

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 everything. The fact that you are with us all the time

gives us strength and courage to move on.

When implementing our ideas, there are always challenges, and I am especially thinking of changing the team,

which we had in the fall of this year. The new Psychologist Josipa and the therapy dog Rico really delighted the children with their fresh and optimistic

approach. The children accepted this change with open arms, and Rico bought their hearts in an instant, with his gentle and friendly look.

Two 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, collecting consent from parents, and I believe that we made this pre-holiday period better for them with these workshops.

There was a lot of joy and fun. And I believe that everyone will remember this way of approach children fondly.

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.

During the lecture, Josipa explained to the children

1. How we experience different emotions and what they are:

- Emotions are reactions in our body to some environmental events that are important to us.

2. She also explained that we have several basic emotions:

- Joy, sadness, anger, fear, surprise, disgust.
- The emotions we experience are important because they help us survive and function in our environment.

3. When experiencing each emotion, what changes occur in our body.

- Where do you feel your basic emotions?
- Mark on the drawing of the girl/boy which part of your body is most affected by that emotion

4. How do we recognize emotions in other people??

- We recognize them by: facial expression (eyes, eyebrows, mouth); body position (shoulders, arms, hands)
- through behavior and based on experience

Exercises were also conducted with children through the following questions:

- How does the boy in the picture feel?
- How does Rico feel in the pictures?

The story of Rico.....

A few days ago Rico had a very stressful day. "Why, what happened to him?" - you must ask.

I'll tell you right away. The day started with rain. It was raining so much that Rico could not take a long walk as he was used to

nor could he play with his dog friends. That's why he felt sad. Later that day he also had to visit the vet.

Josipa took him for a regular check-up, and that's what he fears the most. He was very scared, but he managed to endure and complete

the examination and vaccination. When they returned home, out of great desire to greet him, the little boy Nikola stopp on his tail!

It hurt him a lot. When he gets on his tail, Rico gets angry.

The story was an introduction to the discussion of how we react when we are angry?

Talking about emotions, the children discussed how they react when they have a bad day. One boy had to describe his in front of everyone

angry reaction and he described what he feels in his body when he is overcome by anger.

Some have described that they blush, have a feeling of excess energy, throw toys, slam doors, and it doesn't end well either

if a brother or sister happens to be on their way.

After that, everyone got a drawn boy or girl, which they had to color in places

where they feel the most anger. Whether it's the head, stomach or hands.

Also, after the workshop we were happy because the children were extremely satisfied with everything they learned.

We continued with informal socializing and we had a discussion on how to involve more children in the whole project.

However, expected results of the workshop were achieved especially in the part: how to control your emotions

and how to deal with them. Especially when it comes to anger. How the children showed really exaggerated reactions to anger

during the workshop Josipa decided to specifically address the aforementioned topic at the next workshop in order to teach

the anger and rage control techniques. One of the ways is finding an activity that we like and that does not cause

us stress and finding activities that will include all children regardless of their diversity. Josipa emphasized that engaging

in the drawing activity is one of the ways to "repair" a bad day, a bad mood, and a way to experience pleasant emotions.

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 140 children aged 8-12,

and our intention is to implement the program in all Croatian schools and include all school students.

Therefore, **your support is invaluable** and **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.

We wish you enchanting and pleasant upcoming holidays!

The Libera Team







