POSTER ABSTRACT

Enhancing Children’s and Adolescents’ Learning, Engagement and Well-Being in Schools via Well-Being in Schools-specialization program for teachers

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**Introduction:** Even though the learning results in Finland are still quite good, there are considerably amount of social and emotional problems at schools. Children’s and adolescents’ need for psychiatric treatments has doubled and teachers’ are feeling stressed and burn-out. Based on recent school health surveys almost 44 percent of the lower secondary school adolescents feel that their teachers don’t care about how they are doing or how they are feeling. Among elementary school children already 10 percent are feeling that they are outsiders and that the adults in schools cannot see how bad they are feeling and thus cannot help them coping with their problems.

The comprehensive metastudies from the factors, which affect the pupils’ school success show that the one most significant factor of the school level in the strengthening of the learning and welfare of pupils is the teachers’ ability to learn together and to build the multi-professional collaboration in the school context, including co-operation with parents. Especially recently graduated teachers need support with tasks related to the socio-emotional learning, engagement and well-being of their pupils. Developing the competence of whole school and educational community will be a precondition for the fact that both the teacher trainers and the teachers together are able to bear their responsibility in the strengthening of the learning, engagement and well-being of all pupils.

**Objectives:** The aim of the Well-being in Schools-specialization program is to train teachers to identify, evaluate and intervene the early signs of children’s and adolescents’ challenges and difficulties in learning, engagement and socio-emotional well-being. Besides evaluating and treating the individual level problems teachers also need to learn to recognize and intervene the contextual and communal problems and signs of ill-being, such as being bullied, left alone or having fear of failure or learning difficulties.

The competence to strengthen the learning and well-being of pupils will be based on current research and evidence-based methods, intervention tools and multi-professional collaboration. At the national and international levels, the teachers will reach high-level skills to participate in and organize multi-professional development- and intervention programs in order to enhance optimal environments for children, adolescents and teachers in comprehensive schools.

**Outcomes:** Until now, over 30 teachers from varied educational settings have participated the Well-being in Schools-specialization program. Most of these teachers have upgraded their position as an experts in schools, cities or at other environments aiming to support the learning, engagement...
and well-being of Finnish children, adolescents and teachers. The results will be discussed in the contexts of teachers’ education at Finnish universities, current national curriculum supporting the pupils well-being and collaboration skills as well as at the context of rising rates of children and adolescents in need for extended social and health care services.

Keywords: learning; socio-emotional well-being; teacher; education