

Czech Republic Good Practices: Intergenerational urban garden

Main Goals

- To support urban gardening and community life in the housing estate
- To arrange intergenerational dialogue

Objectives

- To offer a meeting opportunity of seniors and children by gardening activities
- To encourage a sense of responsibility for the task within the gardening team
- To increase the efficiency of the TOTEM city garden

Resources needed

- Competent coordinator with creative ideas
- Space for community gardening
- Gardening and teaching materials

Challenges

- Funding
- To keep both seniors' and children's motivation to work in the community garden

An area of our long-term interest is the promotion of intergenerational relations and an open dialogue across generations. One of the projects of this type is the intergenerational garden that we have been running on the terrace of our center since spring 2015. We have created a beautiful and useful oasis in the middle of the housing estate for our clients as well as for the general public coming either to events connected with the garden or to events of another character using garden spaces. The garden is co-managed by children from two kindergartens and volunteers - seniors from the Intergenerational and volunteer center TOTEM, z.s. Seniors generally have experience with gardening, but they often do not have the opportunity to use it and furthermore they can't transfer their knowledge in the natural way to children. On the other hand, children, by their naturalness and joy, can motivate and activate the seniors to forget about the troubles of everyday life.

In addition to the specific garden work, we offer to the target group professional workshops with topics such as: how to grow balcony plants, how to prepare your balcony for winter, mikrogreens, cooking from garden products in different seasons, cooking of parents or grandparents with children, herbs and how to use them, use of herbs in cosmetics, inspiration from other Pilsen and non-Pilsen gardens, ecological gardening, etc.

Very important is a longterm and continual promotion of the project. We use all information channels which have proven successful: leaflets, posters, webpage, public notice boards, facebook, local newspapers, Czech Radio, presentation of the project at conferences in the Czech Republic and abroad, press releases during and after the project.

There are evaluations with volunteers involved in the project in the form of regular interviews, there is a playful form of evaluation with kindergarten children and there is an evaluation with the kindergarten teachers and with the implementation team.

An evaluation tool is also the Garden Diary, where there are recorded all the happenings in the garden and it serves as an overview of who works in the garden, or who comes to relax, or who comes as a visitor. We use the Diary for children to become aware of all the activities related to the garden and for the promotional purposes of the project.



Taking shared care of the urban garden



Gardenwork in general has always been essential to me. The fact that we will run the urban garden with children was initially not my motivation. But it has changed since the beginning of the project. Working with children is fulfilling, makes sense and it's fun. Over the years as a volunteer I got to like this activity the most.

- Vladimír Dbalý, volunteer -

Facts and points:

- ✓ During a one year project we organised 10 workshops for public.
- ✓ For the effective use of finance we had regular consultations with professionals in the field of gardening and preparation of workshops for public.
- ✓ Beneficial for public were especially: "Exchange of garden plants" and the project "Semínkovna" to collect and exchange crops' seeds.
- ✓ There are about 500 people per year participating on events connected with our urban garden.