

A Description of the Profile and the Achievement of ACPC

www.kinderphilosophie.at

The ACPC Austrian Center of Philosophy with Children is an independent non-profit organization and non - governmental organization that was set up by Daniela G. Camhy in 1985. The main aims are to make a significant contribution to the culture of peace and to human rights education through promoting Philosophy for/with Children in theory and practice. The Austrian Center of Philosophy for Children pursues the following missions:

Acting for and with Children

The practice of Philosophy with/ for Children in formal and non-formal education is much more than an educational program on reasoning skills. It is related with a strong commitment to a global vision of humanism, democracy, social justice, human rights and freedom of inquiry, especially for the weakest members of society.

- The ACPC works at the service for all children and youth with no discrimination
- ACPC involves young people with all different kinds of backgrounds, from deprived social backgrounds, with immigrant backgrounds and young people with special needs.
- ACPC's mission is to empower children to develop personal opinions by assisting them through introducing them to philosophical tools
- The ACPC operates in different contexts with children and youth - in schools and in open youth work and supports migrants and refugees in their social and future professional integration

Educational Programming

- Publish curriculum and teacher preparation materials in Philosophy for Children, inquiry based teaching, classroom dialogue and multi-dimensional thinking
- Translation and cultural adaption and publications of the curriculum of Mathew Lipman (IAPC The Institute for the Advancement of Philosophy for Children)
- Partner with schools and other institutions to conduct courses and comprehensive programs for students of all ages
- Partner with schools and other institutions to assist them preparing international projects, specially EU- projects

- Partner and consult with universities that offer Philosophy for Children courses and degree programs
- Special Partnership with Karl-Franzens UniversityGraz/A through offering a special degree program “Certified Program – Philosophy with Children and Youth” 30 ECTS 2 semester – curriculum was developed by Daniela G. Camhy
<http://www.uniforlife.at/index.php?lang=de&page=content/ukurs-philo-de.html>

Research

- Facilitate and encourage theoretical and empirical research in pre-college philosophy and educational philosophy, including multidimensional thinking, social democracy and moral and aesthetic judgment
- Engage in innovative research projects (national and international projects) and specially EU-projects
- Invite visiting scholars to study and to conduct research
- Organize international conferences and workshops
- Investigate alternative approaches to pre-college philosophy
- Coordinate different national and international research projects
- Publish and disseminate the results in academic and professional venues in philosophy and education

Dissemination

- Promote the work of the ACPC by conducting demonstrations and awareness sessions at schools, by producing various media like websites, brochures, newsletters, conference proceedings, by appearances in television, radio and other new media
- Establish memberships and international and national partnerships and many other kinds of affiliations with academic, professional and many other different organizations.

ACPC Affiliations

- Member, International Council of Philosophical Inquiry with Children (ICPIC)
- Member, The European Foundation for the Advancement of Doing Philosophy with Children (Stichting SOPHIA)

- Member, Federation of Austrian Scientific Societies Verband der wissenschaftlichen Gesellschaften Österreichs VWGÖ

With its work in different areas the ACPC defends, disseminates and embodies the values by Henri La Fontaine, such as humanism, social justice, pacifism and freedom of inquiry -

- activities in schools
- research and projects
- activities in extracurricular youth work
- organizing international workshops, seminars, conferences....
- teacher training
- basic and advanced training in adult education
- developing teaching materials
- publishing books
- philosophical counseling
- creation of a library, documentary center

1. Activities in Schools

Since more than twenty- seven years the ACPC works with children and youth in kindergarten, elementary, secondary and vocational schools.

