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OD1-22 Development of a toolkit to strengthen the ECEC teacher-parent partnership regarding healthy eating, physical activity and sleeping behaviors in young children

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Purpose: Children show health inequalities already at a young age. Among children from families with diverse ethnic backgrounds and/or low socioeconomic positions, excess weight gain and unhealthy behaviors are still common. The need for early interventions to promote healthy behaviors in disadvantaged children is widely recognized. An Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) teacher-parent partnership regarding healthy behaviors may support parents and stimulate their children's development. A preschool-based intervention was developed to strengthen such a collaboration. The intervention consists of a toolkit with parent-child activities and (information) materials. ECEC teachers supervise the activities at the standard walk-in play time. This study describes the systematic development of the toolkit.

Methods: The Intervention Mapping approach was used to develop the parent-child activities. The needs assessment included interviews with experts and focus groups with ECEC teachers. Furthermore, parents were asked to identify healthy lifestyle topics for their child which they think are easy or difficult to pursue. Parent could put a green (for easy) or a yellow (for difficult) sticker at a predefined list of topics.

Results: ECEC teachers (n=10) indicated that the activities should be fun, accessible, practical [in their execution] and should fit in their regular program. The interviews with experts (n=9) and conversations with parents (n=28) resulted in 10 important behaviors in which difficulties are experienced: providing a healthy breakfast, involving their child in meal planning and preparation, providing healthy foods, controlling portion sizes, providing water, exercising together, giving opportunities to be physically active, letting a child play outside, and ensuring their child has enough sleep. The developed parent-child activities relate directly to these lifestyle behaviors. A reader and training for ECEC teachers was designed to improve implementation by the teachers.

Conclusions: The toolkit and associated training will provide a practical guide for ECEC teachers to communicate with parents about lifestyle-related topics. In future research, we will explore parents' and ECEC

teachers' views and experiences of receiving and implementing the toolkit and study the effect of the toolkit on the teacher-parent partnership.