



Work Assistance for Young People with Autism, Mental Illness and Learning/Multiple Disabilities in Vienna

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ARBEITSASSISTENZ

arbeitsassistenz.wuk.at

# WUK Arbeitsassistenz (WUK Work Assistance) - Facts

Sponsor: WUK Werkstätten und Kulturhaus (Workshops and Cultural Center)

WUK Education and Counseling: 14 Divisions

**WUK Work Assistance:** 3 central offerings (315 participations per year)

- > Job Acquisition
- > Job Security
- > Partner Business Services

**Youth Work Assistance in Vienna:** 5 Providers, 4 regional and WUK as supraregional, specialized provider

#### **NEBA - Network for Vocational Assistance:**

- > Youth coaching and A-FIT assignment
- > Job coaching and vocational training assistance support young people after their participation in Work Assistance



## **Target Group and Goals**

Specialization in advising young people (15 to 23 Years, Vienna residents) with:

- Autism
- Learning/multiple disabilities
- Mental Illness

#### Goals:

- Sustainable inclusion of participants in apprenticeship and employment relationships
- Individual support with apprenticeship or job search and with difficulties in existing employee-employer relationships
- For the participants and for their (prospective) employers



## Specialization of WUK Work Assistance

- Implementation of a specialized, supraregional program with suitable knowhow.
  - A multiprofessional team (15 persons) with experts from different fields (psychotherapists, psychologists, business economists etc.) work out individual solutions for young people and businesses.
- 3 Team Specializations (target groups autism/mental illness/learning and multiple disabilities)
- 1 person provides company services and takes over inclusive recruiting
- Cooperations with specialized NEBA programs in Vienna (Jobtrain, WUK Coaching Plus und WUK faktor.c, ÖAHJobcoaching).
   When necessary, cooperation with regional NEBA programs for needs-based support.



## **Work Assistance Tasks**



- Support with Apprenticeship and Job Search (1. und 2. Labour Market)
  - Accompaniment throughout the application process
  - offer skills and test preparation
  - Organization of internships
  - Search for individual solutions to overcome obstacles
- Safeguard of existing apprenticeship or employment relationships
- Company recruitment and consulting
  - Provide information about financial incentives and support opportunities
  - Set up cooperation with The Ritz-Carlton, Vienna/Billa branches
  - Work together with "KMUs" (small- or medium-sized companies)
  - Maintain regular contact after negotiations are completed



# Special Features of the Advisory Service



- Work highly flexible and individualized → a "Standard Program" for all does not work!
- Make individualized plans and rules must be determined



- Intensive support and advising in all phases of the accompaniment: Failures have a different status → Risk of destabilization and termination!
- Relationship is the key to success! Provide support also in times of crisis, participants can come back (e.g. after inpatient stay, loss of apprenticeship, employment relationship problems)



 Daily/Weekly structure development (e.g. offer group offers/peergroup, social situation practice, route planning, daily routine,...)



# Special Features of the Advisory Service



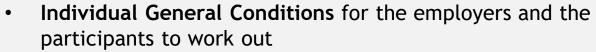


- What is my role?
- What other supporters are there?



Education in Self Management

(to notice early warning signs before crossing personal borders, where can I get help, emergency plans...)





- Specialized Application Training: Training of social competencies, body language and facial expressions, personal hygiene, explaine & resume gaps, what I need and what I can do, self-assurance
- Advisor Competence: Very high expertise and high frustration tolerance



## What Businesses must consider



- Does Work Assistance appear or not?
   If yes, for what reason → Consider the stigma of mental illness and other invisible difficulties!
- Psychological Education Explain! Learn to interpret symptoms (e.g. people with depression or with autistic perception give the impression of being unmotivated, ...).
   Convey diagnoses, without stigmatizing and stirring up prejudice – describe (how is Person x, what does s/he, etc.).
- Training and preparation of staff
- Address the strengths and weaknesses of the specific person
- Partner Business Services: Establish contacts and cooperations (e.g. Ritz Carlton, Nestle, REWE)



## Impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic

#### **Basic situation before Covid-19:**

- Already uncertainty for our target groups because of their disability;
- Already marginalized target groups we work with;
- · Fewer perspectives & fewer chance to put the foot in the labour market because of their disability
- Basically need more time to gain employability

#### Impacts on our work – "the new Normal":

- More stress than before Covid-19
- The content changed a little: Stabilisation of our clients in a time of uncertainty; talking about Covid-19 was necessary; How will I get well through the crises? Main task: To stay in contact anyway!
- Change of our work style: we need to be very flexible; immediate change from personal couselling to digital visability (i.e. zoom) or we met to go for a walk because office was closed
- High measure of stress for us because the situation was/is not foreseeable and clear measures always changed (more intensive); lack of planability and reliability of work life
- We had more topics to co-supervise because sociale projects or couseling centers were also overloaded or somtimes no contact possibility (i.e. living situation, financial problems)



# Impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic

#### Impacts on young people:

- · Social withdrawal they disappeared
- Increase of depression (lack of perspectives, no chance)
- Unforseeable situation had a high impact to our target groups (i.e. for people who have autism they need certainty and became irrited)
- The change to digital life sets a high standard of personal flexibility and capability to handle; some didn't make it

#### Impacts on companies:

- closed or Home Office; no visit of companies to get a feeling for the job; Some branches were totally closed (i.e. Tourism Hotels, Restaurants Service)
- · No intership possibile; or to fast starts of internship
- Just time for the fitter adolescents -> the fitter won!
- Time of reaction became faster (faster invitation to job interviews; faster organization of internships; do it
  now or never -> too fast for our adolescents
- Some business areas are the winners: IT, Retail Trade, pharmaceutical industry



## Wishful adjustements for young people

- Adaption of existing projects more focused on the real needs of our target groups (i.e. for Autism: smaller groups inter-company apprenticeship)
- Taskforce Autism: collection of statistical data, need of valid data to derive continous measures for all ages in the perception of those affected
- The right to work: to make companies more responsible to employ young people with a disability
- More free places of psychotherapeutic treatment and faster access
- Gap between vocational education and final exam: need of adaption of the final apprenticeship exam for our target groups to decrease failure
- More internships in companies -> Incentives for internship possibilities
- Adaption of the application process in the public sector: high level not realistic for our target groups (2 ways: of application; normal and with a disability)
- More time to accompaniment the process->avoidance of change in support
- More projects that combine career orientation and psychosocial aspects for the age group 15 to 23
- More professionals to support in specific need



## Kontakt



WUK Arbeitsassistenz Bräuhausgasse 37 1050 Wien

arbeitsassistenz@wuk.at

T: 01 40121 2000

Sabine Koch

sabine.koch@wuk.at

T: 06991 40 12 155



# **THANK YOU for your attention!**





# "Der Weg in den Beruf"

neba.at/arbeitsassistenz

NEBA ist eine Initiative des 
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