

The Salut Programme: A Child Health Intervention in Sweden



Umeå University



COUNTY COUNCIL
OF VÄSTERBOTTEN

Why was the Salut Programme initiated?

Mental health problems and overweight/obesity have emerged as alarming health problems in many countries, also in Sweden. Therefore, in 2005 the Salut Programme was launched in Västerbotten combining epidemiological surveillance and health promotion. The Salut Programme is an example of a systematic, multisectoral, family-centred approach to health promotion and prevention among children 0-18 years, starting already during pregnancy. The programme constitutes a key element in the health authority's vision to have the healthiest population in the world by 2020.

From the unborn child to the teenager

The Programme is organised into seven age-specific modules; Module I for the unborn child (i.e. the pregnancy), Module II for 0-1½ year olds, etc. up to Module VII for 16-18 year olds. The programme has been developed and implemented in close collaboration with health authorities within antenatal care, child health care, dental services, day-care centres and schools.

The Salut Programme's main purpose is to improve the health of all children in Västerbotten, but also to increase knowledge on children's health, lifestyle and living conditions. The Programme is stepwise becoming a quite unique infrastructure to research on children and their lives.

A healthy start in life

Rather than introducing new interventions, the Programme strengthens ongoing activities to become more systematic. Priority is given to:

- I) secure and favourable conditions during childhood and adolescence,
- II) increased physical activity, and
- III) healthy eating habits.

From pilot areas to county wide implementation

Module I-II-specific interventions were developed within four geographical pilot areas within Västerbotten county, representing different living conditions, before countywide dissemination during 2008-2010. The health promotion programmes in schools (Module III-VII) are disseminated one municipality after another. Fully implemented the Salut Programme will target all expectant parents and children, corresponding to ≈3000 births annually and 57000 children. Lifestyle, health and living conditions are prospectively monitored using questionnaires and routine health check-ups.



Data collection within the Salut Programme

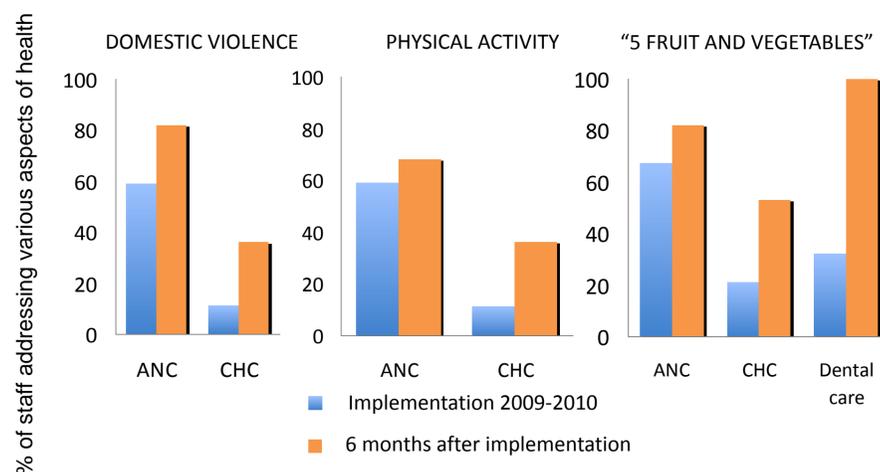


The Salut Programme as an infrastructure for research

The Salut Programme infrastructure has so far been used as the basis for the following research: 1) Obesity, self-rated health and lifestyle in expectant parents and 13-15 year olds, 2) Parents' experiences of health promotion and lifestyle change during pregnancy and early parenthood, 3) Professionals' experience of factors influencing programme implementation and sustainability, and 4) Change and learning strategies.

Result from one of the publications as an example of a finding

A study conducted in the Salut Programme pilot areas 6 months after the initial phase of the implementation, showed that staff within the antenatal care (ANC), the child health care (CHC) and dental care had increased their health promoting efforts, and that the collaboration between the units had improved significantly. See figure and article number 4 below.



Salut Programme publications

Doctoral thesis

- ❖ Kristina Edvardsson. Health promotion in pregnancy and early parenthood: the challenge of innovation, implementation and change within the Salut Programme. Epidemiology and Global Health, Department of Public Health and Clinical Medicine, Umeå University, Sweden 2013.
- ❖ Elisabet Höög. Navigating continuous change - facilitation of development work in health care and social services (in Swedish). Epidemiology and Global Health, Department of Public Health and Clinical Medicine, Umeå University, Sweden 2014.

Peer-reviewed journal articles

- ❖ Sustainable practice change: Professionals' experiences with a multisectoral child health promotion programme in Sweden. BMC Health Services Research 2011.
- ❖ Maternal and paternal self-rated health and BMI in relation to lifestyle in early pregnancy: The Salut Programme in Sweden. Scand J Public Health 2011.
- ❖ Giving offspring a healthy start: Parents' experiences of health promotion and lifestyle change during pregnancy and early parenthood. BMC Public Health 2011.
- ❖ Improving child health promotion practices in multiple sectors: Outcomes of the Swedish Salut Programme. BMC Public Health 2012
- ❖ Overweight and lifestyle among 13-15 year olds: A cross-sectional study in northern Sweden. Scand J Public Health 2012.
- ❖ A population-based study of overweight and obesity in expectant parents: Socio-demographic patterns and within-couple associations. BMC Public Health 2013.
- ❖ Change and learning strategies in large scale change programs: Describing the variation of strategies used in a health promotion program. J of Org Change Management 2013.
- ❖ Challenges in managing a multi-sectoral health promotion program. Leadership in Health Services 2013.

Authors involved in one or more of the publications: Anneli Ivarsson, Eva Eurenus, Rickard Garvare, Ingrid Mogren, Monica E Nyström, Kristina Edvardsson, Marie Lindkvist, Rhonda Small, Elisabet Höög, Lars Weinehall, Magdalena Sundqvist and Masoud Vaezghasemi.