

# Evaluation study of the implementation of the Fitkids program for children orientation in drug counseling centers (EvaFit)

Kira Hower, Holger Pfaff, Jörg Kons, Sandra Gross, Lena Ansmann

## Research objective

Currently, about 50,000 children of drug-addicted parents are living in Germany. Repeatedly the media reports tragic deaths of infants and young children of drug addicts. To consider the situation of children of addicts, an opening and widening of the activities of drug-counseling centers is necessary (European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction 2008; Lenz 2010). According to estimates, only 10% of drug-counseling centers involve children of drug-addicted parents in care planning. It is assumed that drug counseling is not prepared to care for children of addicts. A few years ago, a drug-counseling center in Germany developed a program to embed children into the work of drug-counseling centers by organizational development - the Fitkids program. This program aims to promote healthy development of children and therefore provides both a supportive framework and manual to continuously keep the conversation about children running and possibilities for training and information for consultants. The study aims to investigate the children orientation in drug counselling centers in terms of the center's readiness and current attention in consulting and structures before and after the implementation of the Fitkids program. At the same time, organizational and personal determinants affecting the implementation successful of Fitkids in the drug-counseling centers were investigated.

## Study design

From 2015 to 2017, the program was implemented in about 15 additional drug-counseling centers. The IMVR was engaged to evaluate the implementation success of the program in terms of personal and organizational related children orientation in newly recruited locations in a summative evaluation through quasi-experimental pre-post design (Figure 1). Both the managers and the employees were surveyed before the start of the program (t0) and one year after start (t1) using a standardized questionnaire. Survey t0 und t1 were linked and analyzed through hierarchical linear models.

