

Finnish anti-bullying programme for schools going international

Finland – University of Turku

SUMMARY OF PROJECT

The KiVa programme of the University of Turku developed a comprehensive, research-based programme to reduce the prevalence and negative consequences of bullying in secondary schools. The programme has been in nationwide use in Finland since 2009, and it is now available in six other countries as well.

QUOTE

“Most often, the classroom teachers deliver the lessons about once per month. The lessons include discussions, short films, learning by doing exercises, etc. about the topics of respect, peer support and peer pressure, embracing difference, the consequences of bullying, and how students can together put an end to bullying.”

- Ms. Christina Salmivalli, Head of Project

FACTS & FIGURES

- In Finland, 90% of schools providing basic education (grades 1–9) are implementing the KiVa anti-bullying programme.
- Since 2009, when the KiVa programme first became available for Finnish schools, thousands of teachers have been trained on its implementation, and the proportion of students bullying others has been halved in schools implementing the programme.
- The KiVa programme is currently implemented in six countries via licensed partners, and several initiatives in new regions are under negotiation. About 40 international trainers (to train school personnel outside of Finland) have already been trained, and the next international training will be organized in January 2016.

PROBLEMS TARGETED

Bullying by peers in schools is a worldwide problem that concerns millions of children and youth, and that has severe negative short- and long-term consequences for the victims, perpetrators, as well as those merely witnessing bullying. Effective ways to prevent and tackle the problem are being sought everywhere in the world.

SOLUTION & METHODOLOGY

The KiVa anti-bullying programme provides concrete, comprehensive, research-based tools for schools to prevent bullying, to tackle the cases of bullying that come to the attention of adults, and to monitor the situation via annual school-based feedback. The programme includes materials for teachers and principals as well as for students and parents. Usually, classroom teachers deliver lessons about once per month, including discussions, short films, and learning-by-doing exercises about respect, peer support/peer pressure, embracing diversity, the consequences of bullying, and how students can together put an end to such behaviours. A video game has also been developed in which students move through a virtual school (hallways, lunchrooms, recess areas, etc.) and encounter challenging situations in which they need to find ways to behave in supportive ways. Often these are situations where someone is excluded from the group or is bullied in other ways. Students receive feedback based on their responses, and they are asked to report on their own behaviours with their actual school peers – for instance, how they have succeeded in following the KiVa rules.

OUTLOOK & TRANSFERABILITY

The programme can be readily adopted outside of Finland. The cost for implementation varies by country as it is determined by the licensed partners. The cost models in various countries depend on whether the implementation of the programme is supported by public organizations, NGOs, or fully covered by the end-users (schools). Currently, there are plans to start projects in Brazil and Chile, to test the effects of the KiVa programme in new cultural contexts, and to create a Latin American adaptation of the programme.

Photo: Yes

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