These topics include e.g., human rights- kids rights, justice between genders, prejudices and stereotypes, multiculturalism, social integration, understanding of democracy, intercultural dialogue... Philosophy for Children is most successful when it becomes part of the culture of a school. The relationship with each school is very different, for example:

- Philosophy with Children and Youth as an overall concept for schools – *leitmotiv* of promoting philosophy
- Philosophy with Children and Youth introduced as subject – critical, independent, creative and caring thinking as main focus
- Philosophy with Children and Youth as pedagogical strategy integrated in every subject – focus on philosophical inquiry
- Philosophy with Children and Youth introduced through different projects like
- Philosophy with Children and Youth introduced through different EU projects (environmental projects like Ecodialogo, Eco-sophie, projects on Citizenship

Education like “Education for Sensitive Citizenship”, Children Rights and Preventing Violence, ...)

Some examples of special projects: (Research and EU-Projects with schools not included)

1995 – 1997 In the Year of Tolerance - we had many projects in different schools in Austria - projects against racism and xenophobia - in cooperation with the Austrian Commission of UNESCO and in cooperation with the Federal Ministry for Education, Science and Culture, working with **500 pupils** in different schools.

1996 – 1997 Philosophy with Children and Education for Democracy - Project with University of Dublin, Trinity College, Department of Education, Ireland. Prof. Michael Murray and Daniela G. Camhy, Development of a Curriculum - Strategies in Education Start to work with **300 pupils** in Graz, Austria specially to give some help to children from refugees. 1996/1997

In the last 27 years we built up an international network with NGOs, schools, universities and other educational institutions. The ACPC was involved in more than 20 international and European projects- thousands of people from different countries were involved. Here are some examples:

2. Research Projects

- **1984 – 1988 FWF Austrian Science Fund: Philosophy for Children: A Research Project for further Mental and Personality Development of Primary and Secondary School Pupils** by Daniela G. Camhy and Gunter Iberer at the Department of Education of the University of Graz, Austria. (8 primary and secondary schools and more than **600** children involved) There were experimental groups doing philosophy and control groups. The research showed the improvement in reasoning, reading and creativity.
- **1997 – 2000 Development of a Curriculum for Teaching Romani**
The Romani Project considers itself a contribution to the preservation of culture and identity by codifying and developing teaching methods for language varieties of the Austrian Roma.

A cooperation with the Institute for Linguistics of the Karl-Franzens-Universität Graz and the Austrian Center of Philosophy with Children ACPC.

- **1997 – 2000** Austrian Federal Ministry for Education, Science and Culture: **Development of Strategies against Xenophobia and Racism - an Example of Philosophy for Children**, Daniela G. Camhy, Ursula Glaeser, Clara Kenner und Silvia Paar, Austrian Center of Philosophy with Children (ACPC)

The recent increase of xenophobia and racist activities all over Europe as well as the lack of scientific discussion of these phenomena in Austria has been the motive for the Austrian ministry to develop a research programme on “Fremdenfeindlichkeit – Xenophobia”. The project “Development of Strategies against Xenophobia and Racism - an Example of Philosophy for Children” has been put into practice in elementary schools in Austria. The aim of this project was to find out whether philosophical dialogues with children can serve as an in-advance-strategy against xenophobia. The basis of this research project was an elicitation of the attitudes of children towards foreigners through qualitative research methods. The philosophical dialogues with children were analysed in terms of changes in speech behaviour, argumentative skills and the capability of critical consideration.

- **2002 – 2004** “**Empirical Studies for Structuring of Examples on Philosophy for Children for Knowledge Space Theory**” Monika Pilgerstorfer, Dietrich Albert, Daniela G. Camhy

Cooperation project with the Department of Psychology of the Karl-Franzens-Universität Graz and the ACPC

- **2005 - 2008** “**A Comparative Study on the Teacher Education System between Austria and Japan for Constructing a New Conception of Knowledge for Teachers**” in cooperation with Dietrich Albert (University of Graz, Department of Psychology) und Werner Lenz (University of Graz, Department of Education), Daniela G. Camhy (University of Graz, Department of Philosophy/ACPC) and the Hiroshima University

3. EU-Projects

Leonardo da Vinci:

