

HYPER

Action for Animal Sheltering

Title: HYPER Project Results: Building Inclusion Through Animal Welfare

● Project Number: 2024-1-EL02-ESC30-SOL-000235642

🌐 hyper-action.eu

🌐 www.fifty-fifty.gr

Introduction

The idea behind the HYPER Project was both simple and profound: to bring together two vulnerable groups stray animals in need of care and young people with ADHD in need of inclusion and build a bridge of support between them.

On one side, there are the animals. Stray dogs and cats often arrive at shelters carrying fear, trauma, and mistrust. They need consistent care, gentle handling, and opportunities to rebuild trust in humans. Without this, their chances of adoption remain low.

On the other side, there are the youth. Young people with ADHD often face challenges such as difficulties with focus, social integration, and self-esteem. Yet they also possess creativity, energy, and curiosity that can flourish when given meaningful opportunities. What they need is structure, responsibility, and a sense of belonging.

Module 5

By linking these two groups, HYPER created a unique synergy. Animals received attention, patience, and socialization. Youth gained responsibility, empathy, and the pride of contributing to a cause greater than themselves. Shelters benefited from extra support and community awareness. And the broader community witnessed inclusion in action proving that when people and animals support each other, everyone grows stronger.

This was the heart of HYPER: a model of mutual care, where compassion for animals and empowerment of youth work hand in hand to build a more inclusive, humane society.

Vision of HYPER

Our vision had three interconnected goals:

- Animal Welfare: Improving conditions for shelter animals, reducing stress, and increasing adoption chances.
- Youth Inclusion: Ensuring ADHD youth could participate in meaningful, hands-on activities that respected their strengths.
- Community Building: Strengthening ties between shelters, schools, families, and society at large.

This vision carried us through every decision, ensuring that inclusion and compassion were always at the center.



Overview of the Project



HYPER included multiple activities designed to support animals and empower youth:

- Training workshops that taught dog behavior, safe handling, and inclusive methods.
- Shelter visits where youth and volunteers could directly practice animal care.
- Round tables and discussions with experts, teachers, and shelter staff to exchange knowledge.
- Public awareness campaigns highlighting the importance of adoption and responsible ownership.

