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National Adaptation Plans for Implementing Symbol Work

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Research Paper and Transnational Adoption Plans for Implementing Symbol Work

Austria, Germany, Portugal, Spain and the UK



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Introduction:

The aim of this report is to satisfy Intellectual Output 1 (IO1) of the Erasmus + SymfoS project by providing a summary of research papers submitted by individual partner countries with the purpose of:

- identifying where symbol work is located within the context of working with young people aged 15 – 25 years who are “disadvantaged”, particularly those that are not in education, employment or training (NEET);
- providing consideration of plans to adapt the SymfoS method to accommodate the variety of approaches to “Youth Welfare” provision in the partnership countries; and
- formulating a strategy for incorporating training in the SymfoS method with Higher Education, Further Education and training providers of relevant practitioners.

To achieve the report’s aim, the SymfoS partners were requested to complete a survey of literature to research the presence of symbol work in their countries and to undertake a series of interviews with relevant professionals engaged in working with young people and those involved with training staff working in the youth welfare sector. Partners were requested to follow an overarching structure as outlined in the IO1 template (Appendix 1).

This report is a combined precis of contributions by SymfoS partners. For clarification of any points and examples the reader is encouraged to refer to the individual country’s report located in the Appendices.

Section 1 – Literature Search on the use of symbols as an intervention with young people

A search of the literature found that there is limited reference to the use of physical symbols as a method of engaging with young people, and that the principal use of physical symbols as an intervention is rooted in the field of therapeutic work. There are examples of symbols used in “Projection Tests” to assess personality types and reference to the use of symbols as signs to support work with those with communication difficulties, however, this is of a pictorial and directly representative nature. For further analysis of the related subjects, including the use of metaphor, analogy and creative methods used when working with young people, please refer to the full UK report

Youth and symbols

The significance of symbols, symbolism and symbolic behaviour cannot be understated when referring to the private and social life of many young people in industrialised, Western society. To varying degrees, physical, pictorial and metaphoric symbols are employed as semiotic expressions of identity and expressions of the cultural life of many young people (Clarke, 2006, Hebdidge, 1991) and can range from that depicted in the use of clothing, hairstyles, accessories and adornments, piercings, body modification, tattoos, modes of transport (skateboards, scooters, motorcycles, cars), possessions, consumer products, amongst others. With regard to historic and contemporary youth subcultures the following texts provide a comprehensive analysis - Kehily, 2007; France, 2007, Gelder, 2005; Haenfler, 2014, Jefferson and Hall, 2006, Muggleton, 2003; Thornton, 1995, Brake, 1995; and Bradford, 2012.

Youth counselling and physical symbol work

It is within the field of therapeutic youth counselling that physical symbols are most systematically utilised. The range of creative strategies that can be used include art, role play, journals, relaxation, imagination and dream work - the choice of which must be left to the young person. All these strategies, to a greater or lesser extent, may involve symbols in the process of expressing feelings and meaning and are beneficial to use given that they can be experienced by young people as interesting and dynamic. Interventions that are referred to specifically as “Symbolic work” (Geldard, 2016:147) within the counselling process includes the use of metaphor, ritual, physical symbols, sand tray work and the use miniature animals.

Kegerreis (2010:78) identifies that children use art and craft materials to express and explore their ‘inner worlds’. The psychodynamic counsellor will often observe the child’s behaviour in their use of art materials and formulate an interpretation regarding the child’s emotional state. Kegerreis (2010:79) adds that it is “important to observe and try to make sense not just of the finished product but also how a child builds up a picture”. The use of art allows the individual to process emotional issues “without having to put them into words – to do some all-important non-verbal ‘thinking’ – and gives us a window into their worlds” (2010:81).

Furthermore, Geldard (2016: 176) explores the place of physical objects to “represent feelings, thoughts, beliefs, people, and relationships” and suggests objects should be chosen by and be of interest to the young people and, as Jung (1968) proposed, enable the ‘uncovering of unconscious material’ which can contribute to self-awareness. Symbol work is seen to have the benefit of maintaining engagement, interest and enthusiasm with the young person and helps:

- Access and disclose information consciously;
 - Enable individuals to get in touch with, and explore, feelings, beliefs and thoughts;
 - Represent particular alternatives which can be anchored for comparison;
 - Represent polarities within self so that these can be explored;
 - Represent particular people so that role-played dialogue can be created;
 - Represent something of positive or negative value that can be processed.
- (adapted from Geldard, 2016: 177)

During the counselling encounter the very process of choosing and describing a symbol may be the source of inquiry by the counsellor, involving exploration of the emotions associated with the task of choosing the object, particularly if this had been difficult and the source of ambivalence. The counsellor may invite the young person to choose more than one symbol to adequately represent what they are feeling or thinking. Subsequently, the young person is encouraged to “describe the symbol and its qualities” to cultivate exploration rather than provide an interpretation, allowing the subconscious to be more readily accessible. A respectful and sensitive approach by the therapist is required when concluding the counselling session through inviting the client to tidy the symbols away or through the preservation of the client’s work (Pearson, 2001; Geldard, 2016).

Further examples of the use of physical symbols can be to represent alternatives for comparison or ranking/ordering. Dialogue between alternatives as represented by symbols can be encouraged, particularly regarding troublesome relationships. Geldard (2008 and 2016) highlights the use of miniature animals as symbolic representations which can be approached both as a light-hearted or more structured exercise. Either way, this method can initiate engagement in the counselling process and potentially enable the accessing of

suppressed thoughts and feelings. It is also described as a “projective technique” to explore interpersonal relationships of the young people through a less threatening and less inhibited form of intervention allowing the young person to “project ideas from their family, peer group or other social system on to the miniature animals that are used as symbols, but have the freedom to exaggerate or modify these projections” (2016: 184). As part of the process the counsellor invites the young person to choose an animal that represents themselves and to describe the animal’s qualities and characteristics and therefore discover greater self-awareness. Additionally, exploration of significant relationships can be made through the arrangement and re-arrangement of the animals and the process concludes by the young person rearranging the configuration in a way that makes them feel comfortable.

As part of the process of individuation, as a young person develops their identity, Geldard discusses the possibility of symbols being used to “represent polarities within the self” (2016:180) such as the ability to be good or bad, callous or compassionate, and introvert or extravert. This enables the young person to accept these characteristics and become more comfortable choosing and controlling the direction of their personal development and subsequent behaviour.

Symbols and Metaphor in Play Therapy

Webb (2015:51) defines Play Therapy as “a helping interaction between a trained adult therapist and a child for the purpose of relieving the child’s emotional distress by using the symbolic communication of play” (see also appendix 3). Reid (2001:15) states that it is through the metaphor of play that children are able to process and express their emotional conflicts. Indeed, Freud recognised the significance of play referring to it as “poetic creation” (cited in Schaefer and Cangelosi, 1993:1).

The interpretation of metaphors created in the course of play therapy interventions is discussed by Webb (2015) with regard to the client playing with such materials as clay which can be further interpreted as representing elements of the individual’s life in that it is malleable, manipulable and can symbolise change within one’s life. Kegerreis (2010) recognises the importance of the use of equipment to help express the workings of the child’s internal world and the unconscious and sees play offering an insight into the child’s mind correlating to Winnicott’s (1953) concept of play occupying ‘potential space’ between the child and the external world.

Schaefer and Cangelosi (1993) identify a range of Symbolic Play techniques whereby the client is provided with the opportunity to express their thoughts and feelings through the medium of play equipment which includes the following: dolls; puppets; finger puppets, mask making; costume; telephones; block play; sandplay; water play; the use of food; and mud and clay.

Sandplay and Symbol work/ Sandtray therapy

Perhaps the closest methodological relative to SymfoS is that of Sandplay (often referred to as Sandtray therapy) which uses physical symbols as a therapeutic intervention to promote non-verbal expression, and is “less influenced by rational thinking” (Gerdard, 2016: 181). It taps into a universal vocabulary of symbols to circumvent the need for verbal language for those who may find “verbal exchanges difficult or who work best in a visual, non-verbal mode” (Pearson and Wilson, 2001:3). As Ferreira (2014:113) suggests, it has further potential value as an intervention to use with both children who speak a different language to the facilitator and those that have language and communication difficulties.

Pearson and Wilson suggest that Sandplay and Symbol Work contribute to the development of personal insight, individuation, articulation of inner processes, creation of congruence between our inner and outer worlds and can be used as a therapeutic tool to encourage emotional healing of unresolved inner conflicts (2001:1). Additionally, Sand Tray Work has been proposed by some as an appropriate intervention with juvenile offenders given a perceived potential for developmental immaturity (Parker and Cade, 2018:87).

Mention must be made of the work of Margaret Lowenfield (1967 and 1979), an early pioneer of the Sand Tray method through the use of miniature figures to “create a symbolic representation of their world in concrete form” (Cockle, 1993:2). It is proposed by Mitchell and Friedman (1994) that Lowenfeld’s approach to the use of symbols is “congruent with Jung’s conceptualisation of the collective unconsciousness as an inherent state that is beyond logical and verbal expression” (p18). Wang et al. (2017) add that ‘Sandplay therapy’ has its roots in the Jungian psychotherapeutic approach as developed by Dora Kalff sharing characteristics of both Play Therapy and Art Therapy and can be utilised to enhance an individual’s resilience (Wang et al. 2017; Kalff, 1991 and 2004). A detailed mass of research, catalogue of publications and history of Sandplay can be found in the writing of Mitchell and Friedman (1994). Items used as symbols in Sandplay can include rocks, shells, stones and pieces of wood, small boxes and containers with lids, ornaments, beads, padlocks and keys, toy fences, vehicles, animals, trees and small figures.

Ferreira (2014: 108) describes the method as the client creating a three-dimensional picture with miniature figures in a tray of sand and as an approach that has cross-over with “visualization and imagery, psychodrama, body work and movement, and cognitive restructuring”. The Sandtray composition can then be used to tell their story; explore situations, thoughts and feelings; determine significance and relationships between objects; and gain greater understanding of life events.

The choice of symbol is seen as highly significant as individual figurines are seen as representing parts of the client and are objects to project inner meanings on to. Pearson and Wilson (2001:1) state that when choosing a symbol the individual may feel greatly “repulsed or attracted – that’s usually a clue that a symbol is important ... and can be an expression of the unconscious”.

Pearson and Wilson (2001:5) recognise the importance of moving from cognitive and verbal expression to that of involvement in the kinaesthetic and play nature of Sandplay, which provides boundless creative freedom and “enables clients to drop any defences”. The use of symbols is seen as enabling the “unconscious and conscious mind to project multiple meanings” that can then become clearer and more structured (2001:4). Clients are observed in the Sandplay process to shift from a negative to positive mood as the act of being creative enhances the individual’s self-esteem, satisfaction, inner resources and promotes the tendency to become instinctively problem-solving.

From their perspective, Pearson and Wilson differentiate between Sandplay and Symbol work in that, congruent with the SymfoS method, Symbol work is categorised as an extension of Sandplay in that it is a directed, theme-based process that encourages exploration and discussion enabling the counsellor to develop rapport, and gain valuable information useful for an initial assessment (Pearson and Wilson, 2001; Cockle, 1993). Furthermore, Symbol work focuses on specific, troubling situations or problems with the client and can be used in individual and group counselling and personal development programmes.

Creative activities when working with bereaved children and young people

Mallon (2011:60) cites a number of studies that support the use of creative methods to assist with the promotion of healthy grieving when working with death and palliative care (Bertman, 1999; Bolton, 2007; Hieb, 2005; Wood, 2008). Reference is also made to Storr (1989:143) who suggests that such methods can protect an individual being overwhelmed by depression, provide recovery for those who have lost their sense of personal mastery, and enable the bereaved to repair “self-damage”.

Creative methods could include using a range of different materials, artefacts, pictures, dolls, stories and music from different ethnic origins as highlighted by Hooymann and Kramer (2006). Mallon helpfully references the work of McWhorter (2003), detailing the use of the following methods: making memory boxes, collages, photo murals, masks, stories, biography, poetry, drawing, artwork, puppets, dolls and strategies using natural objects and toys. Mallon (2011), states that by using these media the client has the “opportunity to express their feelings in ways other than verbalisation which for some children is too direct. Instead, through symbols and metaphors they can express their feelings” (p60). Emphasis is also made of the importance of giving consideration to an individual’s cultural background and the choice of culturally-appropriate materials, objects and equipment.

Participatory Action Research with young people using creative methods and symbols

The use of symbols, such as visual images, photographs and arts and craft work, is identified by Alderson and Morrow (2011:52) as an effective method of engagement when undertaking research to record the views of children and young people as it provides “respect, inclusion and protection”. Additionally, Kramer-Roy (2015) highlights the role of creative research methods within the context of participatory action research projects with those experiencing multiple disadvantage. Such methods are seen to assist expression and allow the individual to take more control of the research process and “facilitate individual reflection, sharing, planning for action, the construction of rich data and the reporting of findings” (2015:1208). Creative methods are seen as benefitting projects as their use accommodates:

- the wide range of ages consulted whereby verbal communication could be deemed for some as alienating;
- the sensitive subject nature necessitating a gentle and “unrushed” approach; and
- for some cultures, symbolism and metaphor are a “familiar way to explore ideas”

Section 2 – Practical Research

Introduction

The aim of this part of the research is to contribute to IO1 by addressing element 2 of the Research Paper Template by providing an understanding of the location of symbol work within professional practice in the youth welfare sector throughout the partnership countries.

This section of the report is an analysis of a series of interviews held with a number of relevant service professionals, managers and decision makers that are classified within the Erasmus + SymfoS project as belonging to the “Primary Target Group” (SymfoS bid p32). The organisations identified for consultation are projects, services and institutions that work with, amongst other young people, the “Indirect Target Group”, namely disadvantaged young people (aged 15-25) with issues relating to socio-economic integration (see individual partner’s reports for further details).

Research methodology

Austria interviewed 11 individuals from the public sector youth welfare service, independent youth work and Higher Education and vocational training institutions. Furthermore, attention was paid to creating a gender balance and to the participation of organisations working with refugees and migrants. In addition, lessons from numerous workshops and evaluations of the previous SymfoS project have also been incorporated in the analysis.

