

# STOP: A New Initiative To Prevent Sexual Abuse Against Children

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Stop Child Abuse Through Effective Training and Augmented Reality (STOP) is an Erasmus+ KA2 Youth Project, financed by the European Commission (project number: 2019-2-HR01-KA205-061028). The project started in December 2019, with the duration of 26 months.

STOP project aims to provide an innovative answer to the adverse childhood experiences that affect children and youth in Europe. Sexual abuse of children occurs far more often than previously acknowledged. Children are vulnerable and often ashamed and afraid to report any incidents. As a result, this form of abuse is the hardest to detect, and it has many harmful effects on children and youth. International studies (Barth et al.) reveal that approximately 20% of women and between 5 - 10 % of men, report having been victim of sexual violence as children.

Prevention of child sexual abuse is important for children to learn prevention strategies, how to protect themselves if they are in danger, and ask for help from adults. Professionals working with children such as youth workers should be well informed about the complex impact of sexual abuse on children and about the forms of protection. For this reason, STOP project recognizes youth workers as the first direct target group, developing innovative learning materials intended to empower them in order to teach children how to respond to suspected abuse.

STOP project aims at decreasing sexual abuse and exploitation of children and young people (9-18 years old) by offering an innovative learning methodology to youth workers about sex abuse prevention. The project wants to provide new approaches and tools to youth workers based on AR - Augmented Reality game, in order to fight child adverse experience both online and offline.

STOP is implemented in Italy, Greece, Spain, Ireland, Cyprus and Croatia by the following organizations: The European Digital Learning Network, Kentro Merimnas Oikogeneias Kai Paidiou – KMOP, Universidad De Valladolid – UVA, Asociacion DESES 3, CCS Digital Education Limited, A & A Emphasys Interactive Solutions Ltd and Parents' Association “Step by step” as a coordinator.

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