Importance and challenges of research cooperation between secondary schools and universities – using the example of the project „My heart and I – together healthy“

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...is a programme of the **Austrian ministry of science and research**

...wants to establish **networks** between secondary schools and research institutions

...promotes projects in which **schoolchildren are actively involved** in the research process

...’s vision is to **break down structural barriers** between the education and academic system in Austria

...tries to increase the **interest of adolescents in science**

www.sparlingscience.at
**My heart and I – Together healthy**

- **Importance of health and health promotion**
  - Demographic changes
  - Health literacy and health behaviour of adolescents
  - Adolescents = important target group of health promotion
  - Evidence based health promotion

- **Sparkling Science**
  - School as an important setting
    - Adolescents spend lots of their time in schools
    - School has an influence on adolescents’ health

- **Model project „Together healthy in the district Oberwart“**
  - Process evaluation
Programme and project description

Objectives
- Eliminate barriers to the academic system
- Integrating pupils into the process evaluation
- Raise health consciousness of pupils
- Offer an opportunity to gain scientific qualification

Methods
- Long-term cooperation

Results

Conclusions
**Peer Group Education**

- pupils **organized projects** by themselves
- **peer-leaders**
- pupils „**taught**“ other pupils

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**Constructivist Didactics**

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- authentic and realistic problem situation
- working in groups
- multiple learning contexts, reflection
- complex problems as an initial point (learning by doing)

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Reich (2005), Hammerer (2011)
Scientific project theses

- Physical activity: nordic walking, pedometers
- Nutrition: healthy school cantine
- Psychosocial health: eating disorders

Developing research competencies
- Quantitative online-survey
- Qualitative process evaluation
- …
quantitative online-survey concerning smoking (E-Questionnaire, n=443)

step protocol and survey concerning walking („3.000 steps more“, peer group education)

developing research competencies

telephone interviews within the process evaluation of a model project (topics: health, model project, n=255)

nutrition diary (online, workshop)

project theses (health topics, cooperation with FH Burgenland)
Programme and project description

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3,000 steps more (nordic walking instructors)

healthy school cafeteria (analyzing school cafeteria, creating healthy meals)

planning and conducting health promotion projects

„Diversity is beautiful“ (eating disorders)
### Potentials
- pooling competencies
- constructivist didactics
- peer group education

### Challenges
- organizational conditions
  (duration of a teaching unit, voluntariness)
- motivation
  (Wesentliche Verbesserung eines Produktes, Lösung oder Prozess)

### Conclusions
- freedom concerning time
- innovative didactic methods

**win-win situation**
(secondary schools, research institutions)
Thank you for your attention!

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