In Germany, interviews were held with practitioners and decision-makers from 10 organisations within the field of youth welfare as well as representatives of relevant training institutions.

The Portuguese partners interviewed 12 practitioners working with young people which included sociologist, psychologists, social workers, therapist, ethnographer and NGO project coordinators. These were undertaken as group and individual semi-structured interviews based on the format provided by the University of Gloucestershire (UoG) (see appendix 2) with an average duration of 45 minutes.

Spain interviewed a total 10 practitioners (social workers, psychologists) working with young people regarding vocational guidance, offending and homelessness. Interviews were undertaken in 4 groups from 24th January to 4th February 2019.

In the UK, 13 organisations were approached and a series of 22 interviews were undertaken with relevant professionals and practitioners from January to March 2019 using a structured interview process with follow-up questions, and conducted either face-to-face with the researcher or by telephone. Ethical research clearance was provided by the UoG. Individual interviews lasted from between 45 minutes to 90 minutes. Interviewees were provided with a SymfoS project information leaflet in advance; a verbal description of the SymfoS methodology; and step by step SymfoS process was delivered by the researcher, followed by an invitation to ask any questions for clarification.

General findings

Throughout the participating countries, despite there being the occasional use of physical symbols as an intervention, no replication of the SymfoS method was reported. Confirming the findings in Section 1, responses from practitioners interviewed identified the interventions

that most closely resembled SymfoS were those used in therapeutic work such as Sand Play and systemic work with families. Examples of the use of symbols and symbolism by services can be categorised into the following:

- Physical symbols,
- Pictorial symbols;
- those that were used literally
- those that had a metaphoric quality; and
- Verbal metaphor.

Furthermore, the use of symbols can be subdivided into interventions used as:

- an aid to communication;
- part of therapy;
- an aid for personal exploration and awareness;
- a tool for service and programme evaluation; and
- an aid for personal future planning.

The examples of the use of symbols and metaphor from research undertaken with services and that found in literature are included in the table below (Table 1). Specific descriptions, explanation and photographic representation of the intervention can be found in the appendix (5a-c) and in each partners' reports.

Some of the examples of interventions involving symbols can be cited as originating from specific methodological and theoretical origins, particularly those used within a therapeutic context for those with a psychological issue or who had experienced trauma (e.g. Play therapy) and when working with families systemically (e.g. Family Therapy, Family Constellation work). However, the majority of the interventions used by services lacked such coherence, and were used individualistically by practitioners within the field of 'creative methods'.

It must be also noted that many of the forms of symbol work identified have a commercial element as they are often products available for purchase by service providers (see appendix for web sites).

Table 1. Examples of symbol use from the literature research and primary research with service providers by country

Method	Physical Symbol	Pictorial Literal Symbol	Verbal metaphor	Art & craft materials	Pictorial metaphor	Communication aid	Therapeutic	Personal exploration	Evaluation method	Future planning	Assessment tool	Appendix ref
Austria												
Family/Structural Constellation Work	Yes						Yes	Yes		Yes	Yes	4.9
Family Boards – Family Constellation work	Yes						Yes	Yes		Yes	Yes	
Vocational & Educational Guidance with Dixit cards					Yes			Yes		Yes	Yes	4.31
Natural materials	Yes			Yes				Yes		Yes	Yes	4.4
Play Therapy	Yes						Yes	Yes		Yes	Yes	
Family Therapy	Yes						Yes	Yes		Yes	Yes	
Integrative Gestalt Therapy	Yes						Yes	Yes		Yes	Yes	
Germany												
Phyllis Krystal Method		Yes			Yes		Yes	Yes				4.30
Time lines/life lines		Yes			Yes		Yes	Yes		Yes	Yes	
Adopted Life Story work	Yes						Yes	Yes			Yes	
“Komm auf Tour” Vocational orientation	Yes							Yes		Yes	Yes	
Anti-aggression training	Yes				Yes		Yes	Yes				
Psychodrama	Yes						Yes	Yes			Yes	
Group work exercise	Yes							Yes			Yes	



Method	Physical Symbol	Pictorial Literal Symbol	Verbal metaphor	Art & craft materials	Pictorial metaphor	Communication aid	Therapeutic	Personal exploration	Evaluation method	Future planning	Assessment tool	Appendix ref
Portugal												
Communication aids		Yes				Yes			Yes	Yes	Yes	
Story telling	Yes							Yes		Yes	Yes	
Tree of Life exercise					Yes		Yes	Yes		Yes	Yes	
SPAIN												
House Tree Person					Yes		Yes	Yes		Yes	Yes	4.38
Corman's Family Test					Yes		Yes	Yes		Yes	Yes	4.39
Baum Test					Yes		Yes	Yes		Yes	Yes	4.40
Man in the Rain Test					Yes		Yes	Yes		Yes	Yes	4.41
CARAS-R		Yes									Yes	
Rorschach test					Yes			Yes			Yes	
SAM test		Yes									Yes	
Wheel of life								Yes	Yes		Yes	
Iceberg model								Yes	Yes		Yes	
Lego Serious Play				Yes					Yes		Yes	4.8
Play Therapy	Yes			Yes			Yes	Yes		Yes	Yes	
UK												
Lego Therapy	Yes					Yes	Yes				Yes	4.8
Art Therapy	Yes		Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes			Possibly		
Sand Play/Sand tray & Symbol work	Yes			Yes			Yes	Yes		Yes	Yes	4.1
Social work behavioural metaphor			Yes									
Social work linguistic metaphor			Yes									
Mind of My Own		Yes			Yes	Yes			Yes	Yes	Yes	4.21



Method	Physical Symbol	Pictorial Literal Symbol	Verbal metaphor	Art & craft materials	Pictorial metaphor	Communication aid	Therapeutic	Personal exploration	Evaluation method	Future planning	Assessment tool	Appendix ref
Queen and King of the Island	Yes			Yes	Yes		Yes			Yes	Yes	4.37
Youth work arts-based work	Yes	Yes		Yes	Yes			Yes				
Youth work Theme based group work				Yes	Yes							
Work with young offenders			Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes	Yes		Yes	Yes	4.42
Counselling verbal metaphor			Yes				Yes	Yes		Yes	Yes	
Counselling Physical & symbols	Yes						Yes	Yes		Yes	Yes	
Play therapy	Yes			Yes								
Miniature animals	Yes						Yes	Yes			Yes	4.5
Mandalas				Yes	Yes			Yes		Yes		
Careers guidance metaphors			Yes					Yes		Yes	Yes	
Participant Action Research	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes			Yes		Yes	4.45
Picture Communication Symbols		Yes				Yes			Yes	Yes	Yes	4.16
Widgit Symbols		Yes				Yes			Yes	Yes	Yes	
Symbolstix		Yes				Yes			Yes	Yes	Yes	4.17
Blissymbols		Yes				Yes			Yes	Yes	Yes	
Buttons	Yes							Yes			Yes	4.2, 4.3,
Stones/ driftwood	Yes							Yes	Yes			4.4
Memory Stones	Yes						Yes	Yes			Yes	4.6
“Objects of reference”	Yes					Yes				Yes		4.7
Now & Then Boards		Yes				Yes				Yes		4.10



Method	Physical Symbol	Pictorial Literal Symbol	Verbal metaphor	Art & craft materials	Pictorial metaphor	Communication aid	Therapeutic	Personal exploration	Evaluation method	Future planning	Assessment tool	Appendix ref
PODD		Yes				Yes				Yes	Yes	4.11
Talking Mats		Yes				Yes				Yes	Yes	4.12
RIX Wikis		Yes				Yes				Yes	Yes	4.13
Widgit		Yes				Yes						4.14
Widgit Action Planning map		Yes				Yes				Yes	Yes	4.15
Makaton		Yes				Yes			Yes	Yes		4.19
Talking Cubes		Yes				Yes				Yes		4.20
Information symbols		Yes				Yes						4.22
Emojis		Yes			Yes	Yes			Yes			4.23
Story Cubes		Yes			Yes			Yes				4.24
Blob Tress		Yes			Yes	Yes		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	4.25
Hand of Reflection					Yes			Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	4.26
Vision Boards		Yes		Yes	Yes			Yes		Yes	Yes	4.27
Mind maps		Yes		Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes		Yes	Yes	4.28
Family Island		Yes		Yes	Yes			Yes		Yes	Yes	4.29
Feelings flashcards		Yes			Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	4.32
Mood cards		Yes			Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	4.33
Inside/Out characters		Yes			Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	4.34
Feelings Xrays		Yes		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes	4.35
YOT analogy			Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes	Yes		Yes	Yes	4.42
Career Navigator Road Map		Yes			Yes			Yes		Yes		4.43
Spartan Test		Yes			Yes	Yes		Yes		Yes	Yes	4.44
Tree of Life, Personality Tree		Yes		Yes	Yes			Yes		Yes	Yes	4.36



Section 3 - Potential places for the SymfoS approach to be adopted

Introduction

This section provides a summary of policies, legislation and legal requirements of working with disadvantaged young people and outlines the organisations and services that work with young people in the partner countries. For further details refer to the individual partners' reports (Appendix). There is significant existing statistical data regarding European NEET rates arranged by individual country, age and gender which can be found at: <https://ec.europa.eu>

The situation in Austria, Germany, Portugal, Spain and the UK

Austria –

- **Transition from school to work and prevention of early school leaving:** support through "Youth Coaching" to advise pupils at risk of exclusion or dropping out of school and to support the successful transition from school to work or secondary education level I and II. Implementation is carried out by external partners (sponsors/associations) who work closely with the schools;
- **Child and Youth Welfare (Jugendwohlfahrt):** Youth Welfare responsibilities are regulated by law and serve to ensure the welfare and safeguarding of children and young people and to strengthen the family to optimise the development of children and young people. Public youth welfare is primarily a preventive approach, utilising a range of services including: counselling, support, assistance, accompaniment and education of parents;
- **Young refugees and migrants:** assistance with social integration, future planning and decision making through social support and counselling centres;
- **Open youth work:** aims to encourage social integration, support young people with the transition to adulthood and independence.

Germany

Youth welfare services are provided by both the public sector and independent institutions and cover a wide range of provision. Legal duties regarding youth welfare are outlined in Book VIII of the Social Code and Article 6 of German Basic Law. This includes: counselling as part of 'Help for Education' (§§ 27 ff.); youth work such as extracurricular activities in sport, games and sociability; school and family youth welfare or youth social work - youth welfare/ career guidance; detached youth work; migration and integration services; child and youth protection and parental care. Sozialwerk Dürener Christen currently finances some measures such as the 'Move' or 'lernpunkt' from funds accessed through § 13 of SGB VIII.

§ 13 SGB VIII specifies Youth social work covering:

1. Young people who are increasingly dependent on support in order to compensate for social disadvantages or to overcome individual impairments shall be offered socio-educational assistance within the framework of youth welfare which promotes their school and vocational training, integration into the world of work and their social integration.
2. Where the training of such young people is not ensured by measures and programmes of other institutions and organisations, appropriate socio-educational training and employment measures may be offered, taking into account the skills and level of development of such young people.
3. Young people may be offered accommodation in forms of housing accompanied by socio-educational guidance during their participation in schooling, vocational training or vocational



integration. In these cases, the necessary maintenance of the young person shall also be ensured and medical assistance shall be provided in accordance with § 40.

(4) This offers services coordinated with the measures of the school administration, the Federal Employment Agency, the providers of in-company and external vocational training and the providers of employment offers.

It was suggested that Symbol work can be used in many areas of youth welfare, particularly where there are limitations with the use of verbal communication.

Areas where SymfoS network partners have already successfully applied symbol work include:

- undertaking vocational orientation;
- initial assessment with young people in terms of understanding the individual's situation, clarifying needs and problems to be worked on;
- general consultation and informal counselling of young people and their support systems (including significant others, carers, teachers and friends) in various fields of youth welfare work;
- Group work and school groups focusing on social competence, anti-aggression or media competence training.

Potential areas for applying the SymfoS method with individuals and groups include:

- Getting to know the individual;
- Assessment and clarification of personal history;
- Developing self-awareness
- Attention training;
- Daily structuring;
- Identity development;
- Biography and "life-story" work;
- Communication (training)
- Emotional regulation and management;
- Strengths, weaknesses;
- Perspective formation and future planning; and
- Personal reflection

Portugal

Youth Welfare provision is organized between State Welfare, including the Secretary of State for Youth and Sport, Portuguese National Youth Council, and Youth Permanent Observatory.

"Programa Escolhas" is a social inclusion programme for disadvantaged children and young people and its project workers (social workers, graduates in psychology, sociology and social education) would be relevant practitioners to use Symfos.

An area suitable for adoption of the SymfoS method is in the field of education and training included in the Programme for Priority Intervention Educational Areas which aims to promote educational inclusion and reduce Early School Leaving (ESL) for vulnerable students.

These programmes are supported by numerous Third Sector organisations such as youth associations, private social solidarity institutions, centres which provide employment related activities and Regional Public Administration projects. Staff working with young people at these organisations would be suitable to use SymfoS.

Spain

There are a number of programmes as part of the National System of Youth Guarantee that operate to address social exclusion and issues relating to youth unemployment. These include the following:

- 1) “Entrepreneurship and Youth Employment Strategy” - a European initiative that aims to facilitate young people's access to the labour market through training and counselling implemented in 2013. According to the Public Service of State Employment, this programme includes:
 - Incentives for companies to employ those under-30 years of age;
 - Programmes for young people who prematurely leave secondary education;
 - Training programmes to enhance employability for NEETs with a commitment to be recruited; and
 - Financial incentives for young people who want to start entrepreneurial activity.
- 2) “Integral Program of Qualification and Employment of the Chamber of Commerce of Spain” co-financed by the European Social Fund and Chambers of Commerce network. It aims to improve young people's skills with regard to employability and self-employment through personalized vocational guidance for assessing specific needs, general training (digital skills, employability skills, social skills, and languages) and specific sectoral training and job seeking skills

Regionally, in Andalusia, there are social and labour integration services for young people and adults which include:

- The social action programme intended primarily for young people in care, beneficiaries of the Solidarity Program, people with disabilities and those being treated for addiction problems;
- *INCORPORA*: Employment collaborative programme with business organisations for people at risk of social exclusion;
- *Red Andalucía Orienta* - intended for people registered as job seekers and NEETs

There are also scholarships and other job placement programs that may include disadvantaged youth.

