

Program School for sustainable life

Country: Czech Republic



ŠKOLA PRO
UDRŽITELNÝ ŽIVOT

Age of the children involved:

The program is focused on elementary and secondary schools that want to work with communities, active citizens, local initiatives and other partners on the implementation of joint projects.

Teaser/Short Introduction

The pupils of the schools involved, along with teachers, parents and other partners from outside the school will think about what they can do for the sustainable development of their community or neighbourhood. Together they will gradually implement the proposed changes and develop a better place to live and study.

What is the frame?

Learners actively help to support sustainability in their community and at the same time develop their competencies for sustainable life.

What are the goals of the program:

The mission of the program is to involve the students and the public in specific actions to improve the environment and the education of pupils and adults in community planning.

The primary emphasis is on pupils' work, but the involvement of other partners is indispensable:

Goals of the programme:

- Participants will help with the sustainable development of the community
- And learn at the same time (developing competencies for sustainable development)

The aim of the programme is to develop civil society and the principles of Local Agenda 21 and to encourage the participation of citizens in public affairs and the creation of long-term partnerships with parents and organizations that operate in the area.

What values are promoted in the programme?

All values are promoted in the project. Work with the whole community can help to support equal opportunities for all people to shape their lives. According to the topic of the particular project, certain values such as the respect for nature and the care for the state of our planet and respect for future generations are promoted.

Which competencies are promoted that empower learners to shape a sustainable future?

The programme focuses on the needs of real life. The learning process naturally includes the development of competencies necessary to meet the challenges of the contemporary world. The programme provides students and all who works at the local level, with basic knowledge and skills for long-term planning and implementation of sustainable development of the area.

The Programme wants to develop valuable competencies for life such as responsibility, cooperation and teamwork, active problem solving, communication, and critical thinking.



According to the hand model, all competencies are developed in the project:

- enable learners to cooperate, participate, take responsibility and learn in a self-directed way
- enable learners to deal with their own feelings and the feelings of others
- enable learners to be reflective and critical thinkers –considering different perspectives to reach informed opinions and decisions
- allow learners to take ownership of their learning and reflect on what and how they have learned
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- enable learners to become conscious of interconnectedness - you, me and the world around

The issues pupils involved in the programme face and what they can learn from them?

Insight into the problems of the community:

The problems in our community /is the school bothering you?

Democratic processes, communication, teamwork:

Decide how we deal with it?

How to involve pupils, teachers, other partners?

What will be the impact on public participation?

Partnership, intersectional collaboration:

What can help public administration, business and non-profit organizations?

Working with information:

What is known about the community, about the problem, about the solution? Where to search? Which is more important?

Problem solving, planning:

What is the target of our project? What are the measurable outcomes of the project? How to evaluate its success (the number of persons involved, savings realised etc.). What activities and the order in which they occur (schedule)?

Practical work, working skills:

What work will be needed to implement the project, who is going to do it?

Working with the media, PR:

How to inform as many people about the project and to involve them in the solution (pupils, teachers, parents, businesses, government, non-profit organization)?

Economy

What are the necessary funding opportunities and how to provide it?

Environment

What specific change occurs due to the creation of the project?

How will the project benefit the environment in the village?

Society, social issues

How the project will benefit the local people, community? How many people will be impacted by the project?

Which of the specific scientific concepts does the programme relate to?

It would depend on the topic of the particular project – all four concepts could be used (Cycles, Stability, Change and Energy flow)



Which ecological problems are involved, if any, and how? (Refer to mindmaps of 9 planetary boundaries)

Each project focuses on a different topic, generally they will cover some of the following issues:

Global fresh water use, Land system change, Biodiversity loss, Chemical pollution, NaP cycles, Atmospheric aerosol loading, Ozone depletion, Climate change.

The project could be related to some of following topics.

1. Energy saving, alternative energy sources
2. Waste - prevention and management
3. Water
4. The model measures for environmentally responsible consumption
5. Food (eg. organic food, local food)
6. Trees and greenery
7. Wildlife, landscape, protected areas
8. Interpretation of local cultural or natural heritage
9. Ecological transport, safe routes to schools
10. Public space
11. Development assistance and cooperation
12. Environmentally friendly business

Transferability: Which different areas of learning are included and how?

- related to the learners themselves

Because learners work on the projects in their own school and local communities, it is very strongly related to themselves.

- related to the natural environment
- related to the non-natural environment

Each project relates to some of the topics mentioned above. In each topic nature and non-nature environments are included (mainly both).

- related to learners and communities

The main aim of the programme is to develop civic society and to help with the sustainable development of the local community. The programme very much supports the learner's relationship with the community.

- encourage active transfer during and after the experience

Pupils and students are active during the whole programme and are part of the planning process. They will then see the end results of their work.

What educational strategies are used in the project?

