

## WORKSHOP SCENARIO FOR STUDENTS OF POST-PRIMARY SCHOOLS

### Sponsoring

**Workshop's goal:** The aim of the workshop is to educate its participants' on one of the types of hazardous sexual relations known as "sponsoring". The participants will learn about the reasons for teenagers engaging into such relations, and about help opportunities for young people who are involved in situations of having sex in exchange for gifts and money.

**Duration:** 90 minutes

**Target group:** The workshop is intended for youth between 13 and 18 years old. It can be conducted at school – in such situation the group size is defined by class population. The workshop can also be carried out outside of school, for a group of people who don't know each other. In such situations, it is recommended that the age-wise homogeneous groups count no more than 20-25 participants.

**Place:** school class, day room, training room.

**Materials needed:** provided DVD (option)

**Equipment required:** laptop, projector, projection screen or TV set (if using the DVD).

**Facilitator:** the facilitators best suited for the proposed workshop are people who work with youth on a daily basis, who can run a facilitated discussion, and have at least basic knowledge of the phenomenon of child exploitation for prostitution. We encourage you to run the workshop with two facilitators. This should ease up the discussions that will follow each exercise, and ensure comfort during the workshop.

**Workshop type and kinds of work involved:** lecture, team work, brainstorming, presentation, discussion

The workshop combines elements of a lecture on hazardous sexual behaviours among young people and a discussion with teenagers regarding reasons and consequences of underage prostitution. The content of the workshop and types of work involved can be difficult or poignant for the participants. Before running the workshop, it is advisable to read the "Commercial sexual exploitation of children Q&A" leaflet, available at: [www.edukacja.fdn.pl](http://www.edukacja.fdn.pl).

We have prepared two ways of presenting the story of a person who engaged into hazardous sexual relations. You can either read the story out loud or show the provided educational DVD.

**Workshop completion/evaluation form:** We kindly ask you to fill in an evaluation form for the conducted prevention workshop. Your opinion will greatly help us create further educational materials. Once you have filled in the form, you will have the possibility to obtain a workshop certificate. The form is available at [www.edukacja.fdn.pl](http://www.edukacja.fdn.pl).

## **1. Introduction**

**Duration:** 3 minutes

The facilitator informs the participants that the workshop will deal with a type of hazardous sexual relation, known as “sponsoring”, that young people often engage into.

The facilitator should propose to set and write down a few rules to which all participants shall comply throughout the workshop, e.g.:

- I listen when others speak.
- I don't judge other participants.
- In discussions and exercises, I refer to the story presented during the workshop.
- I treat with respect and discretion the information and opinions disclosed by other participants.
- I maximally engage in the workshop.

## **2. Exercise: Definition of “sponsoring”**

**Type of work:** team work

**Duration:** 10 minutes

The facilitator divides the participants into teams of five. Each of these teams is told to prepare a definition of the problem of “sponsoring”, which concerns young people. The definition should include information such as: who engages into such activities (age, sex, etc.); who the “sponsors” are (age, sex, motivation); how and where the meetings take place; what the remuneration may be.

The teams have 5 minutes to complete this task. Next, each team shares their results with the others.

## **3. Lecture**

**Type of work:** Lecture

**Duration:** 10 minutes

The facilitator introduces the problem of “sponsoring” among young people. We deal with “sponsoring” when young people, regardless of their sex, agree to engage into sexual relations (mostly) with adults, in exchange for, so called, gifts or money. Such meetings can be arranged through the Internet or may happen without prior contacts, e.g. in shopping malls, where young girls often look for sponsors.

Providing this definition, the facilitator should emphasize that in relations based on “sponsoring” the remuneration might come in the form of gifts, often very expensive or exclusive, e.g. a cell phone, perfume, music player, etc., and sometimes inexpensive: a CD, cheap clothes and accessories or lip

gloss. Sometimes the “sponsors” pay with money. Some of the one-time meetings become on-going relations – this is a deal where a young person is being provided for by her sponsor in exchange for sex.

The “Sponsoring” is not an occasional incident among young people. According to the Nobody’s Children Foundation 2010 research, which was conducted on a sample of 1000 young people between 15 and 18 years old, has shown that the quarter of its participants know at least one peer of theirs who had sexual relations in exchange for gifts or money within the previous year. The act of adults engaging into sexual relations with young people in exchange for money is considered a form of sexual exploitation. An act on protecting children from such crimes is included in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, which is a catalogue of legal acts regarding all aspects of young people’s lives. Protection against commercial sexual exploitation is also within the scope of the Polish law (Act of 4<sup>th</sup> April 2014 amending the Polish Criminal Code (Dz.U. 2013 poz. 538, amendments are in force since 26th May 2014.)

[excerpt from the Polish Criminal Code, paragraph 199. 1, 2&3]

#### **4. Presentation: Anna’s story/Jacob’s story**

**Type of work:** Presentation

**Materials needed:** if the story is presented in the form of a video: the DVD enclosed to the scenario, laptop, projector, projection screen or TV set

**Duration:** 5 minutes

Lesson scenario contains two histories – one of a boy and one of a girl. The facilitator should decide which of the stories will serve as a base for the further lesson. The educational content in both stories is the same.

