

Press Release

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To Bring Back the Laughter: ESSEC & MANNHEIM Weekend Executive MBA Class Supports Day-Care Center

- **ESSEC & MANNHEIM Weekend Executive MBA class supports day-care center in Esthal, a town located near Mannheim**
- **The 46 MBA students collect € 22,000 for their project "Spenden für ein Kinderlachen"**
- **Social Projects form an integral part of the management education at Mannheim Business School**

Priest Gerhard Burgard compared the students' support to "winning the lottery": after all, the outdoor playground of the day-care center of the Katholische Kirchengemeinde St. Konrad (St. Conrad of Parzheim Catholic church community) in Esthal had definitely seen better days. Structural defects had to be corrected and the well-used play equipment had to be replaced but the money wasn't there for a renovation. This is where the 46 participants on the ESSEC & MANNHEIM Weekend Executive MBA program came in: The plan was to renovate the facility's run-down outdoor playground and install new equipment, so that the children can once again enjoy a safe space to play and have fun. And this project turned out to be extremely successful. Not only did the students collect € 22,000 for their initiative "Spenden für ein Kinderlachen" but, what is more, they got stuck in with the construction and renovation themselves for weeks, together with the children's parents and teachers. The result is remarkable, and has now been officially opened.



The Esthal children had, together with their teachers, thanked the team for their completely newly-designed outdoor playground by singing "Draußen spielen macht Spaß" (playing outside is fun). As expected, the play equipment - comprising sand pits, play house and tower, slide, tunnel, swings and a trampoline - was also given a thorough "endurance test" on the day of opening. It wasn't just the children from Esthal who were present at the opening, several MBA students had also brought along their little ones.

In the course of the ESSEC & MANNHEIM Executive MBA program, the participants are obligated to engage themselves in a social project outside of the lecture halls. The MBA students come from various geographic and professional backgrounds and have already completed an academic degree and possess on average 10 years of professional experience. Their task is to plan and implement the so-called "class project" themselves as a group. "It is very important to us," says Prof. Dr. Dr. h.c. mult. Christian Homburg, President of the Mannheim Business School, "to not only educate our students in the various management disciplines but to also make them aware of their responsibility to the community."

"We were deliberately looking for a project that would give us the opportunity to become active and which produces a tangible result," explains project spokespersons Dr. Ruth Holzmann and Robert Kappler after successful completion. "We are proud of the fact that we have managed, together with parents, teachers and of course, many donators, to create a safe environment and fantastic new play equipment for the children of Esthal." The participants of the MBA program collected donations in a variety of ways: at companies, from fellow students, parents, through a lottery game, and also an SMS campaign.

To find out more about the project please visit: www.esthaler-kinderlachen.de.