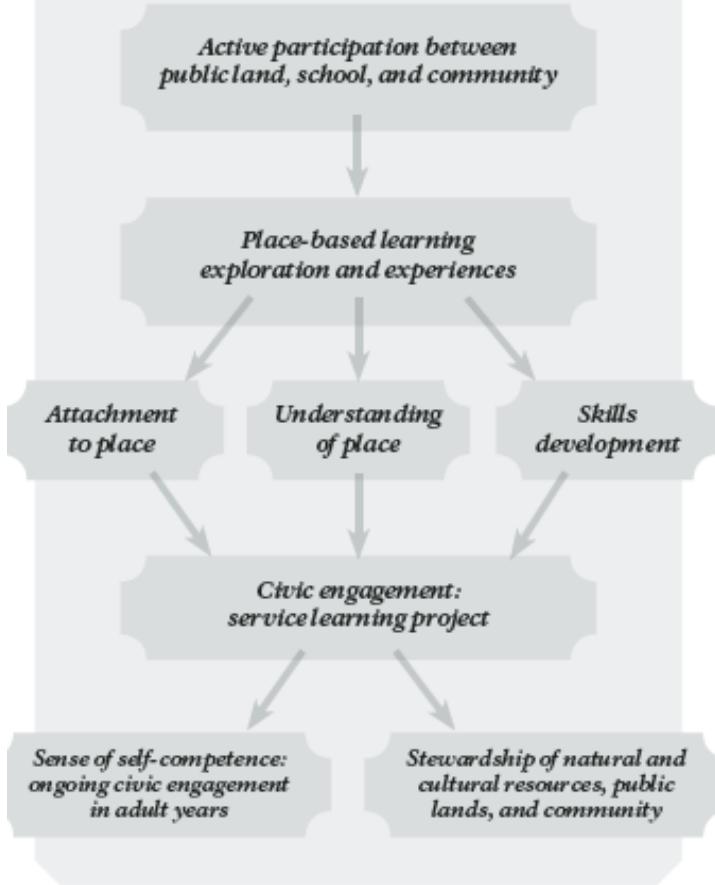
The programme is based on the principles of **placed based learning**. During the process some phases are based on **project-based education, integrated thematic construction, experimental learning and cross subject**

education. What are the main principles of place – based education?

- Learning takes place on-site in the school yard, and in the local community and environment.
- Learning focuses on local themes, systems, and content.
- Learning is personally relevant to the learner.
- Learning experiences contribute to the community's vitality and environmental quality and support the community's role in fostering global environmental quality.
- Learning is supported by strong and varied partnerships with local organizations, agencies, businesses, and the government.

- Learning is interdisciplinary.
- Learning experiences are tailored to the local audience.
- Learning is grounded in and supports the development of a love for one's place.
- Local learning serves as the foundation for understanding and participating appropriately in regional and global issues.
- Place-based education programmes are integral to achieving other institutional goals.

Place-based Learning and Civic Engagement: Theory of Change



More about Theory of change

<http://www.ntu.edu.vn/Portals/96/Tu%20lieu%20tham%20khao/Phuong%20phap%20giang%20day/place-based%20learning.pdf>

How is the programme evaluated?

Each school has support to run its own evaluation of the planning process and project implementation.

The whole programme is based on placed - based education principles and there is plenty of research that supports the effect on the behavioural change and evaluation data.

Such as <http://www.peecworks.org/index>



Description of the program:

Schools (pupils and teachers) in collaboration with partners in the community:

- Map the problems and needs of community
- Think over the vision community ("we as a community have")
- Looking for projects that would help community and is able to implement school
- Select, plan and implement local hands-on project.

If we look at it in more detail:

- The first step in any school that wants to join the project School for sustainable life is to devise visions and plans for sustainable development of the community or school neighbourhood. It's not a formal document, it is created as a result of joint planning of pupils, teachers and other partners from the local community and therefore Vision and Plan should be practical and based on the life. In this case, it may serve as a good basis for further activities in which the students along with the community releases in 
- As soon as school pupils and community representatives will create such a plan / collection of themes, has a solid base upon which to build their projects in the coming years. The emergence of a vision and plan for sustainable development of the village and reservoir of the project is therefore a precondition of participation in the programme and then the school has a chance to get the financial support for the projects.
- The work of pupils and other partners does not end here. The proposed action (project) planning group selects one that wants to make a first and a project plan and ideally also implements. For this reason, it is good to have it in the tank and some low-cost measures that can be implemented without grant support. It can be a foundation of flower-beds in front of the municipal office or location marked boxes to choose batteries. Implementation of at least small changes as a result of joint planning prevents demotivation of involved pupils.

Programme provides strong support for teachers and schools joined in the project such as:

- Workshops for teachers (supported by e-learning course)
- Workshops for school teams
- Methodology and worksheets
- Assisted educational programs for pupils
- Consultancy and other service
- Financial support
- Exchange of experience







Examples of the school projects:

The living garden (Elementary school in Přerov)

The aim of the project was to modify the damaged part of the school grounds - effectively rebuild it into a natural living garden for learning, relaxation and extracurricular activities of children, the general public, but also as a place with a number of shelters for animals.

Outputs:

- exhibition of art works on the form of school gardens. Production and installation of a draft model of the herb garden in the school hall.
- preparation of worksheets for outdoor learning for the Encyclopedia of Herbs in the school garden.
- creating and planting vegetable and herb beds.
- production and installation of elements of live garden - insect houses, feeders and bird bath for birds.
- planting the area, grass restoration, installation of tactile paths, tree planting and installation information label.
- Building of the outdoor classroom

Resources: SEVER (www.skolaprozivot.cz)

SEVER – The Ryčory Centre of Environmental Education and Ethics is one of the largest and oldest Czech non-governmental organizations in the field of environmental and development education (sustainability education). **Our Mission** - In our work, we pursue sustainable life on Earth. Through practical environmental education and awareness-raising, we strive to reinforce responsible attitudes to the nature, the planet and other people.

What We Do - We organize educational projects (one-day programmes or multiple-day retreats) for primary and secondary schools. We are offering courses, seminars, consultations, conferences, internships, teaching aids and literature for educators and pedagogy students. We also educate other groups of adults including civil servants, farmers, small entrepreneurs and NGO professionals. We provide environmental advice, support for public participation in decision-making processes and help in addressing environmental issues.