

Teacher training in the field of health promotion

A proposal for international collaboration and preparation of a symposium for the 20th IUHPE World Conference on Health Promotion

Health promotion in schools

The Jakarta Declaration and the Bangkok Charter identified various global priorities for health promotion, including the need to build a firm health promotion infrastructure and to develop particular settings offering practical opportunities for implementing comprehensive strategies. Schools were identified as one of the appropriate settings for health promotion and this has been supported by international recommendations from WHO and UNESCO. IUHPE is strongly involved in the dissemination of and advocacy for the "health promoting school" concept, including the recent publication with Guidelines for Health Promoting Schools to support this effort.

Teacher training: a key factor for the development of health promotion

Considerable international research has been carried out on this subject and the literature emphasizes the importance of health promotion to improve health resources as well as to aid children's academic progress. As schools are not primarily concerned with the improvement of children's health, health promotion must be incorporated taking into consideration the way in which teachers perceive their mission, as well as the constraints of the school setting. Many factors govern the way in which health promotion programs are developed and implemented: a) the political will to develop health promotion projects allowing sustainable commitment on the part of institutions and communities, b) a favorable environment such as the support and facilitation of the school head, existing teaching practices and the importance given to the well being of the pupils, c) teachers' beliefs and perception of their role in health promotion, their perception of effectiveness and acceptability of health promotion programs, belief in their own effectiveness, teacher burnout and prior health promotion training, d) and factors linked to the implementation of the program itself such as the technical support given to the teachers (training and assistance). Teacher training is often considered to be a central factor linked to the quality of project implementation. Studies show that teachers who have received health promotion training tend to be involved more frequently in health promotion projects and have a more comprehensive approach to health education. They also show that self-perceived competence and motivation to develop health promotion is linked to training.

The need for international cooperation

The way in which health promotion is organised and implemented in each country differs depending on the history, objectives and structures of that country school system. This is also the case for initial and in-service teacher training. Available studies show that few teachers currently receive health promotion training. Developing research, affirming and reinforcing the work done in teacher training in health promotion, supporting the institutes/colleges/universities in the provision of initial and in-service teacher training and stimulating international partnership work are all necessary in order to achieve a better understanding of training practices. Developing exchanges for students (not only from and to western countries but also from and to developing countries) during their initial training is also a relevant goal.

Initial tasks proposed

In the first instance, we would like to create a working group to organize a **symposium on teacher training for the 20th IUHPE World Conference July 11-15, 2010 in Geneva, Switzerland**: www.iuhpeconference.net This would entail the development of contacts with the reference teams in Australia, Canada, USA, UK and China in order to design a working program.

Secondly, we would be interested in developing a **Supplement of Global Health Promotion**, formerly *Promotion & Education*, official publication of the IUHPE, to outline a framework for international cooperation.

INVITATION TO THE FIRST GATHERING

We invite you to attend a workshop in preparation for the 2010 IUHPE conference **FRIDAY SEPT. 12 AT 11H30** on the occasion of the

8th IUHPE European Conference on Health Promotion

Turin, Italy, Sept. 10-13, 2008:

<http://www.hp08torino.org/>

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