

# COUNTRY REPORT

## AUSTRIA 2010

“**Pickerl für’s Baby?**” (check your baby, or controlling the baby, security check...)

### Cooperation between obstetricians and counsellors for better information about the topic of prenatal diagnosis

Starting from an exchange with a group of christian oriented hospitals we had the idea to work together. Even if we come from different viewpoints in the beginning we found common interests in the end – for the best of pregnant women and children. For one year we had many meetings, discussions and workgroups to work out a common line and a lecture for pregnant women and couples to inform them about the possibilities and limits of prenatal diagnosis.

In the beginning we had to confront ourselves with the prejudices every group had about the other one but after some time we found also things to appreciate in the others and in the end we found common ground.

Two times a month a counsellor and a gynaecologist are giving this lecture together. Up to now not so many people came (mostly between 4 and 12 per evening) but many PR-activities are planned and we hope that more people will be informed about this evenings. The problem is that the time we can reach the women is very short, because the first information should be before the 12<sup>th</sup> week of pregnancy.

### **Advanced Training for Counselling around prenatal diagnosis**

prenet (and Nanaya as main speaker of prenet) together with a training institute which has a very good name and offers high quality trainings organized this course. On 5 weekends different specialists offer new information about the methods, about ethical implications and about counselling techniques to support concerned women and couples.

### **Statement of prenet**

#### **In favour of a paradigm change in pregnancy care**

Since pregnancy and the prenatal time are crucial for the mother and the developement of the child **prenet** calls for a different approach in caring. Emphasising the importance of empowerment of woman and bonding with the baby it is necessary to not only check the biological facts and care in a medical way for the pregnant woman but additionally give a broader offer of expertise and counselling. For every pregnant woman/couple it should be normal and easy to get counselling of midwives, social workers, cranio sacral therapists, psychologist, paedagogs etc.

## **Public Discussion about reasons for the caesarean rate of 30%**

This discussion was organized by the official department of women's health in Vienna. This department makes quite a lot of surveys and studies but since they do not cooperate with midwives or other centers who have contact to the women usually no consequences are drawn out of their results.

Now their plan is again to make a survey in all hospitals to find out more about the reasons for the high caesarean rate!!!!!! We will see!

## **Cooperation freelance midwives and Nanaya.**

The organisation of the free lance midwives dared to enlarge their location. Now they have more room to offer groups and counselling but they did not get any public money so far!!

So to support them we organized an evening with a lecture from an extreme mountain climbing woman who is also a university professor and some very famous jazz musicians. The lecture had the title "to start" and focused on similarities between climbing, giving birth and education. It was very, very interesting to hear from her about pain, breathing, relaxation, concentration, the need to feel and know one's body, the necessity of being honest, make a decision, continue because there is nothing else to do.....

And when coming back from such extreme experiences how necessary contact and being touched is to be able to integrate the experience and continue here.

The concert was great because one does not often have the chance to hear these musicians in such a familiar frame.

## **Handicapped accessible location**

In Austria there will be a future law which demands that all public institutions have to be completely accessible also for handicapped people. As a family counselling centre Nanaya and many other institutions are concerned from this law that would mean a lot of rebuilding of entrance and rooms, what is impossible in this dimension. The changes to be accessible by handicapped persons must be finished until 2015. Otherwise the financial supports that family centres get from the government might be stopped. So we have to face this challenge.