

Vienna, Feb 17<sup>th</sup> 2015

## Letter of Recommendation

From 2012 to 2014 the Austrian Autistic Society (Dachverband Österreichische Autistenhilfe Wien) and the Autism Centre Andreas in Bratislava carried through a bi-national EU-financed project called ACE ("Autism Competence Exchange"). One of the main goals of this project was to develop and implement a training course in methods of Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) to support autistic children from an early age on.

As ABA is not commonly known and used in Austria and Slovakia this was a pilot project and served the training of professionals in the autism field over a course of 1 ½ years. The participants consisted of psychologists, medical doctors, teachers and therapists and mainly worked at public health institutions in Austria (Vienna) and Slovakia (Bratislava/ Trnava). The components of the training included theoretical training, practical work under supervision at the Child Development Institute (Instytut Wspomagania Rozwoju Dziecka/ IWRD) in Gdansk as well as several one-to-one intensive supervisions at the institutions the participants of the course worked at. The participants were assessed at the end of the course and received a certificate.

All training components were developed by the lead partner of the EU-project (Austrian Autistic Society) and implemented in cooperation with Dr. Anna Budzińska of IWRD/ Gdansk.

Dr. Budzińska's institute IWRD is exemplary concerning structured behavior-based early intervention for autistic children in Europe. The IWRD is the only replica in Europe of the well-established Princeton Child Development Institute (PCDI) in the USA. We were highly impressed by the professionalism of the organisational structures as well as the ABA methods consistently integrated into day-to-day work at kindergarten and school at IWRD. We were fascinated to see that by applying these methods integration into regular kindergarten and school system of severely impaired children with autism is made possible.

Dr. Budzińska succeeded in building up a great team of ABA therapists at her Institute and has the ability to teach skills and therapeutic strategies to students in a very practical, hands-on way. She has exceptional skills at motivating others through positive, yet productive feedback and a good sense of humour.

Dr. Anna Budzińska was thus able to build up and increase the skills of professionals who work with children with autism spectrum disorders in Austria and Slovakia by working as the leading supervisor of the project in Vienna, Bratislava and Gdansk.

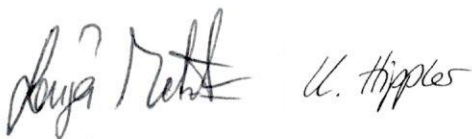
After the 1 ½ year-training course participants in our EU project were able to independently carry through the following ABA techniques: application of principles of errorless learning, application of principles of prompting and reinforcement, creating treatment programs for the individual child, creating motivational systems, management of undesirable behaviors and taking data from treatment as well as creating charts for visual inspection.

All participants gave very positive feedback to Dr. Budzińska and her team during and after the training course. Especially the practical usefulness and the effectiveness of the learned methods were seen as a great advantage when compared to other methods in autism. It was amazing to see that despite the fact that during the training course participants, children and teachers were confronted with four languages (English, Polish, Slovak, German) the project went exceptionally well.

A continuation of supervision after the end of the project has already been organised. Also, in the future a further training course in ABA is planned in cooperation with Dr. Budzińska and the IWRD.

We are very thankful to Anna Budzińska and her team for the wonderful cooperation as well as the supportive and helpful feedback and advice she offered throughout the time of the project.

Kind regards,



Mag. Sonja Metzler & Dr. Kathrin Hippler  
ACE Project Management