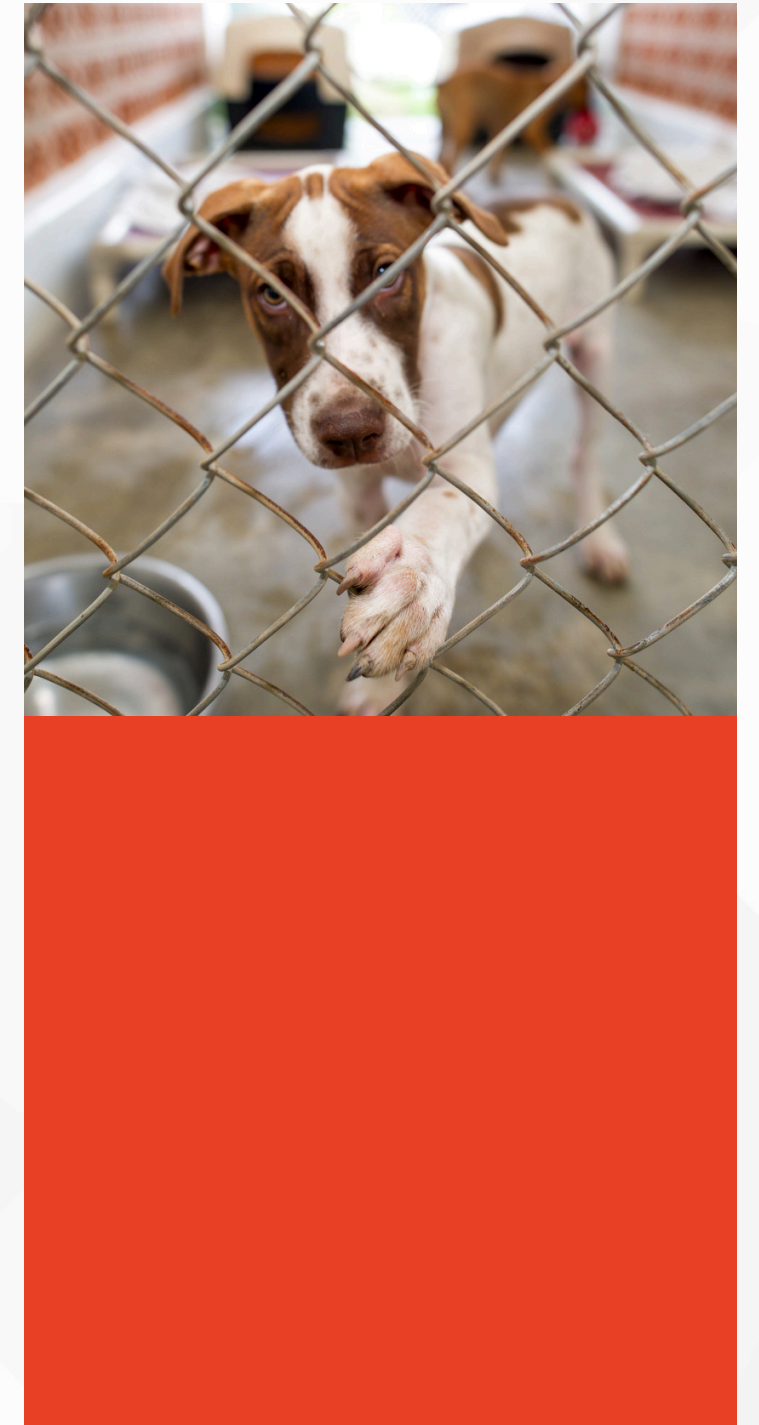
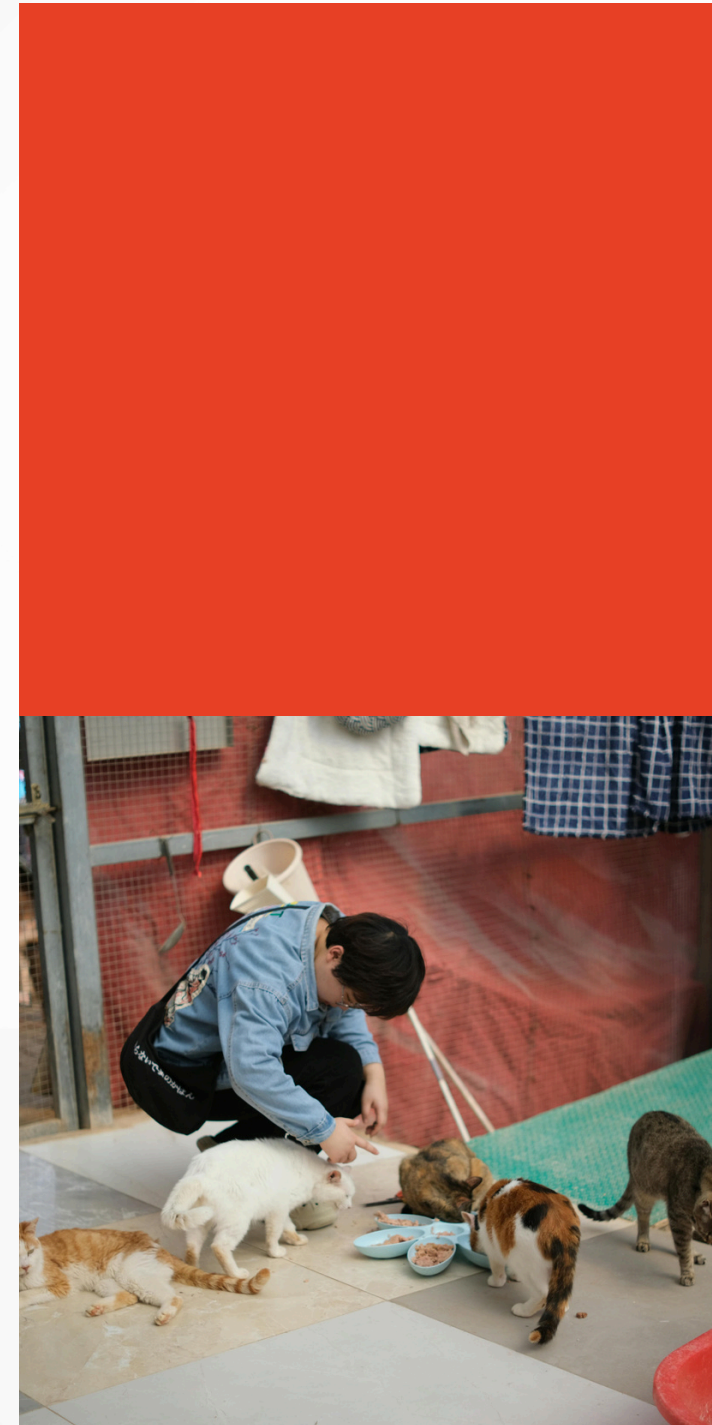
Together, these actions built momentum and visibility for both animal welfare and youth inclusion.

