

# **Guidelines Trainers Development Program Youth Circus**

LKCA (formerly known as Kunstfactor)

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## Introduction

*The Guidelines For Trainers Development Program For Youth Circus* was developed in 2012 by the former institute for amateur arts in The Netherlands Kunstfactor, now known as LKCA, in collaboration with a commission of field experts. To support existing and new providers of arts education, guidelines have been published on each arts discipline for trainers development programs. *The Guidelines For Trainers Development Program For Youth Circus* aims at organizations that want to train participants to coach youth circus.

*The Guidelines* consists of two parts:

(A): a general introduction to the discipline oriented guidelines. In this introduction some important aspects are discussed for potential providers of trainers development programs to keep in mind.

(B): the frameworks to guarantee quality both to the content of the education as well as to the organization of trainers development programs for youth circus trainers. Reading the guidelines, the explanations and the many examples will help a potential provider to make substantive and practical choices.

## Reading Structure

### *Part a: General Introduction*

Chapter 1: a brief and general exploration on the enormous diversity in the field of amateur artists, recent developments in the field of amateur arts and the market for arts education – important for new providers of arts education to determine their intended target group(s) and opportunities.

In Chapter 2: motivation for the publication of guidelines for trainers development programs and why they may differ greatly from one another per discipline.

In Chapter 3: brief discussion on different learning styles and the most important learning theory for arts education at this time. This theory is translated to didactic approaches.

Chapter 4: focus on the role of the teacher.

Chapter 5: information on competences required for arts teachers and considerations on testing students.

With this introduction the authors wish to inspire (potential) providers of arts education -both centres for the arts and by the growing number of individual providers- and encourage them to reflect on their (new) program, thus contributing to a higher quality of arts education.

*Part B: Content Guidelines*

Chapter 1: explains the reason for developing these content guidelines and for the development of the guidelines and a program to become circus coach.

Chapter 2: information on the field of youth circus and the current opportunities for learning, development and growth in The Netherlands. The location of a trainers development program is defined.

Chapter 3: outline of the purpose and the objective of the trainers development program and the profile of the circus coach.

Chapter 4: focussing on project plans; the guidelines are set for competences, the initial and final objectives, learning content, the learning material, the teaching methods and learning activities, including items such as team building and methods of testing.

Chapter 5: on the monitoring of quality standards.

Attachments: four annexes with extra information

## Part A: General Introduction

### 1 Exploration

In this chapter we explore the definition of the amateur artist and current developments to be taken into account by (potential) providers of arts education.

#### 1.1 Who is this amateur artist?

When considering organizing courses or workshops you start by determining for whom, because there is a large variety in the way amateur artists are involved and a large number of art disciplines is involved, and still increasing (for example new media). In the Netherlands over seven million people are somehow actively participating in arts. Some dedicate themselves to one discipline for years on end, others will do theatre classes one year, but then turn to painting with just as much enthusiasm. And of course the levels of ambition differ: some see their activities merely as a hobby, with social contacts being at least as important as engaging in the art discipline; others want to excel, reach for a maximum of self-fulfilment, and want to show themselves to an audience.

*Content and objectives of courses and workshops should suit the provider, but also meet the needs of the participants.*

*Define as clearly as possible the target group(s) of your course.*

#### 1.2 Providers

The field of providers of arts education is constantly changing. Amateur artists choose from a wide range. Major providers are institutes for the arts and music schools. Often community centres and youth centres also offer different forms of arts education. In addition, amateur arts associations provide some form of arts education, either independently or in cooperation with an institute for the arts or an independent art teacher. The number of private providers is increasing: music teachers or visual artists for example are expanding their practice with courses or workshops.

#### 1.3 Current socio-cultural developments

Amateur artists are part of society and as such influence society and are being influenced by it. This should be taken into account by providers of arts education. *The Future exploration report on practice of the arts of the Social and Cultural Planning Office* lists five socio-cultural developments important to be taken into account by providers of arts education:

- individualization
- informalisation
- intensification
- internationalization
- computerization

These developments are reducing the influence of traditional ways of cultural expression, a trend that is reinforced by the growing participation in arts education of people with non-Western background. Equally important is the influence of the internet and digital tools. They give amateur artists an inexhaustible source of inspiration. Moreover, digital devices bring amateur artists into contact with like-minded people all over the world, with whom they can share and discuss their artistic ideas. This applies to new, digital art forms, as well as to traditional disciplines. Digital communities and YouTube make it very easy for amateur artists to distribute visual work, music, literature or dance and comment on it.

#### **1.4 Market-oriented thinking**

Against this background, more than ever, providers of arts education will have to think about the content and quality of their offer and the added value they can provide to students. Also they will have to be able to be flexible and respond to changes in the needs of students. This requires providers to engage in market-oriented thinking and therefore evolving towards cultural entrepreneurship. For the field of arts education this may work out well: active cultural entrepreneurs with a good sense of opportunity will add to the diversity of the courses and workshops – to be offered both offline and online.

*Make a list of current offers in the area; try to determine what areas are left or not yet fully covered.*

This diversity concerns new lesson content and teaching methods, but also to the planning of courses and target groups. There are plenty of opportunities: for example, there the offer of courses for preschoolers, seniors, non-Dutch speakers and people with physical, intellectual or psychiatric limitation can be enlarged. And within the traditional disciplines there will always be a demand for high quality arts education to meet the needs of amateur artists.

## 2 Guidelines for trainers development programs

### 2.1 What are trainers development programs?

In the Netherlands there are numerous photo clubs, painters associations, choirs, writing groups, orchestras, theatre and dance groups, which work towards a performance or an exhibition or a any which way to present themselves. All amateur artists have a drive to develop themselves. They may do so under the guidance of a professional art teacher, a graduate conductor or a skilled director. In the Netherlands, however, amateur clubs often work under the guidance of an experienced non-professional, for instance an amateur theatre company engaging its most experienced player to direct a production.

Well-educated staff (conductors, directors, choreographers, etcetera) for amateur clubs would contribute enormously to the quality. This is one of the main reasons why many associations and umbrella organizations organize trainers development programs, designed for people who want to guide educational and artistic processes of others but did not receive adequate training.

For enthusiastic amateur artists trainers development programs could be an opportunity to gain a more in-depth knowledge or even a 'career move' in their particular area. At times (semi), also professional artists are involved, who excel in a particular discipline, but have no experience with transferring their expertise to others and therefore have no formal qualification (yet).

### 2.2 Purpose of the guidelines

The quality of trainers development programs is important. To support, encourage and inspire potential providers of trainers development programs for each field of the arts guidelines have been published. They provide tools for organizing and creating effective and high-quality trainers development programs.

### 2.3 What's in the guidelines?

The guidelines give a general description of the necessary content and advice on the organization of trainers development programs. Thus they provide a guide for organizations and teachers who work on the improvement of a trainers development program or consider doing that.

The guidelines sometimes differ significantly from each other, partly due to the traditions and backgrounds of each discipline, including those relating to the tasks of a coach / trainer / conductor / director of a group of (amateur) artists. Naturally, these differences affect its content.

*Tip:* reading the guidelines of a totally different discipline can be inspiring.

### 3 Vision on learning and arts education

Experience with (art) education is not enough to build an art education program by yourself. To develop a solid course or workshop you will need at least some knowledge of pedagogy, learning styles and teaching theories. This chapter provides some of the basic principles on education in general, which may help to translate theory into practice.

#### 3.1 Aspects of amateur art

In Section 1.1 we already concluded that the variety in the field of amateur artists is considerable. This implies more or less that the same goes for arts education. Quite often there is also an overlap in the different ways of arts education.

The amateur artist has four different aspects:

- the artist as a performer
- the artist as a creator
- the artist as a member of the public
- the artist as a critic

Not every amateur musician wants to compose, not every photographer is interested in the work of professionals and not every dancer wants dwell on the meaning of each movement. Developers and practitioners of courses for amateurs must be aware of these four possible aspects of art experience. The focus you choose as a provider will influence the content of your course.

