Inclusive Crisis Communication with Children – Case Kymenlaakso

Secure Kids conference 29.1.2025



Inclusive communication

Key principles

- Clarity and simplicity
- Empathy and reassurance
- Accessibility
- Age-appropriate communication
- Participatory approach

Kymenlaakson pelastuslaitos Kymenlaakson hyvinvointialue

Kymenlaakso Rescue Department reaches the region's youth *four times* before the age of 20.

Pre-schoolers

- Ages 3-6
- Kymenlaakso Rescue Department firefighters visit pre-schools yearly
- A short lession of a current topic (themed with "seasonal" risks)
- Emergency evacuation practice
- Visiting a fire truck obviously!





Elementary schools

- Ages 7-12
- Often in cooperation with the local police department
- Educating on the topic of fire safety and concequences of careless use of fire



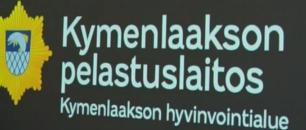


Upper Comprehensive School

- Ages 14-15
- NouHätä! ("NoWorries!")
- National campaign
 - Kymenlaakso: 1 300 8th graders from 28 schools (2024)
- Consist of 3 stages
 - Theory lession and an entry stage-competition
 - Competition prep classes and regional competition
 - National competition
- Teaches f.ex. first aid, fire safety and preparedness.







Feedback from NouHätä! (2024)

- **85** % of students who responded to our feedback questionnaire felt like they learned new skills and gained knowledge during the campaign.
 - "Our trainers made the **learning environment feel really relaxed** even though we were learning about serious things, which I really liked"
 - "A really great lesson, I learned a lot. The **topics** were really interesting. I really liked our trainer."
 - "Could've been a longer class, otherwise good."
 - "It would be nice to have some **hands-on training** with the theory lessions."
 - "Fun class with a good trainer, I wish it had lasted longer!"





High school

- 17-18 year olds
- Punainen liitu (*"The Red Chalk"*)
- National campaign
- Traffic safety
- In cooperation with the rescue department, ambulance services, the police and Finnish Road Safety Council





Other national events and campaigns

F.ex. 112-day and "open house" at the fire station







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Key takeaways

- Inclusive communication with children to prepare them for crisis situations is essential for their safety and well-being
- Tailor messages to their age, abilities and cultural background
- Empower children by giving them tools and knowledge to navigate emergencies
- Listen empower trust



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Thank you!

For additional information you cn contact Merisade Kuusela <u>merisadekuusela@kymenhva.fi</u> p. +358 44 702 6215



Kymenlaakson pelastuslaitos



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Kymenlaakson pelastuslaitos