There are a number of national employment initiatives provided by companies, foundations and NGOs such as:

- **Spanish Red Cross**. a youth association for 8 to 30 year olds offering activities and developing awareness;
- **Fundación Exit**: provides training projects offering voluntary work and coaching for entry to the labour market;
- **Fundación Don Bosco**: promotes opportunities for minors and young people at risk of social exclusion.
- **Fundación Bertelsmann**: career guidance, work experience and training workshops;
- **Opción 3. Iniciativa Social**: a non-profitmaking social cooperative providing skills development for young people to make the transition to independence;
- **Fundación Novia Salcedo**: provides support for the professional integration of young people in País Vasco and other regions of Spain.

In Spain it was found that Symbol work is of special interest in many areas of youth welfare, particularly where there is limitation with the use of verbal communication; the presence of disruptive behaviour; individuals experiencing demotivation and lack of self-awareness; and for organisations where there is an absence of future-planning with young people.

On a national level, potential places for SymfoS to be adopted include NGOs dedicated to the youth sector (see list in section 5), such as those offering programmes for social inclusion of

vulnerable young people in disadvantaged areas (e.g. Association ALFA/Granada “Almanjáyar en familia”, MalagaAcoge) or those providing programmes for young offenders (e.g. IMERIS/Granada).

Another potential target group on a national level are vocational, education and training (VET) services in the field of social integration, as well as school support staff at secondary schools (consisting of social workers, school psychologists, counsellors and teachers of therapeutic pedagogy) since they have the opportunity to work with smaller groups.

Areas where the interviewees expressed their interest in the use of the SymfoS method include:

- Initial assessment with young people in terms of understanding the individual's situation, clarifying needs and problems to be worked on;
- SymfoS as a tool for communication training (e.g. distinguishing descriptive feedback from interpretation) and group cohesion
- General consultation and informal counselling of young people and their support systems (including significant others, carers, teachers and friends) in various fields of youth welfare work;
- Group work and school groups focusing on social competence, anti-aggression or media competence training; and
- Vocational orientation.

UK

Those Not in Education Employment or Training (NEET)

In the UK, the government department responsible for policy relating to employment is the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP). The DWP and the Department for Education together define NEET as young people who are not in any form of education (full or part-time); employment (paid work – including part-time or temporary, but not including voluntary work or work experience); or training (formal employment-related training course – full or part-time, traineeships, ‘basic skills’ and engagement programmes for the most disengaged). DWP & DfE (2013:2)

In the UK the DfE (2010) highlight that there are numerous consequences of being NEET at age 16-18 to both the individual and society which includes an effect on public finance (£56,000 per life time); higher chance of unemployment later in life; less earning power; receive no training; have a criminal record; and suffer from poor health and depression (Social Exclusion Unit, 1999).

The DWP and DfE state that (2013:2) “Local authorities, working with DfE and DWP (through Jobcentres) each have responsibilities for young people.” When an 18 year old makes a claim for benefit the local authority is automatically informed – to enable information sharing and joined-up working.

The DWP and DfE (2013) strategy to address the issue of young people who are NEET specifies the role of local authority services in England and includes;

- Raising the Participation Age - young people will be required to participate in education, training, apprenticeship or work combined with accredited part-time learning until their 18th birthday;
- Additional funding of education and training for young people aged 16-19 and 20-24 with a learning difficulty or disability (LDD) in England;

- Support 16-24 year olds with LDD, to participate in education or training and to provide targeted support to those who are NEET;
- Financial support to continue in education and training for disadvantaged young people in England to help them to continue their education or training including those in care or leaving care; or in receipt of a variety of benefits.

Definition of the Youth Welfare Sector in the UK

Given the framework that the “Youth Welfare” sector operates, there is a wide variety of service providers and practitioners that work with young people regarding their wellbeing which provides an expansive scope of opportunities for the Symfos method. This is classified as the “Children and Young People’s Workforce” and includes organisations from the Public Sector (state), Private Sector (business) and Third Sector (voluntary organisations and charities). The approach by the UK government to these sectors is encapsulated in chapters 3, 4 and 5 of the *Civil Society Strategy* (HM Gov, 2018) outlining the strengthening of role of the Third sector, whilst making the public sector more accountable to local partners and stakeholder.

Further explanation is required to clarify “statutory work” (legal obligation) with young people within the age range of SymfoS (15-25). This can be categorised as statutory social work; youth offending work (up until the age of 18), probation work (18 years plus) and will require the holding of a higher education qualification in a Social Work degree.

Alongside statutory work, the intention of government policy is to develop an integrated workforce which encourages multi-agency and partnership work to create a multi-disciplinary approach to supporting positive outcomes for children and young people.

As Oliver and Pitt (2011: 4) state “the children’s and young people’s workforce is broad and diverse. It includes paid staff and volunteers who work with children and young people. Many practitioners combine work with young people with a specialism such as sport, health or the arts.” This workforce can be subdivided into the following subject areas:

- Youth: Youth workers, youth support workers, youth workers in voluntary, community or faith sector, young people’s housing and accommodation support workers;
 - Social, family and community support: Children and families social workers, foster carers, play workers, CAFCASS advisers, private foster carers, outreach and family support workers, staff in family centres, day centres and residential children’s homes, portage workers;
 - Justice and crime prevention: Youth Offending Teams, staff of youth offending institutions, secure training centres, secure children’s homes, police in school liaison/child protection roles, probation officers;
 - Education: Staff and leaders at Further Education Colleges, teachers, school support staff, providers of extended schools activities, learning mentors, behaviour and educational support teams, 14-19 providers, educational psychologists, educational welfare officers
 - Health: health visiting teams, school nurses, community children’s nurses, child psychologists, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS), paediatricians and sub-paediatricians, community paediatricians, children’s allied health professionals, teenage pregnancy workers
- (Adapted from CWDC, 2010a:4)

Services for young people who have needs and can be identified as “disadvantaged”

Positive for youth – Services for young people in the UK are currently informed by the UK government’s policy document “*Positive for Youth*” (DfE, 2011). This policy statement outlines

service provision for 13-19 year olds and a “vision for how all parts of society – including councils, schools, charities, business – can work together in partnership to support families and improve outcomes for young people, particularly those who are most disadvantaged or vulnerable.” (DfE 2012:2).

When giving consideration to services for “disadvantaged” young people (those defined as not getting “the support or opportunities they need through their families or communities”), *Positive for Youth* earmarks local authorities as having the responsibility “to secure young people’s access to sufficient activities and services to improve their wellbeing” (DfE, 2012:6) through funding services.

The position of youth workers and related support services are seen as having a role in

- “supporting young people’s personal and social development – which includes developing important skills and qualities needed for life, learning, and work;
- ensure all young people are able to participate and achieve in education or training; and
- raising young people’s aspirations”

Specifically, in addition to local authority funded provision, the government stated that “to improve services and opportunities” for young people 63 ‘Myplace’ youth centres would be created in disadvantaged areas; a National Citizenship Scheme would be offered to young people; and there would be an expansion of the Cadet Forces.

Positive for Youth referred to the importance of providing targeted services at an early stage through an Early Intervention Grant to address the needs of young people and their families.

The place of Social work

Much of the statutory work that social workers with children and young people undertake places a heavy emphasis on case management, in the form of assessment and planning, and involvement in the commissioning of direct work to other practitioners.

On a local basis in Gloucestershire, direct work with young people would be undertaken by a combination of public, private and third sector providers with the Youth Support Team (YST) being the most sizeable of services. The YST provides support for young people who are NEET; those in care (under 18 years) and those leaving care (over 18 years); Youth Justice (work with young offenders); housing advice; work with missing young people (run-aways); health (sexual, mental, substance misuse, speech, language and communication needs); Special Educational Needs & Disabilities (SEND); and Careers Advice Plus for schools and colleges.

As such, there will be a wide range of practitioners that will come in contact with young people using the service and this could include: social workers, leaving care workers, youth workers, Programme Officers, Case Responsible Officers, Housing Advice Workers and Education, Training and Employment workers.

The place of youth work:

The Youth Service and youth work has seen a recent transformation from providing universal services to all young people as provided primarily by the public sector to focusing more on targeted work with those with identifiable needs and a service provided by a combination of Public, Private and Third Sectors. Annual spending by local authorities in England on Youth Service funding has declined from £622,000,000 in 2014-15 to £416,000,000 in 2017/18 For a comparison of government expenditure see DfE, 2018b)

Figure 1.1 provides an understanding of current youth work provision:

One to one careers guidance is person-centred using structured interviewing to explore client's experiences, understanding, and values, and help to increase awareness of opportunities, raise aspiration. Engagement is relationship-orientated, dialogue-based and involves the use of action-planning. In addition, a range of online tools are available to assist with personal understanding and familiarisation of options such as Cascaid's Kudos tool and the NCS 'Skills Health Check'.

See summary of Places to Adopt and Opportunities in Section 5 Opportunities

Section 4 - The routes that practitioners can take to get trained to work with young people

Introduction:

This section focuses on the varied routes that practitioners working with disadvantaged young people in the partner countries can become trained and qualified. Further details are found in the partners' reports.

Austria

There is a high degree of heterogeneity within training requirements for those working in the youth welfare sector as a distinction can be made between state-regulated child and youth welfare (Jugendwohlfahrt) and open youth work.

In child and youth welfare, studying social work is a prerequisite for a position within the public sector. In socio-educational institutions, there are also specialist counsellors, social pedagogues, diploma pedagogues, psychologists, educationalists and diploma social counsellors employed.

The majority of workers in open youth work (61%) have formal training in tertiary education (social work, social pedagogy, etc.), 27% have training in the non-formal sector (e.g. basic youth work courses) and 12% currently have no subject-specific training, are in training or are those employed on the basis of specific life skills (boja, 2016).

The relevant qualification courses are as follows:

Social work: Bachelor's degree (6 semesters; 180 ECTS) or Master's degree (4 semesters; 120 ECTS). In addition to pedagogical basics, psychological, legal, political and sociological content is taught. Typical study content includes social work theory, economic, legal and political framework, social work interventions, the foundations of developmental psychology and sociology;

Education: Bachelor's degree or Master's degree - Interdisciplinary studies, in addition to educational content, topics from psychology, philosophy and sociology. Typical content: Basic and scientific theories, research methods, education, development and socialisation, organisation, personnel and management, gender studies, and peace studies;

Psychology: Bachelor's degree or Master's degree. Interdisciplinary studies including maths, biology and medical elements. Typical study content is: Fundamentals; cognitive and emotional, biological, and social psychology; developmental psychology; diversity and gender research in psychology; methodological and diagnostic fundamentals; theory and methods of psychological measurement and observation; clinical and health psychology, psychological diagnosis and interviewing;

Social pedagogy: Qualification over 5-6 semesters. The aim is to create inclusive conditions for people in all areas of life such as housing, work and education. Typical learning contents

are relationship design, legal and medical bases, crisis work, youth work, social diagnostics, mentoring and educational planning, psychological and addictive diseases, and experiential education;

Educators: school education (5-years for secondary schools or 3-years for colleges):

Educators look after children, young people and people with disabilities, prepare games and leisure activities and promote their linguistic, motor, social and personal development. Typical educational contents are basic educational theories and measurement, the planning and implementation of educational offers, child and youth development and developmental disorders, inclusion of children and young people with disabilities, use of media in pedagogy, language promotion, movement and music with children.

In addition, there are numerous short courses offered by training providers, as well as internal training within larger institutions.

Germany

Social work - Individuals can become qualified in social work at universities, in joint studies and in distance learning at Master's or Bachelor's level. There are associated courses to qualify people to work in youth welfare include cultural education, psychology and sociology.

Educators The German Qualifications Framework (DQR) classifies a "state-recognised educator" at DQR qualification level 6 if the training comprises at least 2,400 teaching hours and 1,200 hours of practice.

Portugal

Despite there being no professional identity or clear qualification route for those working with young people, there has recently been the inception of the Portuguese Association of Youth Professionals, which may lead to the professionalization of the field (<http://appjuventude.pt/>).

Those working in the youth welfare sector hold qualifications from a wide range of disciplines including therapy, psychology, social work, sociology, educational sciences, sports, arts, and engineering and can subsequently undertake academic study or training to achieve specialized pathways. Academic and qualification paths are either in unique fields (e.g. psychology) or in a joint honors and postgraduate studies (e.g. degree in therapy and master in psychology). As a consequence, most youth workers have achieved level 6 or 7 European Qualification Framework (EQF): Bachelor's degree, Graduate's certificate or diploma; Postgraduate diploma or certificate; or Master's degree.

Introducing SymfoS into higher education courses as an element of a module in the routes mentioned above could be possible. However, it would not be feasible to include SymfoS as a more formal educational element, such as a curricular unit or a degree, due to official and bureaucratic reasons. Developing short training certification courses for practitioners and graduates provided by public or private institutions may offer a way of introducing SymfoS.

Application for recognition of SymfoS as a professional or training qualification in the National Catalogue of Qualifications by the National Agency for Qualification and Vocational Education or the Employment and Vocational Training Institute would be of value, but hard to achieve.

Spain

According to Spanish legislation, those working with young people using guidance, personal development and therapeutic interventions include psychologists, educational counsellors, teachers, professors and careers guidance workers.

Psychologists need to have a university degree, be specialised in general education, and be accredited as a clinical psychologist allowing them to undertake individual assessments and mental health related interventions. Those who practice professionally with the general public are required to have specialist training in General Health Psychology (in Spanish "*Psicología General Sanitaria*"). In Spain it is possible to take the General Health Psychology specialization, which qualifies a psychology graduate to work as a psychologist in the health sector) or a training in Clinical Psychology and 4 years theoretical-practical training in public hospitals. Further specialization and work experience is required to practice in psychotherapy, psycho-oncology, palliative care, clinical neuropsychology and clinical psychology.

