



PRESS RELEASE



UEP Helps People from Children's Homes Make an Independent Life

Every year roughly 350 young people who have grown up in a children's home start an independent life. Over the course of the next few years, more than a half of them will also appear in another facility run by the state – prison. The improper system of care given to young people growing up in state facilities is particularly at fault. This situation could be changed by a program sponsored by the Centre of Physical Education and Sports at the University of Economics, Prague (CPES UEP) called “Start of Life” which has been implemented in cooperation with the Centre for Adoption and Foster Care.

Prague, May 13, 2008

170 young people aged 16-18 from 26 children's homes participated in the “Start of Life” project, which has been in operation since January 2007 and will conclude in June 2008. In three separate courses they have prepared for common situations which await them in both personal and professional life after they leave the children's home. The first meeting was devoted to the development of communication and socio-psychological skills in the form of interactive games, and focused on finding a job and a place to live, managing economic issues, as well as family and interpersonal relations.

The second meeting, which was held on the premises of the UEP, was focused on the practical use of information technologies. In addition to employees of the UEP CPES, staff of the UEP IT Centre also participated in the project. The last meeting prepared for the young people was a socio-psychological experience course which focused on solving real life



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situations (e.g. working on a team, communicating with state administration, solving family situations, family crises, drugs, home violence, bullying). This course, together with the first one, took place in the sports and recreation centre of the UEP in Dobronice.

The project will be concluded by a ceremony held in the chateau of Bechyně where graduates will receive certificates. The project was co-financed by the European Social Fund and from the state budget of the Czech Republic.

The “Start of Life” project is not the only socially responsible activity in which students, teachers and other employees of the UEP currently participate. Every year the UEP supports a charity gathering called the “Czech Day against Cancer” organized by the League Against Cancer, Prague (www.denprotirakovine.cz). Students from the UEP, together with students from other European universities that are part of CEMS (Community of European Management Schools), engage in a UNICEF and Nelson Mandela initiative called “Schools for Africa” (www.schoolsforafrica.cz). The UEP also supports the promotion of “World Refugee Day” declared by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) (www.unhcr.cz/wrd).

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The University of Economics, Prague (UEP/VŠE) is the largest economic university in the Czech Republic. Nowadays, over 18 thousand students study at the 6 faculties here. These are: the Faculty of Finance and Accounting, the Faculty of International Relations, the Faculty of Business Administration, the Faculty of Informatics and Statistics, the Faculty of Economics and Public Administration, and the Faculty of Management in Jindřichův Hradec. Graduates of the UEP occupy important functions in the private, as well as public sectors. Most of them go to different branches of industry and services, business, marketing, banking, public management, accounting, auditing, tourist trade, and to the field of information technologies. The UEP’s honorable title of “doctor oeconomiae honoris causa” has been awarded to several important Czech and international economists, e.g. the Nobel Prize laureates prof. Gary S. Becker, prof. Dr. Douglass North, prof. Milton Friedman or prof. Robert A. Mundell.



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More information about the UEP is available at www.vse.cz.