



TOOLKIT FOR YOUTH WORKERS INTRODUCTORY

IMELO





Contents

Introduction	3
The purpose of the Toolkit.....	3
Contents of the Toolkit	3
1. Methodological toolkit	3
2. Case study-based difficulty processing: case study collection.....	3
3. Instructional videos.....	3
Presentation of methodological tools.....	4
Presentation of the 10 topics covered.....	4
Presentation of the case study collection	6
The purpose of the case study collection	6
Methodology used	6
Topics covered	7
Presentation of instructional videos	7
How to use the Toolbox?	8
Contents of the Methodology Toolkit.....	8
Contents of the case study collection	9
Contents and availability of instructional videos.....	9



Introduction

Purpose of the Toolkit

The primary goal of the Toolkit is to provide youth workers with practical and immediately applicable knowledge and specific methods in the form of a complex support system. The Toolkit has a dual purpose: on the one hand, it contributes to the professional development of youth workers, and on the other hand, it provides direct, practical help to young people in dealing with the most important difficulties in life, whether it be maintaining mental health, building a career or the challenges of starting an independent life.

Contents of the Toolkit

The Toolkit consists of three separate but closely related parts: the methodological toolkit, the case study collection and the instructional videos, which complement each other to form a whole: the presentations and instructional videos introduce methods and models that can be used to support young people's development, while the case studies show how these can be applied in practice during sessions. Together, they create a complex system that provides both a theoretical basis and practical application for the work of youth workers, while also directly supporting their work.

1. Methodological toolkit

The Methodological Toolkit consists of 10 presentation modules that answer the question "*what*" and present scientifically based methods, techniques and models that can be applied in practice (e.g. SMART objectives, Johari window, Eisenhower Matrix) that help young people develop, improve their skills and deal with everyday problems. This section provides a structured knowledge base for youth workers.

2. Case study-based difficulty processing: case study collection

The case study collection contains 10 specific lesson plans for dealing with complex difficulties. It provides answers to the question "*how*": it shows how the methods in the toolkit can be applied in specific sessions through realistic situations affecting young people. The situations processed using drama pedagogy, training and coaching tools provide a practical framework for transferring theoretical knowledge.

3. Educational videos

The Toolkit also includes 16 instructional videos that support the practical application of what has been learned. The topics of active listening and questioning techniques, conflict management, resilience and digital wellbeing etc. were determined based on the needs of the participants, on the one hand because they develop basic skills that are key to working with young people



and because they deal with skills that can also be applied in the other topics covered by the Toolkit.

Presentation of the Methodological Toolkit

The Methodological Toolkit is a structured collection of scientifically based, practice-oriented methods and techniques that provide tangible answers to the everyday challenges faced by young people. Its strength lies in combining the latest youth research findings with the field experience of youth workers, thus ensuring both professional credibility and practical applicability.

The ten topics covered are key areas that are crucial in the lives of the younger generation (Generation Z and, to some extent, Generation Y): from digital presence, mental health and relationship skills to resilience development and support for becoming an adult. The modules are not presented in isolation but are closely interrelated, thus forming a holistic system that supports the personal, social and professional development of young people.

The methodological approach has four main pillars that give the toolkit its value:

- **Practical models and techniques:** tools such as SMART goal setting, the Johari window, the Eisenhower matrix, and the DESC model, which provide concrete guidelines for problem solving.
- **Skill development:** strengthening communication, conflict management, emotional intelligence and other soft skills.
- **Interactive exercises:** group and individual tasks that allow immediate testing and integration of what has been learned.
- **Scientific basis:** incorporating the latest findings in psychology, social psychology and generational research.

The Methodological Toolkit is not just a teaching aid, but a structured collection of knowledge and methods that can become a key tool in the hands of youth workers in supporting young people. Its main strength is that it does not seek to impart theoretical knowledge, but rather guides young people on the path to development through active involvement, experiential learning and self-reflection. It helps young people navigate the rapidly changing world with greater confidence, awareness and resilience, while supporting them in building on their strengths to successfully enter the various arenas of adult life.

Presentation of the 10 topics covered

The ten topics covered in the Toolkit relate to the key challenges and skills that most affect young people. The selection was based on the latest domestic and international research, as well as the practical experience of youth workers in the field. The ten areas are closely interrelated and together form a complex support system. They do not offer tools for solving isolated problems, but provide comprehensive support to young people in becoming more aware, flexible and independent. Each topic has been processed in the form of a presentation, which serves as the basis for practice-oriented, interactive sessions.





