



SILWAY

INFO GUIDE FOR PARENTS



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Project Partners:



Sportski savez osoba s invaliditetom grada rijeke
rijeka sports association for persons with disabilities



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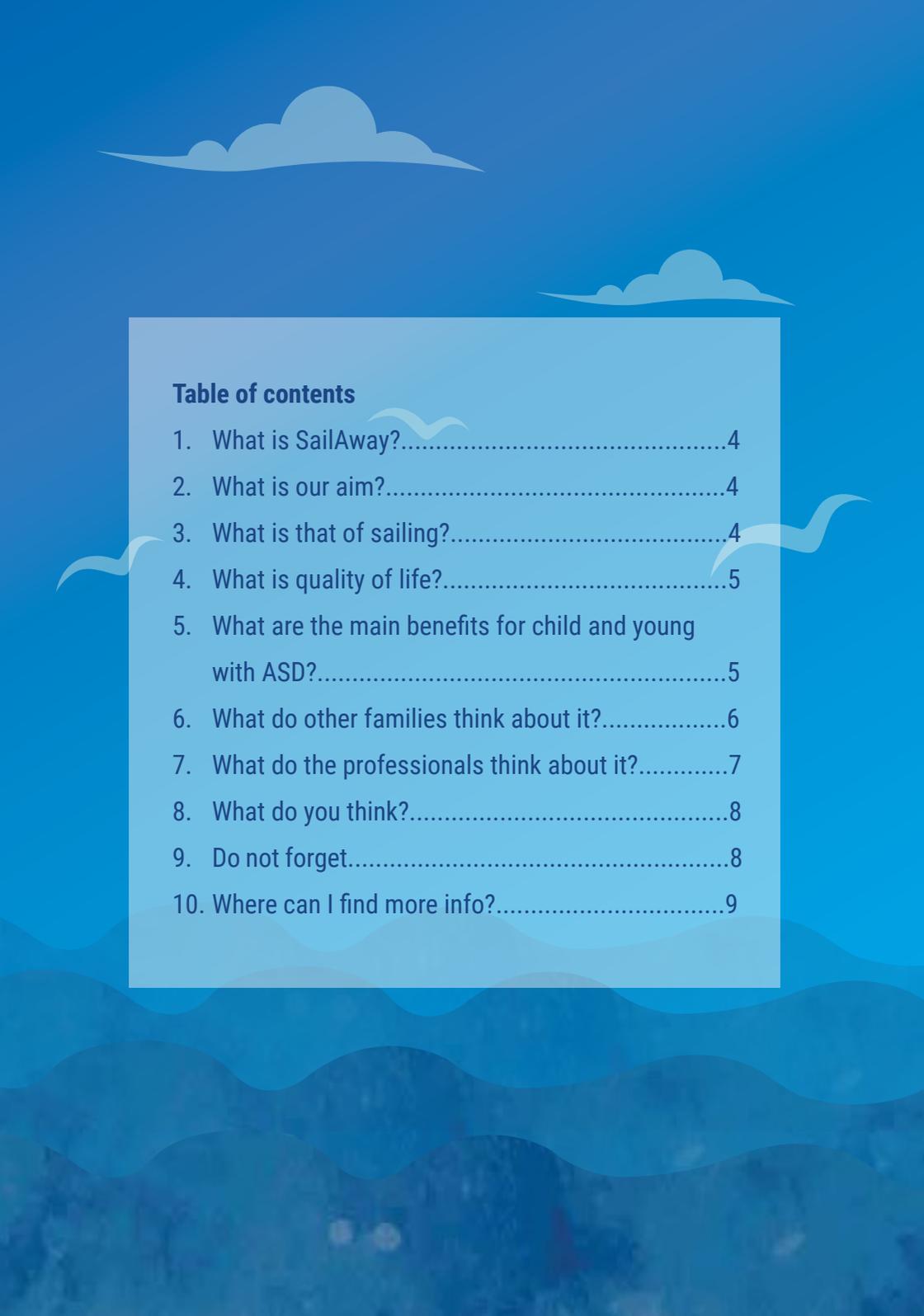
The background of the page is a vibrant blue gradient. At the top, there are two stylized, light blue clouds. Below them, there are two white birds in flight, one on the left and one on the right. At the bottom of the page, there are several layers of wavy, light blue lines representing water. The 'Table of contents' is centered in a white rectangular box.

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1. What is SailAway?



This is an Erasmus program, resulting from the partnership of 6 European organizations: : KMOP (Greece); Rijeka Sports Association for persons with disabilities (Croatia); Aproximar (Portugal); Fundació Mira'm (Spain); Montetauro Social Cooperative (Italy); Institute of Development Ltd (Cyprus); Nautical Club of Paleon Faliron (Greece). It arises from the need to support inclusion and the development of physical and emotional skills in children and young people with ASD (Autism Spectrum Disorder), encouraging their participation in team sports activities such as sailing.

2. What is our aim?



SailAway intends to promote and facilitate the practice of sailing by child and young people with ASD. This initiative also focuses on improving the skills of coaches and sailing clubs to effectively involve children and young people with ASD in their activities and programs, as well as raise awareness in parents/educators of these children about its benefits and access to these opportunities. Participating in this sport is positive not only for their physical well-being and personal or emotional development, but also for their social inclusion and participation in the community. Some of the evidenced benefits include a decrease in repetitive behaviours.