#### 3.2 Types of learning

Why do we want to learn? Why do amateur artists want to learn? For providers of arts education it is useful to contemplate on these questions. The starting point for regular, or formal, education is simple. It generally has a clear structure and a clear goal: within structured boundaries (in time and place), a teacher consciously and systematically passes on knowledge, skills and attitude. Formal learning generally leads to recognized diplomas and qualifications with social value.

Next to formal learning there is extracurricular learning; there are two main forms: non-formal and informal learning. Non-formal learning and formal learning are both intentional and systematic. In other words, both have a clear purpose, for instance learning to play guitar or learning to play volleyball. Contrary to formal learning, these non-formal education does not lead to a qualification or a degree of social value.

*With extracurricular arts education there are no obligations or demands; this way of learning is embraced by enthusiastic individuals. All the more reason to keep their needs and wishes in mind.*

The same is true for informal learning. Informal learning evolves spontaneously, in a context without educational purposes. This way of learning might be very important, especially in the

amateur arts, for instance for youngsters hanging out together, teaching each other cool hip hop moves. Or amateur writers who evaluate each other's work, or bands inspired by peers to publish their clip on YouTube.

In non-formal and informal learning, the goals are defined not as strict as in formal learning. Often, with non-formal and informal learning they are much more personal: 'I just want to be able to do it', or 'My friends are also doing it', and 'I want to see how far I can go' – in other words: the drive comes from within.

For arts education both non-formal learning and informal learning are important. Courses at centres for the arts or other providers often have a concrete goal: learning to use a technique or learning to play an instrument. But almost always those courses also have an informal aspect: to create an environment for students to talk to each other in the corridors before or after class, discussing each others work, sharing tips or playing together. So providers of arts education also play an important role as facilitator, bringing together students with the same interests.

Providing non-formal learning settings involves a large degree of freedom to organize and shape the educational program and activities. Smart providers take the goals and motivations of potential participants seriously.

### **3.3 Learning theory: constructivism**

Although extracurricular arts education is labeled as non-formal or informal education, formal pedagogical theories do apply. Providers of arts education should have some knowledge of the authoritative learning theories. After all, teachers can convey knowledge and skills in different ways. For the best result, it is good to take into account your own approach, while acknowledging alternatives. In the course of the time, educators and educationalists have been developing learning theories. The history of education shows that in time, obviously due to social developments, different types of education and different learning theories were leading. For example, these days learning theories are definitely influenced by the growing independence and involvement of pupils in education.

*Knowledge of learning theory and learning styles may inspire you as provider of arts education to think about your own programs and methods.*

An important trend in the education at the moment is 'new' or 'authentic learning', originating from constructivist beliefs about learning. Before moving on, we will take a closer look at 'authentic learning', because this theory could be very useful for arts education.

The constructivist approach emphasizes that learning is an active, constructive process: learning is linking new information to existing knowledge. Moreover, according to constructivism, the learning will always take place in a social context, i.e. while interacting with others. This implies that communication is an important aspect of this learning theory. Within constructivism, there are four major principles with regard to didactics, each of which may also be important for arts education:

- 1 Education is not limited to the structured transfer of information by the teacher, but rather strives for a productive learning environment, with various missions and global guidelines. These provide the students with a scope for individual initiative and exploration.
- 2 The content of the education is connected to the world of the students and the knowledge they already have. It relates to the participants' own interests and needs.
- 3 Whenever possible, education is provided by professionals.

*Note: the term 'authentic' not only refers to the personal involvement and motivation of the student, but also to the real-life character of the learning tasks.*

- 4 Authentic learning situations are characterized by communication and cooperation of students, on for instance performing group tasks, and by mutual consultation and discussion.

For providers of arts education putting together an education program, the challenge is to implement these principles.

Another tool are the learning processes described in *Didactics: a knowledge base for professionals* They distinguish:

- Learning as a constructive process: people are not passive recipients of information, but build their own knowledge and skills. This is done in conjunction with existing knowledge and skills, expectations and needs. Interpreting and processing is an active process.
- Learning as a cumulative process: the learning process builds on previously acquired knowledge and skills.
- Learning in context: learning in context makes knowledge and skills more meaningful and increases the chance of sinking in properly.
- Learn to focus on agile use: knowledge becomes applicable in new situations if the student learns to apply new knowledge in a creative way, already during the learning process.
- Learning as a social process: knowledge is not only obtained individually, but also mirrors the views of others. By mirroring knowledge, it will be enriched, creating social significance.
- Learning is reflecting: learning and reflection are inseparable. The purpose of the reflection is to increase understanding and insight, also in the work of others.

*Within didactics, next to the constructivist learning theory, two other major trends are known: the behaviorist learning theory and cognitive learning theory. Although they seem to be less applicable in the arts education, the authors advise to gain some insight into these theories as well.*

All of these learning processes can play a role in arts education.

### 3.4 Learning Styles

No student is the same. Within an apparently homogeneous group of students, major differences in attitude and character will exist. These individual differences are reflected in

differences in learning styles, which, of course, apply also to arts education. An important theorist in the field of learning styles is David Kolb, who developed a learning cycle involving four learning styles, closely connected to one another:

- Practical experience – acting, experiencing
- Reflective observation – feeling, watching, listening
- Abstract conceptualization - watching, listening, thinking
- Active experimentation -thinking, acting

People have different strong suits in these four areas: some take in information best through concrete experiences (feeling, touching, holding, seeing and hearing), while others deal more abstractly with information (through mental and visual conceptualization). In processing information something similar applies: some people process information best by actively experimenting with it, others process information by observing and thinking it through.

According to Kolb, to optimize the learning performance these four learning styles - experiencing, observing, thinking, and experimenting- should go together. Despite the personal preferences, in order to become a complete student, one needs to try and use to improve and combine all four styles. The four learning styles are also important for arts education. For the best conveyance of knowledge and skills, a wide range of exercises and assignments should be offered. Ideally, an arts education program will involve all of the four different learning styles.

### **3.5 Methodical didactic approaches**

The four different learning styles and the four aspects of the amateur artist require different teaching approaches. *Dance in Context: a flexible method* describes four approaches for teaching dance, which are also applicable to other disciplines, focusing on the artist, the creator, the member of the public and the critic:

- 1 The technique-oriented approach - the development of the craftsmanship and mastery of technical skills.
- 2 The reproduction-oriented approach - the transfer of existing repertoire or mimicking examples.
- 3 The expressive / creative approach - the development of a personal style, the ability to express one's feelings and experiences in art, including authorship.
- 4 The receptive / theoretical approach – the development of knowledge, understanding and attitudes, which takes place mainly by reflecting on both one's own art, as on that of others, and placing them in a broader social context.

## 4 Being a teacher

In every educational environment, the teacher has both a leading and a guiding and/or coaching role towards the students. Providers should be aware of these roles and knowingly choose which type of teacher fits the training, as well as the target group, the learning objectives, teaching methods (individual or groups) and the art discipline. Four categories can be distinguished: master/apprentice, teacher/pupil, teacher as coach and peer teaching.

### 4.1 Master/apprentice

The master/apprentice relationship is as old as mankind, and one of the most successful forms of teaching. In *Teaching methods in art education, five approaches*, this form is described as follows: “The student will work in the workshop of the master and works in exchange for initiation into all aspects of the profession. The master puts the student to work, if necessary, comments on the performance and results, and helps improve on whatever the student lacks in knowledge and skills. The student works next to the master, thus having the example to follow close at hand. This teaching method hands to the student all aspects of the professional mastery: knowledge and skills, traditions, mores, et cetera.”

Characteristic of the master/apprentice relationship is the practical environment, transfer of knowledge and skills taking place by observing and working next to the master, rather than explicit instruction.

