

**LIBERA**

Croatian Association for Education, Entrepreneurship and  
International Cooperation

**PROJECT PROGRESS REPORT FOR „WE EMPOWER CROATIAN CHILDREN TO  
OVERCOME FEARS“**



**Dear donors and supporters,**

**thank you for supporting our activities with your donations.**

We are also very happy to have attracted a **new fundraiser, the Danica Women's Choir from Zagreb.**

The members of the choir are delighted with our work and have decided to support our project, for which we are extremely grateful.

Thanks to their efforts, we also collected 11 donations during the last Global Giving campaign.

As you may have guessed, **two new workshops** were held

for students of class **3A of Julija Klović Elementary School** with the presence of their teacher Renata, who helped us with logistics. As always, the workshop was held in the Tin Ujević library, Zagreb because the entire space of

the library is adapted to children and their education.

The joy and happiness the children showed when Rico arrived at the workshop is simply indescribable. That love, affection and

the tenderness towards him left us adults speechless. Thanks to his presence, the children absorbed every word from Josipa.

**During the lecture, Josipa explained to the children:**

- What are emotions?
- What types of emotions do we know?
- What kind of change happens in our body when we feel one of the emotions?
- **What thoughts go through our heads when we experience certain emotions in our body?**

Also, Josipa mentioned to the students that fear is a basic human emotion that can be very unpleasant, and we experience it when

we see danger, when we expect danger or when we imagine danger. Of course, if fear is excessive, it can cause a lot of negative

emotions, but on the other hand, it also helps us to pay attention to some danger and thus protect ourselves.

The task was also to answer her questions:

What changes in the body occur when you experience the emotion of fear?

Why do we experience fear? And why does fear have an important function?

**1. Exercises were also conducted with children through the following questions:**

- The first task was to write on a piece of paper what they are afraid of?
- Next to fear, write how much are you afraid of? (from 1 to 10)
- What thoughts go through your head when you feel that fear?
- Write down one thought on a piece of paper.
- Decide not to think about unpleasant feelings

**How to focus your attention on something else and think differently? Examples:**

- List five things you can see, four things you can touch, three things you can hear, two things you can smell,  
one thing you can taste.
- Recite/sing a song
- Calculate a price
- Take the dog for a walk,
- Clean your room,
- Help your parents/brothers/sisters with some work.

**2. The task that intrigued the children the most:**

- All the pieces of paper from the previous task were put in a bag
- The children drew pieces of paper, read what fear it is about
- They had to read how someone feels when they have a fear.

**The task was to construct a thought that will ease the fear of a friend and help him not to be afraid**

- **Help a friend and give a (realistic) answer to the thought that intensifies that fear!**
- **What thought helps?**

**3. The technique that helps with fears and that intrigued children the most is the traffic light technique:**

- **Red: STOP!**

(helps: deep breathing, redirecting attention, counting...)

- **Yellow: CAUTION!**

(it helps: to think about our thoughts and the emotions we feel, to remember what is right to do

and what is not

- **Green: GO!**

(helps: when we have calmed down, think of what is right and do it)

At these workshops, the children were especially emotional because they became very close to Rico, and teacher Renata was

happy with the fact that one girl from the class stopped being afraid of the dog. Rico played a major role in

reducing her fear since she never barks during the workshop, except at Josip's request. As he now met all the children,

before the start of the workshop, he gently nudges them and greets them with his muzzle. He is extremely sweet and got under the

skin of all the children. And we can learn a lot from his behavior, which is unreserved support for all the children he comes in contact with.

He completely calms them down, they cheerfully complete their tasks and know that even if they do something wrong,

Rico will certainly not judge them.

**The realization of project activities** in the previous period is in accordance with the set goals of the project, related to the following:

- socializing and workshops for 24 children with a therapy dog Rico and his mentor Josipa,
- carrying out different topics that teach us about emotions and ways to control them,
- children's photo session to remember the wonderful socializing with friends and activities with the therapy dog and
- handing out gifts that included lot of chocolates and candy.

All those **activities will help prevent later severe forms of anxiety** and at the same time contribute to solving related specific social problems

and proactively influence the development of the community as a whole.

**Considering the relaxing and stimulating role of therapy dogs for children's development, this type of workshops represents an**

innovative activity for Croatian school students. So far, thanks to your support, we have included over 160 children aged 8-12,

and our intention is to implement the program in to all schools that show interest in this form of holding workshops.

Dear donor, we **invite you to stay in touch with us** or contact us through social media or through our website

if you want to know more about our project.

We believe that the pictures in the attachment will also cheer you up.

### The Libera Team





