

## INSTRUCTIONS FOR PROTOCOL CARD

FIRST AID card is a 5 steps protocol for youth workers working with youth in distress. Each youth worker can have the card in their wallet or pocket and can always rely on it and feel more comfortable knowing it's there. Its effect is in empowering youth workers to always feel safe and ready to support youth in distress. The card has 5 steps, which we will explain in detail in this document to help you understand the steps better. This protocol refers to situations, when a young person expresses a distress they are feeling and affects their daily life. It is meant for situations, when a young person needs someone to talk to and share their distress with.

At this point let's remind ourselves that the role of a youth worker is to guide and support young people, not to save them. The need to be heard is what we are trying to fulfill here. Empathic listening allows you to develop and enhance relationships with a stronger understanding of what is being conveyed, both intellectually and emotionally.

### 1. Inform your coworking pair where you are and with who.

We always work in pairs while working in daily centers. When you are about to have a one-on-one conversation with a young person in distress, let your coworker know where you are (it can even be non-verbal communication that you agree upon beforehand).

### 2. Provide a safe visible space, where you can talk alone.

Make sure you also feel safe in that space and that it allows you to have a private conversation without many outside distractions.

### 3. Take a few deep breaths and trust in yourself.

Breathe in and breathe out, while making sure your exhale is longer than inhale. You can do it together with a young person before starting to talk. Breathing is a basic way to help regulate our nervous system. You got this!

### 4. Remember you are here for support, not rescue.

This is a crisis intervention and the goal is emotional regulation of a young person, to reach his/her/their state of balance. That should be in focus for youth workers. It is not about solving the problem in general, but first it is important to regulate emotionally, to calm down and return to balance.

### 5. Beware of questions you ask and summarize what you hear.

Summarize in your own words what you heard from a young person using "If I understood you correctly, you..." or "I heard you say...". This way you make sure you really heard them and it makes them feel heard as well. It is a way of connecting and building trust. You can encourage them to tell you more with "Tell me more about that..." invitation or ask open ended questions. Here are some examples:

How does this make you feel? What is happening to you when you are facing this situation? What are your thoughts on this? What do you need? How can I support you? Do you need anything from me (advice/opinion/...)? What are you planning to do now? What are the next steps you need to take?

### + inform your coworkers about what happened & next steps

It is important to let everyone in the team know that you had a conversation with a young person, what happened and what are the next steps you agreed upon with the young person. Report: name of a young person, date, name of youth workers, topic of discussion (not details) and next step.

