

Preliminary programme

Healthy Life for Children 2 October, Reykjavik

Childhood is a period in life with specific health- and developmental needs and rights. The children are our future and it rests a heavy responsibility on society to create good conditions for a healthy childhood and adolescence that can be transformed into a healthy adult life.

The number of children with overweight or obesity has risen and is now reaching 20 percent among 5-year old children in many European countries, including the Nordics. With obesity comes related diseases, such as type 2 diabetes. Obesity during childhood can lead to life-long suffering and far-reaching economic consequences. Also, childhood obesity prevalence is unevenly distributed among socioeconomic classes and interventions to prevent and counteract obesity amongst children is therefore a vital component for creating a more equal health in the Nordics.

The seminar is organised by the Nordic Welfare Centre and the Nordic Network on promoting Healthy Weight in Children – PromoKids. The seminar is financed by the Nordic Council of Ministers.

The purpose of the event is to:

- Strengthen Nordic cooperation and create a more solid ground for joint action on the EU and WHO level in issues concerning healthy life for children and how to counteract childhood obesity
- Share scientific evidence and exchange experience about good practice and good policies regarding healthy life for children and how to counteract childhood obesity
- Create more awareness among policy makers and politicians within the Nordic region and the Nordic cooperation about the importance of Nordic cooperation in the field of healthy life for children.

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- **Update from WHO**
Dr Juana Willumsen, Technical officer, WHO, Department for Prevention of Noncommunicable Diseases, WHO, Geneva

Dr Juana Willumsen gives an update on the global scene.

- **Healthy body image through health promoting in schools and communities**
Dr Dóra Guðrún Guðmundsdóttir, Head of division, Determinants of health and wellbeing, Directorate of Health, Iceland

Dr Dora Gudrun Gudmundsdottir describes how the work with children's weight has developed in the Directorate of Health in Iceland. The work with the programme Healthy body image aims to diminish shaming and blaming and support a more empowering and humanistic approach.

Everyone, no matter what their size is, should feel included and have possibilities to benefit from physical activity, good nutrition and positive social interactions.

- **JANPA - Joint Action on Nutrition and Physical Activity**
Dr Viktória Anna Kovács, National Institute of Pharmacy and Nutrition, Hungary

Dr Viktória Anna Kovács presents JANPA's technical Work Package 6 that targets "Healthier environments in kindergartens and schools". The Work Package 6 toolbox was created during the JANPA project and is an interactive collection that shows good practice programmes and policies which focus on prevention of childhood obesity. The toolbox also presents the best programmes that were identified in the Work Package 7 "Early interventions - programmes targeting pregnant mothers and children under the age of 36 months".

JANPA was carried out by a network of institutions from 25 EU countries plus Norway. JANPA emphasised on assessing and building policy capacity and underlines the important role that programme planners and decision makers can play in addressing childhood obesity.

- **How do we treat overweight children?**
Anders Forslund, Associate professor, Paediatrician, Head of pediatric obesity unit, Uppsala University Children's hospital

Dr Anders Forslund gives an overview, from a medical perspective, of the risk factors that are contributing to overweight and how we can aid children in tackling them. Treatment options for children with overweight or severe overweight are limited. So far, available options have proven to be rather ineffective in achieving long-term beneficial effects, including reducing weight. Therefore, new options need to be considered. These treatment options need to be integrated into national strategies aiming to reduce the overweight prevalence permanently.

- **Economic perspective on healthy life for children**
Prof. Kevin P. Balanda, PhD FFPH, Director of Research, Institute of Public Health in Ireland and adjunct Professor, School of Public Health, University College Cork.

Professor Kevin Balanda will give an overview of JANPA Work Package 4 which aimed to estimate, in several EU countries, the lifetime human impact and financial costs of childhood obesity and the savings that might be expected if mean childhood BMI was reduced.

Micro-simulation was used to estimate the excess direct healthcare costs and societal costs (income penalty and productivity losses due to absenteeism and premature death) experienced by obese/overweight children during their lifetimes. Details of the research and data requirements, data processing and modelling are given. Challenges encountered and findings for the Republic of Ireland are presented.

Parallel sessions (afternoon 2 October)

- **Ending Childhood Obesity - (ECHO) zones**

An approach engaging the whole society is necessary to support a healthy lifestyle and end childhood obesity. Ending Childhood Obesity (ECHO) zones are geographical areas, where such long-term commitment between key players in society including government, schools and health care have been achieved. In these areas, changes in society are implemented to make it easier for children with their families to make healthy choices.

The workshop addresses questions about key success factors for a whole of society approach and a long-term commitment. Health data, collected to follow up and evaluate the effectiveness of the ECHO zone, will be presented. The data includes answers to health questionnaires, anthropometry and levels of hormones and genes involved in body composition, measured in blood samples, from children at different ages.

- **Health promotion program in Iceland**

The workshop introduces the Health Promoting Programs in communities and pre-, compulsory and upper-secondary schools, including the on-line working area (heilsueflandi.is) that supports participating communities and schools to organise and evaluate their work.

Implementation of the SDG's via Health Promoting Community will be addressed including JA CHRODIS+ dialogue about the subject and implementation of selected elements of JOGG.

Participants will be asked to share practical experience about similar, comprehensive health promotion work in community and school settings in their countries. What are the success factors? What are the main barriers and what is needed to overcome them?

- **Interactive tool from JANPA Work Package 6**

An important product of Work Package 6 is a web-based toolbox including a good practice database. The toolbox helps programme planners and decision makers to design and implement effective interventions. During the workshop the web-based toolbox will be presented.