### 4.2 Teacher-Pupil

Characteristically teacher-driven methods as in courses or workshops are a form of formal education. The educational program follows a fixed curriculum and has a linear structure. The teacher sets objectives and determines in which order the material is presented. The teacher guides the learning process by selecting the contents and arrangement of the material, by indicating the learning pace and by checking proper implementation of learning tasks. There are different ways of implementing this form of education. Sometimes students are allowed input, however, the teacher decides: there is a hierarchical relationship between teacher and student.

### 4.3 The teacher as a coach

As people increasingly want to decide what they want to learn and how for themselves, the teacher’s role is shifting. Instead of being carriers of knowledge, insights and skills, they become, coaching their students. This education method is successful only with students entering the learning process with an active attitude and the teacher playing a coaching, supportive role.

### 4.4 Peer education

New art disciplines and new styles within existing disciplines have been arising from youth culture. Consequently, teachers, not themselves belonging to this group, have insufficient

expertise in the field of these new disciplines and styles. Here the implementation of so-called peer education would be a wise choice. With peer education knowledge, experience and motivation are conveyed by peers and/or people, who have the same background as the target group. Sometimes peers pass on knowledge together with lifestyle. Many young people greatly appreciate peer education, because they identify more willingly with a peer who is also the expert. However, that appreciation does not automatically guarantee of good quality. The quality as well as the efficiency of peer education may benefit from collaboration with or supervision by an experienced teacher.

## 5 Competences

Every provider of arts education strives for high level quality. For one thing, this requires the hiring of competent teachers. Moreover, providers will at least have to think about the desired learning outcomes of their courses.

### 5.1 Competences of the teacher

By competences we mean the knowledge, understanding and skills to achieve the intended objectives in specific situations. Many teachers in the arts have finished a higher professional education. The competences required for a starting art teacher are determined by the Council of Education.

### 5.2 Students: competences, tests and exams

Providers of arts have a large degree of freedom to organise their educational programme and activities, as well as to setting the goals or competences involved in the programme. Also, providers will have to decide whether, and if so, how they want to test if the learning objectives have been achieved. This can be done in various ways:

- Test classes: classes in which the teacher reviews the progress of each student.
- Report: a written record of the progress of the student, evaluating commitment, motivation and attitude. For grading purposes three letters are often used: M (moderately) S (sufficient), or G (good).
- Exams: testing the practical skills and substantial knowledge of students.

Regulations for testing students may vary per country. Some general recommendations would be:

- Reports, examinations and test classes generally apply only to children, youngsters and adolescents.
- It is important to establish the entry level of the student, as well as the general / average level of a group.
- Test classes and exams are particularly relevant when it comes to talent development and promoting transition to professional training.
- Reports are an opportunity to give a student and their parents feedback. Ten-minute meetings provide the opportunity to discuss the individual progression with the student and the parents. Reports should have such a development-oriented approach that they are encouraging for both succesful and weaker students.

Some of the guidelines for trainers development programs in the other arts disciplines contain competences or learning outcomes for students, and in a number of cases also examination requirements and modes for testing.

Providers are free to implement these or put them aside. Providers who choose for a competency-based approach, should include them in their evaluation.

## 6 Acknowledgements

All guidelines published by the former Kunstfactor (now LKCA), are developed in consultation with those who are closely involved in the field of amateur art and art education, and are of course stated in these guidelines. The guidelines were set by the Board of Kunstfactor and are available on the LKCA website, so anyone who is interested can use it.

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## Part B: Substantive Part

### 7 Background and justification

One of the reasons for developing these substantial guidelines came out from the research report *Youth Circus in the Netherlands* into the need for support and development of the youth circus. The report concludes that youth circuses are in need of expertise in all areas to improve teaching in the youth circus, for example through training or re-training.

The training for trainers in circus arts, called BIC, developed by the Flemish Cirkus in Beweging and adopted in 2010 by Circomundo, provides the framework to meet with these needs through substantive guidelines.

The guidelines were drawn up in close collaboration with a field commission of experts, working in the Dutch youth circuses. These are guidelines for a trainers development program to circus coach, implementing existing training plans, methodologies and documents.

The field committee has met three times and has been reflecting on the content of these substantive guidelines. Isabel Van Maele wrote the text, Richard Molenschot, consultant at Kunstfactor, was the chairman and was in charge of the editing.

*Isabel Van Maele* has been teaching circus since 1993 and is a member of the pedagogical staff at Cirkus in Beweging (Leuven, Belgium). Following her master's degree in physical education she entered the pedagogical circus training at the École de Cirque de Bruxelles, where she has been teaching aerial work since 2000. Van Maele coordinates and teaches at the Flemish trainers development program for coach in circus arts (BIC), and she is co-author of the book *Circus in school*.

*Richard Molenschot* worked as a consultant at Kunstfactor. Previously he wrote *Substantive Guidelines for Youth Circus*, together with Margriet van Galen.

Expert members of the field committee, who have contributed from their experience and expertise, were:

#### *Jan Tjeerd Groenewoud*

Chairman of of the board of Circus Santelli (Groningen), where he works as a trainer since 1994, specializing in partner acrobatics and floor acrobatics (tumbling). He also has been teaching in the Dutch BIC. As an acrobat, he is part of the duo *It Pays The Rent*, was a board member of Circomundo, focussing on communication, (social) security and internationalization.

Groenewoud works as a project manager at the University of Groningen, focussing on quality care, teaching and evaluation of the profession.

#### *Rene Hildesheim*

Director and founder of Circus Poehaa (Arnhem), circus teacher and director of (circus) theatre. He was coordinator of the Dutch BIC, previously taught at a technical and vocational education for youngsters, at several art institutions and the Academy of Story Telling in the

Netherlands. Hildesheim was involved in the founding and coaching various small youth circuses. And last but not least, he works as a clown.

*Harry Vos*

Is a board member of Circus Amersfoort, and has in recent years particularly contributed to the realization of a circus venue in cooperation with professional training programs in the area. He has also, in collaboration with Circus Amersfoort and the ROC Central Netherlands, developed a circus module for the program of Social Cultural Work. Vos has initiated, developed and implemented many training programs as a project leader / manager. In everyday life, he is a consultant and initiator of developments in professional education, especially HBO. He guides (management) teams with organizational issues, educational development and qualityimprovement.

## 8 Working field of the youth circus

Before going into the guidelines for trainers development programs to circus coach, it is important to have a look at the youth circus field. How do we actually perceive youth circus and its working field? And what about the learning, development and career opportunities contemporary youth circus provides for its participants. On the basis of the analysis in Chapter 3 the role a trainers development program can fulfill will be defined, and purpose and target group will be determined.

### 8.1 Youth Circus, a definition

A youth circus is the organization or centre where participants attend circus lessons. Next to youth circus also circus school or circustheatre school are used. In Flanders the current name is circus atelier.

Youth circuses activities should be accessible to a broad target group, both in terms of age, background and physical abilities of the participants. A youth circus can sometimes have a special target focus. In addition, there are also youth circuses that have one or more groups of young adults (16 years and older).

The youth circus activities take place at the crossroads of culture, sports and social work. From this starting point youth circus easily connects to all kinds of arts and sports. In a youth circus practicing and presenting circus may be important, but the emphasis may also be more on circus as a pedagogical means. In all cases, the motoric, creative, artistic, and social-emotional development of the participants are leading features.

### 8.2 The field of youth circus

In the Netherlands some 55 youth circuses are active. The rise of youth circuses is relatively young. While amateur choirs and orchestras sometimes already arose in the 19th century, the oldest Dutch youth circus was founded in 1949. Every year, new youth circuses start. The average youth circus has been around for some 25 years.

