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THE PROJECT

Many young people in Berlin's Neukölln district have a migrant background and/or have grown up in a socially or educationally disadvantaged family environment. As a result, many of these young people lack role models and the knowledge needed to make informed decisions regarding their future vocation. The mentoring project "Hürdenspringer" ("Jump your Hurdles") addresses these challenges by providing individualized support to Neukölln youth during their transition from school to work. Volunteer mentors help participants identify their own strengths and skills, thereby facilitating their capacity to create opportunities for themselves. By the end of the program, participants have a clear idea of what to do after completing school. The one-on-one relationships between mentors and participants are key to the project's success. Participating youth develop trust and self-trust as they are exposed to career paths and educational biographies that they would otherwise have no access to. Ranging in age from 25 to 75 years, the mentors have accumulated a diverse set of experiences in the working world themselves.

A crucial aspect of the project is the exclusively voluntary nature of participation. Young people who choose to participate are carefully matched with a mentor who accompanies them throughout the duration of the project. Parents are also involved, as mentors actively seek out contact with parents. The project has been engaged in long-term cooperation with three schools in the district.

IMPACT

Since 2009, the Hürdenspringer team has overseen more than 270 mentoring tandems. Success factors include the project's highly qualified mentoring staff, ongoing monitoring by the project team, and the inclusion of parents. In 2015 and 2016, 35% of those mentored went on to secondary-level education, 18% transitioned into school-based vocational training and 10% enrolled in a prevocational training program. Some 10% of participants were not enrolled in a formal program or course by the end of the year. For mentors, participation in the project also yields benefits as they develop their intercultural, empathic listening and mediation skills while improving their work-life balance.

Founded: 2014 (nach Umstrukturierung)
Project start: 2009

Organization income (2015): €853,832.28
Project budget (2015): €15,904.37

Number of project staffers: 21
Of which volunteer: 20

Project location: Berlin

Reach: Local

Target group: Young people (8th-10th grade) residing in Berlin's Neukölln district



Potential project impact

Objetives and target groups	★★★★★
Approach and concept	★★★★★
Development of quality standards	★★★★★

Organizational performance

Vision and strategy	★★★★★
Leadership and staff management	★★★★★
Supervision	★★★★★
Finance and oversight	★★★★★
Transparency and public relations	★★★★★