

SUPER SENIOR

Company name : MOUVEMENT POUR L'EGALITÉ DES CHANCES - MEC ASBL

Activity sector : Autres

Company category : Fondation, Association, ONG

Description of the action

Creation of an intergenerational tutoring service. Senior citizens aged 50 and over have been recruited to help children in basic schools with their homework at home. Supervised by the service, they meet regularly with the children and thus also forge intergenerational links.

Context

Life expectancy in Europe is increasingly increasing thanks in particular to an overall improvement in quality of life and health. In recent years we have seen the emergence of a category of people who, despite having worked for 40 years, are reaching retirement age with a dynamism and energy that could sometimes make their younger siblings jealous. They practice many activities, in groups or individually, travel, play sports...sometimes even challenge themselves in ways they would not have dared to do in their youth. In short, they use their free time to enjoy life to the fullest while it allows them to. These senior citizens, as they are called, have a life course, acquired experience, which are all riches that must be taken into consideration. They have a certain knowledge, knowledge that can be passed on to other generations.

At the same time, more and more children encounter difficulties in school life: problems of learning, organisation, self-confidence... Some of them do not always have the possibility to benefit at home from an adapted accompaniment where the presence of an external person may prove necessary to avoid the crystallisation of tensions around homework. Others need to obtain additional clarifications in this or that subject, which parents cannot always provide, either because of ignorance, lack of time or even disinterest.

Approach

We brought these two worlds together and set up a tutoring service orchestrated by the seniors for the juniors.

Objectives

Meeting a social need, that of tutoring, and a relational need, that of mixing generations.

Impact

Helping young people who have difficulties at school has significant benefits for seniors. Nowadays, seniors are more encouraged to continue working, even in retirement. While for some, this is a necessity to supplement their income, others are motivated above all by the desire to share and remain active in society. Even if they no longer have the same energy as young people, this does not prevent them from getting involved. Tutoring allows them not only to pass on and maintain their knowledge, but also to stay connected with the new generation, or even to get out of their loneliness for some.

For their part, young people with educational difficulties also benefit from certain advantages. Senior citizens already have much more experience and can therefore pass on tips and tricks to them. And unlike some young parents, they

can be much more patient. On the other hand, as many parents no longer have enough time to listen to their children, senior citizens are much more available and are therefore able to listen to young people. The tutoring provided by senior citizens therefore promotes intergenerational communication. These intergenerational encounters are invaluable both in terms of sharing knowledge and the shared affection for "growing up" together.