The youth circuses differ in size, mission and vision. On this variety in the Dutch youth circus landscape the website of Circomundo, umbrella organization for youth circuses, states the following:

*"None of the Dutch youth circuses operate in the same way. One youth circus can have some 20 class groups and more than 400 youngsters who attend weekly classes, combined with a significant number of staff. Other youth circuses have 15 young people training three times a week under the guidance of four volunteers and perform a monthly action in the region. And yet another youth circus focuses on projects in schools and in the community."<sup>1</sup>*

<sup>1</sup> <http://circomundo.nl/jeugdcircusinnederland/>

While one youth circus focuses on artistic innovation, the other wants to preserve the circus tradition. All approaches are valuable.”

In total, 27 of the 55 youth circuses are a member of Circomundo. Circomundo is a foundation that represents the interests of the Dutch youth circuses, stimulates quality improvement and provides a consultative structure.

International developments are inspiring and important too. Therefore Circomundo is part of the Network of International Circus Exchange (NICE) and the European Youth Circus Organization (EYCO). Youth circuses also exchange with foreign youth circuses on their own accord. Either way expertise is exchanged on themes such as safety, talent training, artistic and educational programs.

The ambition to grow in size and quality increasingly requires a skilled board, a solid organization and a well-trained team of circus teachers and coaches.

### **8.3 Growth opportunities to professional activities**

If a participant of a youth circus wants to improve himself in circus, he can pursue further education in the Netherlands or abroad. To become a professional on a artistic level, a professional training for circus artists is more suitable.

In the Netherlands there are two higher education circus schools; other European countries offer similar schools, all of which can be found on the website of the European Federation of professional circus schools ([www.fedec.eu](http://www.fedec.eu)).

If someone is interested in teaching circus arts, he can do so by taking a circus coach training course. In the Netherlands, there is only one educational program at this moment: the BIC<sup>15</sup>, which was started by Circomundo, based on the Belgian equivalent in 2010. Similar programs were started elsewhere in Europe, to be found on the website of the European organization of youth circuses: [www.eyco.org](http://www.eyco.org).

The value of well-trained and competent teachers and coaches in youth circus should not be underestimated, since these are the people providing the participant with the basics of the circus arts. Because chances are that he wants to continue after the youth circus to develop himself into a professional, he will need that basic training very much in order to be admitted to further education.

## 9 Trainers Development Program to Circus Mentor

The analysis of the growth and development of the Dutch youth circus field (Chapter 2) shows that the demand for qualified teachers and coaches exists. Well trained and competent coaches and teachers in youth circus are important for two reasons. First of all, a good circus instructor or facilitator is able to create a safe learning and playing environment for the participant to develop and participate in high quality leisure. Secondly, youngsters in the youth circus may want to pursue a career as a professional circus artist and therefore, the basics of circus arts handed to the participant in the youth circus, should be of a level that helps him to be admitted to a professional school.

So, there is a need for both skilled circus coaches and skilled teachers who operate at a higher level. The current BIC NL already plays a key role. Further investigation into education for circus teachers would certainly be useful. The guidelines for the trainers development program to circus coach have been set based on the situation described above.

The guidelines states the aim of the training and the target group on which this training focuses. In addition, a clear view on the professional practice arises: what does the profile of the circus coach look like? These frameworks logically generate the learning content, which are explained in Chapter 4.

### 9.1 Purpose and objective

The *purpose* of the trainers development program to circus coach is to ensure better skilled circus coaches.

The *objective* of the program is to equip them with sufficient knowledge and experience to be able to operate in a youth circus as a coach and to be able to evaluate and improve their own teaching independently.

### 9.2 Target group

A trainers development program to circus coach focuses on people who want to use the medium of circus in order to bring both pleasure and skills to other people. The trainer has a more than average skill level. He wants to pass on skills and also grow himself.

### 9.3 Professional profile circus coach

A circus coach shows and practises circus skills with his participants and works with them towards a circus presentation.

The circus coach is an example of circus craftsmanship, mastering several circus skills. The participants who the future circus coach will teach practice circus as leisure. A circus coach works in direct contact with individuals and groups.

Therefore the circus coach as a human being plays an essential role. The circus coach sets with his behaviour and personality an example to the participants. Having a positive attitude towards himself, each individual and the group as an entity, is an important quality. Empathy, authenticity, appreciation for everyone's ability and being and, above all, a sense of humour and perspective contribute to a pleasant learning environment. A circus coach thus shows *leadership and interpersonal skills*.

The circus coach should also be able to effectively teach circus techniques to a heterogeneous group, which is why some *pedagogical teaching ability* is important.

In addition, the circus coach is expected to strive for constantly developing his circus activities through regular reflection, evaluation and adaptation of his actions.

## 10 Regarding the content

With the professional profile for circus coach in mind, we move on to the actual guidelines. This profile provides us with the competencies (4.1), prerequisites (4.2), learning content and learning material (4.3 t / m 4.6) and the methods and learning activities (4.7). From this content follow the criteria to which the teachers team (4.8) should answer with regard to the transfer of the learning content, testing (4.9) and final terms (4.10).

### 10.1 Competences

With competences we mean the knowledge, understanding and skills to achieve the intended objectives in specific situations. The competences provide a summary of what a graduate circus coach is able to do.

From the professional profile (3.3) follows an important classification of competences, which has a leading a role in the elaboration of the guidelines:

- *Circus craftsmanship*<sup>2</sup>: knowing the circus arts, and being able to perform and demonstrate them;
- *Leadership and interpersonal skills*: being able to take care of the social and personal well-being of participants during the circus activity;
- *Pedagogical didactic capacity*: being able to teach circus skills from each main discipline and to be able to develop the creative and artistic ability of the participant, as well as being able to reflect on their own pedagogic didactic action.

It is also important to determine to what level of competence the trainers development program will take the participant (see also 4.8). A circus coach has other responsibilities than a teacher assistant, circus teacher or professor, and therefore needs to master other skills. There is a clear and concise overview of the difference in skills in the professional context of circus trainers (see Annex 1).

This diagram is a directional framework, developed at European level. Several youth circuses from the Netherlands are aware of it and the German umbrella organization of youth circuses (BAG Zirkus) uses this format already.

In the diagram, the following skills are set at the level of the circus coach:

- <sup>2</sup> Under the heading of circus craftsmanship, the combination of technical craftsmanship and creative and artistic expertise are meant in these guidelines. This is based on the view that artistry and creativity are inherent to the circus practice and one can not exist without the other. Only through the combination of the two components the circus arts can be practiced and transmitted. Also in circus movement education these different skills should go hand in hand, and be stimulated and developed in parallel. In the learning content and subject matter of the module circus skills they are treated separately, so that attention will certainly be paid to the creative and artistic ability.

The circus coach is able to:

- act independently during a circus class teaching basic skills;
- accompany a group of children, youngsters or adults;
- knowingly stimulate creativity and imagination;
- create a safe learning environment (safe use of material, provide physical, emotional and social security);
- observe and report unsafe situations and act appropriately;
- provide appropriate first aid in an accident and take action.

In determining competency levels, this scheme is an important guideline, together with some other aspects.

#### *Level of circus expertise*

Before being able to teach a circus coach should know the basics of circus skills from different circus disciplines and be able to perform them.

When determining the level of circus skills required, three important issues are involved:

- 1 The circus discipline: whether it is important in the program to excel in one of the circus disciplines, or mastering the basics in any discipline, will need to be addressed by the provider of the program. Looking at the current market field, both kinds of offer are in demand.
- 2 Several different skills: every circus discipline has a large number of subcategories, which are classified according to the manipulated object, or the required movement skill. There are also new skills appearing, and there are skills (sometimes temporarily) disappearing. A number of skills in youth circuses seem to survive the trends.
- 3 The mastering of the skills: a basic level, intermediate or expert? Beginner level, intermediate level or advanced? And do the skills for each discipline have to be equally good? Exceptions for someone not being able to perform (perfectly), but still having the ability to explain, some extra coaching and teaching may be possible, if there is experience, insight into the movement and excellent teaching skills.

