

## Abstract

Beside the family, the school setting is a social environment which has a strong impact on the health of children and young people. Because of the general compulsory education in Europe, the school setting makes it possible to appeal to children and young people from different social classes and ages. Furthermore schools have got a long tradition in the transfer of knowledge relevant for health-related behaviour. Therefore the school is a popular place for different health-promoting interventions. These interventions are designed more or less strongly to strengthen directly personal resources relevant for the health of the pupils (health-related behaviour) and to influence the social environment to build up sustainable structures for better health at school.

The present paper deals with the question whether interventions that strongly involve pupils and teachers in the planning and implementation process of health-promoting projects or programmes and that aim at building up special structures in the school setting are more successful than those doing without participation of the target group and which don't focus on structural changes.

The analysis of 51 programmes and projects from all over Europe showed that interventions in the school setting were effective in many aspects, regardless of the type of intervention. Nevertheless, long-term effectiveness in changes of the school environment is primarily the result of those interventions which involved pupils and teachers in the process of developing and implementing the programme or those that explicitly target the development of health-promoting structures at school. Moreover, these interventions have an effect on the health-promoting personal resources of the pupils (health-promoting behaviour or attitudes).

The school setting (including the behaviour of the teachers) influences the state of health, especially the psychosocial health, health-related behaviour and well-being of pupils. Most of the analysed interventions were health-education programmes which aimed at influencing directly the health-related behaviour of pupils and disregarded health-promoting structures at school, though.

As a conclusion of the analysis of 51 interventions the following recommendations can be made: to ensure sustainable effects on health-promoting structures at schools, more projects or programmes that mainly target the development of health-promoting structures at school should be implemented and evaluated. In order to evaluate those programmes, adequate methods should be developed and the results regarding the change in the school environment should be published. Furthermore it is important that the scientific community and policy makers value health-promoting structures as an important result of health promotion in schools.