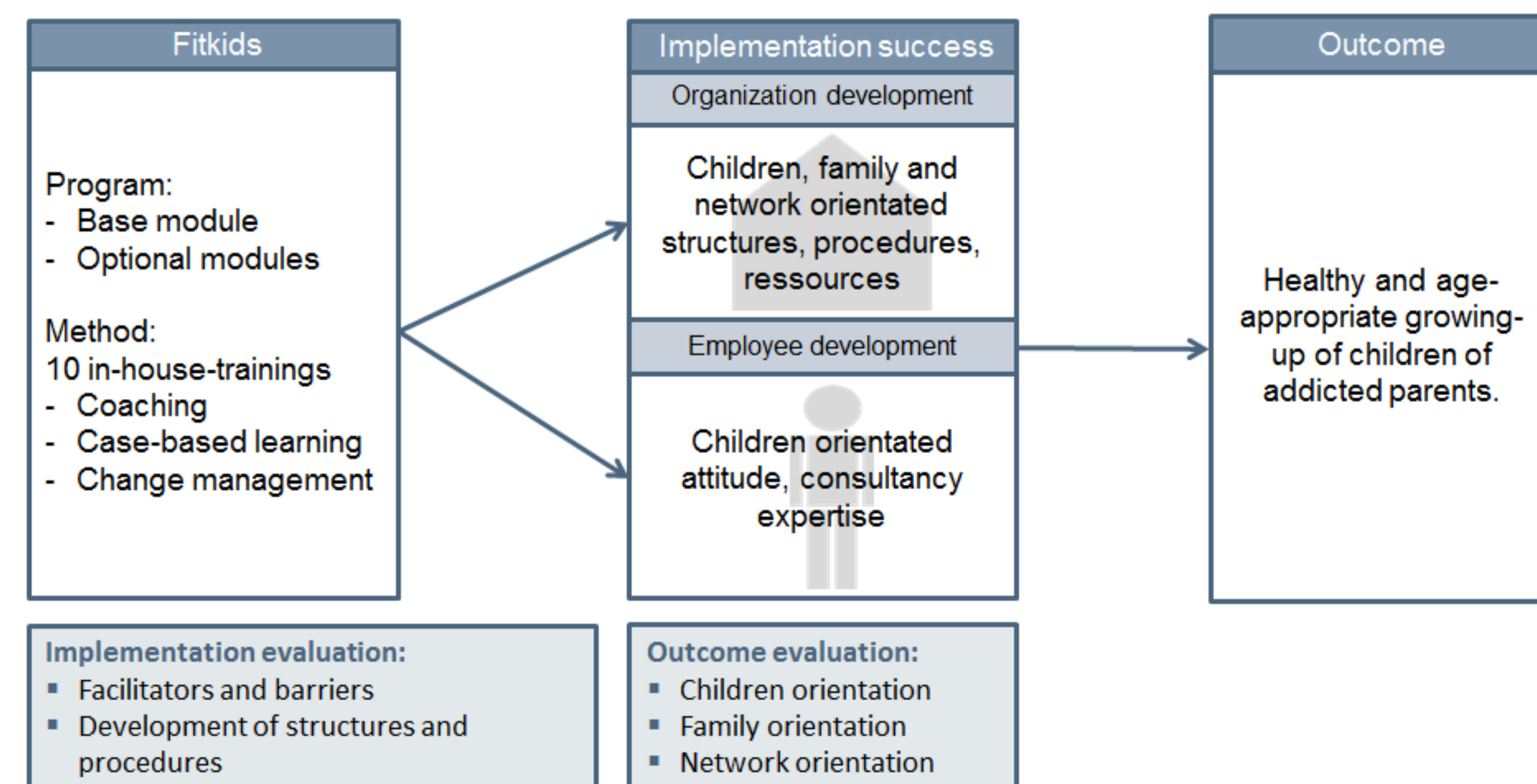


Figure 1: Logical Model of the Fitkids program and the EvaFit study

## Principal findings

15 counseling centers and 76 employees were included in the analysis. The implementation of organizational and individual children orientation can be operationalized in eight different implementations outcomes (Figure 2). Moreover, determinants of implementation were operationalized as the organization's and employee's constitution and readiness for change.

Results from the t0 survey indicate

- a low organizational children orientation, e.g. resources and structural standards, and a higher individual children orientation,
- high social support from colleagues, and high stresses, e.g. work intensity,
- a lower organizational readiness, e.g. infrastructure, for change, and a high individual willingness to change.

Results from linking the t0 and t1 survey show that the implementation of the Fitkids program succeeded significantly in terms of organizational children orientation. Especially the awareness of the existence of the drug abused parent's children as well as structural standards and resources to consider children's wellbeing in consultation significantly enhanced. These first enhancements of children orientation can be interpreted as necessities to implement further children orientated structures and procedures. The employee's children orientation in terms of competences and consideration in consultations does not indicate significant changes.

The organizational and individual constitution changed from t0 to t1 in terms of the organization's social supportive climate among the leadership, infrastructure to implement children orientation, as well as change fatigue and the employee's job satisfaction and frequency to come to work ill (presentism).

The implementation success of the Fitkids program to t1 is associated with organizational and individual constitutional and readiness for change related determinants surveyed in the t0 survey. Significant constitutional determinants are quality awareness, social support among colleagues, and a supportive climate on the organizational level, and job gratification, presentism, and work intensity on the individual level. Readiness for change related determinants showed significant influences on implementation outcomes in terms of organizations change fatigue, infrastructure to implement children orientation, and the employee's change attitude.

Organizational children orientation's enhancement to t1 is mostly associated with employee's a lower change fatigue and social support from colleagues and higher employee's presentism. The individual children orientation shows no significant changes. However, it is associated with the organization's infrastructure to implement change. As the change infrastructure is low to t0 and significantly enhances to t1,