In these guidelines we have chosen to train a circus coach with basic knowledge and skills of the traditional skills from the four circus disciplines (see also Annex 2). More information can be found in the circus expertise module.

#### *Level of leadership and interpersonal skills*

In order to determine the level of the competence leadership and interpersonal skills it is important to determine some aspects of the group which the circus coach is training. The age of the participants is not the only decisive aspect with regard to the required level of competence; characteristics such as disability or a particular cultural background of the participants also require specific qualities of the coach. If circus is used mainly as a means to pass on social and emotional skills, than this aspect should be given ample attention in the trainers development program.

In these guidelines we have chosen to train a circus coach who independently coaches a group of children or young people, being aware of their personal and social well-being. More

information can be found in the module Leadership & interpersonal skills.

### *Level of pedagogical didactic capacity*

Expertise in pedagogical teaching skills should also be an important part of the program, together with handling the responsibilities the future circus coach will meet. Many youth circuses use the terms assistant trainer / circus coach and circus teacher / senior teacher.

From the level circus mentor and up, a group is independently taught. So far, the only existing preliminary trainers development program in the Netherlands is the BIC. Learning purposeful teaching is interesting for any further level of specialization.

In these guidelines we have chosen to train a circus coach who acts independently during a circus class in which he teaches the basic skills. More information can be found in the module Pedagogical Didactic Capacity.

## **10.2 Previously obtained knowledge and experience**

What basic levels of competence does the participant need to have to start with?

As stated earlier, a future youth circus coach should be able to develop three levels: mastering the circus skills, dealing with individuals and groups and be able to teach circus. The extent, to which these skills should be already present at the start, is discussed below.

### *Circus Expertise*

The provider of the training program determines which skills should be mastered from the beginning and which can be obtained during the trainers development program. Ofcourse, this influences the learning content and duration of the program.

Advice would be to request a minimum of technical skills to be mastered so that the participant can focus on the pedagogical aspect.

The initial terms of the International Basic Trainer Program of the European Youth Circus Organisation (EYCO) are a good starting point (note: for the initial terms of the EYCO format a number of basic skills was chosen; it does not include a number of techniques such as aerial work, partner acrobatics, etcetera).

Initial terms EYCO International Basic Trainer Program Examples of skills to be mastered

Acrobatics	Juggling	Balance	Show Circus
<i>the candidate is able to...</i>	<i>the candidate is able to...</i>	<i>the candidate is able to...</i>	<i>the candidate is able to...</i>
...move, role and rotate around three body axes, roll over forward	...throw and catch three objects fluently,	...keep balance on a moving object	...give a small artistic presentation presenting
	... to rotate plates and manipulate diabolo or other juggling tools		
<i>Examples</i>			
Roll over backwards, cartwheel, screw.	Juggling three cloths, plate spinning, manipulating the flower stick, like the basic tic-tac movement	walk on a fixed (tight string)  keep balance on a moving object (rola bola).	Oneself in any form to an audience on a stage

### *Leadership and interpersonal skills and pedagogical teaching capacities*

In determining the initial terms in the field of leadership, interpersonal skills and pedagogical competences, previously mentioned responsibilities (4.1 and Annex 1) are important aspects. Some programs require specific qualifications, sometimes putting up an admission test. This applies only to level 3 *circus teacher* and higher, and therefore not within our guidelines, with which we focus on the aspects of the training to Level 2 *circus coach*.

### *Recommended initial terms*

Taking into account the initial terms of the International Basic Trainer Program of EYCO, together with the skills described in the professional profile for circus trainers (Annex 1), the following prerequisites for the participants are recommended:

- The candidate masters a minimum of technical circus skills.
- The candidate shows himself motivated to get started with circus and work with children and youngsters.
- No pedagogical degree or teaching experience is required, experience as teacher assistant is recommended.
- Minimum age is 18 years.

### **10.3 Learning content and subject matter**

Now that the competences are defined, we attend to the following questions:

- 1 *How do the participants acquire these competences?* The learning content can be passed on in phases, modules, and blocks or per discipline. The way that is chosen depends on and is in accordance with the vision and the overall objectives.
- 2 *With what learning material do the participants acquire these competences?* We start out with those topics that can be worked out in the teaching program. Below we describe the

content of each module, with a direct hands on translation of learning material.

The learning content of the three competences is divided into three modules:

- a Module Circus Expertise
  - How well does the circus coach master the circus arts?
  - What circus technical and artistic creative skills do the participants learn and what will be the focus in the curriculum?
- b Module Leadership and Interpersonal Skills
  - What makes a good coach?
  - What do the participants learn about the care for social and personal well-being of their pupils? How do the participants learn how to pay attention to both the group and the individual?
- c Module Pedagogical Didactic Capacity
  - How does a circus coach teach?
  - What general and circus pedagogical and didactic skills do the participants learn and how is this practised in the curriculum?
  - How does the participant learn to reflect on his own actions?

#### **10.4 Module Circus Craftsmanship (A)**

In this module the focus is on circus technical skills and their artistic execution.

The learning goal for the participant is twofold, learning to:

- 1 know, perform and demonstrate circus skills from each main discipline and
- 2 develop his own creativity and artistic skills.

This part of the curriculum will take at least 60 contact hours in the program.

##### *Learning content*

- 1 Circus technical skills: knowing, and being able to perform and demonstrate circus skills from the required disciplines (juggling, balance, acrobatics and aerial work - Annex 2).
- 2 Creative and artistic skills: developing his proper artistic and creative ability:
  - learning to observe;
  - developing their own creativity;
  - knowing their own body and learn to use it as a means of expression;
  - understanding and having a sense of what makes a performance to be a strong presentation;
  - recognizing different forms of presentation;
  - learning to combine circus techniques, theatre play and tools (costume, music, decor) to create a stronger circus act;
  - being able in a conversation to reflect and analyze, after a presentation, in an appropriate manner.

### *Learning material – learning content 1: circus technical skills*

#### *Theoretical part - topics:*

- history of the circus;
- modern developments and new skills in the circus disciplines;
- current situation of the professional circus and the youth circus in the Netherlands;
- the human body, the movement apparatus.

#### *Practice part:*

It is recommended that a circus coach can fluently perform and demonstrate basic figures of the most common circus techniques. The provider of the program ensures that there is still room for new techniques and trends.

### *Learning material - learning content 2: artistic and creative ability*

The participants can learn to create his own circus arts and ideas and present his act to an audience. Methods and exercises from the dance and theatre world can be used. Watching many performances and acts and learning to give feed back is also part of the arts education. The creative ability can be developed within the making of an act, and also by inventing new ways to handle circus objects.

#### *Theoretical part - topics:*

- types of performing arts (theatre, dance, music, multi-disciplinary);
- styles of performing arts (physical theatre, mime, location theatre, puppetry, object theatre, classical ballet, modern dance, hip hop, pop concerts);
- theatre design (use of space, decor, objects, sound, music, video, costume, light);
- dramaturgy (analysis, imagination, drawing systems).

#### *Practice Section – topics:*

- basic play: playing for an audience (visibility, eye contact, focus);
- moving with the body: learning to use the form elements of space, time, power
- interplay
  - with fellow players: observing interactions, focus, timing
  - with circus object: redefine, build relationships, invent new possibilities;
- making acts theatrical:
  - depict a story
  - use design (costume, scenery, lighting, objects);
- analyzing and reviewing performances.

## **10.5 Module Leadership and interpersonal skills (B)**

This module is focussing on coaching groups and individuals in the group. The learning goal for the student is to be able to take responsibility of the social and personal welfare of the participants during the circus activity.

This component comprises at least 30 contact hours in the program, as well as 30 hours traineeship.

