

## DREAMS WORKSHOP

*Promoting youth volunteerism and artistic self-expression*

### THE CHALLENGE

Education and teaching quality in Turkey remain a challenge. Children, especially those from disadvantaged communities, attend overcrowded and under-resourced schools. Many lack motivation to learn and opportunities for self-expression. Despite efforts to reform the education system, teaching and learning in many schools are still largely based on traditional, non-participatory methods. Teachers lack skills and access to training in innovative teaching methodologies, such as the use of art as an educational tool to enhance children's development. The importance of non-scientific subjects like art is undervalued, despite the known deficit in creative thinking skills among children and youth in Turkish schools.

### THE PROGRAM

Within this context, the Turkish Educational Volunteers Foundation (TEGV), through the Dreams Workshop program, provides disadvantaged children with quality non-formal education, while training a cadre of older youth to serve as volunteer mentors and teachers. Now in its second phase, the program will reach out to new children in its existing 11 urban centers, as well as to young people in more remote parts of the country, through a modified approach known as Dream Corners. Over the course of three years, 2,300 youth, ages 18-26, will be trained as volunteers to run up to 2,500 eight-week art workshops benefiting 42,000 children. Volunteers, many studying to be teachers, will be trained in art techniques and life skills development. To improve the quality of training and workshop delivery, TEGV will develop a program curriculum and volunteer training guidelines. The Dreams Workshop engages volunteers and children in a creative setting which boosts the self-esteem of all participants, while developing creative and communication skills often neglected in schools. Research has shown that access to non-formal mentored activities, particularly in the arts, can help rekindle young people's motivation for learning in formal educational settings.



### OUTCOMES

In the long term, the program will prepare Turkish children to lead more enriched lives as adults, instill greater civic responsibility in youth, and contribute to improved quality of teaching in schools. Program outcomes include: increased life skills among target children and youth (e.g., creative thinking, communication, teamwork, self-confidence, and responsibility); increased engagement of children in art activities; improved professional skills of volunteers; and increased awareness among families about the importance of art in education.

### THE PARTNER

Established in 1995, TEGV's goals are three-fold: to enhance educational access and quality for primary school age children and youth through voluntary support; build transferable skills and promote volunteerism among youth; and advocate for educational reform. The foundation's activities parallel trends in current national educational reform aimed at more child-centered and activity based teaching, and address the educational needs of young people inadequately served within the formal setting. The organization annually serves over 700,000 children and youth participants at 69 owned and operated community centers and 17 independently-funded mobile units.



**Eğitim Gönüllüleri  
İnteraktif Forumu**

**PROGRAM:** Dreams Workshop  
**PARTNER:** Turkish Educational Volunteers Foundation (TEGV)  
**PERIOD:** 1 August 2006 – 31 July 2009  
**LOCATION:** National  
**REACH:** 2,300 youth, ages 16-26; 42,000 children and adolescents, ages 7-16  
**MODEL:** Creative arts/education/volunteerism

### RESULTS TO DATE:

As of December 31, 2006, nearly 3,000 children and youth had been positively impacted during this phase of the program. Since its inception in 2003, the Dreams workshop has reached more than 31,000 children and youth volunteers.