- 1. Digital Wellbeing:** This presentation teaches conscious use of the digital world. Its subtopics include conscious media consumption, setting digital boundaries, online safety, protection against cyberbullying, and digital detox techniques. This is a key topic because Generations Alpha and Z were born into the digital age, and technology addiction and the distorted perception of reality on social media place a serious mental burden on them.
- 2. Relationship tools:** This module focuses on effective communication and building supportive human relationships, as the quality of relationships is a crucial factor in young people's well-being. Sub-topics include active listening, empathy, and consciously developing and nurturing supportive networks.
- 3. Mental health:** The presentation provides practical tools for stress management, mindfulness practice and strengthening self-acceptance. Subtopics include breathing techniques, relaxation methods, emotional regulation and dealing with negative thoughts. The importance of this topic is justified by the high prevalence of anxiety and depression among young people.
- 4. Cultural identity:** Specifically reflects on the challenges faced by young people living in minority, bilingual environments. Subtopics include preserving traditions, exploiting the advantages of bilingualism, code-switching strategies, and awareness of the role of cultural bridges.
- 5. Conflict management and assertive communication:** This section delves deeper into the topic of relationship tools, teaching specific techniques for constructive conflict management. While relationship tools lay down general principles, this module provides specific, practical models (e.g. I-messages, DESC model, fogging) for dealing with difficult situations. Assertiveness, as communication based on respecting one's own needs and the rights of others, is a key skill.
- 6. Problem solving and decision making:** The presentation introduces structured and creative problem-solving methods. Subtopics include Polya's 4-step model, the fishbone diagram, the Six Hats technique, and recognising and managing cognitive distortions. The goal is for young people to be active shapers of their lives, rather than passive victims.
- 7. Conscious career orientation and career building:** This module provides concrete, practical help for planning for the future. Subtopics include self-awareness tests (e.g., Holland code), using modern job search platforms, optimising your LinkedIn profile, the STAR method for interviews, and personal branding. The topic responds to the changing labour market and young people's uncertainty about the future.
- 8. Self-awareness and personal effectiveness development:** This topic forms the basis for all other modules. In addition to self-awareness models (Johari window, VITALS), it also introduces tools for increasing personal effectiveness (Eisenhower matrix, Pomodoro technique, SMART goal setting).
- 9. Resilience and Coping Strategies in a Changing World:** This topic focuses on developing mental resilience and psychological flexibility. The presentation introduces the concept of resilience as a 21st-century superpower that helps us adapt to rapid technological changes and manage the stressors of modern life. It discusses various coping strategies in detail, distinguishing between adaptive (effective in the long term) and maladaptive (providing short-term relief but harmful) methods. The presentation provides practical tools for practising mindfulness, reframing techniques, structured problem solving and emotional regulation. Finally, it recommends specific daily routines and exercises for building resilience, emphasising that this is a developable skill that helps young people navigate a changing world with greater confidence.
- 10. Supporting independent living and becoming an adult:** This presentation provides specific answers to the challenges of "emerging adulthood". Its sub-themes are the four pillars of independence (emotional, practical, social, intellectual), dealing with the "mamahotel" phenomenon, finding a partner and





the modern difficulties of starting a family, and the basics of financial awareness. The topic directly reflects the life situation of the target group and the phenomenon of delayed adulthood.

Presentation of the case study collection The

purpose of the case study collection

The aim of the collection is to support the development of young people's personal and social skills through the processing of realistic, complex problems, and to provide youth workers with tools for their everyday work.

the development of young people's personal and social skills and to provide youth workers with tools for their everyday work. By combining drama pedagogy and coaching methods, the case studies not only convey knowledge, but also initiate an active, experience-based learning process that develops reflective thinking, self-awareness and community learning.

In pedagogical practice, case studies are a reflective methodological genre that builds on real or realistic educational situations, learning processes and interpersonal challenges. Their essence is to present development needs, the chosen methodological tools and their impact in relation to a given problem. This collection contains ten case studies that deal with fictional situations drawn from everyday life. They authentically represent common difficulties and offer specific lesson plans for working through them.

Methodology used

The present case studies are activities based on the methodological foundations of drama pedagogy, using its tools in combination with other methods. The basis is the methodology of *drama pedagogy*, which, according to László Kaposi's definition, is "a group play activity in which participants build an imaginary world and then become involved in this world as actors. Within this fictional world, they encounter real problems and gain real knowledge and experience from these encounters." Drama pedagogy provides an opportunity for participants to work through the challenges of everyday life in a protected environment, try out their reactions, recognise their feelings and seek alternative solutions.

The central elements of the drama pedagogy tools used in the sessions are the conventions defined by Jonathan Neelands and Gavin Bolton:

- **Context building conventions**, which help the situation and the the creation of a frame story,
- **Narrative conventions** that enable the plot to unfold,
- **Deepening conventions** which emotional and interpretation levels deepen experiences,
- **Reflective conventions** that support the process of self-awareness, self-reflection and community processing.

The methodological frameworks of case studies are complex and operate on multiple levels: they combine drama pedagogy, training and coaching approaches.

- Drama-based learning (based on the principles of Gavin Bolton, Dorothy Heathcote and Neelands) ensures emotional involvement and experiential learning.





- the trainer approach helps the targeted development of soft skills – communication, cooperation, emotional intelligence –
- while coaching-based exercises offer specific tools for career guidance, career development or personal effectiveness development, for example.