### *Learning content*

The following skills must be developed:

- 1 Guiding a group (of individuals):
  - Connecting to the group
  - Guiding a group process;
  - Provide leadership;
  - Work together;
  - Communicate;
  - Creating a socially safe environment.
  
- 2 Guiding the individual (in the group):
  - Motivate, inspire, encourage;
  - Demonstrate model behaviour;
  - Dealing with unacceptable behaviour;
  - Provide first aid in an accident.

### *Learning material*

#### *Theoretical part*

- 1 Coaching a *group* (of individuals):
  - Supervision styles;
  - Target frame;
  - Group dynamics;
  - Communication skills.
  
- 2 Accompany the individual (in the group):
  - Social and emotional development of the child. Attention points per age group;
  - Anxiety and motivation;
  - First aid in an accident (first aid);
  - Legislation master apprentice situation.

### *Learning material*

#### *Practical part*

Frequently and in different situations practicing to coach, evaluate and modify by doing traineeships, role plays and other practical methods.

## **10.6 Module Pedagogical Didactic capacity (C)**

The module pedagogical didactic capacity has the main emphasis on the transferring, differentiation, structure, building up and safe practice of the skills. The main purpose of the learning content is that the student learns how circus skills from each major discipline and

creative and artistic skills can be taught.

This component comprises at least 50 contact hours, as well as 30 hours of practical traineeship. These hours are also the traineeship hours for the module Circus Mentor. (B).

### *Learning content*

#### 1 General pedagogical teaching skills

These are teaching skills: generally applicable pedagogical teaching and methodical working methods and visions (regardless of profession), such as: preparing the lesson, execute and evaluate; creating a safe learning environment.

#### 2 Circus pedagogical and didactic skills

In addition to the fact that a circus coach should know his profession and be able to teach it, continuously monitoring safety is a very important issue. Circus practice involves risk, so at all times accidents must be avoided.

Important circus pedagogical and didactical skills are:

- To be able to teach circus skills from each main discipline in a safe manner:
  - being able to explain in clear and understandable language, connecting to the level of the student;
  - clear demonstrations;
  - knowing a wide range exercises for the skills to teach;
  - knowing the right steps to match the level of the student (differentiation);
  - being able to apply those steps at the right moment;
  - being able to observe well;
  - to know and be able to apply rules for safe practice;
  - recognize unsafe situations and intervene appropriately.
- To be able to develop the artistic and creative ability of the student:
  - to know exercises and be able to make them up to encourage the pupils;
  - learning to create imaginative circus games.
- Ensuring an emotionally safe learning environment:
  - observe well;
  - work safely in the training hall and on the stage;
  - proper organization of the rehearsal room, regularly checking circus material and installations, storage of materials, learning safety, measures and how to apply them;
  - stretching and injury prevention.

### *Learning material*

#### *Theoretical part*

- learning styles: learning theories Kolb, Gardner, authentic learning;
- motoric learning: analytical and global approach, bilateral transfer, psycho motor development of the child;

- exercise training: Recognize the major muscle groups, training and caring per circus skill, correct attitude as a helper, knowing factors that determine the difficulty per discipline (risk factors);
- methods and didactical work forms: the open method (Annex 3), and stepwise and jump wise method;
- knowledge of materials for aerial and balance systems

#### *Practical part*

Practising the teaching (in different situations) focussing on:

- explanation (audibility, intonation, volume, key words, telling principles);
- demonstration;
- helping;
- recognizing unsafe situations and intervention;
- authenticity in being and acting;
- using an open track process (Appendix 3).

### **10.7 Work forms and learning activities**

Not everyone has the same learning techniques. As a provider of a trainers development program you will ofcourse provide a variety of work forms so that the different ways of learning will be addressed and developed. Working at competences may be translated into classes, group work, methods for gaining insight, reflection and visioning, exercises, independent learning, reading and viewing assignments, portfolio and traineeships.

Teaching methods to master the circus skills include:

- to teach skills, use a step by step method (teacher coaching, individual learning);
- to share skills, learning from each other (shared coaching, collaborative learning);
- to learn skills by practicing independently using observation cursors;
- a varied offer in learning activities to stimulate personal interest;
- a varied offer of learning activities enabling progress in personal development areas
- training lists, checklists;
- offering periods of free training (student coaching, individual and / or collaborative learning).

Didactical work forms to teach circus skills include:

- to get the role of coach by teaching;
- to collect teaching tips: the participant tries out a new skill, experiments and records the teaching tip found by him;
- through micro teaching: teaching the other participants and hereby being observed by the teacher. After each teaching moment in the group, time is taken to discuss the approach;
- teaching in real situation, in the form of practical traineeship with supervisor;
- create lesson plans, and then reflect, evaluate and adjust.

Teaching methods for learning to care for the emotional and social well-being of participants during the circus activity:

- observation training;

- being observed by fellow students and/or the coach with evaluation;
- to keep a portfolio with reflections on personal experiences;
- practising positive affirmations;
- to discuss in a small group real life situations (interviewing);
- role play: playing situations that can occur, or acting situations from real life (for example, dealing with annoying or inappropriate behaviour).

## 10.8 Teachers Team

In this chapter, the criteria for the teacher or participant of the (didactical) learning process are discussed, in addition to the previously mentioned competencies in Part A (5.1 competences of the teacher), and the tasks and responsibilities that come with it.

We recommend working with a team of teachers during the trainers development program. The participants will not only learn different learning and teaching styles, but each teacher has his own specific knowledge. One or two professors will guard the unity and continuity in the program. They coordinate the program and the contacts with the participants and the guest teachers. Coaches for students during their practical training can be part of the teachers team.

### *Criteria guest teachers*

- has thorough knowledge of the profession;
- is qualified with a teaching degree at bachelor or master level and professional training at least level 3 EYCO (see Annex 1);
- has competencies of profession profile 4a (see Annex 1);
- has varied practice experience (different teaching situations and surroundings, employers, target groups);
- has their own vision or methodology;
- reflects on own functioning.

### *Criteria, duties and responsibilities of principal teacher:*

- meets all the criteria described above;
- gives at least one third of all lessons.

### *Criteria, duties and responsibilities of coordinator:*

- is present for at least two thirds of the program;
- follows the participants and coaches them during the trainers development program;
- makes the program in consultation with the principal teacher;
- organizes the logistics and administrative part of the training or delegates it.

### *Criteria, duties and responsibilities of the supervisors:*

- follows at least one student through at least two conversations during the program and at least one observation during the students traineeship;
- communicates this with the principal teacher and has a decisive voice in the final evaluation.

## 10.9 Testing

Feedback and confirmation by others contribute to learning. It is important that the participant on a regular basis has insight in his progression and feels successful.

For this, these instruments are used:

- being tested on technical circus skills;
- presenting a circus act for an internal audience, with evaluation;
- to be observed in a concrete teaching situation, with evaluation on coach style and pedagogical teaching skills.

So a student is followed by several people during the program, but he must first and above all critically evaluate his actions himself, and have personal commitment in order to learn more.

For this, these instruments are used:

- Personal Development Plan (PDP);
- portfolio in which self-reflections are collected on different subjects;
- regular exercise and training of circus skills.

### Testing competence

At the end the participant should be tested as to whether the learning objectives have been achieved. The guideline for the trainers development program to circus coach is to test the participant on the basis of a competence test.

The competence test consists of:

- a written preparation of the lesson;
- a circus class given in a real situation with a real target group, observed by two examiners (inter-subjective testing);
- a discussion, evaluation and interpretation of the given class, relating to the preparation.

### Certification

The participant will receive a certificate or diploma on completion of the program. This will explain per module what the strengths and work points (if any) of the participant are.

### Procedures and methods of evaluation

Because there are different forms of evaluation, also different observers and evaluators are needed (self evaluation/ evaluation by fellow students / evaluation by the (guest) teacher). For the final exam (the competence test) it is good to have next to a person involved, at least one external evaluator. This increases the objectivity of perception

The professors decide the final score, based on all the facts given.