2008 – 2010 “VP3 – Vocational Professionalization by Practising Philosophy (with Children)”

The partners from the participating countries exchanged experiences of the practices in vocational educational training (VET) of kindergarteners in the different partner countries and developed a module to introduce the innovative strategy “Philosophy with Children” to enable vocational educational teachers to train their students. One important goal of doing philosophy is to encourage children to ask questions, give reasons to their opinions and at the same time discover various interests and in exchange with the others find solutions and answers for themselves. Kindergarteners can become facilitators for the philosophical dialogue. These tools will help them to stimulate cognitive, social, creative and caring thinking that are necessary to cope in a multicultural globalized world.

Participating countries: Austria, Germany, Greece, Romania

Comenius:

2011 – 2013 “Kids Rights”

The aims of our project "Kids Rights" are for the students to understand that kids' rights are from vital importance to let function democracy. Freedom of opinion and expression is a basic right of democratic participation and lays the foundation for an open, pluralist society. Students must learn and practice how to argue in public and should be aware that the right to freedom of speech is closely related to other rights. Controversy and competition of interests and opinions will create conflicts and it is important that they are resolved through arguing, discussing and negotiating. The philosophical dialogue is introduced to reflect about kids' rights including the following values: tolerance, mutual respect, appreciation of fair compromise, responsibility and the ability to deal with situation such as disagreement and controversy. Developing the students' social competences through teamwork and dialogue is necessary. Participating countries: Austria, Germany, Netherlands

2008 – 2010 “ePhilosophy

In this project we realized an ongoing platform for Philosophy with Children. The aim is that children from different countries develop a community by philosophizing on subjects like culture, tolerance, children's rights and intercultural dialogue. Not only language skills were

developed, but also the meaning of words in their cultural context will become more clearly. The use of ICT skills is important for verbal and written communication. By debating on the weblog, children will be able to react to each others' opinion, reflect on their own thoughts and will learn to express their own ideas while respecting other people and their cultures.

The created awareness will be broadened in a motivational manner.

Participating countries: Austria, Bulgaria, Germany and the Netherlands

Socrates Comenius Action 1:

1996 – 1998 "DIALOGOS - Philosophy for Children: Citizen Sensitiveness Education"

Dialogos: International project's journal with articles by pupils and teachers from three European countries: Austria, Portugal and Spain.

Schools involved in the project: Hauptschule Markt Hartmannsdorf (Austria), Colegio Valsassina (Portugal), Insitute de Bachillerato No. 4 (Spain)

1997 – 1999 Projekt 100: "European Children Think Together"

Based on Janusz Korczak we developed an newspaper from children for children in ten different languages. Participating countries: Austria, Belgium, Germany, Great Britain, Italy, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Spain

2002 – 2004 Aquarius

This project puts its main focus on language and environmental education and philosophical inquiry. The principal topic is "water". Furthermore it includes an exchange programme for students of a school in Reykjavik (IS) and a school in Graz (A).

The following schools are involved: BRG Körösstraße (Austria), Commercial College of Iceland (Iceland)

2002 – 2005 "Eco-Sophie"

This project is carried out in cooperation with schools in Germany, Hungary, Netherlands, Norway and Austria.

Eco-Sophie is based on the teaching materials (book and CD-ROM) concerning environmental education developed within the ECODIALOGO project.

Following schools are involved: Hauptschule Markt Hartmannsdorf (Austria), Friedrich-Hartmann Schule (Germany), ÀKM Àtalos Iskola (Hungary), Bos en Duinschool (Netherlands), Onderwijs Begeleidings Groep Kennemerland (Netherlands), Koningin Wilhelminaschool (Netherlands), Ruselokka skole (Norway)

Sokrates Comenius Aktion 3:

2001 – 2003 "Ecodialogo" (2001-2003)

The set of proposals and activities that are presented in ECODIALOGO have been developed within the framework of the European Community's Socrates programme in the field of education. The objective of ECODIALOGO is to strengthen environmental education in primary school (mid and upper levels) by means of philosophical reflection grounded upon interdisciplinary and intercultural foundations.

