

An Effort To Help Children In Foster Care Homes

Research has shown that foster care children in general show poor study results, low education levels, and a high risk of social exclusion in adulthood. Skolfam is a preventive model designed to enhance school performance of children in foster care. The model is based on collaboration between the child's school and the social services of the municipalities. An improved schooling is a powerful measure, a so-called 'protection factor', that will help foster care children and youth withstand other challenges, the so-called 'risk factors'.

The social worker of the child and the family home along with a psychologist and a special educator make an individual mapping of a student's ability to perform well at school. It charts the student's strengths and possible gaps in Swedish and maths, assesses the relationship between student and teachers, assesses the student's intellectual ability, cognitive, social and practical skills, as well as the student's emotional status. This mapping is the basis for a plan created in unison by the school staff, the family home, and the Skolfam team. The plan leads towards the goal of the student filling in the knowledge gaps and learning as much as the conditions allow.

Good for the Children – Good for the Economy

The researchers Lars Bernfort and Martina Lundqvist from Linköping University summarize the results from their health economic study of SkolFam in Norrköping with the following points:

- The children's abilities and performance in school are improved.
- The children who participated in SkolFam had higher grades than the control group.
- The children who participated in SkolFam needed fewer resources from the Social Services during and after the intervention.
- The children's prospects of continued education and work improved when the grades got better.
- The effort both enhances quality of life and is cost-saving. In the short as well as in the long term.

Page four of the evaluation contains an abstract in English:

http://www.skolfam.se/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/SkolFam_utv%C3%A4rd-140207.pdf