

## "TAKE A SAFE STEP" - SOCIAL CAMPAIGN AS A TOOL TO INCREASE PARTICIPATION AND CONTRIBUTE TO SOCIETY

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**Introduction:** The primary goal of occupational therapy is to enable people to participate in everyday activities they choose. The limitations experienced by people can be caused among other things by environmental accessibility restrictions including lack of appropriate assistive devices for personal mobility.

**Objectives:** To increase participation and contribute to local society by organizing social campaign "Take a safe step".

**Approach:** Social campaign «Take a safe step!» were organized by NGO «The Park of Special aids» in form of 3 events which took place in 3 biggest markets of Riga. The venue was chosen due to big amount of people from marginal groups using it on daily basis. During campaign people were addressed, occupational therapists assessed and adjusted mobility aids owned and used by people as well as issued free of charge for long-term use assistive devices to persons who needed them in order to improve their mobility.

**Practice Implications:** Five OTs and 10 OT students took part in campaign. During events in total 133 canes, 143 elbow crutches and 18 rollators were issued to 218 persons. At least 500 persons were consulted in person. Approaching people from different groups of society in public places served as dissemination tool for making OT services more visible and valued.

**Conclusion:** Collaboration between practicing OTs and students provided an opportunity for using non-traditional intervention methods. Feedback from recipients confirmed the difference that OTs can make by addressing the persons in public places and providing services that would otherwise be not accessible for them.