

FAMILIENwerkSTADT (from childcare facilities to family centres)

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Organisation: Kreis (District) Offenbach
Country: Germany
Level of government: Local government
Sector: Education, Social protection
Type: Partnerships, Public Service
Launched in: 2010
Overall development time: 6 years
Link to the innovation's website

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Description

FAMILIENwerkSTADT aims to improve the quality of education and care for children, advancement of educational equality for children with a migrant background and from socially disadvantaged families, stronger participation of families in the daily routine of the child care facilities, the building-up of parental competencies, and through the development of an integrated approach in working with families and the development of a neighbourhood network to support families.

Why the innovation was developed

The municipalities were chosen according to the percentage of migrants and socially disadvantaged families living there. The childcare facilities taking part in the project fulfil the following requirements: (1) 50% of the children they look after come from families with a migrant background, and some even up to 92% and; (2) those families and children were excluded from society and daily lives. The innovation was developed to foster the integration of families with a migrant background into the community/municipality and to enable self-help. The childcare institutions were chosen, as the accessibility of families is at its highest at childcare facilities as a daily contact is guaranteed.

Objectives

Develop staff capacity, Improve access, Improve effectiveness, Improve service quality, Improve social equity, Improve user satisfaction

It is the objective of the FAMILIENwerkSTADT as a model project to realise the conceptional and structural development of four child care facilities in the Kreis (District) Offenbach into family centres within two and a half years.

Main beneficiaries

Ethnic or racial minorities, Families, General population, Government staff, Low-income groups, Young people

- Institutions (child care facilities).
 - 300 families and children.
 - Communities.
 - 4 municipalities.
 - 50 staff members.
 - 25 different nationalities are touched by the innovation.
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Existing similar practices

Early Excellence Centres

In the private sector, civil society or elsewhere

Pen Green Centre in the town of Corby, Northamptonshire County Council

Services for families in child care institutions. Target group: Socially disadvantaged and educationally deprived families.

<http://childrenscentre.pengreen.org/contact/>

Results

Effectiveness

Participation of parents has changed in at least 3 child care institutions from 20-30% to 60-80%.

Service quality

Accessibility:

Establishing a network of multipliers existing of parents from the child care institutions that constituted a language and cultural bridge between parents and child care institutions (staff).

Responsiveness:

- Parents stayed at childcare institutions.
- Parents used the offerings of child care institutions more and more.
- Parents were more open and looked for help with other problems not directly related to child care facilities.
- Increased independence of parents especially mothers (training, professional development).

Reliability:

Reliability of parents increased.

User satisfaction

- Satisfaction is very high for parents and staff.
 - People realised that it is possible to include parents into institutions.
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Evaluation

The evaluation consisted of talks with parents and staff in the beginning. The result was that parents had no access to the institutions and that the staff likewise had no access to the parents. At the end again, the evaluation consisted of talks with parents, multipliers and staff. The result was that the barriers identified in the beginning had been greatly reduced.

Development

Design

Policy planning staff of Integrationsbüro Kreis Offenbach (Office for Integration, District Offenbach).

Design time: 1 year

Testing

- Talks with institutions (how do families take part in the offerings of the institutions).
- Pilot phase with three institutions 2005 - 2008.

Testing time: 2,5 years

Implementation

Tools used:

- Scientific monitoring.
- Training for teams/staff.
- ICT for language development.
- Theme evenings for parents.
- Excursions within a community for parents.
- Counselling for parents.

Resources used:

- EUR 260 000 for 2 ½ years.
- 4 part time staff in child care facilities (excluding the work of the integration office and scientific monitoring).

Implementation time: 2,5 years

Diffusion

- Hosting Expert Conferences.
- Speaking at Expert Conferences.
- Website.
- Taking part in European Prize for Innovation in Public Administration.
- Intermediate and Final Report of scientific steering group.

Diffusion time: ongoing

Challenges and solutions

- Challenge: Change attitude of staff in child care facilities towards families with migrant background.
 - Solution:
 - Training of staff for intercultural competencies.
 - Raising awareness for intercultural differences.
 - Supporting the team by trained experts from migrant communities.
 - Counselling of the institutions by Integration Office Kreis (district) Offenbach ('Quality Circle').
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Partnerships

State, district and cities

Other Public Sector

Land Hessen (Federal State of Hesse), Kreis (District) Offenbach, cities (Dreieich, Rödermark, Rodgau, Mühlheim) participated with providing the necessary funds.

Office for Integration, District Offenbach

Other Public Sector

The 'Integrationsbüro of Kreis Offenbach' developed the concept, attracted the funding, recruited and chose the child care institutions, supported them on all aspects of integration and helped with accessing the parents.

Child care facilities

Private sector

They realised the concept.

Lessons Learned

Lessons Learned

- The childcare facilities are important institutions with which the integration of educationally deprived migrant families can be furthered.
 - Concept works well.
 - Sustainability is difficult, as these institutions need extra personnel to continue the work they started.
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Conditions for success

The institutions need to make the necessary arrangements (sufficient personnel, concept for target group) in order to succeed.

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