Youth health conferences Vienna

01/2024 – 12/2028

Initiator
Wiener Gesundheitsförderung

Objectives

Psychosocial health in children and adolescents is the central focus of Austria's preventive healthcare strategy for the years 2024 to 2028. The Federal Health Agency provides annual funding for preventive measures. Vienna Health Promotion (WiG), together with the Women's Health Center FEM and queraum. cultural and social research, organizes several youth health conferences each year to strengthen the psychosocial health of socially disadvantaged young people in Vienna. The Vienna model of the youth health conference is a proven, participatory method of health promotion, established in 2012, and is considered a model of best practice.

The target group includes socioeconomically disadvantaged young people of all genders between the ages of 12 and 19. Through participatory work at the youth health conference, they are to be strengthened in their health literacy and made more aware of the connection between their living environment and their well-being. The extended target group also includes people who work with young people (e.g. educators, youth workers) as well as decision-makers in the district.

Implementation

In a participatory process spanning several months, young people explore topics related to health and well-being from their own perspectives. They are supported by the implementation team and trusted adult mentors (e.g., teachers, educators, youth workers). Drawing on their own experiences, the young people develop their own health-related topics, prepare them according to their own ideas, and present them at a large event for other young people and adults. Supporting activities such as capacity building, reflection workshops, and topic-specific workshops enhance the process and strengthen the young people's resources.

Project Office for the Youth Health Conferences

The Youth Health Conferences support up to 55 neighborhood and collaborative initiatives developed and implemented independently by young people and their supporters.

The aim is to strengthen participation and civic engagement in health promotion and to improve the quality of life for young people in Vienna. A particular focus is on aspects that positively influence the psychosocial health of young people.

The project office provides individual support and guidance – from the initial idea and planning stages to the successful submission of the neighborhood initiative. Vienna Health Promotion (WiG) provides financial support of up to €300 per initiative for material expenses and the costs of external trainers.

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