## **10.10 Final terms circus expertise**

The final terms for the circus expertise imply knowing and being able to perform and demonstrate the circus arts.

- 1 Technical skills: in Annex 2, these final terms are described in detail. The appendix provides an overview of the skills of the four basic disciplines of circus (juggling, balancing, acrobatics and aerial work).
- 2 Artistic and creative skills:
  - the participant encourages consciously the technical creativity in each of the techniques offered;
  - the participant creates an emotionally safe environment for the participants so that their fantasy, movement, courage and creativity can develop;
  - the participant knows and uses various supporting elements that enrich a circus act (play, movement, music, costumes, decor,);
  - the participant helps the pupil to make his act interesting to the public and to gain insight and understanding.

## **Final terms Leadership and interpersonal skills**

The final terms for leadership and interpersonal skills involve being able to provide social and personal welfare of participants during the circus activity.

Leadership and interpersonal skills

- the participant can teach groups (children, youth, and adults) independently;
- the participant creates social and emotional wellbeing of the participants during the circus activity;
- the participant cares for the well-being of the individual in the group;
- the participant teaches the group in an enthusiastic and positive way;
- the participant can communicate properly with the parents about the child and the youth circus.

## **Final terms Pedagogical Didactic Capacity**

The final terms for the Pedagogical Didactic capacity imply the ability to teach circus skills from each major discipline and developing the creative and artistic ability of the pupil.

- 1 General pedagogical didactic capacity:
  - the participant prepares his lessons with a focus on the intended purpose;
  - the participant structures the lesson with emphasis on motor and social emotional aspects;
  - the participant creates a safe learning environment;
  - the participant can clearly explain and / or demonstrate;
  - the participant is flexible and adapts to the real situation;
  - the participant evaluates after class and improves it;
  - the participant uses an open work process.

## 2 Circus pedagogical and didactic skills:

- the participant acts independently during a circus class in which the basic skills are taught;
- the participant knows playing and differentiation for each of the technical and artistic skills to learn;
- the participant accompanies an independent group in making acts;
- the participant knows the security risks and measures and acts accordingly;
- the participant has an accident first aid diploma and takes the right actions.

## 11 Quality Standards

The provider of a good quality trainers development program not only ensures good organization of the learning content, but also high quality and close monitoring. The provider is responsible for the implementation of the quality of training. The following topics should be taken into account:

- developing a program plan based on the guideline, showing that the program pursues an acceptable level;
- the vision on which the program is built;
- the actual content and the way it is offered;
- professional support for the participants;
- the method of testing;
- a systematic evaluation by participants.
- a clear process to identify and analyze obstacles, is used to find solutions for a next time.

In addition, the following organizational conditions are important:

The safety and how it is secured in the elaboration of the program, such as:

- secure premises;
- safe environment;
- safe working environment;
- certified materials.

Prevention and how it is secured in the program, for example:

- a clear complaints procedure;
- the appointment of a trustee;
- a certificate of good behaviour from teachers.

Quality standards mean that to maintain or strengthen the quality of the program structural evaluations are being done and improvements are being implemented. We recommend to consult everyone involved in the trainers development program (teachers and guest teachers, coordinators, students, alumni and people from the professional field) in evaluating the quality of the program and the measures to be taken for improvement.

Issues and questions that belong in the discussion about the quality of the trainers development program can be found in Annex 4 -Checklist quality care.

### **Quality Cycle of Deming (Plan-Do-Check-Act)**

A tool to ensure and increase the quality, is the quality circle of Deming. This describes four activities of a cyclical nature that monitor and secure the process of result improvement. This cycle can be passed through for each process in the training with the objective to maximize the quality of the process.

#### *Plan*

In the planning phase, we look at the current processes or activities, what the results are and

how they can be improved.

The result is formulated clearly beforehand and in this phase the basis is determined on which data (*critical performance indicators*) the results can be measured. For example, the number of participants and the number of graduates, working as a circus coach, the satisfaction score of the participants, the extent to which targeted didactical goals are met, the time taken for various parts of the program or the number of participants that graduates at once.

*Do*

Introduce the improvements (at small scale).

*Check*

Measure the results of what you have done based on the performance indicators you set earlier. You check to see if the actual results match the results that were planned (planning phase).

*Act*

Adapt the work processes on the basis of the results found in check.

## Appendix 1

### Profession profile framework Circus Trainers (EYCO)

#### Responsibility

		Responsibility		
Capacity		Is able to...		
1	Teaching assistant	help during the circus activity		
2	Circus coach	act independently during a circus class in which the basic skills are learned		
3	Circus Teacher	achieve a long-term program in accordance with the educational program of the school or organization		
4a	Specialist teacher	establish a pedagogical program within one circus technique		
		supervise the activities which belong to a specialization in his circus technique		
4b	Principal teacher		write a circus pedagogical program	
4c	Teacher of Trainers			development program : Co - develop a trainers development
				program and lead trainers program activities

#### Pedagogy

		Pedagogy		
Capacity		Is able to...		
1	Teaching assistant	care for individuals and small groups, under the supervision of the circus coach or teacher.		
2	Circus coach	guide a group of children, adolescents or adults		
3	Circus Teacher	analyze pedagogical approach, evaluate and adapt to the participants / the group / context		
4a	Specialist teacher			
4b	Principal teacher		coordinate a team of teachers	
4c	Teacher of Trainers			helps reflect on circus pedagogy and group dynamics

#### Art Education

		Art Education		
Capacity		Is able to...		
1	Teaching assistant	support an artistic approach; be a role model for the participants.		
2	Circus coach	consciously stimulate creativity and imagination		
3	Circus Teacher	set goals for the artistic development of the participant		
4a	Specialist teacher	give an artistic approach of his / her technique		
4b	Principal teacher		write a circus pedagogical program to develop artistic skills	
4c	Teacher of Trainers			integrate artistic skills into his / her pedagogical training development program

## Safety

		Safety		
Capacity		Is able to...		
1	Teaching assistant	mention and apply the basic rules for the physical safety of the participants during the circus activity, observe report unsafe situations		
2	Circus coach	create a safe learning environment (using safe materials, provide physical, emotional and social security) observe and report unsafe situations, and apply appropriate action provide appropriate first aid in an accident and take the right actions		
3	Circus Teacher	Circus Teacher : follow the security policy of the organization, estimate and evaluate safety risks of physical as well as social and emotional safety		
4a	Specialist teacher	develop recommendations and rules for safety in his / her technique		
4b	Principal teacher		Principal teacher : ensure responsibility for the safety in the circus school, or where the circus activities take place	
4c	Teacher of Trainers			teacher of trainers : develop programs and integrate the theme of safety into his / her pedagogical training program

## Appendix 2

### Final Terms Circus Expertise

#### *Own technical skills*

This list provides an overview of skills from the traditional four basic disciplines of circus. We recommend that you also stay open to new techniques and materials that are not listed here.

This package of movement skills is a nice basis to be able to work with unexperienced circus participants.

After following a trainers development program for youth circus, the student should have these skills under control.

