

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 2.5.2 - Case A "Programmatic Interventions in Greece based on needs assessment and local determinants"

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Slide 1

George Karydas: Hello and welcome. We're hosted at the Medical School of University of Patras, in the library, and today we have with us Eleni Papachatzki.

Slide 2

George Karydas: We are going to ask her some questions about the implementation of WP5 Grünau Moves, it's a Work Package from the Join Action Health4EUKids and we are going to ask her some questions about how and what was the plan of the implementation of this Work Package.

Slide 3 - Implementation protocol in primary schools

Eleni Papachatzki (University of Patras): Okay. So, hello George and thank you for this discussing that we're having today. I was very happy to work with this fantastic team in the University of Patras under the coordination of the Apostolos Vantarakis. So, I'm now going to present our implementation protocol and as per the need assessment that we did and of course the local determinants. So, this is the program that we've implemented, the protocol in primary schools in Patras town and this is a program that we are running two years now. So, during the first year as per Grünau Moves we followed what they did, that good practice. So, our main things were Poster Campaign; Optimization of meal composition and Nutrition Days; the Motion Detector, and we are going to explain that; the Movement City Map; the Active to school and back approach; the Soccer cup, and of course we did some Training for the Multipliers and everybody was involved in the protocol. So, actually we are trying to do the same thing now during the second year of implementation and of course I can give you more details on that if needed.

Slide 4 - Year 1 of Implementation (2023-2024)

George Karydas: yes, of course we would like more information about your experience in implementing WP5 and also if you meet your expectations.

Eleni Papachatzki: okay. So, here in this slide you can see more details of everything that we did and actually we have these categories and we have actually photos of what we did and we have the consent of everybody that we can see in these photographs.

Slide 5 - Posters and motion detector workshop

Eleni Papachatzzi: Let me give you some more details. So, regarding the posters we were going to each school every month, so we had a poster about healthy nutrition, about daily activity, and of course what well-being and aging living. So, with the pupils we discussed about this project once per month and we had some crossword in the end of each poster and the pupils were asked to find the word that was hidden. So, in this way we tried to engage them and to make them like pay attention to what we were trying to say. What we found really easy is that we had two main heroes: Socrates and Aliki that actually they were pupils and they're going to the primary school and they tried to leave healthy and happy. So, we had these characters in all the posters so what does Socrates and Aliki do and, for example, what do are they cooking, how do their exercises, etc.? if that makes sense. And other than that, during the last month of the implementation we asked students to make their own posters so that they will be more engaged in what we're trying to do. And so, we asked them to draw what they found more impressive in this thing that we're doing. So, we had the posters and we did an exhibition and actually it was very fun, we had some nice time and actually students, the messages that they want to pass through the posters they were really nice.

So, regarding the Motion Detector workshop -as you can see in the slide- actually that was one day workshop and what we did is we divided the pupils in groups and per group, let's say 10 to 15 people, for 10 minutes we were trying to pass a message, so the first work of the first station was about Mediterranean diet, the second about oral hygiene, the third was about a cooking challenge that we tried to cook something that we can eat every day we are families, and then next station was the food portions and make my plate, and finally the last one which was the more fun was "sugar detective". So, we're trying to be detectives and find out how much sugar is in each product that we have consumed in each food. And actually, from what we get because we ask for feedback and evaluation of what do we did from both students and teachers and this is what they found really impressive, really interesting and they learned from that. And we tested their knowledge one year after that and we found that they do remember the hidden sugar, they do remember how to read the labels of each food, it makes sense.

Slide 6 – “Active to school” and “movement map”

George Karydas: so, Eleni, could you explain us what is the “Active to school and back” and also the “movement map”.

Eleni Papachatzzi: okay, thank for the question. Actually we took that idea from Grünau , they did it so we did it, we found it very interesting and what we actually did was that we draw with the students the schoolyard and actually we draw some movement games. And we did it all together so again they are more committed to that, like chess or like a snake or like squares that pupils can jump or run. So that we try and motivate them a little bit more again physical activity. And regarding “movement city map” that was very interesting because in an area and like around schools we found all the places, public places that actually they were free and the students could go there and exercise, play with their friends or with their parents and we were not aware and they were not aware, so we were not aware that there are some like stadiums around that they have like hours free for the public to join what actually they're doing there. They were free and personal and stuff there to help them. So, we found which are the most safe pathways that they can commute or they can walk from their house to school so that we can engage them and actually their parents to let them walk to their school and we like right down that this is a safe road and you are advised to follow this one. And we have given the maps and also, we have given the maps in a QR code so they can scan it with their mobiles or their parents' mobiles, and they can find whatever they are looking for around the area. So, this was very helpful as well from the feedback that we got.