The facilitator invites everybody to listen to Anna’s story and explains that the situation it describes will serve as material for further discussion. Next he/she reads out loud the story or plays the video.

*Anna (15)*

*Some time ago, I noticed a few girls in my neighbourhood. They seemed very confident, they had brand-name clothes and different cool gadgets. I envied them a lot, I could only dream about that kind of clothes or cosmetics. It all somehow made me feel worse than these girls and attractive.*

*Once I met one of these girls at the bus stop. We started to chat and she showed me her new mobile. She said that it was a gift from one guy she knew, and that she knew a lot of guys that gave her cool things. Then she looked me up and down, and she said that I could also go out with guys like that, and the best ones are those met online. You just have to be nice to a guy and do what he asks for. She and her girlfriends had been doing it for one year.*

*Guys are okay and if any of them is old and sleazy you just tell him to get lost. I really didn't want anybody to find out what I was doing and I was sure that I would finish with it whenever I felt like doing so. I met with two guys and I had enough - it was not so cool as it's supposed to be. And, what's worse, the other guy wanted to do something that I didn't want. When I said no he became aggressive and I was afraid that he would hit me.*

*My parents are such losers. They work all the time, keep talking about saving money, financial crisis and other stupid things. I feel that they don't really care about me. I get food and go to school. That's all they think about my needs. Later on, my mobile broke and I really wanted a new model. The one that everybody has now. I found a guy on the Internet who liked my photos and said that he could buy it for me as a gift... And now it all became a nightmare. He keeps calling me, sends nasty text messages, and he wants to see me again.*

*Once I saw him near my school and I was scared to death. What if he will actually find me? What have I done? I just want him to leave me alone, I don't know what to do. I'm not the kind of person he thinks I am...*

*Jacob (17)*

*It felt as if I was missing up on something. Days were indistinguishable from one another, nothing changed. Boredom and emptiness ruled. My parents didn't get it at all... If not for my best mate Michael I'd go crazy. It was him that Robert contacted. Robert wrote via some portal that he saw our photos and videos, that he's looking for new faces for fashion shots and thinks we will be right for the job. He proposed a casting. We were so shocked he spotted us...*

*In order to go to this casting we had to somewhat work on the school situation and parents' consent but it was worth it. Robert turned out to be really cool; lots of interesting people were dropping by the studio all the time, the atmosphere was awesome. The shoot wasn't a success, turned out they took somebody else for the ad. But... this wasn't important. I've met amazing people, got sucked into this world: photographers, artists, actors waiting for the role. I felt appreciated as they accepted me as one of their own. My class mates went to the background.*

*At some point I got invited to this party. May was supposed to be there. They said she had connections and it was good to have her on your side. I wanted to finally meet her. Michael got into some trouble with his parents and, eventually, I went alone. I had it easy with my old folks - told them I'd be sleeping over and that's it. No questions asked.*

*I've never been to such a party, it was amazing... And I got to know May. She was older than I'd thought, 30-ish or so. But the company was diversified and everybody was accepted, even the little snot I was. I blinked and it was already 4 am. People started to disperse. Robert, May and a few other people were going to spend the night at a hotel, they took me with them. On the way, Robert told me that May fancied me and - being in my shoes - he would not waste such an opportunity. I thought I had nothing to lose and a lot to gain...*

*When I woke up May had already left. On the table, I found some banknotes with a "For You" note on top. I thought she got mixed up. A deal where she does something for me or helps me out a little - ok, but money..? It felt odd. I texted her to say she left some cash in the room but she wrote me back that it was meant for me and that she counted on our further collaboration... I did what she wanted. In*

*return, I had everything – parties, clothes, gadgets, money. Sometimes, I would meet up with May's friends – they did not save on me either. I told my parents I earned money as a flyer distributor. They believed this was what I was getting busy with after school and on weekends. I thought everything was going smooth... but only for a time.*

*I met a girl my age and... fell in love. I wanted to have a normal relationship and not be an on-call company, paid for or bought with gifts. I told May this had to end and not to arrange any more meetings for me. She... went berserk. She yelled she was the one who ended her own deals, that she would publish our photos and destroy my reputation, that my girlfriend would learn I was a manwhore.*

## **5. Exercise: Things you can gain, things you can lose.**

**Type of work:** Brainstorm

**Duration:** 25 minutes

The facilitator invites the participants to a brainstorming exercise on the consequences of engaging into the rendezvous-for-gifts exchange. Next, he/she divides the board into two fields and writes down two questions: on one side – “What can you gain?”, on the other – “What can you lose?”

If the students don't show initiative, the facilitator should encourage them to analyse Anna's/Jacob's story. What did they gain and what did they lose? What else might have happened in similar situations? What else can you gain or lose? What are the probable benefits and what are the risks?