Educational psychologists, having graduated in psychology, are accredited by the General Council of Psychology of Spain, enabling them to work with young people regarding assessment, diagnosis and intervention within educational and research centres, and psychoeducational intervention in programmes of prevention, development and educational guidance.

Those psychology graduates specialising in social intervention require accreditation by the National Professional Commission of the General Council of Psychology of Spain enabling them to practice with children and young people regarding personal development and assessment in child protection; advocacy; family mediation; adoption assessment; and a wide range of youth work. Other psychologists working with young people include those in human resources, coaching and experts in legal psychology, and must have a relevant Master's degree. All psychologists must be registered with regional offices of the Spanish Psychologists' Association.

Educational counsellors are required to have a degree in psychology, pedagogy and psycho-pedagogy and have a Master's in Education and if working for public institutions, have passed a Public Service exam. Teachers of secondary education, baccalaureate, vocational training and language teaching, must be qualified in their specialism at Master's level and university professors need to hold a PhD.

Careers guidance workers must have a degree in either Psychology, Sociology/Political Science and Sociology (joint award), Pedagogy, Psycho-pedagogy, Labour Studies, Labour Relations and/or Human Resources, Social Work and Social Education. Graduates without a relevant degree to work with young people can complete a Master's or specialization diploma such as that established by the Andalusian Employment Service Agency for their guidance staff. This consists of 100 hours of guidance training, 70 hours of employment guidance training and 2 years' experience in careers guidance in any public or private organisation. A minimum requirement is 50 hours training in careers guidance and 6 months experience of working with young people.

Typically, social workers operate in multidisciplinary teams alongside psychologists, doctors, teachers, and lawyers. Social educators can also work with young people in non-formal education (community outreach, leisure and cultural activities, socio-educational intervention such as the environment, health, road-safety, intercultural and international cooperation).

Those working as support workers with young people who are disabled or have special educational needs must have completed the Superior Technician in Social Integration Vocational Training. They are also qualified to provide social inclusion and vocational support, to act as guardians for minors and provide intercultural mediation.

UK

Regulation of professions in the UK

Given the rudiments of symbol work, distinction must be made between therapeutic interventions and those associated with guidance and coaching. Lefevre, building on the points that Wickham and West (2002) stress with regard to professional competence, states “there should be no expectation that social workers using symbolic and creative modes of communication would function at the level of art or play therapists, who use these forms as primary therapeutic tools and should be formally trained and experienced in their use” (2011:130). With this in mind, it is important to establish what training and qualifications are required to practice as a psychotherapist or psychotherapeutic counsellor.

To prevent confusion, distinction must be made between the wide range of practitioners in the “helping professions” who use counselling skills (Nelson-Jones, 2013:3/4) and the position of counselling as a distinct and institutionally regulated profession.

Counsellors and Psychotherapists Those who can practice as counsellors and psychotherapists need to be registered with the professional organisation, the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP) which has in turn been accredited by the Professional Standards Authority (www.professionalstandards.org.uk). To qualify as a counsellor or psychotherapist it is necessary to complete a course recognised by the BACP which amounts to a minimum of 400 hours staff/student contact time, and students undertaking 100 hours of supervised counselling practice.

Social Workers To practice as a social worker and undertake statutory work with children and young people, you must be registered with the Health and Care Professions Council ([HCPC](http://www.hcpc-uk.org)) and have successfully completed an approved degree or postgraduate programme in social work. Courses take three or four years full time and have a standardized syllabus. A degree apprenticeship in social work has also been approved.

Youth Workers: The National Youth Agency (NYA) states the following routes to become a youth worker:

- a Youth Work Apprenticeship – being trained to level 2 to 6 whilst working;
- Youth Support Worker – this refers to the bulk of the youth work workforce and are those workers who have achieved level 2 or 3 in youth work practice;
- Professional Youth Worker – gaining a qualification at level 6 – degree, or above provided by an institute of higher education and is a course that is JNC recognised and validated by the NYA (<http://nya.org.uk/careers-youth-work/getting-qualified/>)

Careers Guidance workers The Careers Development Institute (CDI) is the organisation that oversees the National Occupational Standards for careers professionals and recommends that a ‘qualified careers adviser’ is someone who has achieved accreditation at QCF Level 6 (Degree Level) or higher (www.thecdi.net/Career-Development-Sector-Progression-Pathway).

Probation Officers To qualify as a probation officer to work with offenders over the age of 18 years, it is necessary to complete probation officer training via the Professional Qualification in Probation (PQiP). This entails:

- relevant experience of working with challenging behaviour
- a recognised qualification at QCF Level 5 or above (for example an honours degree, HND, foundation degree, diploma of higher education or higher apprenticeship)
- prior knowledge and understanding in four required knowledge modules: the criminal justice system, crime and criminal behaviour, penal policy and punishment, and the rehabilitation of offenders (see UCAS and Prospects websites).

Youth Offending Team (YOT) Officer To become a qualified YOT Officer, a practitioner requires a wide range of experience of working with young people and a qualification in such subjects as a degree in social work, a degree or diploma in youth and community studies or youth work, or another relevant professional qualification. Many YOTs may allow workers to start without these qualifications and work as Support Workers, working with low risk and medium risk offenders whilst being closely supervised by professionally qualified superiors. This enables practitioners to work to prevent children and young people under the age of 18 from offending and re-offending.

Section 5 - Challenges and opportunities organizations and practitioners may face when implementing SymfoS

Introduction

This section is a summary of the analysis of a series of research interviews held with those organisations and practitioners within the partner countries highlighted in Section 2. The aim of this section is to contribute to IO1 by addressing element 5 of the Research Paper Template to determine which organisations use symbols or have the potential to use symbol work as an intervention; explore the range of opportunities and challenges of using symbol work that the organisations identify; and determine the steps and process required for organisations to trial the SymfoS approach. For further information visit the individual partner's reports.

Overall, the concept of symbol work was received positively by those interviewed and considered to be an intervention which could be broadly applied throughout services with disadvantaged young people. For those working with young people classified as NEET there was a consensus that creative, informal methods of intervention which involve activities were the most effective form of intervention as they:

- contribute to engagement of service users and retention of group membership;
- encourage personal expression and rapport between client and practitioner;
- provide a contrast to formal educational methods and
- promote the production of outcomes with regard to identification of future goals.

Additionally, those interviewed who work with this group were more amenable to adopting creative methods and informal learning techniques as part of their professional practice and grounding which could ease the integration of the SymfoS approach into their work.

It was found that the general approach of projects to assessing young people's needs and determining their future goals followed a similar pattern which involved relationship-based interaction with the client, employing dialogue in the form of unstructured conversation and/or the completion of standardised forms.

Some projects used symbols as an intervention although this differed from the SymfoS approach as the symbols used were of a literal and pictorial nature rather than being used as metaphors. Reference made to the use of symbols by service providers is explored in greater detail in Section 2 of this report.

Opportunities –

In summary, the SymfoS methodology was confirmed as having potential with the following young people:

- those who struggle to articulate their goals
- with behavioural issues
- excluded from mainstream education and those at risk of being excluded;
- those at risk of dropping out from school;
- with communication issues and problems, low levels of literacy, dyslexia
- young offenders
- bereavement work with children and young people
- those engaged with mentoring work
- students approaching transition stages (end of Secondary education (15year olds)
- those who have experienced trauma/abuse
- young people in supportive environments
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities
- Children in Care as part of the review process
- those undertaking “Life Story” work
- Care Leavers’ Pathway Plans
- those receiving careers guidance work
- preliminary work prior to initiation into counselling

Places for Adoption and Opportunities by country

Place/Organisation	Activity	Worker	Client group
Austria			
Youth Coaching (Ministry of Social Affairs)	Support the transition to work or further education, prevent school drop out	Youth Coach (external organisations)	Students at risk of dropping out aged 15-19
Youth Welfare	Strengthen family functioning, counselling	Youth Welfare Officer	Young people and families
Refugee Support Organisations	Assessment, future planning, support	Refugee Support Workers, Social Workers	Refugees and migrants
Open Youth Work Projects	Assist with the transition to adulthood and independence	Youth Workers, Social Workers	Young people aged 12-18 years
Germany			
Existing SymfoS partners	Vocational orientation Initial assessment		Young people with verbal

	General consultation and informal counselling Social and media competence, anti-aggression work		communication issues
	Getting to know the individual; Anamnesis, assessment and clarification of personal history; Self-awareness; Attention training; Daily structuring; Identity development; Biography and “life-story” work; Communication (training); Emotional regulation and management; Strengths, weaknesses; Perspective formation and future planning; and Personal reflection.		
Portugal			
Prorama Escohas	Social inclusion	Social Workers, psychology, sociology & social education graduates	Disadvantaged children and young people
Programme for Priority Intervention Educational Areas			Students at risk of leaving school early
Third sector organisations	Occupational activities		
Spain			
National System of Youth Guarantee	Reduce social exclusion		Those under 30 years of age
Entrepreneur-ship and Youth Employment Strategy	Training and counselling to enhance employability and self-employment		Those under 30 years of age and NEET
Integral Programme of Qualification and Employment	Self-employment, employment, employability skills development, vocational guidance		Young people
Social Action Programme (Andalucia)			Young people, in care, in treatment for addiction, disabled young people
INCORPORA	Social inclusion		Young people at risk of social exclusion

Red Andalucia Orienta			All people registered as job seeking and NEETs
Place/Organisation	Activity	Worker	Client group
Young Employment Granada	Courses, professional qualifications, vocational guidance, internships		Unemployed young people
Spanish Red Cross	General activities		8 to 30 year olds
Fundacion Exist	Training, voluntary work, careers coaching		Young people at risk of social exclusion
Fundacion Don Bosca	Promotes opportunities		Young people at risk of social exclusion
Fundación Bertelsmann	Careers guidance, work experience, training workshops		Young people
Opción 3. Iniciativa Social	Independence skills development		Young people
Fundación Novia Salcedo	Support professional integration		Young people
UK			
Careers Guidance Services	Careers orientation, education guidance, careers guidance	Careers Guidance Workers & Coaches, Careers counsellors	NEET young people, pupils, students
Alternative Education Provisions	Careers orientation, Emotional Intelligence, Engagement in education, work with behaviour	Support workers, mentors	Pupils, Students
Youth Offending Teams (YOT)	Future planning, Self-awareness, Emotional Intelligence, Desistance work	YOT Workers, YOT Support Workers	Young offenders under 18 years who are NEET
Probation Service	Future planning, Self-awareness, Emotional Intelligence, Desistance work	Probation Officers	Ex-offenders 18 years plus
Social Services	Pathway Planning	Social Workers, Leaving Care Workers	Care Leavers
Social Services	"Life Story" Work	Social Workers, Leaving Care Workers	Children in Care Care Leavers
Social Services	Child in Care Reviews	Social Worker, Independent Reviewing Officer	Children in Care

Youth Centres	Future life planning, Self-awareness	Youth workers, Youth support workers	Young people aged 15 plus
Mentoring Organisations	Future life planning, careers orientation	Mentors	Young people aged 15 plus
Place/Organisation	Activity	Worker	Client group
Specialist schools and colleges	Future life planning, careers orientation Communication		Young people who have Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)
Speech and Language Teams (SALT)	Communication	Speech and Language therapists	Young people with issues with speech and language
Counselling Organisations	Therapeutic work	Counsellors, psychotherapists	Young people
Bereavement organisations	Therapeutic work	Practitioners, therapists	Bereaved young people

Challenges –

In summary, the following challenges require addressing:

- Marketing the product to young people
- Unambiguous explanation
- Understandable process
- Recognise value/benefit
- Avoid abstract concepts
- Timing of initiation
- Quality of product
- Quality of relationship with practitioner
- Consideration of client and peer-buddy group personality – open-minded and trusting
- Consideration of Peer-buddy composition
- Providing detailed descriptive feedback
- Clear differentiation between descriptive and interpretative feedback
- Need for practical session on effective and respectful peer feedback
- Quality of interpretation
- Adaptation to one-to-one format for individual work and those who cannot join group work
- Peer Buddy risk assessment and potential for cross-contamination
- Cognitive functioning of those with disabilities or experiencing mental health issues

- Those with limited social networks
- Group ground rules
- Peer tactlessness
- Minimizing unrealistic expectations
- Those disadvantaged young people who are barred from employment (asylum seekers)
- Practitioner commitment to SymfoS
- High levels of practitioner training
- Practitioner core workload pressures
- Commitment to the process from management and practitioners
- Protected time and space for practitioners from management
- Cost of materials (SymfoS cases)
- Securing consent from parents and guardians for under 18 year olds

Areas of Concern

A number of concerns were expressed by partners and for a greater description refer to individual partners' reports (appendix). In summary the following concerns were expressed regarding SymfoS:

- The need to distinguish SymfoS when used as a VET intervention compared to Symbol work as a psychotherapeutic method;
- Need for qualified practitioners and regulation of the method;
- Readiness of service user to engage;
- Is it a safe method?
- Are support systems for the young person in place?
- Consideration of Safeguarding.

Steps required to trial SymfoS:

In summary, the steps required to trial SymfoS include:

- Establish central administrative reference point in each country
- Clarification of theoretical origins and SymfoS logic
- Empirical findings regarding the method's efficacy
- Statement of value and benefits to clients and services, including testimonies
- Specify SymfoS practitioner training programme
- Clarification of SymfoS process and duration of sessions
- Audio-visual examples of SymfoS method – including service-specific examples
- Service-specific (disabled young people, young offenders) focus groups and training
- Mid-point and periodic evaluation during trialling of SymfoS
- Implementation of Quality Assurance processes
- Authorisation by relevant managers
- Clarification that SymfoS is a safe intervention

Section 6 Challenges and opportunities for Higher Education, Further Education and training organisations when seeking to implement SymfoS

Introduction

This section focuses on analysis of interviews undertaken with decision makers from universities, colleges and training providers who are involved in educating and training students and practitioners who currently work or intend to work in the youth welfare sector ("Primary Target Group 2" SymfoS Erasmus Plus bid, page 32). As the contributions from each partner are highly particular to each country the findings are presented individually and further details can be found within the partner's reports in the appendix.