Participating countries and organisations: ACPC (Austria), Universidade Catolica Portuguesa (Portugal), GRUP IREF (Spain)

Netd@ys Europe 1998:

1998 "The Philosophical Hotel"

Participating countries: Australia, Austria, Belgium, France, Great Britain, Israel, Netherlands, Poland.

In 1996, Richard Anthone organised an Internet discussion project called *The Philosophical Hotel*. It was funded by the European Commission (as part of its Netd@ys collection of online events) and facilitated by Averbode, the Belgian educational publishing company. The project aimed to encourage philosophical dialogue, both oral and online, across a network of European schools with children between 10 and 14 years of age. The project involved a limited number of schools first. It was then made available for several weeks to any schools who had heard about the initiative through correspondence or advertising.

We provided children and teachers, via online forums, with mini-stories, puzzles and questions to stimulate oral discussions. The forums were designed to look like discussion rooms in a hotel, complete with cartoon receptionists and waiters. Teachers conducted oral discussions with the children following a methodology appropriate to philosophical inquiry beginning with numerous 'open-ended' questions and leading on to a dialogue of ideas.

DAPHNE – Programme

2002 – 2003 "European Network Launching children's Rights and Preventing Violence "

A research project in cooperation with Omega - Health Care Center of Graz. DAPHNE-Programme (2000-2003) is a preventive action project of the European Community to fight against violence in children, young people and women.

Philosophy for Children was introduced specially to school classes with many children from different countries (migrants, refugees ...), the ACPC organized teacher- training workshops and workshops with parents in the communities.

Sokrates Grundtvig 2 Lernpartnerschaften

2004 - "Maestro – Multipliers in Adult Education – Structures and Organisation"

The aim of this project is to strengthen adult education in so called "alternative places of learning". In cooperation with experts from local museums modules are developed including philosophical inquiry and philosophical dialogue.

Participating countries and organisations: ACPC Austrian Center of Philosophy for Children (Austria), CVO Tweedekansonderwijs Mechelen vzw (Belgium), Moysikologiki Etaireia Kyproy (Cyprus), Kadrioro Väliskunsti Muuseum (Estonia), Westfälisches Forum für Kultur und Bildung (Germany), Methodicko Pedagogicke Centrum (Slovakia)

2004 - 2006 "Who am I - am I somebody?"

Social integration of female migrants and socio-cultural fringe groups on country and European level.

Participating countries and organisations: ACPC Austrian Center of Philosophy for Children (Austria), KoKoLeLe e.V. (Germany), Hogeschool van Arnhem en Nijmegen (Netherlands), Deutsch-Bulgarisches Berufsbildungszentrum Pleven (Bulgaria)

Sokrates Comenius Aktion 2:

2005 -2008 MENON: Developing Dialogue Through Philosophical Inquiry

This project aims to encourage teachers' professional growth by developing their dialogical sensitivity and skills through philosophical enquiry. Philosophy in its original Socratic form is essentially a dialogical search for wisdom and good practice. It provides a powerful context

for teachers to explore core questions of pedagogy - including ethical and social issues arising from their curricula. As a consequence of this widening of teachers' perspectives and skills, the project is effectively aiming also to convert classrooms into communities of dialogical enquiry where children learn not only basic skills such as listening and responding, but also dispositions for lifelong learning and participation, such as curiosity, reasonableness and openness to others' perceptions and cultures.

