

KAAP project for parents language learning in Antwerp, Belgium

1. Need/challenge addressed

- Language/multiculturality
- Motivation
- Social
- Family

What is so special about KAAP?

- Parents are more involved in the school life of their children.
- Foreign speaking parents learn Dutch in the same school context as their children.
- Parents and school work closely together on parental involvement.

2. Level of intervention

This project is run by the NGO 'Schoolbridge' offering teaching and learning support initiatives to schools in Antwerp. It is targeted to pupils and families considered at risk.

3. Intensity of the intervention

The Schoolbridge project is an ongoing initiative.

4. Target group and age group

The lessons are for foreign speaking parents with children in primary and secondary schools (only for the first two years of secondary school).

5. Conditions and different steps necessary for the implementation of the measure

Schools must meet certain conditions before applying for the project. During the project Schoolbridge advises the school on how to improve parental involvement for instance how to communicate with parents, how to welcome parents at the school etc. Also, the whole school team gets involved as active actors. All relevant stakeholders need to be involved in order for the project to be implemented well.

The project is limited to 1 year, but the support on how to improve parental involvement can take more time. Schoolbridge decides with the school team on the duration of the entire project.

6. Stakeholders/professionals involved in the delivery of the measure

- The Schoolbridge
- Adult education centres (important as the parents after the Kaap project continue learning Dutch at the adult education centre)
- The city of Antwerp by financing the program
- The schools as the main actor

7. Overall responsibility for implementation of the measure

Regular evaluation events are scheduled, whereby a member of the Schoolbridge reflects with the school team on the results achieved and how to continue with good progress. They also discuss how the school itself can improve parental involvement after the Kaap project has finished.

8. Obstacles encountered during the implementation of the measure

It is often difficult for schools to find a physical place within the school itself to hold the classes (2x a week). Furthermore, schools are supposed to help organizing an enrolment event for the parents in their school. The project only starts when more than 15 parents with more or less the same schooling level attend. That leaves a lot of disappointed parents when less than 15 parents enroll for the project.

9. Monitoring/assessing the measure

The Schoolbridge regularly evaluates KAAP project with the school teams. The Schoolbridge also evaluates the project with a colleague from the adult education centre. The group of parents get evaluated by attendance, cohesion and so on. The effectiveness of the project is being discussed in the group. This includes a qualitative analysis of parental involvement in the school. Another important factor to evaluate is the involvement of the whole school team in the project.

10. Results

In total, 68 parents were involved in qualitative research by the University of Leuven. The parents reported that communication between them and the school improved as a result of the project, as did their knowledge on the school system in Flanders.

Two main points for improvement:

- Contact between native speaking Dutch parents and not native speaking Dutch parents could be improved
- Participation of the KAAP parents in school/school activities does not change/improve in particular after the year following on the KAAP project.

11. Resources and funding involved

The City of Antwerp finances the measure

12. Current status of the measure

This Schoolbridge initiative is still running in Antwerp.