

Viimsi Municipality, Estonia



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Keyword(s):

Health and Family Education

Introduction

The Estonian Health Development Institution has been working together with local governments for the last 6 years, partnerships to enhance public health have been established throughout Europe and the need for such partnerships has arisen in Estonia as well. It derived from the fact that parenting is also something you need to learn and it is not something that parents just know. There is not enough support and information for parents. Therefore, through local courses jointly with local governments and private sectors people come together to jointly educate and discuss about the parenting problems and couples relationships of the local community and try to find the best way to improve it.

This program is aiming to identify problems, find solutions and show the value of education in practical everyday life – and thus, enforcing the general appreciation of lifelong learning.

Main challenge

The initiative focuses on the need of most vulnerable families who have behavioral problems to learn a new toolkit for solving family issues between parents and children and also between parents. The main challenge was to provide funding for the programme.

Timing



The initiative is an ongoing project since 2015 in Viimsi Municipality.

Objective

Objectives of the project are:

- To illustrate how to communicate with and raise children (setting boundaries, teaching to cope with emotions and stress, develop through games, solve conflicts).
- Help parents to solve their own conflicts and cope with stress.
- To show the practical value of learning new skills and create learning habits

Target group

Families with children age 2 - 8

Geographical range

Local municipality

Stakeholders and partners

Stakeholders are the Estonian Public Health Development Institution (funding) , Viimsi local government (funding and implementing) and its affiliates (promoting), kindergartens (promoting), trainers from private sector (teaching and mentoring). Viimsi municipality co-operated with the State through a public health programme.

Strategy / materials

The initiative addresses parents with young children (2 – 8 years). That is the period when parents have the most difficult time to adopt to the new parenting situation and the impact on the children's future is most efficient.

For communication, Viimsi Municipality used its own media channels as well as the local paper, facebook ads, spreading information through kindergartens and its own institutions. The Municipality also made direct offers to families based on childcare officials information. It used videos, posters and leaflets as communication material.

Viimsi Municipality has learned that the most important way for communicating is through social media platforms. Also, a lot of teaching materials that were mostly available on paper are now also available in electronic form due to the demand

Resources

One course costs about 8,000 to 10,000 Euros. The project coordinator is from Viimsi Municipality. Funding comes about 45% from a State project and 55% is funding from Viimsi Municipality.

Compliance with Sustainable Development Goals (SDG)

The project is in line with SDG 4.7 as promoting knowledge, skills, values and attitudes to lead productive lives. Also, SDG 3 target 3.7 and that promotes education for family information, education and health.

Innovation(s)

Within the project, there is personal mentoring for families and, in addition, the programme has been modified to be teachable via internet (for example Zoom). That is an essential difference since the courses were originally meant for teaching in person.

Evaluation

The outcome of the strategy is evaluated by feedback. Stakeholders are involved in this process by evaluating their ability to solve and understand family problems.

Success parameters

- Parents are able to socially communicate with children which has positive impact on the children's success.

Impact

Parents evaluated before the courses that their children have behavioral issues in 59% of cases and after the course, this share had dropped to 19%.

Parents feel more secure in what they are doing and are more calm. Children cause less stress. Parents learn to set goals and to achieve them.

The children's performance in school improves, as well as the ability to express themselves and solve problems.

Impediments

A main challenge were Covid-19 restrictions. It was overcome by modifying the course to be taught via internet (exp. Zoom).

Replicability

The chances of the initiative to be replicated by other organisations are good. Parents all over the country and outside the country are definitely interested in learning how to be a better parents and partners and to learn how to set new goals.

Concluding remarks

Parents of Viimsi Municipality are very interested in learning new skills and applying them for everyones benefit.

Website/Social Media profile(s) of the initiative

<https://www.viimsivald.ee/vallavalitsuse-kontaktid>

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