	Opportunities and Challenges
Austria	Opportunities • SymfoS' innovative characteristic means by using it, organisations can stand out from the crowd; • Within the framework of SymfoS, a complete curriculum will be developed which meets the requirements of ECVET adapted for both the continuing education sector and HEI providing a sound foundation for training; • Blended learning approach - both online and in-class modules can be offered; • It can be used in various consulting settings with a wide range of problems; • In addition to client work, the method is also suitable for teamwork and supervision. Therefore a large circle of interested parties can be addressed. Challenges • It is not yet an established approach that is embedded in the education system; • Absence of relevant impact research • The theoretical underpinning requires development • The training providers and HEIs must themselves recruit and develop suitable trainers for its implementation. • Bespoke certification needs to be developed for specific sectors and subject areas (e.g. recognition by universities, further education and labour market services).
Germany	

	The following opportunities to incorporate SymfoS in courses were suggested: <u>University of Applied Sciences, Niederrhein</u> • Training of students of social work, especially in “General theoretical and practical basics of the media areas” (Module 4.2) which includes a variety of methodological approaches and could offer a seminar on symbol work; • Included in subjects such as 'artistic design', 'digital media and social media' and 'photo, film, video', optional seminars in Module 4 Media Pedagogical Basics. • Symbol work seminars as part of the voluntary continuing education courses • SymfoS to be used as a method within 'self-awareness days' with students. The use of symbol work using physical objects (such as stones) and time-lines, is already an established component of biographic work during this series of seminars. <u>Catholic University Aachen</u> • The Department of Social Work will be offering a seminar on symbol work in the winter semester 2019/2020 in cooperation with the Sozialwerk Dürener Christen in the Family Accompanying course. This will be evaluated to determine whether it will be permanently included in the university curriculum; • Concepts of Social Work (Module 10) as part of the seminar “Techniques of Vocational Action” offered to up to 15 students; • Opportunities are also identified for training organisations and further education institutes as part of promoting self-determination and increasing individuals’ potential, orientation towards the world of life and problem solving.
Portugal	
	Opportunity – there is a wide scope of qualification fields for training youth workers in which SymfoS could be located. Challenges – • It is important to have suitably skilled and qualified trainers to introduce the approach accurately necessitating the maintenance of a sound certification system for trainers. • Ensure an accessible system to access SymfoS materials and resources such as training, trainers, guidelines, and supervisors. • Cultural and contextual adaptation of the methodology.
Spain	
	Opportunities • Raise awareness of SymfoS in universities through workshops and practical activities. • Provide information on SymfoS to undergraduate courses in a variety of subjects • To integrate the SymfoS for Youth method to university courses using the example of the University of Granada, a Diploma of Specialization could be introduced whereby there must be clearly defined teaching plans, structured in modules and subjects of at least 30 ECTS which are recommended, but not mandatory. • An alternative would be to offer a Postgraduate Diploma equivalent to 10 ECTS with clearly defined teaching plans, and structured in modules and units. There has to be a description of teaching methodology, training activities and evaluation systems.

	- The regulation of university education (Royal Decree 1393/2007) provides for the possibility for specific courses which do not have to register on the Registry of Universities, Centres and Qualifications (RUCT). - Training would be by corporations of public law or professional associations which regulate professional accreditation such as the Andalusian Political Science and Sociology Professional Association within a university environment through a collaboration agreement of public universities. Challenges - The methodology is yet to be integrated into the Spanish education system. - Undergraduate students are not prepared for the training and are not qualified. Undergraduate students will have knowledge of the methodology but are not qualified to work using symbols with young people.
UK	
	Opportunities - SymfoS was received positively; - No education or training providers offer symbol work in their programmes; - It is possible for universities to include information and knowledge about it in their professionally validated courses; - Training providers identify it could be used at level 2 and 3 in a Communications module. Challenges: - Qualifications for skills-based interventions are generally not provided by university courses for youth welfare practitioners but are instead delivered by private training companies and consultants; - Robust empirical evidence regarding its efficacy and theoretical underpinning is required by education and training providers

Section 7 - What could be the national/regional/local strategic routes through which SymfoS could be quickly disseminated?

Introduction

This section explores whether there are any national bodies or specific professional groups which would aid the adoption of SymfoS. A summary of the approach of each country and the identification of specific organisations is presented in the following table.

Partner	Strategy
Austria	
	A systemic strategy should be adopted, addressing different stakeholders and applying both bottom-up and top-down approaches: - Social organisations providing services to young people: contact with both youth workers and decision-makers as symbol work requires a commitment from both parties. - Contact with the following national associations of youth work and youth welfare for dissemination and acceptance of the method: - The National Network Open Youth Work (BOJA); - The <i>Association for Youth Welfare</i>; - Umbrella Association of Austrian Child and Youth Facilities (DOJ); and - Association of Social Work (OBDS).

	- Contact with policy and decision makers within public and political administrations who have an influence regarding social work, youth work and youth welfare policy on regional, state and federal level; - Training providers for practitioners; Dissemination to universities and technical colleges which are involved in qualifying and training social workers, pedagogues and psychologists
Germany	
	This is informed by the experience of the previous 'SymfoS for Success' project. 1. Management from various areas of youth welfare (social services, youth welfare offices, institutions and organisations, youth social work institutions in the field of informal education, NGOs, youth centres and schools/school social workers), decision-makers at vocational training providers, universities of applied sciences in the field of social work, NGOs and school authorities. Locally Existing network of organisations familiar with symbol work; Regionally Provision of information to relevant organisations and invitation to multiplier events. Nationally Presentation of the SymfoS project to the Addiction Therapy Days in Hamburg is planned for June 2019. 2. Decision-makers from the interface between school and youth welfare in the Düren region: Recent developments have meant a move towards multi-professional teams (teachers, special educators, social workers) and an advisory role for teachers enabling access to a greater cohort of students with the use of SymfoS. Indeed, these teachers are potential SymfoS practitioners. There has also been an initiative involving the secondment of teachers for the supervision for extra-curricular activities within schools and, in Düren, the creation of a regional education office, a municipal integration centre, an inclusion consultant and a planned additional position within the education-psychology service. There is the nationwide coordination office for municipal integration centres LAKI, which organizes training courses for seconded teachers. Furthermore, there are coordination offices for debt social work at regional and federal level. 3. 'Education policy makers' responsible for recognition of qualifications. The associated project partner, the Catholic University of Aachen, will be involved on two different levels: certification of "Train-the-Practitioner" curricula and recognition and accreditation of learning outcomes and competences acquired by young people.
Portugal	
	The dissemination of SymfoS has already begun through contact with relevant stakeholders interviewed for IO1. This network of organisations will be encouraged to remain involved in SymfoS. To expand the participation of the Third Sector, contact can be made with bodies such as: • The European Anti-Poverty Network Portugal, • The Portuguese Non-Governmental Development Organizations Platform, • The Portuguese Network of Work Integration Social Enterprises, Education Network for Global Citizenship, and EURO DESK group. To engage professionals from education, training and youth work contact could be made with national professional associations such as the • Portuguese Association of Youth Professionals.

Spain	• provide information about SymfoS to relevant senior staff and managers in educational and employment organisations – this could include education counsellors, university officials, and employment and enterprise directors • Then, for these staff to distribute information throughout their sectors to include universities, schools and vocational training providers. • Contact with NGOs and other organisations working the SymfoS Indirect target group (NEETs) • Then, invitation to relevant professions (who satisfy the SymfoS Trainer Person Specification) to a SymfoS workshop presentation on the method to demonstrate examples. • On-line dissemination of SymfoS which is regularly updated and translated into Spanish. • Provision of regular newsletter to relevant people. • Promotion of SymfoS through free media such as social networks (Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, YouTube and Instagram) • Create “Participatory Forums” in Spain which could include recommendations about the methodology • Consideration of dissemination route dedicated to young people as potential clients and Peer-buddy members. • Organise events for the participation of young people and practitioners which could provide recommendations and feedback on SymfoS
UK	To assist with the dissemination and promotion of SymfoS contact could be made with the following: • Youth Work - Nationally youth work organisations to include the National Youth Agency, UK Youth, Youth for Christ, Prince’s Trust • Social Work – British Association of Social Workers (BASW) – this national organization supports and develops the careers of social workers; • Prisons and Probation - National Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders (NACRO) – this is a social justice charity providing services in education, housing, substance misuse treatment, health and reduction of re-offending; • Youth offending – Beyond Youth Custody – this is a national programme with promotes best practice in resettlement of young people leaving custody; • Lecturers - Contact through the Professional Association of lecturers in Youth and Community Work (TAG) • Counselling and psychotherapy - British Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP) • Careers guidance – Career Development Institute (CDI) – this professional body promotes careers guidance skills and knowledge, integrates current research and theory into practice, and informs practitioners of sectoral developments. Also, National Careers Service (NCS) – provide information, advice and guidance on education, training and employment

Conclusion

This report has been a summary of a combination of a literature review, scoping exercises and interviews with relevant organisations conducted across the partner countries to satisfy the aims of IO1. From this body of work a number of points have been established.

Presence of Symbol Work: From the literature research it was found that there is limited symbol work as part of practice within the “youth welfare” sector. Systematic symbol work that has theoretical origins and utilises representational physical objects as a core component of the methodology is restricted to therapeutic interventions. This finding was verified by results of the scoping exercise amongst service providers and demonstrated that there is no exact duplication of the SymoS symbol work with disadvantaged young people classified as NEET.

Adopting SymfoS as an intervention with the direct target groups: From the series of interviews conducted with relevant organisations and practitioners across the participating countries, the general response to SymfoS and symbol work was positive and demonstrated that those working with disadvantaged young people across a wide range of service providers are enthusiastic about the method’s potential and receptive to it being incorporated within their repertoire of interventions.

This finding is however conditional on the points highlighted as ‘challenges’ and ‘concerns’ regarding the method’s adoption outlined in section 5 which will need to be addressed. Of utmost importance is the need to provide a definition of the boundaries of SymfoS, as, on the one hand, there is recognition of the inherent power of symbol work and, on the other, because of its potential there is the need for strict regulation and governance of its use due to its capacity to connect with the psychological processing of individuals who may indeed be highly vulnerable. This must include thorough training of practitioners and the establishment of a structure of quality assurance.

Although there were a number of disparate points from the findings of the partners’ interviews with the target groups the main commonalities include: the need for audio-visual examples of the method; enabling the method to be presented in an understandable format; empirical research of its effectiveness and applicability; and a robust statement of its theoretical underpinning.

Adopting the method in training programmes: Again, this varies from country to country. However, from partners’ findings, Higher and Further Educations could incorporate SymfoS into their curricula, although this would be limited to information about symbol work as an intervention. The most likely location of training programmes for certification in the SymfoS method will be within the training sector undertaken by private companies.

Appendix

1 IO1 Template for research

IO1 - Research paper and national Adoption Plans for Implementing Symbol Work		
What?	Size?	When by?
The end produce will be documents appropriately 7-8000 words in length which summarizes the situation in your own country in relation to current youth practice and the use of symbols, the potential places where practitioners could be trained in the use of SymfoS and possible routes for the methodology to be more widely adopted. Please use the following sections to structure your review. Please make use of appendices.		All individual partners to complete the report and have an English translated copy 28/2/19
Introduction regarding the aims of your report	200 words	
Section 1 – Literature Search Literature research on the use of interventions with young people (aged 15-25 years) which use symbols or physical objects as part of the process. What interventions are mentioned, how are they used, what are the findings?	500-1000 words	
Section 2 - Practical Research Undertake research with organizations that currently or who could use symbols or physical objects as part of an intervention process. Ensure you follow the ethical research process Undertake interviews with service providers – we need 10 different opinions (x2 focus groups of 5 ideally or separate interviews). Summarize any findings which discuss current practices which use symbols or physical objects as part of the interview process	500-1000 words	End of January 2019 Mid Feb 2019
Section 3 - Potential places for the SymfoS approach to be adopted Discuss the national, regional and local policies and legal requirements that seek to address working with disadvantaged young people Discuss the types of organisations that will deliver services to meet the needs of young people	500-1000 words	
Section 4 - Describe the routes that practitioners can take to get trained to work with young people in your country What is the training sector? How does training of practitioners working with young people happen?	500-1000 words	

Where could symbol work fit?		
Where would symbol work fit in to courses provided by Further Education and Higher Education Institutions?		
Section 5 - Challenges and opportunities that such organizations and practitioners may face when implementing SymfoS		
Summarize any findings from the focus groups/interviews which discuss what the opportunities and challenges may be.	500-1000 words	
What would be the best approach to support individual organizations?		
Section 6 - Challenges and opportunities that training organizations and Universities may face when seeking to implement SymfoS		
What is required to be able to use symbols?	500-1000 words	
What proof/evidence would be required?		
How could SymfoS be incorporated as a method of intervention within the training sector and professional higher education courses?		
Section 7 - What could be the national/regional/local strategic routes through which SymfoS could be quickly disseminated?	500-1000 words	
Are there any national bodies or specific professional groups which would aid the adoption of SymfoS?		
Conclusion	200 words	
Summarize your report		
Once completed send the report to the University of Gloucestershire who will then write up the final report - UoG to provide a short summary of each country's findings. Total length will be between 15-20 pages not including appendices. Partner reports to be included in the appendices.		Completed 31st March 2019

2. Structured interview Questions for Section 2 and 5

1. Name of the organisation and practitioner:
Background of organization? What work is it involved in? What are the aims?
2. Any knowledge of use of physical symbols? –
3. Please describe the process a young person may go through when your organisation works with a young person who needs additional support.
 - a. How do you assess the needs of a young person?
 - b. What interventions do you commonly use, as a result of assessing them?
4. When undertaking assessment and planning work with young people regarding their futures, do you use any other methods apart from dialogue (question and answer) and form completion?
5. Please describe the intervention process that is used to help the young person reflect on their current situation and set goals for future positive outcomes.
6. Within this process, what tools are used and how are they used?
7. Why do you use the process and the tools?

