

Principles of the socio-cultural work in the Neighbourhood-Centre of Schöneberg



Nachbarschaftsheim Schöneberg e. V.

Holsteinische Straße 30

12161 Berlin-Friedenau www.nbhs.de

Citizen's comitee and platform for social service

Following the statutes and articles, the purpose of this society is to further and promote the Health and social well-being of the population with the help of

- running a neighbourhood-centre as well as additional social establishments
- offering socio-cultural work relating to the municipal district with activities for all ages
- activities to bring various population groups together, promoting mutual understanding and social responsibility
- giving everyone the opportunity to get involved in volunteer work in order to realise social and cultural interests
- nursing services and medical welfare work
- employees leading social activities and looking after needy persons
- the continuous support and recruiting of volunteers

The neighbourhood centre Schöneberg is a non-profit-organization. It pursues merely all-party and interdenominational issues. The neighbourhood centre Schöneberg sees itself in the tradition of the worldwide settlement-movement and their neighbourhood centres. It connects social and cultural work with the aim of enabling people to help and organise themselves (Self-help System).

Network Neighbourhood Centre

In order to represent our interests and exchange valuable experiences the neighbourhood-centre Schöneberg is a member of the following institutions and organizations

- Verband für sozial-kulturelle Arbeit, Landes- und Bundesverband (The Association of socio-cultural work, state- and nationwide)
- International Federation of Settlements (IFS)
- Deutscher Paritätischer Wohlfahrtsverband, Landesverband Berlin e.V (Parity Welfare Federation, Berlin)
- various professional organizations

The neighbourhood centre Schöneberg is a partner of various political institutions, health insurances, welfare organizations, foundations, house-building societies, Schools and churches in order to achieve its goal of improving the social infrastructure within the neighbourhood.

Ensuring quality of life within the neighbourhood

The following principles have dominated the community-oriented socio-cultural work of the neighbourhood centre for many years:

- projects overlapping different generations and social classes
- Connecting social and cultural activities
- To promote selfhelp and the free development of civil commitment
- tangible help for citizens
- municipal, neighbourhood-oriented approach

A home for everyone

People of all ages and nationalities, people of any origin, belonging to any social class or group are welcome to our neighbourhood centre. Everyone is invited to use this facility; for recreation, information and communication. To test and to develop their own talents, to participate in as well as influence issues going on in our neighbourhood.

Active Encounter – promoting neighbourly companionship

At our organisation different groups, social classes and generations are given the opportunity of getting to know and respect each other. This balances and counterworks the effects of separating within modern society as well as the trend towards the segregation of groups into specific ghettos. Defining and solving problems, however, is not the main reason people come together at our centre. Instead, it is on behalf of being an active part of the community, shaping community life beyond restraints, obligations or restrictions. The social interaction amongst different peoples, cultures and opinions promotes a feeling of solidarity and togetherness.

Protection and Integration – deriving strength for every-day-life

If asked for, specific groups may use secured areas, i.e for elderly people or for drug-addicted persons. Turkish women, for example, may also seek shelter in separate rooms in correspondence with their cultural tradition. The respective groups attain an own sense of protection and security in order to be able to master their every-day-life with its daily effort for integration. In today's global society with its decreasing social warmth, its destroyed social and cultural identities and fragmented sense of "home", people are more and more looking for a temporary or even permanent sense of belonging within a social community.

Recreation and Well-being in pleasant surroundings

Being a "home for everyone", we need to arrange and decorate our facilities in an appropriate way to create an atmosphere of well-being that attracts our visitors. Our neighbourhood-café, the park and the playground all invite to linger for a pleasant, neighbourly chat and a moment of rest in our green haven, in the midst of the urban jungle.

Discovering and promoting hidden potentials

The neighbourhood centre Schöneberg encourages its visitors to unveil and develop their creative abilities. We offer chances and opportunities for everyone to discover and further their own personal strengths.

