

# Inclusive Crisis Communication with Children – Case Kymenlaakso

Secure Kids conference 29.1.2025



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# Inclusive communication

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

*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 lesson 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 consequences 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 lesson 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 lessons."*
  - *"Fun class with a good trainer, **I wish it had lasted longer!**"*



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# 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





# 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*

# Thank you!

*For additional information you can contact*

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