Participating countries: Austria, Finland, Hungary, Iceland, Latvia, Malta, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Spain, UK

4. Extracurricular Activities for children and youth

Lerncafe

The Lerncafe is a free of charge afternoon activity for students between the ages of 6 – 15 years. Members of the ACPC supervise the Lerncafe. The team place a great emphasis on strengthening the social skills of children, to give children a healthy self-confidence and a good self-esteem and to reinforce their sense of community. The coexistence of different cultures and nationalities which can live actively together is an important foundation for the integration, interculturalism and Interreligion.

Kinderuni (Children University)

The primary goal of the ACPC at the Kinderuni is to inspire children for themes such as humanism, human rights and freedom and offers them an outlet and guidance for their questions and thoughts. The ACPC offers various events for the Kinderuni for several years now. Our past topics include, for example, "Philosophizing about the world and what we can do with her" and "Language confusion".

Workshops for Children and young people

The ACPC offers a number of workshops for children and young people every year. The main focuses are, for example: Identity, human rights, living together in a multicultural society, understanding of democracy and political education. One popular workshop series is "Intercultural dialogue - Diversity as an Opportunity". The aim was to make a philosophical contribution for encounters between people of different cultures. Especially young people with immigrant backgrounds and young people of the majority society are provided with the

opportunity to develop competencies and skills to get better along in a globalized world. Additionally, workshops for children and parents are also offered to build a bridge between the generations.

5. Organisation of International Workshops and Conferences on Philosophy for Children:

- 1985** July 21 – 25: International Conference on Philosophy for Children “**Philosophy for Children**” at the Inter–University Center Dubrovnik, Yugoslavia
- 1986** International meeting “Philosophy for/with Children” at the Retzhof near Graz
- 1987** May 27 – 31: International Conference on Philosophy for Children “**Wenn Kinder philosophieren ... Philosophy and Children**” in Schloß St. Martin in Graz, Austria
Hosting the ICPIC meeting, the “International Council for Philosophical Inquiry with Children”.
- 1991** September 18 – 20: Austrian – Hungarian Conference on Philosophy for Children “**Kinderphilosophie**” im Bildungshaus Retzhof near Graz, Austria
- 1992** June 25-28: International Conference on Philosophy for Children “**Das philosophische Denken von Kindern**”, Meerscheinschlößl, Karl-Franzens Universität Graz, Austria
- 1993** International Workshop in Semriach, Austria, teacher continuing education with participants from 6 countries, Switzerland
- 1994** International Workshop for teacher continuing education, organised by the Hungarian Academy of Sciences in Budapest, Hungary
- 1996** International Workshop in Prague, organised by UNESCO and the Center of Human Rights and Citizenship at the University of Prague, Czechia
- 1996** **Janusz-Korcza-Meeting** at Urania and Janusz-Korcza Film Festival at KIZ, Graz, Austria
- 1997** International Workshop for teachers of the Netherlands and Austria in cooperation with the educational institution of Styria, EU-platform and the Austrian Centre of Philosophy with Children and Youth, Graz, Austria
- 1999** **Teacher-Training**, Workshop for teachers from Slovenia organised by the University of Ljubljana, Slovenia