Achievements: Shelter Support

Shelters are often overwhelmed by the number of stray animals. HYPER supported them in several ways:

- Providing trained volunteers who could help with daily tasks.
- Raising awareness about the challenges shelters face, bringing more attention to their work.
- Improving shelter operations through practical resources and knowledge-sharing.

This support lightened the load for staff and ensured animals received better care.



Achievements: ADHD Inclusion

A unique achievement of HYPER was designing activities specifically for ADHD youth:

- Short, structured, and hands-on animal care tasks kept participants engaged.
- Youth learned empathy, patience, and responsibility by directly caring for animals.
- Inclusion was not symbolic it was practical, empowering, and impactful.

This aspect of HYPER demonstrated that inclusion is possible when the environment is adapted to participants' needs.



Achievements: Community Impact

Beyond shelters and schools, the project reached into the wider community:

- Families learned about adoption and responsible ownership.
- Community members joined campaigns and volunteer programs.
- Partnerships between organizations ensured broader visibility and engagement.

HYPER became more than a project it became a movement for awareness and collaboration.



Success Story: Volunteers

One of the most powerful outcomes was the involvement of new volunteers. Many had never visited a shelter before. Through HYPER, they experienced first-hand the impact of their efforts: walking dogs, cleaning kennels, or simply giving animals much-needed affection. For the volunteers, this was not just service it was personal growth. They gained empathy, teamwork skills, and a sense of belonging to a greater cause.





Success Story: Rescued Animals

The lives of many animals were changed by HYPER. Dogs that were fearful or aggressive became calmer thanks to consistent care and socialization. Cats that hid in corners began to trust again after gentle handling. Some of these animals went on to be adopted, starting new lives in permanent homes. These stories are living proof that inclusion works for animals as much as for people.

Success Story: School Involvement

Schools were a vital partner in HYPER. Students took part in workshops, visited shelters, and even helped design awareness campaigns. Teachers reported that students became more empathetic and responsible after participating. For many, this was the first time they connected learning in the classroom to real-life social responsibility.



Key Training Sessions

The training sessions were milestones of the project. They focused on:

- Understanding dog communication and safe handling.
- Developing inclusive approaches for ADHD youth.
- Applying knowledge in real-world contexts at shelters.

These trainings did not just transfer knowledge they created confidence in participants, showing them they had the skills to contribute meaningfully.



