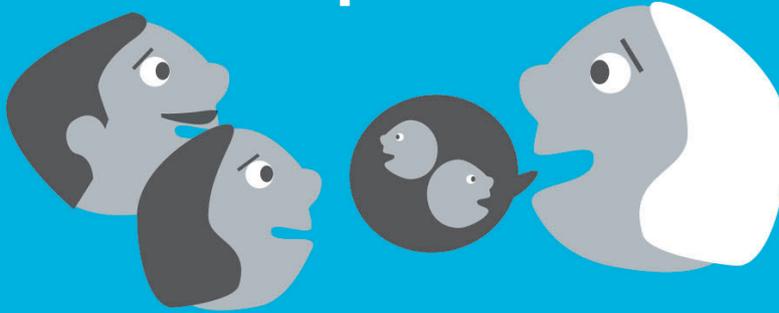


CASE LET'S TALK ABOUT CHILDREN SERVICE MODEL

Talking about the children when working with children and their parents



Talking about the children when working with children and their parents Preventing 25% of child welfare notifications would save around € 8,4 million

CASE: LET'S TALK ABOUT CHILDREN Service Model

Considerable savings by talking about the children when working with children and their parents

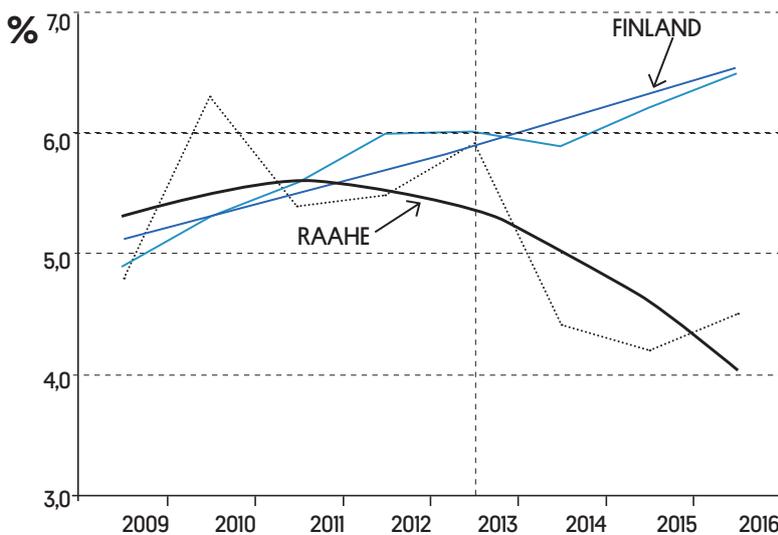
The costs of child welfare services are on the rise on a national level. The resources of social and health care services go into corrective measures, while small investments in early intervention could make the use of the heaviest and most expensive measures unnecessary. (Heinonen et al.)

The Let's Talk About Children intervention method has been researched in a randomised setting. It has been shown to relieve symptoms of depression and anxiety among children and improve their

behaviour in cases where the parent has a mental disorder. In this service model, all municipal actors commit to a shared goal to support the child's daily activities in cooperation with families, creating a service structure that supports cross-sectoral cooperation.

The diagram describes the effects of the implementation of the service model in municipal health and social services, early childhood education, and schools in one municipality.

CHILD WELFARE NOTIFICATIONS FOR ALL 0-17-YEAR-OLDS



One life
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The One Life health project strives towards a healthier Finland. The Finnish Brain Association, the Finnish Diabetes Association, the Finnish Lung Health Association, the Organisation for Respiratory Health, the Finnish Association for Mental Health, the Finnish Heart Association, and the Cancer Society of Finland have teamed up to promote people's health and welfare throughout their lives. Duodecim participates in the project as an expert organisation.

It shows how the percentage of children referred to child welfare services developed in comparison to the national level.

The implementation of the service model began in 2012, and it became fully functional in 2013. The number of child welfare notifications decreased by 25% between 2013 and 2016 (481-359=122). It seems that families received help before the situation developed into a crisis requiring the intervention of child welfare services. As the estimated cost of one evaluation made by the child welfare services is at 480 euros, the municipality in question saved 58,560 euros in these expenses. The municipality was then able to invest this sum in previously under-resourced open care services for families. This allowed the shift of focus to prevention and support.

Municipal statistics also show a significant decrease in the number of situations involving involuntary taking into care. According to estimates, the avoidance of being taken into care saves 60,000 euros per case.

Costs:

The national implementation of the service model will take approximately two years. 2.5 employees are needed for nation-wide coordination and consultation. This will cost approximately 225,000 euros per year, meaning 450,000 euros in two years.

The implementation of the service model is under way in nine regions, while nine regions still have not started the implementation. The national implementation of the service model would require additional training in these nine regions. The training lasts nine days in total. The training would be organised by a private sector service provider, costing 1,000 euros per day, or 9,000 euros in total. The training would cost a total of 81,000 euros for the nine municipalities.

National costs in total: coordination €450,000 + training €81,000 + other costs €20,000 = €551,000.

Savings:

Around 70,000 child welfare notifications were submitted in Finland in 2016 (à €480). Their total cost amounts to 33.6 million euros. Preventing 25% of the child welfare notifications would save 8.4 million euros. At the national level, this would save 7.85 million euros (€8.4 million - €0.55 million = €7.85 million).

Please note:

The estimates do not take into account the time required by the training nor the savings resulting from, for example, the decreased number of children taken into care.

The above-mentioned training costs have been estimated according to information given by private sector service providers. The regional authorities also train their own trainers, which would ensure the autonomy of the regions in relation to the development and maintenance of the service model. This will reduce the regional costs in the future.

Sources:

- Hanna Heinonen, Antti Väisänen, Tiia Hipp. Miten lastensuojelun kustannukset kertyvät. Central Union for Child Welfare 2012.
- Niemelä M, Kallunki H, Jokinen J, Räsänen S, Ala-Aho B, Hakko H, Ristikari T and Solantausta T (2019) Collective Impact on Prevention: Let's Talk About Children Service Model and Decrease in Referrals to Child Protection Services. Front. Psychiatry 10:64. doi: 10.3389/fpsyt.2019.00064
- Niemelä M, Kallunki H, Jokinen J, Räsänen S, Ala-Aho B, Hakko H, Ristikari T, Solantausta T. (2019) Collective Impact on Prevention: Let's Talk about Children Service Model and Decrease in Referrals to Child Protection Services. Frontiers in Psychiatry (in print).



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