8. Given what you have heard about Symfos, what would be the opportunities and challenges/barriers that such an intervention might have, if applied in your organisation and practice?
9. What steps would need to be taken to trial the SymfoS approach?

3 Definitions of “Creative arts therapies/Expressive therapies”

- *Art Therapy* is defined as the use of art media, images, and the creative process and respects client responses to the created products as reflections of development, abilities, personality, interests, concerns, and conflicts. It is a therapeutic means of reconciling emotional conflicts, fostering self-awareness, developing social skills, managing behavior, solving problems, reducing anxiety, aiding reality orientation, and increasing self-esteem (American Art Therapy Association, 2007).
- *Music therapy* is the prescribed use of music to effect positive changes in the psychological, physical, cognitive, or social functioning of individuals with health or educational problems (American Music Therapy Association, 2007).
- *Drama therapy* is the systematic and intentional use of drama/ theatre processes, products, and associations to achieve the therapeutic goals of symptom relief, emotional and physical integration, and personal growth. It is an active approach that helps the client tell his or her story to solve a problem, achieve catharsis, extend the depth and breadth of his or her inner experience, understand the meaning of images, and strengthen his or her ability to observe personal roles while increasing flexibility between roles (National Association for Drama Therapy, 2007).
- Dance/movement therapy is based on the assumption that body and mind are interrelated and is defined as the psychotherapeutic use of movement as a process that furthers the emotional, cognitive, and physical integration of the individual. Dance/movement therapy effects changes in feelings, cognition, physical functioning, and behavior (American Dance Therapy Association, 2007).
- Poetry therapy and bibliotherapy are terms used synonymously to describe the intentional use of poetry and other forms of literature for healing and personal growth.
- Play therapy is the systematic use of a theoretical model to establish an interpersonal process wherein trained play therapists use the therapeutic powers of play to help clients prevent or resolve psychosocial difficulties and achieve optimal growth and development (Landreth, 1991; Webb, 2007).
- Sandplay therapy is a creative form of psychotherapy that uses a sandbox and a large collection of miniatures to enable a client to explore the deeper layers of his or her psyche in a totally new format; by constructing a series of “sand pictures,” a client is helped to illustrate and integrate his or her psychological condition.
- Integrative approaches involve two or more expressive therapies to foster awareness, encourage emotional growth, and enhance relationships with others. This approach distinguishes itself through combining modalities within a therapy session. Integrative approaches are based on a variety of orientations, including arts as therapy, arts psychotherapy, and the use of arts for traditional healing (Barba, Fuchs, & Knill, 1995; Estrella, 2005).

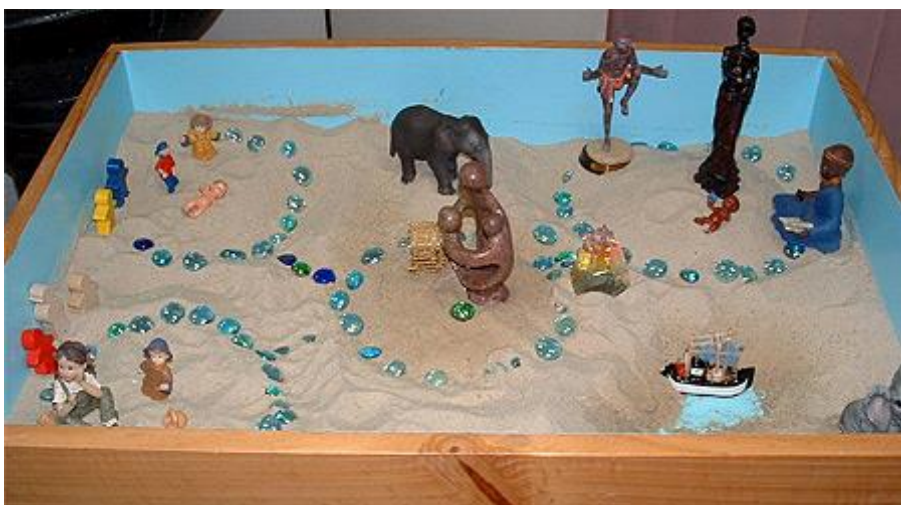
(Malchiodi, 2008:11))

4. Examples of Physical and Pictorial Symbol use

Physical objects –

Youth Offending Team

4.1. Use of **Sand Play** – this was used by the Youth Offending Team interviewed as an intervention and method of engagement with regard to work aimed at reducing offending and criminalisation. The use of Sand Play with the young people was experienced as problematic due to issues with clients struggling to relate to both the process and the practitioner. With regard to the process of Sand Play, service users found it uncomfortable to participate in, confusing, infantile, and repeatedly questioned “what is this?” Additionally, there were difficulties with rapport development between the service users and the Sand Play therapist who was perceived as being “posh” and originating from a different socio-economic group.



<http://www.sandplaytherapist.com/>



4.2. The use of **buttons** from clothing, chosen from a selection of different buttons in a glass jar was identified as being used to describe the young person's life on a time line – this is an effective and positive mode of engagement as the young person is doing something active rather than talking about a subject that could be difficult. Also, the use of buttons to create a composition about the young person's family, social network and people who are important to them (it is thought that this technique originates from GMAP providing AIM training about sexual offending).

Therapeutic intervention project working with those with Borderline Personality Disorder (BPD) and early intervention for psychosis

4.3. Use of **buttons** and stones as a representation of how the individual is feeling. BPD is “characterized by a pervasive pattern of difficulties with emotion regulation and impulse control, and instability both in relationships and in selfimage” (Bateman & Fonagey, 2010:11). Those experiencing BPD struggle with the concept of mentalization which is defined by Bateman & Fonagey (2010:11) as “the process by which we make sense of each other and ourselves, implicitly and explicitly, in terms of subjective states and mental processes.” Howe (2011:29/30) supports this definition by stating that mentalization is the “capacity to understand how one's own and other people's mental states affect behaviour”. : The following treatments can be used for those with BPD - Mentalization Based Treatment (MBT), which aims to assist the individual's stabilization of both the individual's emotional expression and sense of self; and Dialectical Behaviour Therapy to enable the management of difficult emotions through the process of experience, recognition and acceptance of emotional states (Mind, 2019). With this in mind, the use of choosing buttons or stones to represent affective states contributes to interventions for those who struggle with mentalization. Furthermore, objects, such as buttons and stones can be used to represent people that the individual knows. These are arranged to assist with relationship mapping and developing an understanding of social inter-relationships.

Prince's Trust

5.4 Stones and Driftwood – this is a creative evaluation exercise to encourage participants in youth work activities to create a composition to symbolically represent how they felt following a group residential. This process mirrors elements of the SymfoS technique in that the youth worker leaves the individual group members alone to work on their compositions and returns later to receive a presentation (Stage 1) by the young person as to what the objects represent. This is also seen as a highly personal process whereby the objects take on a valuable representational meaning.



Bereavement charity

4.5 Miniature animals - this can be used as a method of expressing difficult emotions as well as way of exploring family relationships in that the animals are used as symbolic representations of family members to replace the need for the use of a genogram.

<https://www.tpctherapy.co.uk/take-a-tour>



<https://www.marylim.co.uk/creativity>

4.6 Memory stones – used in bereavement work. The choice of different textures of rock enables discussion and expression of the corresponding emotion – e.g. rough rock for difficult feelings such as abuse; smooth pebble for every day memories.



Interventions for disabled children and young people and those with a speech and language impairment

4.7 “Objects of reference” - Physical objects that are used to represent an activity, place, or person approach used by Speech and Language therapists to “aid understanding of spoken language, support understanding of daily routines and provide a means of expressive communication”. The object can be a literal representation or have an abstract quality akin to a metaphor – e.g. silk scarf to represent a person. This approach is used frequently with those with

A collection of various objects and cards laid out on a white surface. The objects include:

- Cards with images:**
 - pavilion
 - rebound
 - beech middle
 - swimming
 - horse riding
 - soft play
 - outside
 - swing room
 - diner
 - cube room
 - snack
 - school
 - home
 - shower
 - toilet
- Other items:**
 - A black sock
 - A green leaf cutout
 - An orange card with text and a small blue object attached.
 - A brown rectangular piece of material.
 - A dark green textured square.
 - A red net bag.
 - A blue spoon.
 - A blue plastic piece.
 - A red key.
 - A white pom-pom.
 - A pink fuzzy ball.
 - A white knitted piece.
 - A small silver bell.

4.8 LEGO® Therapy

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XmJB1Lj2PTY>



4.9 Family Constellation / Structural Constellation

Family Constellation also referred to as Structural Constellation work, can use physical symbols as representational objects. This method is used to develop insight into the internal dynamics of organisations such as businesses, associations, networks, partnerships, and families by revealing structures and the nature of relationships within systems. The method can then be used to find solutions to barriers and identify opportunities for change. When used with families, it is a method of family therapy or systemic therapy, in which individual people are arranged to symbolically represent family members and recreate relationships. In this way, the network of relationships within a family can be visualized.

There are variants of the method which includes a highly person-centred approach to problem solving created by the family therapist Virginia Satir in contrast to the more facilitator-directed approach of Bert Hellinger. Satir's concept has been further developed in Germany by Matthias Varga von Kibéd and Insa Sparrer (Systemic Structural Constellation).

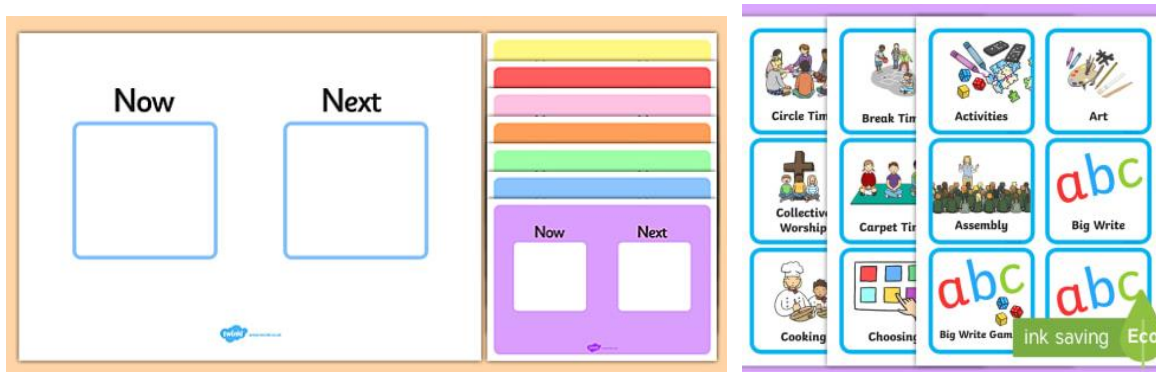
Family Constellations can also be constructed on a Family Board, as developed by systemic therapist Kurt Ludewig (2000), with the help of wooden figures and symbols, if no members or group are available for a constellation



<https://www.richardgriffincoaching.com/constellation>

4b Pictorial symbols – There are numerous versions of pictorial symbols to assist young people with communication problems. These are often utilized by Speech and Language Team (SALT) practitioners.

4.10 “Now and Next boards” – pictorial symbols providing literal representation to the disabled student to assist with the transition to the next activity/stage at the school or college



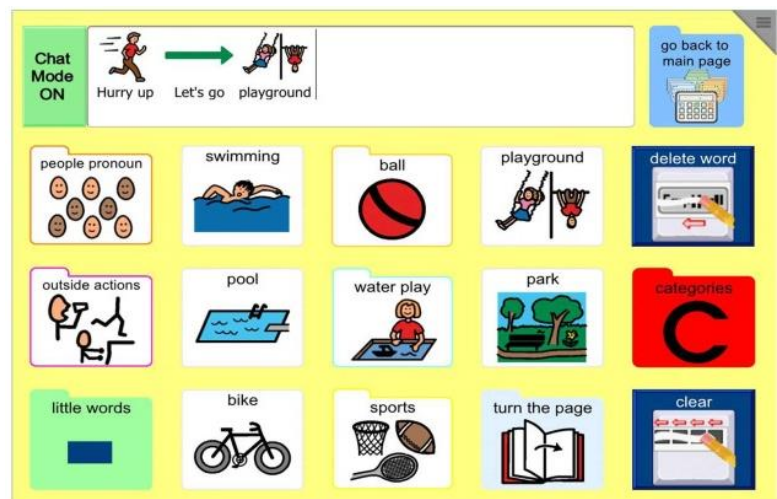
– <https://www.twinkl.co.uk/resource/t-s-111-now-next-visual-aid>

5.11 Pragmatic Organisation Dynamic Display (PODD)

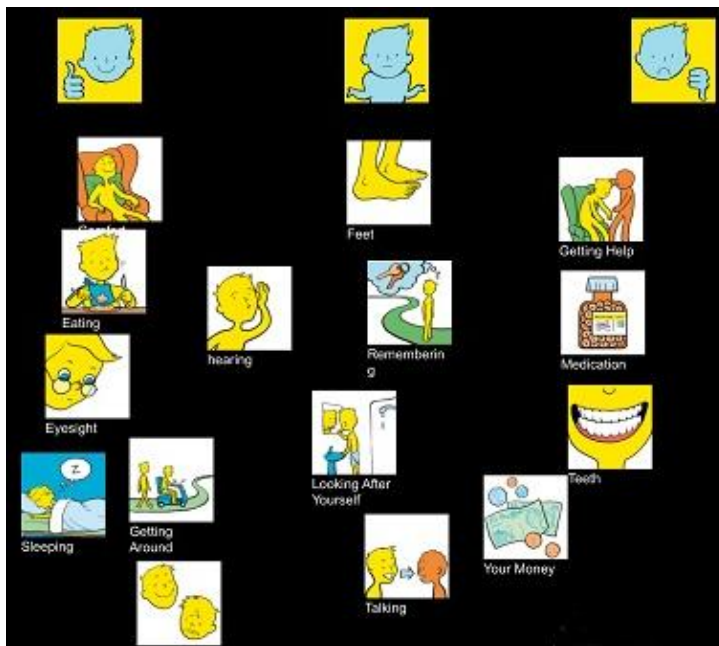
Symbols used with complex learning disabilities

<https://www.novita.org.au/equipment/podd-communication-books/>
originally created by Gayle Porter with the Cerebral Palsy Education Centre (CPEC) Victoria, Australia.

