The dissemination of the “Unplugged” prevention program in Italy: evaluation and impact

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Unplugged

- Universal school-based program for preventing tobacco, substance use and alcohol abuse among adolescents
- Based on **social influence** approach
- It includes the following components
  - Social skills
  - Personal skills
  - Knowledge
  - Normative education
- It is administered by **teachers** trained in a 3-days course
- It is made by **12 units**, 1 hour each
- It is designed for **12-14 years old** students
- It was tested through a **randomized controlled trial** in 7 European countries in 2004-2007 school years
After the publication of effectiveness results, the program has been adopted and implemented in several European and non-European countries, thanks to several projects and funding:

- Eudap Faculty: network of trainers
- Project IKEA 5 East European countries
- UNODC project 6 North Africa and Middle East countries
- Others, nationally funded (Slovenia, Slovakia, France, UK, Czech Rep, Poland, Brazil………)

![Map of Europe showing countries where the program has been implemented](image-url)
• In Italy a big dissemination plan was acted, involving many regions, in North, Centre and South of Italy
  • The dissemination was funded by several local, regional and national funding plans
  • In 2010, it was included among “effective practices” of the national “Gaining Health Program”, coordinated by the National Centre for Disease Control (CCM) of the Ministry of Health
  • It was then included among effective prevention practices in the Local Prevention Plans (at the districts level) of many Italian regions

• This kind of dissemination follows a “naturalistic” model, working through invitation of schools, spontaneous applications, training, implementation, monitoring
Naturalistic model of dissemination

- Regions are invited
  - NHS districts are invited
    - Training courses
      - Schools are invited
        - Teachers’ training courses
          - Application of Unplugged in class

- National coordination team (OED)
- Regional coordinators
- Local coordinators=trainers
- Teachers
- Pupils

- EUDap Faculty

- (OED)
Theoretically efficient and powerful

6 International Training of Trainers courses
46 participants

21 National Training of Trainers courses
454 participants

171 Training of Teachers courses
2926 participants

50% implementation
36,575 pupils reached

75% implementation
54,860 pupils reached

100% implementation
73,150 pupils reached
Naturalistic model implies a certain selection

Regions, districts are invited

50% accepts

Regional, district training courses

50% refuses

but then 30% do not send people to the training courses

Schools are invited

30% refuses

10% do not participate

Teachers’ training courses

10% do not participate

Application of Unplugged in class

15% zero units

40% six units
22,802 students received Unplugged in 2011-12 school year in Italy

These are 7% of the 13 years old children residents in Italy according to the National Census 2011
### Studenti raggiunti 2011/2012

#### Totale Italia 13 anni

<table>
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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Studenti RAGGIUNTI</th>
<th>STUDENTI TOTALI</th>
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<th>% corretti per programma pianificato su 2 anni</th>
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Dato sul Piemonte ancora parziale (manca Cn2, To1, To2)
Impact

- According to the effectiveness data of the EUDap project (Italian sample), Unplugged reduces
  - The prevalence of pupils getting drunk at least once in the last 30 days from 14.7% to 8.9%
  - It is therefore possible that of 22802 pupils reached by the program in 2011-12, 3352 would have experienced drunkenness episodes, and that
  - 1322 (39%) could have been prevented from drunkenness because of the program
The dissemination effort has been constantly accompanied by
- monitoring of **trainers, teachers and pupils reached** by the program
- monitoring of **implementation**
- evaluation of **satisfaction** of teachers and pupils
- reporting (specific regional reports)

Data from Lombardy region, 136 classes, 143 teachers, 2246 students
Implementation: mean duration of units

Durata media delle unità (minuti)
Implementation: activities within the units
Teacher’s satisfaction and comments

- **Incremento delle conoscenze sulle sostanze**: 65.0%
- **Arricchimento dei teaching skills**: 61.5%
- **Miglioramento della relazione con gli studenti**: 69.9%
- **Clima di gruppo**: 58.7%
- **Utilità del manuale per l’insegnante**: 55.2%

- Improvement of school climate 67.8%
- Improvement of relationship with students 88.8%
Pupil’s satisfaction and comments

Improvement of school climate 34%

Improvement of relationship with teachers 29,5%
Conclusions

• The adoption of Unplugged as prevention curriculum for 13 years old pupils in Italy followed a naturalistic approach, sustained by local, regional and national funds

• The peak of enthusiasm was probably reached in 2011-12

• After the peak:
  • Continuous efforts are needed to maintain the application of the program in the schools
    • Monitoring
    • Reporting
    • Communication (Italian website, newsletter)
    • Booster sessions for trainers and teachers
    • Local visit to Unplugged teams to make annual plans
    • New material, activities, tools

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