

Computer Clubhouse



Media based
learning
inspiration from
sosuMedia

In a few words

© Jan Gejel 2011

This hand-out explains the key elements in a Computer Clubhouse, and can also be applied to other forms of LABlearning and media based learning settings.

The Computer Clubhouse history was born in the early 90th at the MIT Media LAB in Boston. There are now more than a hundred clubhouses worldwide in the Computer Clubhouse Network. This means that the Computer Clubhouse Network is offering 20 years of global experience.

The idea was and still is to offer young people at risk from 12 to 18 years after-school facilities to explore, exploit and further develop their *media talents and interests*. The Computer Clubhouse offers high quality media tools, and support from trained adult mentors.

The Computer Clubhouse addresses young people not fitting well into the traditional classroom, at risk of dropping out and early school leaving - and young people simply not able to learn in the traditional academic way. It offers them *re-motivation for learning* and networking, based on their own media world, and on their own talents, interests and ambitions.

In the Computer Clubhouse the young people are learning by *designing and producing* useful and innovative media products for the community, such as companies, cultural and educational institutions, or public organisations. The youth teams collaborate with resources from such organisations and with media professionals, but also with artists or subject-related experts.

The collaboration is based on mutual benefits.

The young people acquire *self-confidence*, high level media literacy, and teamwork and community competences through working in the media projects. The clubhouse supports their "educatability", employability and their entrepreneurship spirit.

The Computer Clubhouse must be hosted by a legal and financially solid organisation with strong community networks, such as a municipality, a major cultural institution, a company or education.

The Computer Clubhouse functions as a bridge between the public and the private sector.

The Computer Clubhouse can be financed in different ways: by a single large sponsor, by the community at large, by a team of sponsors or institutions. When the youth teams carry out a media project for an organisation, it usually becomes a co-sponsor. In this way the youth teams contribute to the clubhouse budget themselves.

A Computer Clubhouse must provide *high quality media tools* and should be able to finance one full time coordinator and one full time senior mentor. The Computer Clubhouse will establish and maintain a *network of volunteer mentors and professionals*. Often experienced young clubhouse members become junior mentors for new youth teams.

An average Computer Clubhouse budget might amount to around 100.000 euro a year, financed through ownership, public funding, and private sponsorships or media project co-sponsorships.

Usually a Computer Clubhouse will include *guiding* the young people towards further education or employment opportunities, when they are ready for this, or even towards forms of *entrepreneurial initiatives*.

The Computer Clubhouse Network in Boston offers certain *support functions*, such as mentor training and mentor networking.

Community benefits

1

Youth at risk is offered a strong alternative to passive media consumption, drugs and alcohol and to living in the streets

2

Youth at risk will develop strong and relevant learning and collaborative competences, in support of their future educational and labour market capacity

3

The community will learn to interact with youth at risk in a constructive way, and will be offered a most interesting creative media environment fostering innovative ideas and products for companies and institutions



Much more knowledge about the Computer Clubhouse *learning and media principles, social practice* and *theoretical background* can be accessed from:

www.sosuaarhus-international.com/LABlearning.htm

www.computerclubhouse.org

Consultancy on establishing a Computer Clubhouse within the EU: Jan Gejel on jan.gejel@skolekom.dk