Preventing social problems

We tie social and cultural work together because social and cultural identity depend upon each other. Apart from that, offering a cultural program makes our facility more interesting for everyone. The negative reputation sometimes clinging to social facilities disappears. We believe that both areas, social and cultural, offer numerous possibilities to participate actively as well as to recuperate in a more passive manner.

Culture and Communication provide for social competence

Cultural activities have a great impact on social work. They provide for active contribution, self-headed design and realisation or even only curious participation of different individuals. Cultural work enables the presentation of fears, dreams and desires. It expresses existing living conditions in a language understood by everyone. Cultural work leaves enough room for subjective wants, develops communicative structures and activates social contacts. It keeps body and soul vigorous and promotes a feeling of trust towards things, people and issues that lead to more social competence and self-esteem.

Self-help for more health and well-being in the neighbourhood

We encourage self-help in the social field as well as promoting the good health of our citizens, by them coming to terms with their own personality and current situation in life. The neighbourhood centre offers various self-help groups, comitees as well as recreation activities.

Strengthening the self-organisation of citizens

We support all kinds of citizen self-organisation by making available rooms and technical equipment as well as our professional knowledge and experience. If asked for, we pass on our established connections to the press, political institutions and municipal administration, mediating in the case of conflict.

Building up Opportunities for Education and Employment

Self-realization and proving oneself worthy are not a matter of material wealth alone. Social facilities lose their appeal if they offer nothing but the conventional. The organisation as well as the settings of the neighbourhood centre Schöneberg allow for everyone to participate, develop and create according to their own needs. We want to give those, who wish to unfold their creativity and socially engage themselves, as well as those, that wish to master social problems within a group, the opportunity of meeting up, educating themselves and joining in cultural work.

To contribute and to participate – volunteer work and commitment

As a member of the neighbourhood centre Schöneberg, all visitors of our institution and all citizens of our municipal district are asked to influence the development of our work and its goals. We define ourselves as a common platform for social engagement, voluntary participation and civilian cooperation. We make decisions transparent on every level of our organisation and take a high interest in informing our members of the structures and facilities within our neighbourhood centre.

Help and guidance – being sensitive of problems

Beyond doing justice to the cultural interests and the need for communication of our visitors we try to take up personal problems and offer qualified advice and counselling. This can be in the field of social counselling, legal guidance, nursing advice or tenants counselling, where we employ the respective qualified personnel. If we cannot offer the needed help and advice ourselves we refer to qualified addresses at hand.

Employment and Qualification – work for the neighbourhood

We support the re-entry of women and other disadvantaged persons into the professional field (labour market). In order to do that we assist these people personally, qualifying and giving them sensible work which contributes to improving the situation of the municipal district. We also co-operate with various partners to accomplish this.

Qualified Services for our neighbourhood

We establish the necessary social facilities and services for the citizens of our municipal district, ranging from integrate children's day-care, nursing facilities, family educational and recreational services to legal and personal counselling, integration services for citizens of foreign nationality, services for the elderly and many more. Professional standards and criteria are accounted for in all of these facilities and activities.

Publicity and Transparency for citizens

Regular and extensive Public relations are an important part of informing the public about current events and the basis for ongoing acceptance by our peers. We issue programmes, flyers, ads, calendars, brochures and annual reports and take advantage of modern technology in the form of internet and e-mail. In addition to the continuous information of the citizens and institutions we work with daily, we hold close relations to the local press and media.

Suggestions and complaints are welcome

All suggestions or complaints from customers, users, visitors, citizens and institutions help us to discover weaknesses and further optimise our work to better accomplish our tasks.

Responsible and open-minded employees

The employees of the respective areas of our facility are supposed to fulfil their duties independently and to their own responsibility, working together in order to achieve the best possible results for the citizens of our municipal district. Every employee is invited to contribute his or her personal abilities, ideas and wishes and is obligated to continually qualify and train him- or herself.