Topics covered

When compiling the case study collection, the primary consideration was that the situations covered should reflect real problems directly affecting young people: social relationships and exclusion, cultural identity, career orientation dilemmas, digital well-being, mental health, loneliness, workplace expectations, digital addiction, conflict management and issues related to starting an independent life. The individual case studies deal with complex topics.

The selection and structure of the topics ensure that the case studies create complex learning situations in which young people can process issues typical of their age group by drawing on their own experiences and emotions, thereby developing their skills. The topics present the problems through fictional situations based on real experiences, thus ensuring authenticity and relevance.

The structure of each case study is uniform: it contains a detailed description of the situation, the methodological framework of the session, a series of thematically structured tasks, and a presentation of the expected outcomes. This structure allows participants not only to understand a given problem, but also to connect with it emotionally, experience the dilemmas, and work together to develop solutions. The basis for the processing is provided by drama pedagogy tools (context-building, narrative, deepening, reflective conventions), which are supplemented by trainer and coaching techniques.

Presentation of instructional videos

The Toolkit includes instructional videos on 16 key topics. The videos aim to cover practice-oriented areas that most effectively support the work of youth workers. The four topics selected — active listening and questioning techniques, conflict management, resilience, and digital wellbeing etc.— develop basic skills that are key to working with young people.

At the same time, these topics were selected based on participant feedback and practical needs, focusing on areas where there was the greatest need for a deeper understanding of the methods, for trying them out, and for applying them in everyday work. The videos therefore do not cover the entire subject matter, but rather specifically reinforce the applicability of the Toolkit, significantly improving methodological understanding and practical integration.





How can the Toolkit be used?

The real value of the Toolkit lies in the fact that its three parts do not work separately, but complement each other to provide comprehensive support. The **presentation modules and instructional videos** provide the professional foundation: they present clear methods, models and development techniques that guide youth workers in the most important areas affecting young people. **The collection of case studies** offers practical application: it uses realistic situations to show how the methods presented in the modules can be conveyed in an engaging and interactive way.

The parts thus form a whole: youth workers first learn the "*what*" (modules) and then, with the help of the case studies, experience the "*how*", i.e. the possibilities for practical application. This structure ensures that supporting young people is not just about imparting theoretical knowledge, but also about providing a real experience that develops their self-awareness, social skills and coping strategies.

The Toolkit serves as a methodological basis that **can be flexibly applied** in practice, providing practical guidance and inspiration for youth workers. It is not a static curriculum, but a professional foundation that can be incorporated into sessions in various ways: by applying complete session plans, incorporating individual elements, or even developing completely new independent plans based on familiar methods and practices. The emphasis is on creative use and developing the ability **to plan sessions independently**, so that participants can confidently and flexibly adapt their work to the needs of young people.

Youth workers can independently create **sequences** for each topic based on the principles they have learned. This allows them to:

- **They can respond flexibly** to the current needs and situation of the group.
- **can shape** the course of the session **creatively**, do not work according to a fixed script,
- **ensure a deeper learning process** because the exercises are logically structured, allowing participants to reach insights step by step,
- **develop their own professional competences**, as independent planning strengthens their methodological knowledge and self-confidence,
- **they create a personalised learning experience for young people** that is better suited to the local context and the needs of the group.

Contents of the Methodological Toolkit

Contents of the methodological collection 10 presentation modules.

1. Digital Well-being
2. Relationship tools
3. Mental health
4. Cultural Identity
5. Conflict Management and Assertive Communication
6. Problem Solving and Decision Making
7. Conscious Career Orientation and Career Building
8. Self-Awareness and Personal Effectiveness Development
9. Resilience and Coping Strategies in a Changing World



10. Supporting Independent Living and Becoming an Adult

Contents of the Case Study Collection

The 10 lesson plans in the case study are as follows:

- **Case Study I.** *"The excluded student" – social relationships, exclusion, acceptance, empathy*
- **Case Study II.** *"Giving Voice to Ourselves" – cultural identity in minority communities*
- **Case Study III.** *"Anna's Choice" – identity conflict and external expectations, drama pedagogy, career orientation*
- **Case study IV.** *"The perfect life" – digital well-being, online identity and the conflict between the real self, mental health*
- **Case Study V.** *"Unspoken Anxiety" – Mental Health, Resilience, and Overcoming Communication Barriers*
- **Case study VI.** *"Alone in the crowd" – personal well-being, meaningful relationships, from superficial communities to genuine connections*
- **Case study VII.** *"The first job – work-life balance, professional challenges and expectations, career building, career orientation issues"*
- **Case study VIII.** *"Trapped in digital addiction" – digital wellbeing, digital addiction, real relationships and digital balance*
- **Case study IX.** *"When friendship becomes toxic" – relationship tools, conscious relationship development, setting boundaries and healthy relationships*
- **Case study X.** *"Finding your own voice" – identity search and independence, independent living, becoming independent, mental health*

Content and availability of educational videos:

The educational videos are available on the project website:

<https://imelo.hu/>