

Best Practices in action: how to transfer, implement, and sustain effective health promotion interventions for children (0-12)

Module 2 - Grünau Moves: a Best Practice to promote health and prevent obesity in children

Session 2.5 - Grünau Moves: Examples of Local Actions

Unit 2.5.1 - "Stakeholder Engagement & Community Capacity Building"

Lecturers: Jaime Jiménez Pernet, Olga Leralta Piñán, Amparo Lupiañez Castillo, Silvia Toro Cárdenas - Andalusian School of Public Health (Spain)

Slide 1 & 2

Hello, I'm pleased to introduce this presentation on Stakeholder Engagement and Community Capacity Building. In the next few minutes, our team from the Andalusian School of Public Health will share our approach, experience, and reflections in the context of our pilot intervention of the Grünau Moves Best Practice.

Slide 3 - Community needs assessment

Our pilot intervention began in the Polígono Sur neighbourhood, supported by the strong institutional framework provided by the Office of the Commissioner for Polígono Sur, which brings together national, regional, and local administrations. Through the Community Health Board, this office is actively engaged in promoting local health initiatives in close collaboration with public services in health, education, and social care.

To design effective health promotion activities, we first assessed the community's needs. We analysed local health statistics and applied the "Living Healthy Tool" with three target groups: health professionals, representatives from community associations, and families. All groups identified unhealthy food environments as an important problem.

Recent research shows Training on food choices as a promising strategy to help individuals to better navigate these environments—in particular when such training is well-designed, repeated over time, and adapted to the needs of the population.

As a result, we propose a training program for both professionals and key community members. The goal is to equip them to promote healthy eating practices among vulnerable populations, and to make effective use of resources already available within the community.

There is solid evidence that educational programs can lead to real improvements in eating habits and helping people maintain these changes over time and we know that to develop a relevant and practical training is essential to involve families and local stakeholders.

Slide 4 - Adapted version of the "Shopping Basket" Course

At the Andalusian School of Public Health, we had developed a "Shopping Basket" course that focused on practical skills like reading labels and choosing healthier, affordable foods. To better serve vulnerable groups, we adapted the previous course with support from Carmen Gutierrez. She is our retired nurse who worked for many years in the neighbourhood and still lives there. She was contacted by the Office of the Commissioner for Polígono Sur. With her recommendations, we created visual aids, used simpler language, and included hands-on

activities. We also emphasized affordable, seasonal foods to make our advice realistic and accessible for everyone.

Our training uses a cascade model learning: we train community facilitators, who then teach others in their own networks. This approach helps break down language and cultural barriers and increases the program's reach. We know that training is most effective when it fits the real needs and context of the people involved. By including everyone and using local resources, we can build healthier food environments and help positive changes last in the community.

Slide 5 - Training program

The main goal of this course is to empower social agents and professionals working in public services and the third sector, so they can lead effective interventions to promote healthy eating. The training gives them the knowledge and tools they need to develop workshops with families in the neighbourhood to make healthy and sustainable choices when shopping for food.

Our course uses a blended learning approach, which means it combines online learning with two practical workshops. At the start, there are 3 online modules. The first module is about what a balanced diet means and how it affects health. The second module teaches how to shop for healthy and sustainable foods, with practical tips for reading labels and budgeting and the third module focuses on how to cook in a healthy way, identifying strategies for preparing nutritious meals at home. A fourth module, in person, explains how to run workshops and share this information with families.

To successfully complete the course, each participant is required to organize a workshop with families in the neighbourhood. This approach not only extends the reach of the program but also helps build local leadership and community attachment. By empowering participants to become facilitators themselves, we aim to ensure that the intervention is both sustainable and scalable, creating lasting positive change in the community.

Slide 6 - Preliminary results of the Training Program in Andalusia

The training program took place over 10 weeks, from April to June 2025. So far, 21 people have enrolled, from 11 different organizations and groups. These participants have already organized six workshops in the community, each with between 5 to 15 attendees at each one. This has helped to expand the program's reach involving families from the neighbourhood.

Early evaluations are very encouraging. Many attendees report that the workshops provided useful and easy-to-understand information about healthier shopping habits. They intent to buy more fruits and vegetables and less processed food. In addition, many participants shared that they felt comfortable and welcomed during the sessions.

These initial results show that programs led by the community are successful. By working together and sharing clear and useful ideas in a supportive environment, we can help communities and families make lasting, positive changes in their eating habits and improve their health.

Slide 7 - Lessons learnt from a community-based intervention with institutional support

And now, we conclude this presentation with some reflections on our pilot experience.

From our perspective at the Andalusian School of Public Health, strong leadership from the other core group members, that is the Office of the Commissioner for Polígono Sur, the Andalusian Health Service, and the Progress and Health Foundation—has been crucial for making this training program a success. Their support helped us to create a model that can now be used in other communities with vulnerable groups.

Other key factors for success include involving the community directly, ensuring the program is flexible to meet different needs, and building strong partnerships with other organizations. However, we also faced some challenges. Limited institutional resources—like not enough time, or staff—can make it hard to keep the program running in some areas. Overcoming these limits is essential to make sure the program continues and grows.

Finally, we believe community-based projects like Health4EUKids are vital in the fight against childhood obesity. Training people locally about healthy food is most effective when paired

with broader policy changes. And working together across health, education, and social services ensures these initiatives last and have a real, long-term impact.

Slide 8 - Thank you all for your participations!