

## GOOD PRACTICE

# Lifestyle and a Healthy Weight



**City**  
Enschede

**Country**  
Netherlands

**Mission**  
Coaching children to a healthy lifestyle, in order to create a lifelong healthiness and prevent future claims on health care.

**Target Group**  
Children aged 4-12 and parents, schools, weak social areas

**Highlight**  
A project that gathers complementary key stakeholders as partners and combines nutrition and physical activity to foster healthy lifestyles among children.

**Timeframe**  
Initially Sept 2013 – Sept 2016

**Budget**  
€ 150 000 per year



Lifestyle and a Healthy Weight is a project based on the previous Healthy Children in Healthy Communities (GKGK) program.

### Objectives

- The program aims, every year, to:
- reduce by 5% the number of obese children in the participating schools;
- get 25% to 50% of the parents of obese children participating an intervention against in obesity;
- increase by 10% the number of children that are members of a sport club.

•Healthy children will be more capable to live their life without social help from the government and more likely to be self-sufficient.  
Healthy people also have more chances to get a good job and have a better social life, etc.

### The program

“Lifestyle and a Healthy Weight” is coordinated by the Beweeg Wijs (Wise Move) company, whose aim is to develop a lifelong love of movement, according to each individuals’ potential. It builds on the former Healthy Children in Healthy Communities project that was implemented from 2010 to 2013 in 2 Enschede schools.



The program takes place in Enschede vital sports clubs and 11 primary schools. A vital sport club is a club which cares about its citizens and takes action in its community or city. It uses its core business not only for its own members, but also for those who need it in society, the vulnerable ones. Besides its sport technical core activities, it also organizes and facilitates activities that adhere with the social problems in the city or in a community.



The project comprises several elements:

- Weekly extra hour of active movement for children at school;
- Weekly theoretical class on healthy lifestyle at school;
- Instruction of parents on the importance of healthy food & movement for their children,
- Instruction of parents on how to stimulate their children to be physically active and participate in sports.
- Sport clubs in the neighbourhoods introduce their sports during the school gymnastic lessons
- Introduction of healthy lunch regimes (no sodas or sweets) in school refectories;
- Organization of cooking classes for parents.

The children undertake, every year, a science-based test on their condition, coordination, weight and motorial skills.

### **Cooperation and Partnerships**

The program, based on the motto “it takes a whole village to reach a child”, is made possible by a partnership between the City of Enschede, Beweeg Wijs, Menzis (Dutch health insurance), GGD (Dutch health organization), TNO (National Research Institute), Enschede primary schools and vital sport clubs, teachers, dieticians and parents.

Half of the project budget is covered by the City of Enschede ; the other half by Menzis.

Many volunteers, mainly belonging to vital sport clubs, take part in it and implement it on the field.

## **Key Outcomes and Results**

Lifestyle and a Healthy Weight directly reaches 2 100 children in total, not to mention their families.

While the project is at a too early stage to provide results, its predecessor Healthy Children in Healthy communities brought a 35% decline of obesity in the participating schools. One of them even got obesity-free after just 2,5 years. These encouraging data motivated the transfer of the project into 11 other schools, and the creation of Lifestyle and a Healthy Weight.

School principals reported a correlation between the Healthy Children in Healthy Communities project and children happiness and test results.

### **More information:**

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