

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

Module 3 - Smart Family: a Best Practice to support and empower families in promoting well-being and healthy lifestyle

Session 3.4 - Post-implementation phase of Smart family

Unit 3.4.2 - "Lessons learnt and plans for the future in Kaunas city"

Lecturer: Tautvydas Lukavičius (Kaunas City Public Health Bureau)

Slide 1

Hello I am Tautvydas Lukavičius from Kaunas City Public Health Bureau. I would like today present model 3 Smart Family: a best practice to support and empower families in promoting well-being and healthy lifestyle.

Slide 2

So, we have Unit 3.4.2 "Post implementation phase of Smart Family. Lessons learned and plans for the future in Kaunas City"

Slide 3 - Intensive working with the families

At the start I would like to start with intensive working with the families that we have in this project in Kaunas. The Smart Family model was implemented with modifications to the intensity of activities and work with families, due to the type of possibilities of the country's health care policy compared to the practice in Finland. Our implementation started in 2024 January, ended in 2024 December, so we have whole year working with the families except summer three months.

Slide 4 - Lithuania Experience

In our Lithuania example the team working with the families was: nutritionist, case management specialist, chef, physical activity specialist and psychologist. We have this team that have 185 direct and remote hours working with our families. The main and the key tool was Finnish team materials from the Smart Family model in Finland, and of course before we start the project coordinators, that's me and my colleague, we have training session with mentioned team and specialists on how to use Finland Smart Family Model materials and how to work with the families using this key tool.

Slide 5 - Results after the implementation and working with the families

Results after implementation and working with the families. Overview of changes by key areas. Changes in healthy eating habits? Of course, there is question what has changed? We had results that people started cooking at home more often. Before the program, cooking was mostly done in three to five times per week. Now after program, more people cook daily at home. Also, fruit and vegetables consumption increased. Previously, they made-up about 20% of the diet; now they have increased to 35 to 50%. Also, fast food consumption has decreased

in these families. Before the program, many children ate fast food several times a month; after the program they reported eating it only once a month or not at all. We can make a main conclusion: the program successfully encouraged families to choose healthier food and cook more at home. But there are may still be challenges in maintaining these changes in long-term.

Slide 6 - Lessons Learned from Practical Events

Lessons learned from practical events. The weight gain in children is a normal sign of growing bodies. However, most did not increase their waste circumference, and nearly half even reduced it. This suggests that after changes in diet, sleep routines, physical activity, and increased parental support, about half of the children successfully applied the knowledge gained during the program and ensured healthy growth. Still, about half of the participants gained additional weight, indicating that some families need more time for change. While many adults successfully applied knowledge about nutrition, physical activity, and sleep, they did not have time to adjust their psychological attitudes and parenting skills, which are essential for imitating internal changes in children.

Slide 7 - Participants' suggestions for continuity and quality improvement

Participants' suggestions for continuity and quality improvement in the program, especially in Smart Family. So, first one is extending the program duration. Some participant stated that changes do not solidify in a short time, so they would like a longer program or a support system after it ends. Second, one more practical activities. Participants enjoyed hands-on sessions the most, so they suggest: more healthy cooking workshops, more coaching group and one-on-one support, and family-oriented physical activities and practical events.

Slide 8 - Participants' suggestions for continuity and quality improvement

Also, with suggestions, third one is greater parental involvement. Some parents felt that they should have participated more. One more suggestion was: more individual consultations (so, it's coaching and psychotherapy) for parents or practical advice on changing family habits. And the forth one: how to maintain habits after the program? The suggestions was: some respondents reverted to old habits after the program, due to a lack of support, suggested creating a continuous motivation system. So, it can be an online community with tips and challenges, and periodic reminders or meetings with specialists.

Slide 9 - Possible Improvement Directions

Possible improvement directions. Longer program duration, as I mentioned before, or greater psychological support mechanisms. More practical sessions, of course, people engage best when they can apply concepts in real life. A more family-orientated activities to involve both parents and children. And creating a system to sustain motivation after the program ends. For example, online support meetings or individual and group coaching.

Slide 10 - Conclusion

Some conclusions that we made: the program was beneficial and encouraged healthier habits, especially in nutrition, of course, physical activity and family time without screens. Participants engaged most in practical activities, it's was cooking and sports. Challenges remain in reducing screen time and maintaining habits long-term. Greater psychological support and additional support mechanisms after the program will be valuable. All participants agreed that the would 100% recommend this program to others families. These conclusions can help further improve the program to make it even more effective and ensure a lasting impact.

Slide 11 - Future plans in Kaunas city

And future plans in Kaunas City. Sustainability strategies, identify long term strategies for financial and operational sustainability. So, we have meetings with politicians for asking some funding and the possibilities to continuous Smart Family model in Kaunas City, maybe in Lithuania if it's possible. Regulatory and compliance considerations, address regulatory

requirements or approvals needed, of course. And next steps and action plan, define actions, responsibilities and timelines for the future progress. If funding continues so we can make new action plan for next year and for the Smart family model to continue in our city.

Slide 12 - Thank you all for your participations!

So, thank you all for your participation.