

Abstract

Early childhood interventions represent a concept of coordinated health promotion interventions and early interventions, which take parent's life circumstances and their individual resources for a child's healthy development in early life into consideration. According to the Austrian Strategy on Child and Youth Health, early childhood interventions should be established now.

The aim of this thesis is, to find out how parents in the need of early childhood interventions can be identified and which strategies, methods and instruments are suitable to gain a broad access to these families. Therefore, an opportunistic and systematic literature search, a group discussion with relevant stakeholders and interviews with practitioners were conducted.

If families face multiple factors which may contribute to parent's failing in parenting and taking care of children and if they face a lack of resources for a child's healthy development at same time, the likelihood for a need of early childhood interventions increases. A concept of coordinated early childhood interventions allows confirming whether a family is in need of early childhood interventions or not in a systematic way.

It is useful to make use of existing ways and contacts within the health system, education system and early intervention systems in order to gain access to these families who need support. Moreover, (home visiting) programs with a comprehensive approach provide access to families which are not able to making use of existing programs by themselves. As information on health and health promoting interventions should be easily accessible, different information technologies (especially the world wide web) have to be used to transfer information in a target group specific way. Home visiting and low-threshold services should be implemented in the families living environment in order to reach families in precarious or burdened life circumstances.

Generally, all families may face unexpected burdened life circumstances after birth of their child. Existing ways to get in contact with families should be used and systematically enforced to identify families in need of early childhood interventions. In a network of coordinated early childhood interventions it has to be guaranteed that families in the need of early childhood interventions are provided those measures which they need most.