

Newsletter #1

Healthy Young Minds



INNOVATION AND CROSS-CULTURAL COLLABORATION

Healthy Young Minds is an innovative cross-cultural health project aiming on tackling childhood obesity in the cities of Ballerup (DK) and Granollers (ES). The project is based on a three-sided collaboration plan in which several schools, leisure time institutions and both municipalities work hand in hand to promote the development and use of e-learning communities.

The project aims at addressing the health and emotional consequences of obesity in youngsters, mainly by focusing on food and physical activity. As a response to the lack of results of existing health programmes, this project is to be implemented following a very innovative and ambitious approach known as IVAC, which stands for Investigation, Vision, Action and Change. The IVAC-methodology is based on the idea that

youngsters should be active agents in their own lives and communities. On this basis, emphasis is placed on raising awareness of health issues among teenagers, so that they commit themselves to change the determinants of health in their municipality. In spite of giving youngsters a leading role, the project also provides the appropriate guidance, counsel and resources by means of key professionals in schools, sport clubs and the town councils.

Giving youngsters such an active role is a way of helping them develop a responsible attitude towards themselves; and this is a MUST to achieve sustainable healthy communities.

The project is also expected to benefit from synergies between the two municipalities, since the experiences will be continuously exchanged via the Internet. Actually, the website

www.heyomi.eu is the cornerstone of the project, since it helps students feel they are working collaboratively towards a common goal.

The project was launched in September 2009 following The European Union priorities and it contributes to:

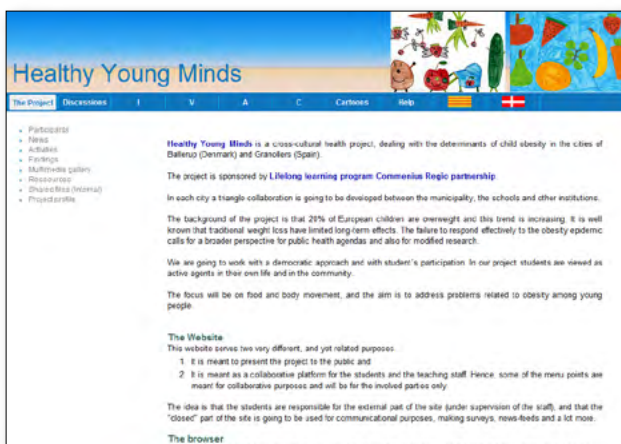
- *promote healthier lifestyles*
- *address determinants of health*
- *create supportive environments for healthy living conditions.*

The HYM project is developed by the municipality of Ballerup, the Hedegårdsskolen and the Ballerup FritidsCenter (BFC) in Denmark in partnership with the Town Council of Granollers, Joan Solans and Salvador Espriu schools and the organisation P.A.U. Education. ■

CHECK THE HYM-WEBSITE



www.heyomi.eu



Activities developed by the schools:

- http://www.heyomi.eu/main/top/activities/physical-games/tagofwar_/index.php
- <http://www.heyomi.eu/main/top/activities/physical-games/ballerup5a/video/index.php>
- <http://www.heyomi.eu/main/top/activities/physical-games/hideandseek/index.php>
- <http://www.heyomi.eu/main/top/activities/physical-games/topulluponions/index.php>

Healthy Young Minds, a joint international project between Ballerup (DK) and Granollers (ES)

STUDENTS FROM GRANNOLLERS AND BALLERUP HAVE A SAY IN HEALTH MATTERS!



In order to establish first contact between students from both countries, the coordinators of the project organised a drawing contest on the topic:



What does the HYM project make you think of?

With the help of their teachers, students had to think about the concepts of either individual or collective health and, then, capture their ideas on a creative drawing.

Most of the drawings showed balanced and healthy diets, rich in fruit and with a moderate sugar consumption. They also showed the importance of doing physical activity regularly, the need to establish good relationships with classmates, and the importance of getting enough sleep.

Not only were all the drawings uploaded on the web, but also exhibited at the schools to let the rest of students and families take part in the project.

After the exhibition, students from each country exchanged votes to choose the healthiest and most artistic drawings. Finally, the awards presentation took place in the presence of local authorities.

Students from Joan Solans and Salvador Espriu made an oral presentation in English and Catalan which was recorded and also uploaded on the web. At the same time, students from Ballerup expressed via Internet their enthusiasm and keen interest in working jointly with students from Granollers.

Some of the awarded pictures can be seen at the top of the web page. ■



DIET WORKSHOP: HEALTHY BREAKFAST



Students from Salvador Espriu and Joan Solans took part in a workshop called "healthy breakfast" to increase their knowledge about food.

These kinds of practical diet workshops are effective tools to improve eating habits and rectify the common mistakes that the majority of youngsters make. Besides, what is even more important is that, in some cases, these workshops can introduce some diet changes at a household level.

