

Croatia's Growing Up Together (Rastimo Zajedno) Programmes

Aims

Growing Up Together (Rastimo Zajedno) is a set of family-centred parenting support programmes designed to strengthen parents' knowledge, confidence and skills to support child development and wellbeing.

The model offers different programme pathways, including a universal parenting programme for families with young children and targeted programmes for families who may need more specific support, such as parents of children with developmental delays or disabilities, families living in adverse circumstances and Roma families.

As part of Croatia's wider early childhood intervention and family support system, it offers a practical example of how parenting support can be embedded in existing education, social welfare and community-based services.



Responsible organization:
Centre for Parenting Support "Growing Up Together"



Country
Croatia

Implementation Highlights

- Applies a family-centred approach to child development, focusing on parental empowerment, practical skills and positive parent-child relationships.
- Provides structured group workshops that support parents' wellbeing, coping skills, self-efficacy and confidence in everyday parenting.
- Is implemented through education and social welfare systems, including kindergartens, family centres and rehabilitation centres, by trained professionals.
- Enables a differentiated parenting support model, with a universal programme and targeted programmes for specific groups of families, including parents of children with developmental delays or disabilities, families living in adverse circumstances and Roma families, supported by referral pathways into the appropriate programme.
- In selected targeted programmes, engages both parents and children through simultaneous parent and child workshops, joint parent-child workshops, and booster workshops to support sustained change.
- Engages community-based paraprofessionals, such as Roma cultural mediators, where this helps strengthen outreach, trust and participation.



What makes this an innovative practice?

Impact: does it work?

Effectiveness and efficiency

External evaluation found that the universal and disability-focused programmes were relevant to the needs of parents and professionals and contributed to improvements in parenting knowledge, skills and relationships.

Evidence Base

Evaluation has demonstrated positive outcomes for parental confidence, parenting skills and access to support services.

Reach: who can benefit?

Equity and access

The model offers different programme pathways, including universal and targeted programmes for families experiencing disadvantage, parents of children with disabilities and Roma families, helping improve equitable access to services.

Transferability and scalability

The programme can be delivered through existing services and professional workforces, supporting scale-up across education, social welfare and community settings.

References and additional tools to favour translation

- UNICEF Europe and Central Asia. Family-Centred Services for Early Childhood Intervention: Highlighting Initiatives in Croatia and Serbia. 2022. Available from: <https://www.unicef.org/eca/media/22066/file/Case%20study%204.pdf> [unicef.org]
- Centre for Parenting Support. Growing Up Together. Growing Up Together - Centre for Parenting Support. 2025. Available from: <https://www.rastimozaedno.hr/en/>