

Activity book for refugee children from Ukraine

Since the start of war in Ukraine, more than 4 million people have fled, half of whom are children. As of today there is the Mylifejourneybook for these children: an activity book in which children can write their experiences of the journey, but also their memories of Ukraine and their hopes for the future. The book can be downloaded free of charge for everyone at www.lifebookforyouth.com/mylifejourneybook

'With the Mylifejourneybook we want to strengthen the resilience of refugee children from Ukraine. We know that sharing intense experiences helps to process them and can help prevent trauma to children', says Martine Tobé, of Life Book for Youth and FICE Nederland. She is one of the initiators of the Mylifejourneybook. The book is now available in three languages: Ukrainian, English and Dutch. Martine: "Our contacts in Ukraine, Hungary and Romania, who are involved in the care of children from Ukraine, indicate that there is a great need for material to help refugee children'.

Being normal

By describing or drawing their experiences, children become aware of their own strength and of the people who can support them. Elianne Zijlstra of the University of Groningen and FICE Nederland: "The Mylifejourneybook meets the need of children to be normal. They don't want to be pitied for having fled, but they do want to share their experiences."

'What did you have to leave behind?'

The book contains questions about their journey, daily life in Ukraine, but also their favourite music and what food they like. There is also space for children to write down their experiences of what led them to flee Ukraine, what they could take with them and what they had to leave behind, and what helps them when they are sad. The book ends with the question of what they will do first when the war is over.

Wide-ranging cooperation

The initiative for the Mylifejourneybook is a collaboration of Life Book for Youth, FICE Nederland, Het Begint Bij Mij and the University of Groningen. Previous Life Book for Youth publications for children placed in care and children in quarantine received positive reviews, and this led to the initiative to develop the Mylifejourneybook for refugee children from Ukraine. Hanne Peerenboom of Het Begint Bij Mij: "I didn't have to think long to participate and I am proud of the result. For children, it is an activity for now, a memory for later and a support to dare to look ahead again and to continue living.

Free download

The Mylifejourneybook can be downloaded online for free and printed out yourself: www.lifebookforyouth.com/mylifejourneybook

Distribution is welcomed by the initiators because then as many children as possible can make use of it.

In the future, Mylifejourneybook can also be translated into other languages, so that children from other conflict areas can also use this workbook.