<https://www.tobiidynavox.com/en-US/software/content/PODD-for-Compass/?MarketPopUpClicked=true>



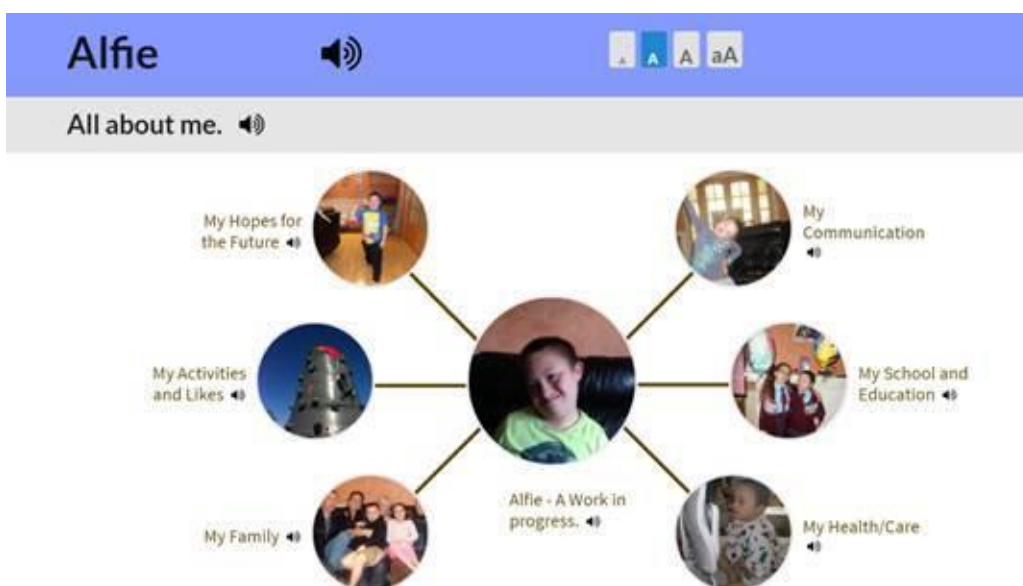
4.12 “Talking Mats” -



An intervention using picture symbols with people with communication difficulties, and those close to them, by increasing their capacity to communicate more effectively – can be used with a physical mat and pictorial cards or on a computer.

<https://www.talkingmats.com/>

4.13 RIX Wikis – this is an intervention developed by the University of East London used with those with an intellectual or learning disability to ensure the individual's needs, wants and aspirations are stated. This mirrors elements of the SymfoS “Basic Clearing Process” in that it uses a Mind-map arrangement (called a Wiki) which includes various domains of the individual's life – e.g. hopes for the future, communication, school and education, health/care, family, activities and likes. (<https://rixresearchandmedia.org/>). Photographs, videos, symbols and documents are then uploaded onto the Wiki (<https://wiki.rixwiki.org/wandsworth-local-offer/home/pcp-template-clone-220/>).



(<https://rixresearchandmedia.org/rix/wikis/individuals-and-families/>)

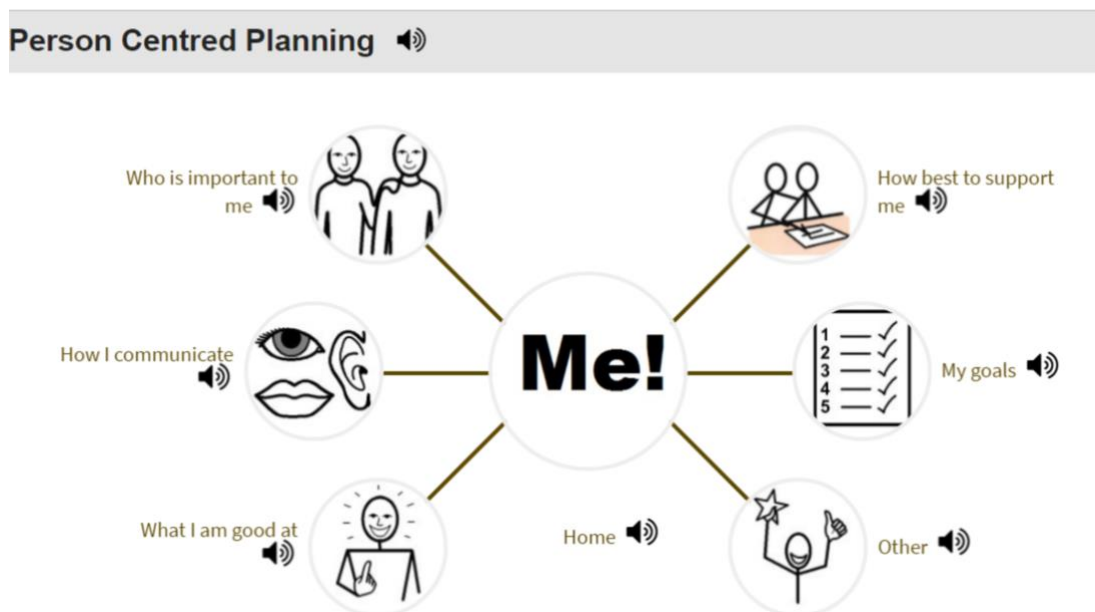
4.14 Widdgit – This is a literal pictorial symbol method to enhance communication for people who have difficulty with the written or spoken word and is used frequently with people with learning disabilities.



<https://www.widgit.com/symbolupdates/> and <https://www.widgit.com/resources/>

4.15 Widget Action Planning Map – the Widget methodology has been adapted by Careers South West for a mapping exercise when undertaking careers guidance work with young people who struggle with communication and cognitive processes. The Action Plan format (see appendix) resembles SymfoS “Basic Clearing” with the following domains –

What's important to me?	My job ideas?	What happens next?
Home Things I like to do.	College or 6 th Form.	School.
Other examples below:		



<https://thrive.wandsworth.gov.uk/kb5/wandsworth/fsd/service.page?id=Xtd96nSCzcq>

4.16 Picture Communication Symbols (PSC) Mayer-Johnson



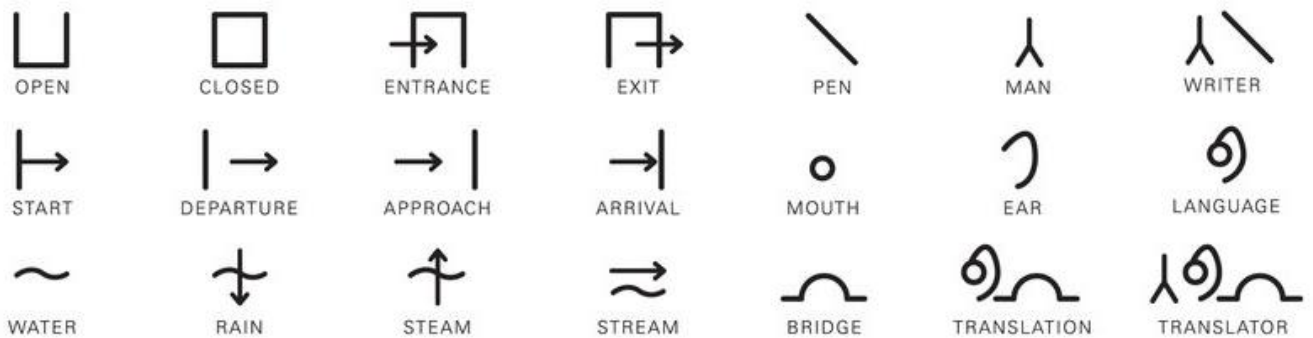
(<https://goboardmaker.com/products/pcs-high-contrast-vol1-cd-win-mac>)

4.17 Symbolstix



(<https://www.teacherspayteachers.com/Product/AAC-Story-Unit-At-the-park-Symbolstix-2093208>)

4.18 Blissymbols



(https://www.researchgate.net/figure/Blissymbols-Several-interesting-things-can-be-observed-by-looking-at-blissymbols-such_fig2_300005260)

4.19 Makaton



(https://www.makaton.org/shop/examples_computer_use)

4.20 Talking Cubes

A project interviewed that works with disabled young people provided information about an interesting multi-sensory resource that they use which employs Widgeits, written word and recorded verbal messages to explore the young person's interests and plans for the future. When a button on a face of the cube is pressed, a message regarding the corresponding subject is played



4.21 Mind Of My Own (MOMO)

MOMO is an on-line tool aimed at children and young people who use health, social care and education services to provide an opportunity to communicate with their key workers about elements of their life, opinions about the services that they receive and plan for the future. This is achieved through the use of pictorial symbols and texting.

What's good in your life right now?

Pick all the choices you want and add your own if you like.

 Where I live	 My school/ college	 Sport	 My friends
 My hobbies/ activities	 My family	 My pets	 A place I go
 Something I achieved	 My money	 My care plan	 My health
 My relationships	 My work		

How you feel right now
Pick all the feelings you're having right now and add your own.

 OK	 Calm	 Anxious	 Hopeful
 Confused	 Angry	 Excited	 Enthusiastic
 Unsure	 Unsafe	 Scared	 Ignored

any other feelings?

What's good in your life right now?
Pick all the choices you want and add your own if you like.

4.22 Use of Directly Representational Symbols for Information Provision

Alcohol

It takes 1 hour for your body to get rid of 1 unit of alcohol

-  1 can of lager = 1 ½ units
-  1 small pub measure of spirits like gin, vodka or whisky= 1 unit
-  1 bottle of alcopops = 1 ½ units
-  35cl (small bottle) of spirits like vodka, gin or whisky =13 units
-  70cl (medium bottle)= 26 units

The Law
You have to be 18 to buy alcohol

How can it affect you?

- It can make you do things you wouldn't normally do e.g. have sex without condoms
- Can make you feel dizzy, sleepy or sick
- Takes longer for you to react when something goes wrong
- You might not be able to walk in a straight line
- You might become very happy, aggressive or very upset.

(Speech and Language Therapy, Gloucestershire Youth Support Team)

4c Generic Youth Work

5.23 Emojis - Project service evaluation methods frequently cited as using Smiley Face and Emojis – These are used in a variety of contexts.

Do I get it?



Yes

Sort of

No. Help!

Learner comment (optional):

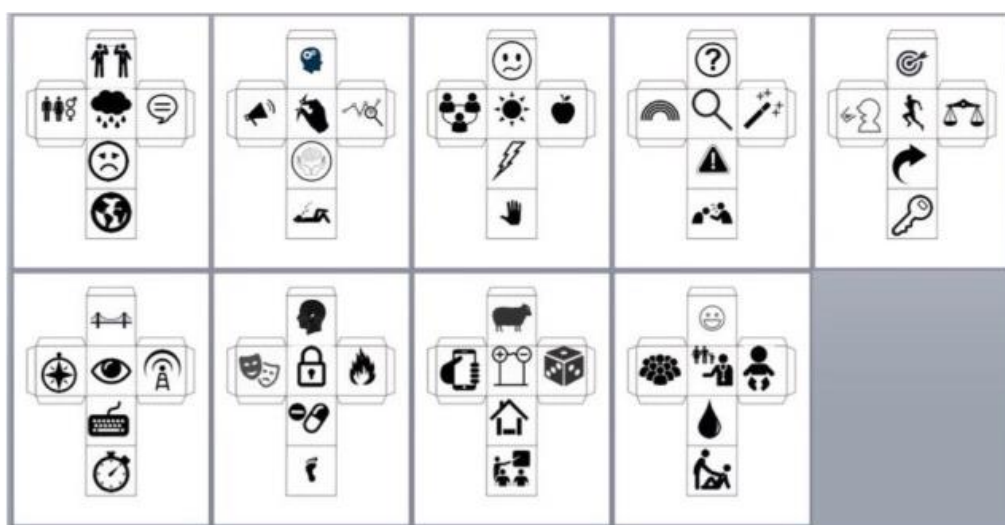
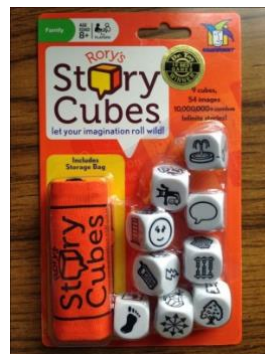
How can we help?

<https://www.tes.com/teaching-resource/lesson-self-evaluation-sheet-emoji-ofsted-approved-grade-1-11666249>

4.24 “Story Cubes”

Story cubes are a collection of dice with different icons on each face. The participants roll the dice and are invited to “think on their feet” and create a story from the presenting icons. They can be used as an Icebreaker and an intervention to articulate young people’s feelings and emotions.