Slide 7 - Soccer cup, other related actions

George Karydas: Eleni, could you explain us about the “Soccer cup”?

Eleni Papachatzzi: so, regarding the “Soccer cup”, that actually was your idea and thank you very much for that, the children were so obsessed about and enthusiastic. it went really well and actually happened for the second year, during this year that we’re running and so, the children were divided in teams and they were pledged together both like all ages, both boys and girls had so much fun, we spent a day there and actually I believe it was one of the best actions during the implementation protocol. Actually, this is happening now even without us, without our team because it’s something that now they take for granted; for example, they are preparing during the whole year, and at the end of the year, like during May, they are having their soccer annual cup. So, what we found from that is that they’re more children involved to like activity, like monthly activities and Sports Club and of course there were some offers as well from local sports club and that was something which was a really good regarding physical activity levels.

Slide 8 - Nutrition days + movement play

George Karydas: also have a dedicated day about the nutrition day, it was very impressive and children love it and it was as a game presented to the children. About the movement game, could you explain us some more details?

Eleni Papachatzzi: okay. So, Greece is a sunny country so the weather here is almost hot during winter and summer, however like the students they did ask us what they are going to do how are they going to do like physical activity when it’s raining, it’s not raining much but this was their question. So, actually what we did is we tried to find ways to do more physical activity during the raining days and I thought that we had this idea from Minorca and the team there that we played with some balloons with music, aloud music so actually during the breaks in school. So, we have given balloons to the students and we put some music up and they were trying not to drop the balloon. Actually, it was really fun, they loved it, even the teachers loved it, we love it, we found it a great idea. Thank you so much that they gave us this idea. So, this is what we did: we’re just blowing balloons and giving to them.

Slide 9 - General recommendations - Our experience

George Karydas: so, after all this impressive implementation actions did you meet your expectations? What is your impression?

Eleni Papachatzzi: okay. Actually, this is really a difficult question to answer, but I’m happy to give you our impression. Yes, our impression is good and we’re not sure getting expectations. I think we’re going to measure that, but regarding the questionnaires that we have given to pupils we can see that there are like fewer people students that they are living with overweight. There are more students that they are involved to like weekly physical activity and regarding diet choses, they tend to be more healthy. Other than that, what we found -that is was very important for our team and we are very happy about that- is that we made with the team as per need assessment a protocol that they decided. So, we suggested we were involved but the most important thing is we wanted children to get involved with what we were doing because this is a way that they would feel what we’re doing it’s their own program, their own protocol and of course we have more chances for this to be implemented without us in the future. So, in this yet we succeed we did an easy protocol, an easy to follow protocol with minimal expenses because all the equipment that they need they have it at school, and teachers were involved, parents were involved and we were happy about that, we could have done better regarding parental adherence to the protocol, but here we are because we are trying to keep like this protocol running. So, during the second year the adherence from the parental point of view to the protocol was better compared to the first one. We had more parents involved, this is what I mean. Another thing that I would like to say apart from the protocol which was easy to follow is that we tried to train the trainers, to train the local actors, we tried to train teachers and parents so they can spread the methods of healthy living without us in the background.

Slide 10 - Annual conference

Eleni Papachatzzi: So, apart from the annual conference, as you can see in the slide, we organized a workshop that was open and free in the community and as per University of Patras workshops. So, we organized the course and in the University of Patras that we had if I remember correctly more than 100 participants from the local community and from public health and they were involved and there we informed them about the project, about we did. So, we give them all the information needed in order to spread the message of healthy living.

Slide 11 - Thank you all for your participation!

George Karydas: so, Eleni, thank you very much for this important information about the implementation of WP5 in Greece JA Health4EUKids were very well, we believe so and thank you very much for this conversation we had.

Eleni Papachatzzi: okay thank you for the discussion and I would like to thank all the team that they were involved, all the volunteers as well, all the teachers and of course we would like to thank all the pupils, parents, families that they were involved, that they loved the project and worked with us in a try to make our children have healthier and happier lives. Thank you very much.