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## Summary

The German Network for Children's Health and Environment (NCHE) offers a training program called "Prevention Assistant" for paediatric doctor's assistants and paediatric nurses. The course consists of 84 teaching lessons. The training is certified by the German Federal Medical Association. During these courses paediatric doctor's assistants and nurses are trained to motivate children and their parents to healthier behavioural patterns whilst the families attend the outpatient clinic for regular appointments. The initial project was supported 2002 to 2004 by the German Ministry of Health (Gz. 328-1755-20). Over 300 participants were successfully trained between 2003 and 2008.



## Content of the training

The training program increases the knowledge and the skills of the participants. Main topics are environmental tobacco smoke, accidents, vaccinations, breast feeding, SIDS, children's diet, allergy prevention, and physical activities. The program is aimed to improve preventive capacities for the target group of infants, children, teenagers and their families. Skill training includes communication skills, learning from role model, bio-psycho-social health concepts and coordination and organisation of preventive medicine in the clinic. The participants learn to use an intranet platform [www.praeventionsassistentin.de](http://www.praeventionsassistentin.de) which enables them to continue broaden their experience and knowledge even after the training has finished.

## Setting approach

The paediatric outpatient clinic is an important setting for health promotion, as regular preventive medical checkups for children are well accepted and offer a unique opportunity to reach over 90 % of all children. In this important setting nurses and doctor's assistants with the above named training for "Prevention Assistants" have the opportunity to contact the patients frequently and use this opportunity to increase knowledge of the patient and caretakers to enable them to recognise, change or just improve behaviours.



## Evaluation

The network requested an external study to evaluate the first version of the program from 2003 to 2005. Aim of the study was to obtain detailed information on the working areas of preventive assistants. The aspect of sustainability plays a major role, since a large number of the participants had finished the training more than two years ago. The methodology included a written questionnaire filled by the graduates from 2003 until 2005. The results revealed a very positive feedback for this training program, but the results also indicated the need to optimise the the transfer of information into the "Prevention Assistant's" daily routine.



## Perspectives

The training program targets to cover an important sector of the growing need for primary paediatric prevention, to raise the professional attractiveness of medical assistants and to reduce the workload of physicians in outpatient and clinical settings. To optimise the achieving of this goal, the network will expand efforts for a stronger cooperation of medical assistants and physicians. The authors are among the founders of the "German Academy for Prevention and Health Promotion for Children and Adolescents". The new academy guarantees the high quality of the training and aims to spread the training throughout Germany. Cooperation with European partners is a priority goal.

**Training locations & development**

**2001**  
Concept

**2002-2003**  
Governmental support

**Since 2003**  
Osnabrück  
Munich

**Since 2005**  
Bad Orb

**2006**  
External evaluation

**Since 2006**  
Berlin

**2007**  
Certification

**2008**  
German Academy for Prevention and Health Promotion

**2009**  
European Partners?

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