Effects of a comprehensive fruit- and vegetable-promoting school-based intervention in three European countries: the Pro Children Study

Studies have highlighted the link between increased consumption of fruits and vegetables and decreased risk for non-communicable diseases. Both the World Health Organization and the Food and Agriculture Organization have now made the promotion of increased consumption of fruits and vegetables and priority of their agenda. The Pro Children project is a multi-component intervention that was developed to incorporate several elements identified as successful key elements of an intervention. The aim of this paper was to evaluate the effect of the Pro Children intervention on schoolchildren’s fruit and vegetable intake after 1 and after 2-years of follow-up.

The Pro Children intervention had different components: classroom component, school component, family component and optional component. Overall, in the three countries where the intervention was implemented (Norway, Spain and the Netherlands), the intervention goal was reached. Furthermore, the results suggest that effects were stronger for the consumption of fruits than vegetables. This study concludes that the Pro Children intervention seems to be a positively-leaning intervention to promote European’s schoolchildren’s fruit and vegetable consumption, but mainly impacts fruit intake in the short term.