3. What is that of sailing?



Sailing is a nautical sport. Sailing employs the wind to propel a craft on the surface of the water that pushes the sails of the sailboat. Most sailing represents a form of recreation, and it is divided into racing and cruising. There are many types, sizes, shapes, and weights of sailboats. Keep on mind point of sail, wind, currents, and trimming.

Trimming is a specific sailing-term to refers to adjusting the lines that control sails, including the sheets that control angle of the sails with respect to the wind, and to adjusting the hull's resistance to heeling or progress through the water.

4. What is quality of life?



Quality of life (QoL) means attaining those things that every person desires for his or her life in order to have a fulfilling life. Quality of life is normally structured in eight interconnected dimensions: "emotional well-being, interpersonal relationships, material well-being, personal development, physical well-being, self-determination, social inclusion and rights". Also, that of people with ASD if we give them the chance and necessary support.

Each dimension is translated into different indicators. Physical well-being takes into account issues related to health or leisure; social inclusion deals with participation and integration in community or social support; personal development relates to education or performance; material well-being has to do with employment and housing; interpersonal relationships deals with relationships; self-determination has to do with goals and values or choices; and emotional well-being is related to self-consciousness or emotions.

5. What are the main benefits for child and young with ASD?



Sailing have benefits in areas such as executive functions to improve flexibility, waiting times, impulsivity and attention. In addition, Sailing is not just another sport: it is a sport that gives them the opportunity to participate in a team with shared challenges in an inclusive and active way. A team with both people with ASD and with neurotypical development. All this in an exclusive and natural environment. Any better offer?

Therefore, SailAway will boost the participation of children and youth with ASD in sailing. We believe that sailing, as a sport, can improve the quality of life of the people who practice it. Also, that of people with ASD if we give them the chance and necessary support.

6. What do other families think about it?



Now that we know what quality of life is and what it is made of, we can see how sailing can improve their quality of life through its possible effect on many of those dimensions. For this, we rely both on our own experience and on the background information received from families of people with ASD in different European countries.

Now we will show you a summary of the opinions gathered:

DIMENSION	RELEVANT ASPECTS FOR FAMILIES
Physical well-being	- The person is active and improves his/her physical capabilities (lung capacity, physical strength, balance, mobility, and muscle tone).
Emotional well-being	- Improves self-confidence (personal value, self-concept, self-esteem). - Reduces anxiety levels.
Material well-being	- Need of help with materials, travel, and support for sailing.
Personal development	- Self-improvement and successfully performance of those activities proposed.
Interpersonal relationships	- Broadening of the social circle (friends, acquaintances...).
Social inclusion	- Acceptance and participation in society.
Self-determination	- Improvement of personal autonomy and decision making.
Rights	- Equal opportunities, accessibility, and inclusion.

7. What do the professionals think about it?



In the various partner countries we talked to professionals related to the topic. In the following table we present a summary of what was said:

DIMENSION	RELEVANT ASPECTS REFERRED BY PROFESSIONALS
Benefits of sports to children with ASD	Sports can be beneficial to this population, promoting self-esteem and self-concept if some conditions are met: a) the coaches and the group are prepared. b) the children and young like this sports. It is implemented on an individual routine (which facilitates the integration of the individual in the activity).
Professional training	Increase in specific training in this subject. Enjoying a healthier lifestyle.
Interpersonal relationships	To improve the quality of social interaction, it is essential: a) individualized work with these children, understanding their abilities and difficulties; b) good communication between professional and the parents/caregivers;
Social inclusion	For a better social inclusion and well-being of this children It's very important the communication between institutions and family. It is also important to pay attention to whether the people in the child's environment are wise to lead with them in an inclusive way. Performing to different tasks and roles by participating in an inclusive, collaborative group activity.

8. What do you think?

We would like to thank for your time so far. If after reading the above you are considering the participation of your child in the sport of sailing by means of a sailing club, do not hesitate to contact one of the partner clubs of SailAway or find the nearest one and hand them this guide. They will be able to reach to us and we will guide them in this awesome journey.

Find out the contacts of the sailing clubs here: <https://www.sailawayproject.eu/library/>

9. Do not forget...

Sailing is not a very common sport, and therefore at first we will not know if practising the sport will be pleasant for your child. However, this does not mean we should not give him/her the opportunity to try it and make the decision later. More than anyone else, you as parents know your child and through language, other means of communication, behaviours and expressions, you will be able to know if the activity is being pleasurable or not for him/her. You should also keep in mind that it is very likely that he/she requires a period for adaptation. For this reason, we will try to make the environment and the activity as friendly and respectful as possible. Here you will find some recommendations:

- Hold as previous meetings as you need with those in charge of guiding and planning the sailing activity, as well as with other support people. Your child should be the focus and any support must be developed around him/her. These supports can be adapted throughout the sessions, taking into account the goals you all set.

In these meetings is quite important that you discuss:

- Your child's likes, interests, motivations and fears.
- Potential signs of anxiety and frustration in your child and any strategies to addressing and reducing them.
- The communicative modality or modalities your child uses (oral, written, gestural, AACs...).
- Sensory aspects to be taken into account (both for their own interest and in case they have excessive sensitivity).
- How to present him/her the activity taking into account the different routines, and so he/she is able to understand what will be expected of him/her and what will happen sequentially.
- How to use different aids, visual or otherwise, within the boat and how the crew will use them.

Finally, we all must bear in mind that the journey may not be easy at first. But we recommend you not to give up trying: the pleasure you will experience once you are used to sailing practice will bring you a handful of sensations hard to find in other sports. And lately, your child must have the final say.

10. Where can I find more info?



SailAway has its own [website](#). You can find more information about this theme.



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