The aim of this particular workshop was to transmit students the pleasure of eating and to raise their awareness about the food they normally eat. To do that, the focus was placed on the breakfast and on the afternoon snack, since these are normally the meals that students prepare by themselves.

More specifically, students worked on sandwiches and the ingredients they should include. By means of a simple preparation, students could prove that, depending on the ingredients, a sandwich can perfectly observe the nutritional guidelines of the food pyramid. At the bottom of the pyramid there are the carbohydrates, in this case the bread; by adding some vegetables the necessary amount of vitamins is covered and, finally, some

proteins such as cheese, eggs or tuna provide a perfectly balanced, healthy and simple meal.

The workshops were held right in the school dining hall under the necessary food handling hygienic conditions. The whole activity lasted for about an hour, in which students were first given some theoretical guidelines to follow during the practice. Finally, students made a global evaluation of the activity.

Last but not least, it is important to highlight that the HYM professional team organised the workshop in collaboration with Ada Parellada, a chef and restaurateur with years of experience in this type of event with youngsters. ■



THE INTERNATIONAL DIMENSION IN BALLERUP



The municipality of Ballerup has done a lot to promote the international dimension in the local schools.

In 2007 they instituted an International Policy with 5 focus points of which education was one. In 2010 an International Strategy with 21 actions was decided, and in 2011 an International Curriculum is going to be developed.

According to the law of the Danish "Folkeskole" the international dimension must be integrated in every subject at every level when appropriate, so every single teacher – not just the foreign language teacher - is responsible for implementing the international dimension into his or her teaching.

One of the actions in the strategy was to appoint an international coordinator in each school and in the public library. These coordinators have together formed an international net-

work, facilitated by the international advisor. They have been offered further international education in terms of 2 units from the educational diploma studies on Globalization.

The first unit called *Globalization and education* included a study visit to Wuxi in China which is a sister city of Ballerup, and the second unit called *Internationalization and school development* starts in the autumn of 2011.

All the other actions of the strategy will be implemented in the near future according to the municipal economy.

Healthy Young Minds is a very good example of how an international project links students from various cultures together using a concrete subject: 'Health education'.

Eight out of the nine mainstream schools in Ballerup have international links with schools abroad. Six schools



collaborate with Wuxi in China, three schools with East Kilbride in Scotland (which has been a twin town for 46 years, actually the longest existing link in Europe) and one with Granollers in Spain. ■

Pictures from the project



HOW IS THE PROJECT PROGRESSING



The project Healthy Young Minds started with meetings and visits in both Spain and Denmark, with teachers, staff and representatives from the municipalities as well as politicians.

Students started to get to know each other in the early days of August 2009, via a drawing competition on the website.

The main focus of this 'health project' is that students themselves explore, get ideas and visions about a healthier life and then share these ideas with the students in the other country.

"Students discussion" is the forum on the web, where the students from all three schools in Granollers and Ballerup can exchange all their vision and experiences.

All students from the three schools in Granollers and Ballerup have been exchanging investigations and ideas from their daily lives.

Many topics have been discussed:

- *How to create new games and physically plays, in the schools*
- *What kind of sports they practice in the spare time*
- *How to get more sports activities during school time and in the breaks*
- *Eating habits in the two countries*
- *How they spend different holidays (summer holiday, Christmas holiday etc.)*

Many pictures, instructional videos and ideas are presented on the web.

The student's activity indicates that they very much like working on the web, both from the schools and at home. They learn fast and are very skilled in using the web.

Working on the web gives the students the feeling of gaining friends from 'abroad' and they indeed do so.

The project has also been giving the teachers the possibility to work with

health issues in a new and different perspective. They get the "whole world" into the classroom and a 'real life aspect' is going to be integrated in the school life and hopefully in the design of the future curriculum as well.

Furthermore, by using a foreign language this way, gives the students very fine experiences in practicing a foreign language, in this case, English.

The project has been invited to present our project at a conference in Bordeaux in May 2011. We are going to give presentations on all our new experiences and we will bring a lot of material, including this newsletter and the new video which is being produced right now.

Newsletter #2 will primarily bring articles written by the students. ■

THE WEB PLATFORM



The Healthy Young Minds web platform serves at least two very different, and yet related purposes.

1. It is meant to present the project to the public and
2. It is meant as a collaborative platform for the students and the teaching staff. Hence, some of the menu points are meant for internal collaborative purposes and are for the involved parties only.



One of the fundamental ideas is that the students are responsible for the external (public) part of the site (under supervision of the staff), and that the 'closed' areas of the site are being used for communicational purposes, making surveys, news-feeds and a lot more. Experiences from previous projects and research shows, that this responsibility is highly motivating and therefore a very useful tool in the learning process. The 'closed' part of the site contains discussion fora which has been used for exchanging ideas and points of view.

In the process the metalanguage is English and as you will see in some of the videos and on the web pages generally spoken, the language quality is fairly high. ■

Healthy Young Minds

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