

NEWSLETTER Winter 2012-13

TWO SYMPOSIA!

The ToyBox-study will be presented in two international symposia scheduled in Europe during 2013.

Symposium in Ghent May 2013

The ToyBox-study will hold a symposium at the International Society of Behavioural Nutrition and Physical Activity's annual meeting, to be held in the city of Ghent, Belgium, in May 2013.

ToyBox project participants will present the project and the development of the intervention targeting pre-school children. Material specially designed for the ToyBox-study will be shown publicly for the first time.

The meeting includes a guest commentary from Professor John J Reilly, of the University of Strathclyde, Scotland.

The symposium will discuss the importance of preventing obesity in younger children, and the need for an effective approach and innovative material that can be used in home and kindergarten settings.

Dr Yannis Manios, the coordinator of the ToyBox-study and Assistant

Professor in Harokopio University, Athens, says it is time for fresh thinking on obesity prevention.

“Our aim was to develop and implement an intervention targeting key behaviours related to early childhood obesity such as snacking and drinking habits, physical activity and sedentary behaviour and their determinants” he said. “The implementation of this multifactorial, school-based, family-involved intervention is aiming to influence kids’ social and physical environment, aiming to improve these behaviours in more than 4.800 4-6 year old children, their teachers and their families, allowing for cultural diversities in six European countries (Belgium, Bulgaria, Germany, Greece, Poland, Spain). We are also assessing the cost-effectiveness of this intervention, an important parameter for the potential expansion of such

programmes to promote public health which is often neglected” he said.

See www.isbnpa2013.org



Symposium in Granada September 2013

The ToyBox-study will hold its second major international symposium at the International Congress of Nutrition, in the city of Granada, Spain, in September 2013.

The project's participants will present the first results coming out of the study, including a major survey of the prevalence of overweight and obesity in pre-school children, children's snacking and drinking habits, physical activity and sedentary behaviours in six different European countries, namely Greece, Spain, Belgium, Germany, Poland, Bulgaria.

With more than 20 classes in each country, it is anticipated that more than 8,700 children aged 4-6 years will be involved in the intervention, along with their teachers and their families. The process, impact, outcome and cost-effectiveness of the intervention will be assessed.

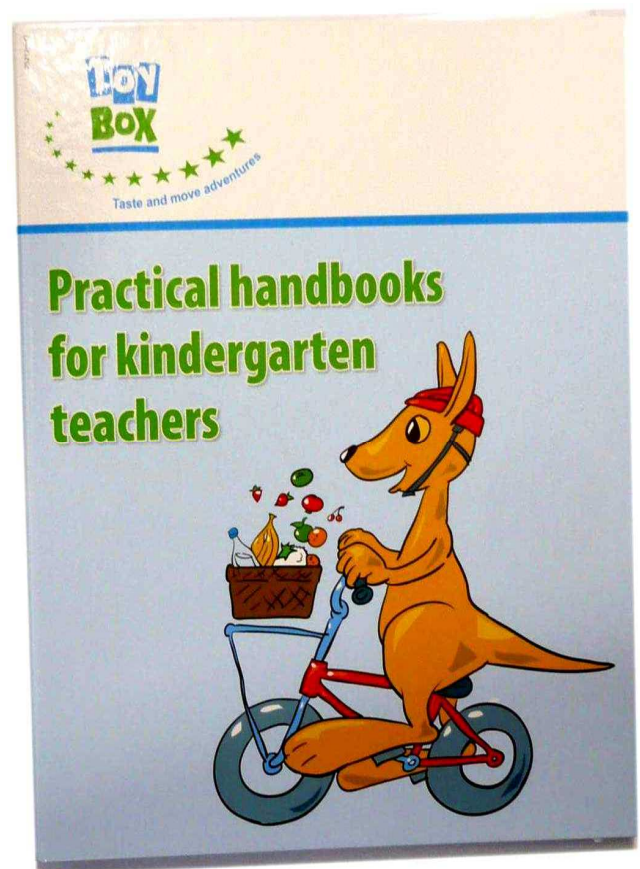
The pre- and post-intervention periods are estimated to last two months and in order to avoid seasonality effect, the pre- and post-examination will take place at the same time period within a year difference, which allows 7 months in between for implementation.

**IUNS 20th International
Congress of Nutrition**
GRANADA (SPAIN), SEPTEMBER 15-20, 2013

See www.icn2013.com

ToyBox Intervention Material

The ToyBox intervention material has now been designed and printed. It comes with a box that includes handbooks for the activities to be implemented in the kindergarten, as well as flyers to be delivered at home.



The kindergarten material include a kangaroo hand-puppet, a Teachers' General Guide, four Classroom Activities Guides, one for each of the targeted behaviours (illustrated on the next page) with ideas and instructions to assist teachers in promoting the active participation of the whole class and being role models themselves.

The Teacher's General Guide includes the timetable for introducing a series of related topics, and a proposed sequence which involves four weeks devoted to each main theme – Drinking, Physical Activity, Eating and Snacking and Sedentary Behaviour – each of which has a booklet of suggested Classroom Activities (see illustration).

Classroom Activities Guides



This is followed by eight weeks in which two weeks each are devoted to repeating and reinforcing the messages and activities linked to the four themes. The intervention material to be used in the class by the kindergarten teachers is included in each of the four classroom activity guides.

The material to be delivered at home consists of nine Newsletters and eight Tip Cards which are handed to the parents throughout the year. These

Newsletters and Tip Cards provide facts and recommended practices to encourage parents to set good examples and be a role model for their children. The four key messages related to the targeted behaviours of the intervention are illustrated on four posters for children to colour and display at home. The *Newsletters* are designed to be taken home by children and shared with their parents and family. They integrate with the Tip Cards, and offer information and ideas for activities, experiments and good practices to serve as a role model for children.

The pack provides one introductory newsletter and two newsletters for each of the four themes – Drinking, Physical Activity, Eating and Snacking and Sedentary Behaviour.

Newsletters



TOYBOX

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ToyBox is an EU-funded four-year study (2010-2014) to develop and test an innovative and evidence-based obesity prevention programme for children aged 4-6. Early childhood is a critical period for addressing obesity prevention since behaviours, psychological traits and physiological processes are largely developed or formed at this young age. The development and adoption of the desired behaviours will help to ensure optimum growth during childhood and increase the likelihood of long-term health in adulthood.

ToyBox comprises a multidisciplinary team of 15 partners across the EU:

Harokopio University, Athens, Greece – Coordinator
Dr von Hauner Children's Hospital, University of Munich Medical Centre, Germany
Ghent University, Belgium
VU University Medical Center, Netherlands
Oslo and Akershus University College, Norway
University of Zaragoza, Spain
Durham University, UK
State Institute of Early Childhood Research, Germany
Children's Memorial Health Institute, Poland
Medical University of Varna, Bulgaria
International Association for the Study of Obesity, UK
CBO B.V., Netherlands
AOK-Verlag GmbH, Germany
University of Roehampton, UK
University of Luxembourg, Luxembourg



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