#### *Juggling*

- 1 plate spinning
- 2 juggling with cloths
- 3 juggling with balls
- 4 juggling with clubs
- 5 juggling with rings
- 6 flower stick
- 7 diabolo

#### *Balance*

- 1 unicycle
- 2 rola bola
- 3 rope walking/dancing
- 4 walking on the ball
- 5 stilts

#### *Acrobatics*

- 1 dynamic acrobatics / tumbling
- 2 acro balancing

#### *Aerial work*

- 1 trapeze
- 2 tissue and chinese pole

#### *Juggling*

##### *Plate spinning*

- spin with preferred hand
- spin with not preferred hand
- at least five tricks

### *Juggling with cloths*

- building up to three cloths
- big and slow juggling with three cloths
- two variations with three cloths

### *Juggling with balls*

- build up to cascade with three balls
- juggling three balls while looking at audience (25 throws)
- two variations with three balls
- juggle two balls in one hand (both hands)

### *Juggling with clubs*

- basic movement back and forth throwing and catching a club
- three manipulations with one club

### *Juggling with rings*

- basic movement throwing and catching one ring
- cascade with three rings
- at least three other tricks with rings

### *Flower stick (circus stick) and / or devil stick*

- tic tack movement
- at least three other tricks with the circus stick

### *Diabolo*

- spinning the diabolo and accelerate
- adjustment of tilting movement
- redirecting 'swing out' movement
- throwing and catching
- at least five other tricks with the diabolo

### *Balance*

### *Unicycle*

- pedalling 10 meters straight ahead on the unicycle
- stepping on without help
- getting off with the unicycle in front
- turning left and right

### *Rolla bola*

- stepping on without help
- staying balanced on the plank
- controlled step off without help
- jump up with two feet
- a minimum of two other tricks on the rolla bola

### *Rope walking/dancing*

- stepping 5 metres forward with correct foot and arm position
- being able to explain and demonstrate the half-twist on the cord (possibly just on the ground)

### *Ball walking*

- stepping up
- stepping on the spot
- stepping forwards
- braking
- stepping backwards

### *Stilts*

- putting the stilts on
- stepping forward
- landing on knees
- getting up with hel

### *Acrobatics*

#### *Dynamic acrobatics / tumbling*

- rolling forwards
- rolling backwards
- coming to headstand
- handstand (with help if needed) and rolling through
- cartwheel
- extra with partner: handstand pullovers
- extra with partner: clowns roll (forward tumbling with two)

#### *Partner acrobatics*

- three shapes for a pyramid with a table
- three shapes for a pyramid with a basing partner in stance
- three shapes for a pyramid with a basing partner lying under

It is recommended that, if possible, the participant demonstrates both positions.

#### *Aerial work*

#### *Trapeze*

- going to sit on a low trapeze and getting off safely
- going to sit on a high trapeze and getting off safely
- at least 5 figures on trapeze
- climb and descend on a tissue or rope
- climb and descend on a chinese pole

### *Open method*

The idea of these content guidelines is that the youth circus uses an open method. Circus coaches will have to incorporate the key competences in order to be able to work in this way.

Circus coaches and teachers should be more than able to handle differences in learning styles of participants. Participants will learn more effectively and with more fun. In addition, an open method of learning creates a broader development for the participants, in which a circus coach:

- uses the open method;
- creates a task-oriented learning environment;
- creates a stimulating environment;
- affirms the learning process always with a positive approach.

#### *Features of an open method:*

- 1 *Openness in the curriculum:* offering a wide range of learning materials, teaching forms and learning situations, differentiation, ownership of the participants in the curriculum, rules are flexible.
- 2 *Openness in the teaching methods:* self discovery in learning, ownership of participants in the working process, in working with materials, pace, group composition. Focus is on the individual progress of the participants.
- 3 *Openness in interaction:* the coach gives the participants the fullest possible explanation and information about the course content, organization and arrangements, security, agreements and compliance of it. Key words: encouragement and appreciation, assistance and correction, interaction, room for expressing feelings in the class.

#### *A task-oriented work environment*

A task-oriented environment determines whether working safely and correct is possible. Conditions are:

- clear instruction and structure of learning material;
- feasible, open and entertaining assignments;
- specific, supportive, well dosed feedback;
- learn to help each other and take care of each other;
- a well designed organization.

#### *A stimulating work environment*

A stimulating work environment contributes to the way in which a participant can develop. Features are:

- room for creativity;
- an open atmosphere in which participants are made and kept curious;
- opportunity to train and research actively and experimentally;
- participants have the idea that they're working towards something.

#### *A positive approach*

An important condition for learning within the youth circus is a positive learning environment in which a participant feels safe and valued.

Properties of a positive learning environment are:

- stimulating inquisitiveness, curiosity and love for the profession;
- attention and devotion;
- patience and discipline;
- commitment and involvement;
- pleasure.

Fun is less elusive than it might seem. You can translate fun into:

- challenges in the work (exciting and dynamic);
- the possibility to take initiatives (ownership);
- being assigned responsibility (recognition of quality and trust);
- celebrating successes (appreciation, pride and self-esteem).

## Appendix 3

### Checklist quality standards

Issues and questions that belong in the discussion about the quality of the trainers development program are:

- 1 Objectives of the trainers development program:
  - a *Domain specific requirements*: are the final terms of the program in line with the requirements that youth circuses in the Netherlands demand of their trainers? Do the final terms fit to the professional standards for youth circus trainers? In the absence of a well-defined framework in that area, requirements from youth theatre schools, dance and sports education etc. are useful for a standard setting.
  - b *Level*: do the final qualifications of the trainers development program match descriptions of qualifications, duration and intensity in similar programs in Europe?
  - c *Orientation or positioning in the (youth) circus field*: do the final terms meet the requirements to access professional education? Final qualifications include conducting and giving circus training independently. In the description of final qualifications sufficient attention is given to general characteristics of didactic courses, and the students own circus skills are clearly described.
  
- 2 Program
  - a *General requirements*: the trainings program is in line with professional practice, there is a link between innovations in professional practice and the content of the training.
  - b *Relationship between the objectives and content of the program*: formulated final terms are covered by the learning objectives of the different parts of the program, the content and structure of the program is in accordance with the phase (start /middle /end) of the training, the program promotes physical, creative and educational growth.
  - c *Programs consistency*: the components of the program are fine tuned and there is no unnecessary overlap or repetition.
  - d *Weight of the program*: the program is balanced in physical and cognitive requirement, not just in the training weekends but on the whole program.
  - e *Inflow*: there are clear prerequisites for the participants, they have no issues with connecting, and the prior information provides an adequate and realistic image of the program and career prospects.
  - f *Size of the program*: do the length, spreading over the year and the frequency of the program match with the objectives?
  - g *Relation between content and form of the trainers development program*: does the didactic concept match with the objectives and is that concept guiding in the design of the program, the learning process and the choice of methods? Is the didactic concept realized? Is there a good relationship between physical training, educational and creative development, self teaching, dealing with groups and preparation / self study?
  - h *Feedback / evaluation*: feedback and evaluation match with formulated final terms. Feedback matches/ suits the learning objectives of the program components. Is there individual feedback to students and are evaluations carried out consistently?

- 3 Employment of teachers / coordinators
  - a Requirements for trainers / teachers
  - b Quantity of staff: is there sufficient manpower during the training days?
  - c Quality staff: Is the expertise of the teachers matching with the purposes of the program and its components?
  
- 4 Services
  - a *Locations*: Are the locations suitable with regard to accessibility, travel time, stay and eat; are the locations, and the variety of it, contributing to achievement of the substantive goals?
  - b *Teaching materials*.
  
- 5 Intern quality care
  - a *Evaluation of results*: the program, or components of it, will systematically be evaluated. Beforehand it will be made clear what is to be evaluated and how that is testable.
  - b *Improvement measures*: previously mentioned mid-term evaluations lead to adjustments in the curriculum and to improvements to the program as a whole.
  - c *Involvement of staff, students, alumni and the professional field*: all people involved in the trainers development program (teachers, participants, coordinators and guest teachers) are actively involved in the evaluation of the quality of the program and the measures to be taken for improvement.
  
- 6 Results
  - a *Level achieved*: in content and level, the realised final qualifications of the participants are consistent with the intended learning outcomes of the program. Graduates are well able to position themselves within the field of youth circus in the Netherlands / Europe.
  - b *Educational efficiency*: the efficiency of the trainers development program (percentage graduates and dropouts) corresponds to similar programs in Europe and the trainers development program meets its own targets.

## Colofon

### *Guidelines*

*Trainers Development Program Youth Circus*

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