want to share a workshop that I did with teenagers about judging in first impressions. We talked about down’s syndrome, obesity, homosexuality and important women, working with different characters and role playing.

1: First impression: A character is shown to the students.

2: Judging: The students describe the picture with adjectives (ugly, fat, sad, beautiful...).

3



3: Feelings: Another student, behind the picture, receives the messages and expresses his/her feelings.

4: Explanation: We reveal the real life of the character (this girl got honor degree and she is a teacher).



3 Megan McCornick

- Down's syndrome
- Extra copy of a chromosome
- Honour degree in a university of USA
- Best student in one of the best universities
- She is a teacher



4.4.3 Entertainment

Last, but not the least, I invite you to remember your childhood and the games that you used to play and **enjoy** the most. With those games you made friends, you had a good time with your family, and you learnt new things. As they were important games in your life, you

can share them with passion and enthusiasm. I'll just show you a short inspiring list, but I'll be glad if you make it much bigger.

ENTERTAINMENT

Board games

Languages with Battleships



Numbers with Bingo

(recommended by my mates
Ania & Mallaury)



Concentration with Chess

Traditional games

Team work through sports



Abilities with Bowling



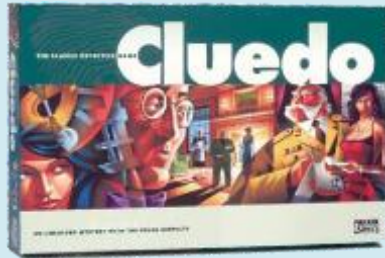
Colors & body parts Twister



Logic with Clue do



Numbers, colors and sport



As we learnt from this book, we can **adapt** them to learn languages, to create new team buildings or energizers. We can also **invent** new games or... why don't you try with **giant** activities? Take a look!

HUGE ACTIVITIES

Roads with tape



Completing tasks

Snakes and ladders



Getting points



Getting more points!



Try this with hula-hoops too!



Dress-up your drawings



A silver paper river



Passing through ropes



Feet painting



Theatre



Treasure hunts



SPECIAL ENTRIES

Zombies & humans

Ideal for over 18 years old participants.

On a playground or park, make 2 teams: zombies and humans. Make costumes for the zombies and prepare different areas and tasks for the humans in order to survive. If zombies touch humans, they convert into zombies so they have to wear a zombie costume. You can use water guns. Make rules to avoid any kind of violence!



Homemade gym

This is a special activity for me, as it's one of my hobbies and I made my own gym machines when I was young. We only need recycled bars, plastic bottles and tape! Create a list with exercises and rules. Use this activity not only to do sport, but also to accomplish the rules, to foment cooperation between participants and to learn numbers and body parts in other languages.



FINISH?



5.1. FUNDRAISING

There are **other** kinds of activities that you can do as volunteer and they allow you to obtain some **money**. Afterwards, as volunteer, you may use that money to perform new and better activities, or give it to people who need it, as charity, buying clothes, food... This is what we call ***fundraising*** (although the concept is also adopted by companies). However, it requires permissions and different documents to fill in advance, so, if you are planning to do it, make sure you check all the information about it. If you are interested in fundraising, I recommend you the book “***+250 fundraising ideas***” by ***Paige Robinson***. It offers important sources with the information needed and over 250 ideas of activities, divided in **9 groups**:

GROUPS	EXAMPLES OF IDEAS
1) Sponsorship	Organize a football match together with a partner.
2) Raffles	Sell tickets.
3) Collections	Place charity boxes in specific areas.
4) Games and activities	Small games or activities where the participants can give or collect some money.
5) Make and sell	Bracelets, sweets, books...
6) Buy and sell	Make your own merchandising.
7) Events	In special days like Valentine’s day, mother’s day...
8) Other business	Renting rooms, collaborations with other companies...
9) Internet	Placing advertisements on your website.

5.2. VOLUNTEERING PROMOTION

Volunteering is more than activities or fundraising. You can also **encourage** other people to do the same, to benefit the society. Some of your workshops can be about what you do, and why it is important. There are lot of **potential** people who would be volunteers but they don't know about it. That was me, before starting my volunteering. It was thanks to friends, videos, articles and former volunteers that I got to know it. I also realized about the **importance** of promoting volunteering when I arrived to Bucharest. When I was talking about what I do, people were curious and **motivated** to become volunteers too. This is one of the reasons why I decided to write this book, making a bigger **chain of volunteers** helping to the society. **What would you do to promote volunteering?**

5.3. IS THIS THE END?

Before I became a volunteer, I thought on all the responsibility that it requires. I was somehow worried about it. Then, my cousin *Desirée*, told me that volunteering would also help me: ***"In the moment that you don't enjoy volunteering, you aren't a volunteer anymore"***. Finally, I realized that I would also improve my own skills, like English or the way that I teach. However what I never expected is this **experience** to be so **wonderful and helpful for me**. The better I felt, the better I helped. Thanks to this, and to the **amazing people** that I had the chance to meet, I can say that this is not the end, but the **continuation** of the greatest years of my life. **I really wish you the same feeling, and the biggest success in everything you do from now!**

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OTHER SOURCES

Cursos inea	Lean simulations
Eat your kimchi	The 36 th avenue
Educacion inicial	Brayan Onai
Erasmus+	Discover, explore and learn
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La colmena de las abejas	Clap taller grafic
Limbos	Montañismo
Mi tienda de papel	Kids, the best of my life حياتي مع ابنائي اجمل
Mundo primaria	Leer mx
Ser manitas	Ayel

This guide was created under the Knowledge Builders 3 European Voluntary Service project organised by Asociatia Young Initiative Romania.

The Young Initiative Association empowers people and communities through education and supports the development of children and young people.

Find out more on:

- the **Association's website** at www.younginitiative.org and
- on its **Facebook Page** at www.facebook.com/fb.young.initiative



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David Herrera

The guide for volunteers

While doing his project, he noted some special needs not only for the kids, but also for the volunteers. He realized that volunteering is both motivation and skills, when working with determined target groups. That's why he decided to study different sources to improve his activities and, afterwards, share them with other volunteers, who could have the same needs than him.



David Herrera Rivero is an EVS (European Volunteering Service) volunteer from Spain. He did his project for one year in Bucharest, Romania, in the NGO "Asociatia Young Initiative". He worked with homeless and abused kids and teenagers in different centers. He developed English and Spanish languages clubs over Bucharest and he imparted workshops in high schools and libraries.

An open mind for volunteers