

VIDA

VIDA – Knowledge-based efforts for socially disadvantaged children in daycare is a research project hosted by Aarhus University. The aim is to document which types of pedagogical daycare efforts are most successful in providing better opportunities in life for socially disadvantaged children.

The project has been commissioned and is financed by the Ministry of Children and Education and lasts for a period of three years. The researchers will test various pedagogical models and thereby explore which types of efforts generate the best effect. The goal is to improve the preschool teachers' knowledge of how to improve the life opportunities of socially disadvantaged children through a targeted pedagogical effort.

Further information

edu.au.dk/en/research/research-projects/vida/

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VIDA

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VIDA

Knowledge-based efforts for socially disadvantaged children in daycare. A research project and model program

7000 children and
preschool teachers in
120 daycare centers from
four municipalities in
Denmark participate
in VIDA



How can ECEC intervention in daycare best improve socially disadvantaged children's opportunities in life?

The research project and model program 'Knowledge-based efforts for socially disadvantaged children in daycare' (VIDA) examine how ECEC intervention in daycare can improve the life opportunities of socially disadvantaged children.

The comprehensive project will document which types of pedagogical daycare efforts are most effective at providing better opportunities in life for socially disadvantaged children. The aim of this effort is to improve the children's well-being and learning. One approach is to stimulate their personal, social and language competences as well as logical understanding.

The research project comprises some 7,000 children in 120 daycare centers in four municipalities in Denmark and implements and examines two types of pedagogical efforts. The daycare centers are divided into three groups. In the one group, focus is on the children's well-being and learning (i.e. the VIDA model program). In the other group, focus is also on the children's well-being and learning (as in group 1) as well as parental involvement (i.e. the VIDA + parents model program). A third group (the control group) is left to continue with their ordinary practice.

The efforts are implemented in inclusive environments, i.e. the children's ordinary daycare environment that they share with other children.

The project has been commissioned and is financed by the Ministry of Children and Education.

The VIDA research project consists of the following four elements:

1. Development of the VIDA model program and the VIDA + parents model program

Development of the model programs is, in part, based on previous experiences from the ASP project (<http://www.dpu.dk/site.aspx?p=8182>). Thus, the evidence-based VIDA model program builds on the knowledge acquired in the ASP project. A Clearinghouse-review will map existing research on the effects of parental programs, and this knowledge will substantiate the development of the evidence-based VIDA + parents model program.

Throughout the development phase, VIDA will update the material previously produced for and used in the ASP Qualification Folder. Moreover, a new IT-based tool for analysis, which will facilitate the daycare centers' interpretation of own practice, is under development. Lastly, as part of the qualification process, an IT-based version of the 'ASP-tool' will be employed as a means to train the daycare staff in early discovery of socially disadvantaged children.

2. Testing the two model programs through intervention in four municipalities

The intervention lasts two years. The participating daycare centers have been randomly selected and divided into two intervention groups (VIDA and VIDA + parents). They will be offered education and training that will qualify the managers and preschool teachers to implement the evidence-based knowledge in the daily

routines and possibly renew practice.

One particular quality of the VIDA intervention is that it is based on three elements: Knowledge, reflection and action: First, the managers and preschool teachers acquire the knowledge in the VIDA-material through individual study and an educational course. Secondly, they use this knowledge to take a new look on the existing practice, and thirdly, actions that are based on this knowledge are initiated to renew and improve the existing practice. Subsequently, these actions will be the object of the next phase of reflection, just as other knowledge-elements may be involved in the ongoing process of reflection in the staff group. The three elements foster a certain type of learning dynamics that will lead to the promotion of innovative staff skills.

The educational course, which is integrated into the implementation of the VIDA model program, covers all three elements. In order to implement the VIDA model program and to reach the goals of the model program, the managers and preschool teachers are taught how to work systematically with learning and change-processes in daycare. As part of the implementation of the VIDA + parents model program, the managers and preschool teachers are trained to involve the parents in collaboration about the children's learning and well-being. The intention is to involve social workers from the participating municipalities in this process where and when this is possible.

The managers of the participating daycare centers are offered additional training called 'facilitated learning processes'.

The control group of daycare centers proceeds with their existing practice and serve as reference group in the project's effect measurement. At the end of the research project, these centers will be offered in-service training in collaboration with the involved municipalities.

3. Effect measurement; integrated analysis and the efficiency of the two model programs

The effects are measured by the children's outcome of the intervention, which is studied by exploring the relation between the intervention and the effects, and through a comparison of the two model programs and their effects.

A further comparison of the educational course and the more intensive training is also included in the efficiency assessment. Like the model program, the effect study will be based on a randomized controlled trial, which means the daycare centers participating in the VIDA model program, the VIDA + parents model program and the control group will be selected randomly from the same four municipalities.

The outcome is measured by the development in the children's social and learning competences registered at three screenings. Data from these screenings are correlated with data from Statistics Denmark via anonymized civil registration numbers in order to correlate the effects with social background and for investigation of longitudinal effects. The quantitative part of the effect study is supplemented by qualitative studies of organizational practices that are changed as a result of the interventions.

4. Presentation, dissemination and suggested entrenchment of specific models

The project results are disseminated in ways that make the acquired knowledge available for the field of practice. In a long-term perspective, the project contributes to the general development of models that are likely to become entrenched in daycare, municipal efforts as well as educational programs and in-service training in Denmark.