

Opening greetings
Marion Kuester

Dear guests, colleagues, students and friends, and most honored, FILL IN<
Dear Dan Cohen, Joachim Reis, and my most cordial welcome to all of you, international, national and regional participants of this conference devoted to, "Drama Education for Children and Adolescents at risk".

You better believe me: this moment that I am here to greet you at our university is a very happy, grand and long anticipated/longed for moment. In many respects it is an exceptional pleasure to see you all here gathered under one roof. The fact that you came here from far away as well as from close locations may serve to validate/justify the themes we chose to feature here at this conference. "THEATER WITH ME?" Yes, theater is important, theater is good for you, especially for children and adolescents at risk (because of biological as well as socio-cultural differences???)

A multitude of contributions (to be) made by colleagues representing the worlds of theater, music and the arts, as well as the worlds of psychology and pedagogy and empirical research will shape this meeting and give it its ultimate/unique form. Thereby they illustrate the need for interdisciplinary encounters, integration,

exchange and research, a way to sublimate our knowledge and experience into a newer higher life force/power, which will help us to re-evaluate our life circumstances in a consumption driven world. The thought of integration raises questions about equal rights and social justice. The current financial and economic world crisis, which has continued to confront us, while working to prepare this conference, has transformed any call for change of values and incentive systems into an outcry.

The diversity of the contributions (made) to this meeting also speaks to the broad scope of the worldwide efforts that surround the use of theater supported interventions. These types of international exchanges I believe to be infinitely important for us so we can support each other when we attempt to confront burning issues around the globe, and to encourage each other in managing the many problems we face. At this critical juncture joint action seems to me more important than competition or progress that only benefits the elite.

I sincerely hope that we ----PUZZLED-----
-----?? and their benefits for the development of children, adolescents and adults.

More than anything I wish that the impact of this conference will be so far reaching that we will indeed spark/trigger/bring about

changes, and that we will experience/see progress in the pursuit of our aims.

I am very happy about the fact that there are so many students amongst us, students who are committed to campaign/fight for the use of theater pedagogy and therapeutic methods. These students are eager to learn from the presentations and workshops, so that they can apply their new knowledge in their future work, and more effectively counter the challenges of our current times. I also want you to know about the almost infinite/endless dedication of our student (conference) support team. Their commitment, their collective collaboration and their sense of responsibility has given me great confidence and inner strength, and has reconfirmed my confidence in the next generation. Without the support of my students of "das darstellende spiel" my intention would never have been transformed into action. I want to thank all our theater students again.

Let me also use this moment to acknowledge the help of our colleagues in technology and administration/management. Their collaboration and support is so much appreciated. To have received the advice and support of the BTS is also a great source of pleasure, and it is with the most sincere enthusiasm that we welcome the members of the IDEA. We are truly fortunate that they accepted our invitation to hold their annual

meeting here at our university and that we can, thereby participate in their important work. Your presence enriches our conference in many different ways. Thank you for joining us. We want to thank all our supporters and sponsors, particularly, our patron, the minister of Education and Culture, Mister Henry Tesch.

(All you) dearest conference participants
Let's make a real effort to listen to each other's contributions, learn from our cultural, social and economic differences, and transform them into opportunities to develop more skills. Closer understandings should help us respect our differences and interact more constructively when we need to confront such differences. In doing so we hope to inspire each other to upgrade the quality of our professional practice as well as our scientific inquiry.

Thank you all