Community Events

The round tables and public events allowed dialogue across groups that rarely meet. Shelter staff, educators, psychologists, volunteers, and students shared ideas and challenges. These conversations led to practical solutions, such as better volunteer coordination and more inclusive activities. Events like these built trust and created lasting partnerships.

Educational Materials

One of HYPER's lasting contributions was the production of educational tools. These included guides on animal handling, strategies for inclusion, and case studies documenting successes. Designed to be practical and easy to use, these resources allow other communities to replicate our model and learn from our experiences.

Partnership Building

Partnerships made the project possible. Schools, NGOs, shelters, and local authorities came together to support a shared mission. These collaborations were not temporary they built networks that continue today. The trust and cooperation developed during HYPER will help sustain its impact long after the project's official close.



Community Awareness Campaigns

Awareness is the first step toward change. HYPER ran campaigns across social media and local platforms. Messages focused on adoption, sterilization, and compassion for strays. These campaigns reached families, schools, and the general public, planting seeds of awareness that will continue to grow.



Lessons Learned: Inclusion

We learned that inclusion requires patience, flexibility, and creativity. ADHD youth thrive when tasks are broken down, when there is structure, and when they receive encouragement. With these supports, they can excel. Inclusion is not only beneficial for them, but also enriches the entire community by promoting empathy and understanding.





Lessons Learned: Shelter Collaboration

Working with shelters taught us that integration of programs requires careful planning. Shelters are under pressure, so volunteer activities must be well-organized to avoid creating extra work. When coordination is strong, however, shelters benefit greatly from youth and volunteer involvement, turning challenges into opportunities.

Lessons Learned: Community Engagement

Engaging communities is not a one-time effort. It requires continuous communication and visibility. Schools and families must be brought in repeatedly. Public campaigns must stay active. The lesson is clear: to create cultural change around animal welfare, persistence is essential.



Recommendations: Sustainability

To keep momentum alive, we recommend:

- Securing stable funding through partnerships, grants, and creative fundraising.
- Continuing youth-focused training programs to build new generations of volunteers.
- Expanding school-based initiatives to embed empathy and responsibility early.
- Advocating for stronger public policies on sterilization and responsible pet ownership.

These steps will ensure HYPER's work continues to bear fruit.



The Role of Youth Moving Forward

Youth are central to sustainability. They are not passive participants they are leaders. Their creativity, energy, and willingness to volunteer can shape the future of animal welfare. Empowering them ensures the values of HYPER live on in future generations.

The Role of Shelters Moving Forward

Shelters must continue to evolve. They are not only places of rescue they can also be centers for education, inclusion, and community outreach. By staying open to volunteers, schools, and partnerships, shelters can transform from struggling institutions into hubs of innovation and compassion.



Broader Impact of HYPER

The significance of HYPER goes beyond Thessaloniki. It demonstrates that animal welfare and inclusion can be combined successfully. This model can be replicated in other cities and countries. HYPER is not just a project; it is a proof of concept that shows how local initiatives can inspire broader change across Europe and beyond.



Launch of the Final Report

We are proud to present the Final Report and Handbook of the HYPER Project. These documents capture our journey, our results, and our recommendations. They will be freely available on the project website, ensuring accessibility for educators, shelters, NGOs, and policymakers. This is our way of ensuring transparency, accountability, and continuity.

Key Takeaways

The essence of HYPER can be summarized in four key messages:

1. We supported shelters and improved animal care.
 2. We empowered ADHD youth through inclusion and responsibility.
 3. We inspired communities to get involved in adoption and welfare.
 4. We built a model that is sustainable, replicable, and impactful.
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Conclusion

The HYPER Project was more than activities and events it was about people and animals, learning and growing together. We saw youth gain confidence, animals find loving homes, and communities unite in compassion. These results show us what is possible when we act together. But this is not the end it is the beginning of a movement for inclusion and animal welfare. Let us carry these lessons forward, ensuring that what we started with HYPER continues to inspire action, kindness, and change.



Thank You

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