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Vesna Popović: ”Youth work gives me more freedom and food for the soul”

Introduce yourself and your job.

I am the director of applied drama programs in CEPORA, which allows me to be in direct work with youth in different groups all the time.

What makes your job exciting?

The nature of my work in CEPORA gives me the opportunity to rediscover every single person I work with, every single issue we deal with over and over again from a new, exciting angle. I love the process I go together with every group I work with, because it is always very fun, exciting, guffy, but also very personal, profound and healing. Every time I finish a workshop I get filled with enthusiasm and new energy, and I think youth work is a specific context that brings you this every single time.

What are your dreams as a youth worker?

To see the youth we work with grow up using their full potentials, discovering themselves over and over again and using continuance learning through life. And to see them never forget how to play and find their inner child.

Why did you choose youth work?

As my day job I'm a social worker in the Center for social welfare. Working in the youth sector with CEPORA allows me to use the creativity I have for implementation of my professional competences in a fun and exciting way with the groups we work with. It gives me more freedom and food for the soul.

What is your most memorable experience as a youth worker?

I have so many, but I will choose the first one that came to my mind - a situation when the group of young people without parental care we worked with for over 3 years at that moment made hidden messages in my notebook, for me and my team, so we would discover them later. And the messages were telling us how they know we are there for them, and how much our support matters. So, for me to know that they know that we are there and are not going anywhere is always a 'best' memory.



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How has your job effected you and what have you learned?

I always learn new things from the young people I'm in contact, but the most relevant one is that they always remind me (so I learn over and over again) how to be happy, how to enjoy every day and get my inspiration from everything surrounding me. The sharing that happens in the process is something I wouldn't give up for anything else. That experience gives you the sensitivity for different causes, personalities, experiences... And that is something we all need more of.