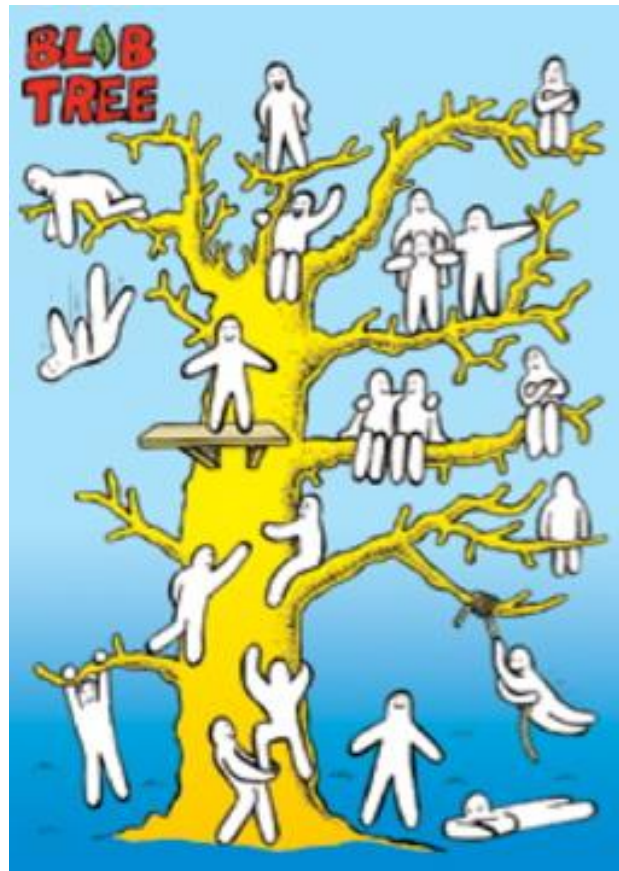
<https://www.storycubes.com/>



<https://slowchatheath.com/2017/02/14/story-cubes/>

4.25 Blob Trees –

This method is used very frequently with young people by youth workers to explore and articulate young people's feelings following an activity or part of a structured programme- devised by Pip Wilson. Young people are invited to circle or identify the characters they relate to or who represent how they are feeling.



http://www.pipwilson.com/2004/11/blob-tree_110181146915869209.html

4.26 The Hand of Reflection – A technique to use with young people to assist with evaluation and reflection following participation in activities. Participants are given a piece of paper and access to pens. Ask participants to draw around their hand, and record the following on the fingers of their hand:



- Thumb – something good, something they enjoyed
- Index finger – something they would like to point out (could be good or bad)
- Middle finger – something bad, something they did not enjoy
- Ring finger – something they will **treasure from the activity/event**
- Little finger – something little they want to add (could be good or bad)
- Palm – A prediction for the future - What they are going to do next?

(<https://woodcraft.org.uk/sites/default/files/Evaluation%20and%20reflection%20activities.pdf>) as part of evaluating participation in a collaborative project between Woodland Folk and the National Citizen's Service

4.27 Vision boards – young people are invited to create a composition which can be a collage of words and pictures to represent goals and aspirations on a large canvass regarding who and what inspires them. Within the context of youth work practice, this process is used as a point of group discussion to promote exploration and awareness through discussion rather than being an endorsement of the process of “visualization” and commitment to the “Law of attraction” which requires scrutiny and analytical criticism



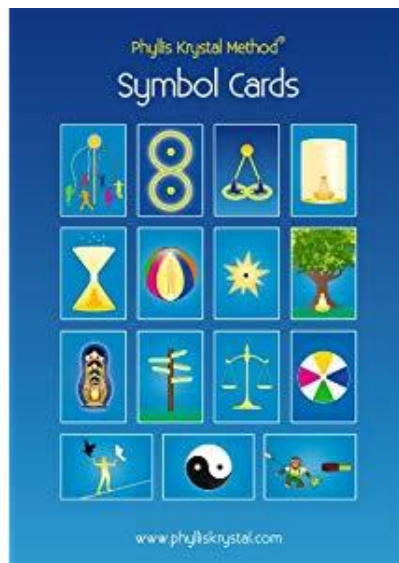
<https://www.makeavisionboard.com/what-is-a-vision-board/>

4.28 Mind maps – Items are selected from the news and current affairs – articles, photos – to create a montage which is central to young people making a presentation to the other young people and corporate volunteers. This is a method to articulate and assist verbalisation regarding goals and the future in a creative and free ranging manner. By presenting back to the group it reinforces the concept that everyone is in the same situation, joining in, opening up, developing trust and relationship building. By sharing what the young people care about this can provide a positive reinforcement regarding their aspirations.

4.29 Family Island

Create an island to represent individual family members out of scrap material to illustrate what makes them a family – then invite the family members to visit each island, giving permission to ask questions and invoke rituals (welcomes, handshakes etc.).

4.30 Phyllis Krystal method – Symbol cards



<https://ear-thschool.com/current-krystal/>

4.31 Dixit Cards

In Austria, symbolic and fantasy cards, such as “Dixit Cards” are used in a variety of methods for educational and vocational guidance, to explore imaginary personal journeys to achieving employment. Clients select cards that reflect their personal aims and use them to provide an explanation in concrete terms related to their objectives. These cards are seen as an aid to bring ideas into the consciousness.



4.32 Feelings Flashcards – these cards are used by practitioners to explore feelings and develop emotional awareness – they have a feeling on one side with its diametric version on the reverse of the card - <https://www.amazon.co.uk/Todd-Parr-Feelings-Flash-Cards/dp/0811871452>



4.33 Mood Cards – These cards are again used by the practitioner with the young person to explore emotions and develop mindfulness. They have a positive affirmation on the reverse



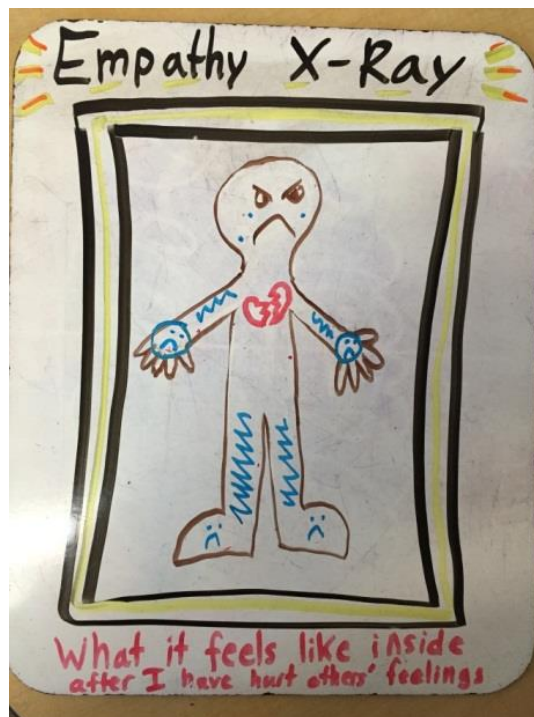
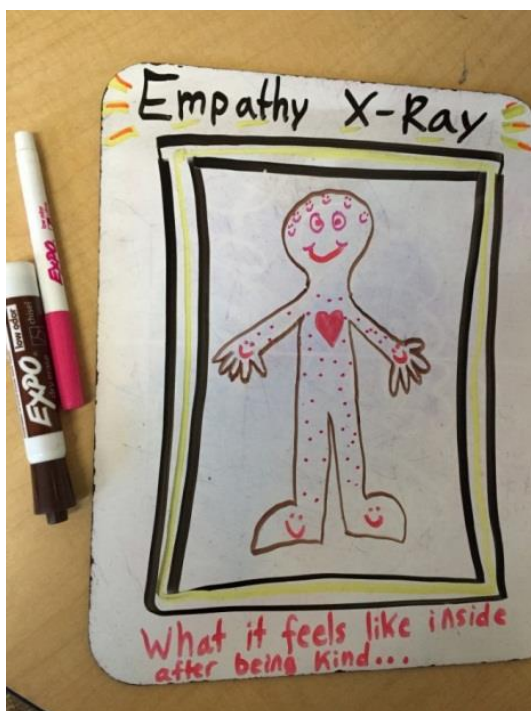
<http://www.themoodcards.com/>

4.34 Inside/Out Film Characters – these are used by the practitioner to have discussions about characters that represent emotional states to encourage emotional self-awareness and expression and exploration, and “unblock” feelings.



<https://www.thehelpfulcounselor.com/20-counseling-themes-in-inside-out/>

4.35 Feelings X-rays – this is akin to Empathy X-ray exercises whereby an outline of the body is drawn to create a body-map. The child or young person draws images or places physical items on the body-map which represents feelings and how different places on their body reacts and responds accordingly.



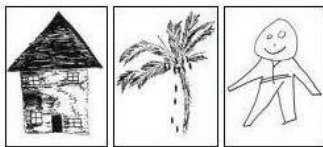
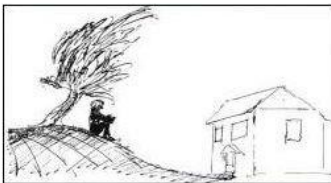
<https://kristinamarcelli.wordpress.com/2016/02/18/empathy-x-ray-helping-children-notice-the-positive-physical-response-to-connection/>

Queen/King of the island. As you draw a gate at the end of the bridge, state that the young person owns the key to the gate and only they have the power to decide when this gate can be opened (Draw a key on the young person's island). Next draw waves all around the islands. In the waves draw sharks' fins. Put more sharks around the bottom island, some around the island adjoining the child's kingdom, but leave one side of the child's island safe for swimming. Now hand over control to the young person. Explain that they have total control over who goes on to the islands. Ask what would make it the perfect place to live, what would be on the island. Ask which people, places or things would they want on their island ALL THE TIME. They can draw or write these in. Next ask what people or places would be on the next island. State that these are people or places that they would like to see occasionally. The young person is in control and they have the key so they can decide when to see these people or places and can decide when they have had enough. Important information is, "Are these people allowed onto the young person's island or does the young person cross the bridge to visit them?" Ask the young person to draw or write them in. Next, state the young person can then place people or places they hate in one of two places. They can place them in the bottom island (This is a totally secure island. People cannot travel off this island, there are no boats or planes or any means of transportation, and freezing cold shark infested waters surround it). However, they can also choose other people or places to take their chances in shark-infested waters. If the young person draws and completes the task you can ask questions as desired.

<http://www.durham-lscb.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/sites/29/2016/06/1415623335-Queen-or-King-of-the-Island-Exercise.pdf>

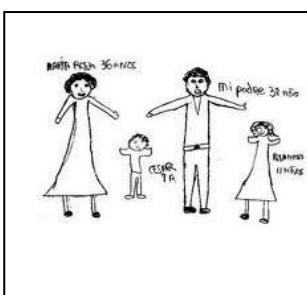
4d Projection Tests

4.38 "House-Tree-Person"



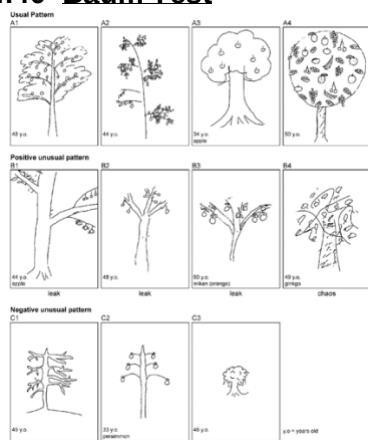
(Source: <https://www.psicoactiva.com/tienda/estudio-test-htp/>)

4.39 Corman's Family Test



(Source: <http://korinanatalia.blogspot.com/p/test-de-la-familiael.html>)

4.40 Baum Test



(Source: https://www.researchgate.net/figure/Examples-of-drawings-made-in-the-Baum-Test-and-their-classifications-from-Utena-Saito_fig2_328636263)

4.41 “Man in the Rain” Test



(Source: <https://aptitus.com/blog/sabes-como-dibujar-a-una-persona-bajo-la-lluvia/>)

4e Youth Offending Team, Careers Guidance, Participatory Evaluation

Youth Offending Team

5.42 Use of metaphor and analogy – this can take the form of any creative medium such as sharing the viewing of a favoured feature film with the practitioner, creating a montage, using the project’s garden as a special metaphor. This has been found to be a very effective intervention as it provides a young person-centred approach which enables the young person to articulate their goals and provides the professional with an insight into the young person’s world. This is in stark contrast to conventional process driven assessment and planning form completion which is often perceived as alienating the young person.

Examples of such work could be a young person and practitioner watching a film together e.g. Rocky



The steps that Rocky runs up become a metaphor for the steps the young person wants to make. The “triumph” stance of Rocky representing what they young person wants to achieve.

Careers

4.43Career Navigator Road Map



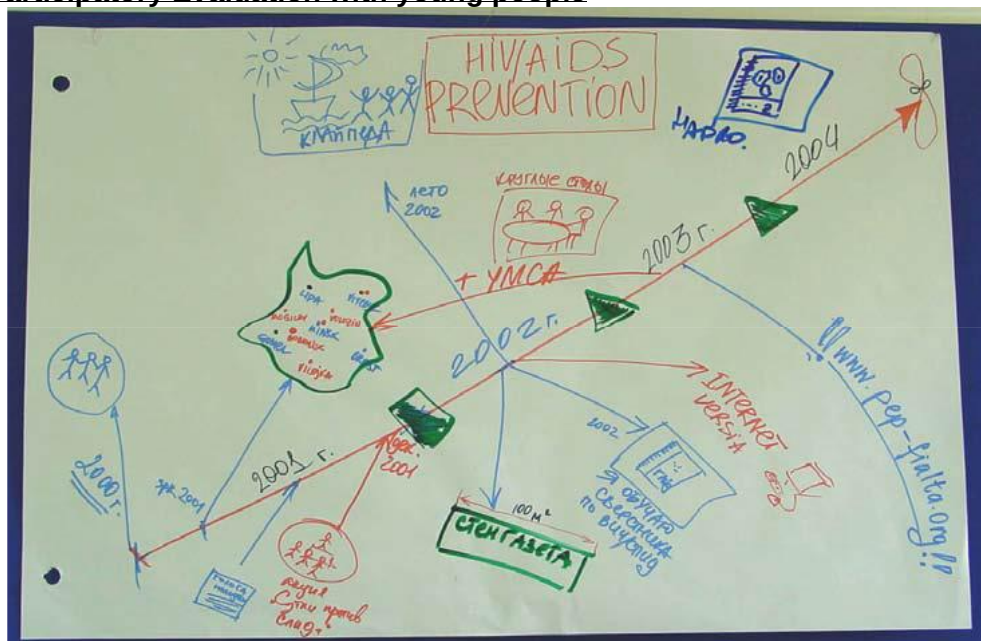
<http://creativecareercoaching.org/product/career-navigator/>

4.44 This is a feature of the ‘**Spartan Test**’ created by SACU. This asks participants to repeatedly choose from a selection of 4 images per page the picture that best represents them and then matches the responses to a range of options in education and work for further exploration. An example is provided below.



NONE OF THE ABOVE

4.45 Participatory Evaluation with young people



(Gawler, 2005: 22)

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