Examples:

Gain/benefit (what you can gain): gadgets, cosmetics, clothes, money, feeling of social elevation (due to obtaining impressive gadgets or clothes), higher self-esteem (I can get by myself, I have all I want, I'm attractive, somebody wants to date me and is ready to pay for it, etc.), belief you have met/will meet glamorous people (e.g. the “sponsor” will take me to a party/enable me to visit interesting places or take part in fancy events/will help me set up for life), feeling of entering adulthood (my peers don't know what it's like).

Loss (what you can lose): health risks – sexually transmitted diseases, e.g. HIV, unplanned and unwanted pregnancy, risk of committing an offence against the law (e.g. drug dealing, theft, inducing one's peers into prostitution), risk of physical abuse, blackmail, rape, risk of falling into alcohol/drug/etc. addiction, possible threats to mental health, anxiety, depression, stress, fear, risk of being rejected and stigmatized by our group/family/community, risk of losing good reputation, possible difficulties in building relationships based on respect and subjective treatment, being burdened with shameful reputation (being labelled), “loss of innocence” – as a result of being exposed to negative consequences of maintaining sexual contacts in exchange for gifts or money, loss of self-respect, etc.

If these examples do not resurface spontaneously in the line of discussion the facilitator may ask the participants for their opinions, adding that these ideas come from a youth survey conducted by Nobody's Children Foundation.

Summing up, the facilitator emphasizes that, while numbers are far greater on the “losses” side of the board than on the “gain” side, people engaging into “sponsoring” rarely consider negative consequences – i.e. what they could lose. They think they’re in control of the situation. They don’t notice the fact that sexual contacts in exchange for gifts or money are connected with great risks. Often, they don’t even consider the risks, even though one can never tell what will happen during such “sponsored” meeting and what influence on the future will such relation have. Losses connected with mental or physical help cannot be undone nor redeemed. They cannot be replaced even with the best gadgets and clothes. They may scar you for life.

## **6. Discussion: Why?**

**Type of work:** Discussion

**Duration:** 20 minutes

The facilitator now induces a discussion about reasons that make young people engage into sexual relations for gifts of money. During the discussion, the group should mention possible reasons and motivations, such as: lack of money – when young people cannot afford something they really desire, peer pressure/“bad company” – when a young person gives in to encouragements because he/she wants to be like the others, bad parents-child relations, neglect – when parents don’t talk with their child, are not interested in the child’s basic needs, or with whom and how their child spends his/her time, desire to do something “extreme” and exciting, seeking adventure or entertainment, desire to impress others with one’s gadgets – when a young person wants to make an impression on his/her peers by showing off his/her possessions, need to endear oneself to one’s peers – when a young person wants to have the same things as his/her peers in order to be accepted by them, pressure or physical duress from others, belief that various social norms of the adults’ world are of little importance and one can do whatever one wishes to, need to confirm one’s worth – I am attractive/sexy/someone takes interest in me, feeling of having no prospects.

The facilitator should emphasize that the motivations are numerous and vary, and that the problem is quite complicated. Motivations may group up, e.g. the idea of having sex in exchange for gifts may come to the mind of a person whose parents have a drinking problem, who has no proper role models and who can’t afford fancy, expensive things, but it may also come to the mind of a person with low self-esteem, who would like to be accepted by his/her peers, to whom only cool gadgets and people in brand-named clothes matter. However, none of these reasons is worth risking the negative consequences of having sex for gifts and money, which have been discussed before.

## **7. Discussion: What can I do? Don’t judge – react.**

**Type of Work:** discussion

**Duration:** 15 minutes

The facilitator now asks the participants, what they would do if they were to learn that someone they know maintains sexual relations in exchange for gifts or money. The facilitator should emphasize that, normally in such situations, people tend to judge others: they think or say this

is immoral, disgusting or offensive. They may reject such people or want to have nothing to do with them.

Anna's story, the exercise and the discussion during the workshop clearly show that reasons for maintaining sexual relations for gifts or money vary. They often stem from the problems of a lost young person, who is sure that this is only a short episode of his/her life, that he/she has everything under control and can stop it any time he/she wants. Our judging such people or rejecting them doesn't help them overcome their problems. It is in no way helpful to them.

The facilitator should encourage everybody to share ideas on what can be done for people who decide on engaging into sexual relations for gifts, and for those who quit such lifestyle but are still facing its consequences.

**During the discussion, it is important to talk about:** making it clear for such a person that he/she is valued because of who he/she is, not because of what he/she has; not isolating such a person; being rejected by a group is often the reason for young people to engage into such behaviours – a continuous rejection may, in such circumstances, push them towards an even more dangerous situations; indicating the possibilities for contacting adults one trusts: parents, psychologists, school educators, teachers, form tutors, etc.

## **8. Conclusion**

**Duration:** 2 minutes

Many young people may not want to talk openly about their problems from fear of being judged or condemned. An anonymous discussion might be easier for them. By contacting the toll-free 116 111 Helpline for Children and Youth, they will find help and support they need. Sometimes writing might be easier than talking. Via the [www.116111.pl](http://www.116111.pl) website you can send an anonymous message and receive help.