Determinants	Children Orientation	Implementation degree	Organizational development					Employee development				
			Resources	Offers for children	Structural standards	Consideration on in consultation processes	Awareness on the existence of children of clients	Competences in consultation	Competences in legal bases	Competences in cooperation		
t0 → t1												
46% → 52%			28% → 34%	30% → 33%	34% → 49%	43% → 49%	49% → 63%	64% → 67%	57% → 59%	62% → 61%		
Constitution												
Organizational	Quality awareness		.063 (+)*	.147 (+)	.001 (+)**	.986 (+)	.694 (-)	.566 (+)	.120 (+)	.052 (+)*	.471 (+)	
	Supportive climate		.150 (+)	.214 (+)	.431 (+)	.550 (+)	.008 (+)**	.654 (+)	.430 (+)	.869 (-)	.432 (+)	
	Image		.380 (+)	.628 (+)	.396 (+)	.219 (+)	.294 (+)	.240 (+)	.112 (-)	.385 (-)	.667 (-)	
	Social cohesion leadership		.172 (-)	.142 (-)	.106 (-)	.325 (-)	.181 (-)	.956 (+)	.549 (-)	.221 (-)	.331 (-)	
	Social cohesion colleagues		.016 (+)**	.424 (-)	.070 (+)*	.070 (-)*	.067 (-)*	.552 (-)	.011 (-)**	.144 (-)	.156 (-)	
	Parent-hood		.445 (+)	.394 (-)	.982 (-)	.278 (+)	.935 (-)	.346 (+)	.351 (+)	.939 (+)	.320 (+)	
Individual	Burnout		.565 (-)	.350 (-)	.233 (-)	.492 (-)	.674 (-)	.527 (-)	.620 (+)	.318 (-)	.985 (+)	
	Job satisfaction		.423 (+)	.214 (+)	.559 (+)	.946 (-)	.617 (+)	.743 (-)	.894 (+)	.779 (-)	.574 (+)	
	Job gratification		.249 (+)	.468 (+)	.328 (+)	.092 (+)*	.026 (+)**	.525 (+)	.981 (-)	.724 (-)	.757 (+)	
	Presentism		.005 (+)**	.057 (+)*	.093 (+)*	.009 (+)**	.461 (+)	.028 (+)**	.505 (+)	.027 (+)**	.052 (+)*	
	Job autonomy		.844 (-)	.226 (-)	.103 (-)	.783 (-)	.521 (-)	.448 (+)	.264 (+)	.809 (-)	.186 (+)	
	Work intensity		.359 (-)	.075 (+)*	.824 (-)	.611 (+)	.614 (+)	.565 (-)	.089 (+)*	.327 (+)	.506 (-)	
Readiness for change												
Organizational	Change fatigue		.004 (-)**	.001 (-)**	.084 (-)*	.201 (-)	.300 (-)	.524 (-)	.009 (-)**	.070 (-)*	.240 (-)	
	Change willingness		.655 (-)	.270 (-)	.920 (+)	.711 (-)	.511 (+)	.315 (-)	.372 (+)	.590 (+)	.937 (-)	
	Change infrastructure		.269 (+)	.980 (+)	.866 (-)	.544 (+)	.465 (+)	.995 (-)	.010 (+)**	.024 (+)**	.004 (+)**	
Individual	Change attitude - affective		.466 (+)	.192 (+)	.043 (+)**	.648 (+)	.772 (-)	.437 (+)	.383 (+)	.107 (-)	.871 (-)	
	Change attitude - cognitive		.660 (+)	.798 (+)	.438 (-)	.720 (-)	.286 (-)	.491 (+)	.501 (+)	.349 (+)	.032 (+)**	
	General opinion on program		.453 (-)	.123 (-)	.575 (-)	.614 (-)	.146 (+)	.762 (+)	.267 (-)	.718 (-)	.375 (-)	

Figure 2: Organizational und individual children orientation and its determinants: Changes from T0 to T1 and its influences

\* p ≤ .1; \*\* p ≤ .05



## Conclusions

Evaluating complex interventions like Fitkids requires not only the consideration of aimed outcomes (children's healthy development). In the first step, the drug counselling center's children orientation (e.g. organizational structures, employee's competences and consideration in consultations) need to be successfully implemented through the program. Therefore, personal and organizational conditions are required to successfully implement children orientated structures and procedures.

## Practical Implications

The evaluation study provides an overview of children orientation and its requirements in drug-counseling centers. The results contribute to additional knowledge about prerequisites of organizational change that can be used to positively influence implementation processes of children orientation.

## References

- Bothe, Patricia; Pfaff, Holger; Hower, Kira; Kons, Jörg; Groß, Sandra; Ansmann, Lena (2016): Organisationsentwicklung in der Sozialen Arbeit. Evaluation eines Programmes zur Förderung der Kindergesundheit in der Drogenberatung. In: Zeitschrift für Evaluation 15 (1), S. 122–132.
- Lenz, Albert (2010). Riskante Lebensbedingungen von Kindern psychisch und suchtkranker Eltern – Stärkung ihrer Ressourcen durch Angebote der Jugendhilfe: Materialien zum Dreizehnten Kinder- und Jugendbericht. (Sachverständigenkommission des 13. Kinder und Jugendberichts, Ed.). München: Sachverständigenkommission des 13. Kinder und Jugendberichts.
- European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (Ed.). (2008). Drugs and vulnerable groups of young people. Lissabon: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities.

## Contact

Kira Hower

University of Cologne Institute for Medical Sociology, Health Services Research and Rehabilitation Science  
Eupener Strasse 129  
D-50933 Cologne

Phone +49 (0)221 478 97141  
kira.hower@uk-koeln.de  
www.imvr.de