- 2000** Symposium “Kinderphilosophie” within the framework of the VI. Austrian Congress of Philosophy “Philosophy – Science – Economy” Think Together – Learn from Each Other, at the Johannes-Kepler University Linz, Austria
- 2001** International Workshop within the framework of the EU-Project “Ecodialogo” for teachers from 11 different European countries in Girona and Barcelona, Spain
- 2002** International Workshop within the framework of an EU-Project “Sofia” for teachers from 8 different European countries in Graz, Austria
- 2004** March 25-29: International Conference on Philosophy for Children **“Encouraging Philosophical Thinking”**, Bildungszentrum Raiffeisenhof in Graz, Austria. Hosting the SOPHIA European meeting.
- 2004** International Workshop “Philosophy with Children”, Graz, Austria
- 2005** October 20-23: International Conference on Philosophy for Children **“Philosophische Grundlagen innovativen Lernens – Philosophical Foundations of Innovative Learning”**, Meerscheinschlößl , Karl-Franzens-Universität Graz, Austria
- 2006** October 19-22: International Conference on Philosophy for Children **“Dialogue – Culture – Philosophy”**, Mehrzwecksaal Wall, Karl-Franzens-Universität Graz, Austria
- 2006** International Workshop “Philosophy with Childwren”, Bildungshaus Raiffeisenhof, Graz, Austria
- 2007** October 18 – 21: **“Philosophy – Globalization and Intercultural Understanding”** Karl-Franzens-Universität Graz, Meerscheinschlößl, Graz, Austria
- 2007** International Workshop “The Arc of Inquiry in Philosophical Dialogue”, Bildungshaus Raiffeisenhof, Graz, Austria
- 2008** October 16 – 19: **„Philosophy of Interculturality“** Karl-Franzens-Universität Graz, Meerscheinschlößl, Graz, Austria
- 2008** International Workshop “MENON – Developing Intercultural Dialogue through philosophical Inquiry”, Graz
- 2009** October 15 – 18: **„Creativity – Thinking – Philosophy“** Karl-Franzens-Universität Graz, Meerscheinschlößl, Graz, Austria
- 2009** International Workshop “Complex Thinking”, Pedagogical University, Graz, Austria

- 2010** October 14 – 17: „Thinking the Future“ **Philosophy – Sustainability – Global Consciousness“** Karl-Franzens-Universität Graz, Meerscheinschlößl, Graz, Austria
- 2010** International Workshop “Philosophy for Children”, Retzhof Castle, near Leibnitz, Austria
- 2011** October 20 – 23: “**Childhood and Democracy – New Philosophical Challenges”** Karl-Franzens-Universität Graz, Meerscheinschlößl, Graz, Austria
- 2012** October 18 – 21: “**Cognition – Emotion – Communication”** Karl-Franzens-Universität Graz, Meerscheinschlößl, Graz, Austria

6. Other activities

- **Exhibitions**

- 1985** As part of the „400 Annual Exhibition of the University of Graz“ to the topic “Kinderphilosophie”, Graz, Austria
- 1991** Presentation at the „exchange of ideas“ of the Ministry of Education and Art at the Congress in Graz, Austria
- 1992** “Water exhibition”, Philosophy with/for Children about epistemological and philosophical issues, Vienna, Austria
- 1992 (05-07)** As part of the exhibition „Dialog in the dark“ Salzburg has selected „philosophy for children“ under the Children network, which was launched by the Ministry of Family Affairs, as the main project for children, Salzburg, Austria
- 2007** „Anne Frank – a history for today. In cooperation with the Anne Frank Foundation and the association Anne Frank at the BG/BRG Pestalozzi, Austria
- 2007** „Thoughts – Images – Worlds. When children philosophize“. Social Security Office of the city of Graz, **Austria**

- **Philosophical Cafés**

Since 2000 the Philosophical Café is organized by the ACPC about four times a year. It is a place where everyone who is interested can come and discuss, analyze, tell, criticize, add or listen. The aim is to practice critical thinking skills for analyzing and judging independently. A philosopher "hosts" the suggested topics (e.g. racism,

integration and diversity, human rights...) at the "Philosophical Café" (the philosopher asks questions as in a Socratic dialogue).

- **Kidsparade**

Annually the Kidsparade takes place in the city of Graz. The ACPC is an active participant at the Kidsparade that promotes "Children's Rights". Last years' topic was "Right to freedom of speech". The ACPC was involved with stories about children's rights.

- **Philosophy SLAM**

Since 2012 a Philosophy Slam takes place three times a year. People present a short, self-written text on a particular topic. Anyone who has anything to say can participate. Philosophical content, presentation and style are evaluated and the audience elects the winner. One of the last topics was "Freedom". People who wanted to participate thought about question like "What is Freedom?" "Where does freedom begin, where does it end?" and "Are we free?" Usually around