

Stay-at-Home Kids on the Rise in Sweden

There are stay-at-home parents, but there are also stay-at-home kids. Children who do not go to school, so called 'stay-at-homers' (hemmasittare), are seen as a growing problem in Swedish schools. Until now, it has been a relatively unexplored field.

Magelungen AB was formed in 1993 as an employee-owned limited liability company to operate treatment work for children, adolescents, young adults and their families. Their program for stay-at-home kids (HSP) is a manual-based treatment program to help dropout students back to school. The program is built upon evidence-based practices.

For each student participating in the HSP, there is a treatment team consisting of two so-called therapists. The program consists of three phases; mapping, processing and maintenance (maintaining new habits, behaviours, etc.).

The program is based on cognitive behavioural therapeutic approaches (CBT) in which pupils, parents and schools are invited to work together for the best results. The intensity of effort varies based on the needs of the youth. Much of the work is done when the student is in everyday situations, at home and at school.

Good Results

The results thus far reported from the program are good, and students in the program may sometimes leap from no school attendance to a 75-80% or higher school attendance. Other effects of the work is increased social engagement and participation among the youth, for example by taking up leisure activities, as well as better mental health and less depression and anxiety among both students and parents.