

„Inclusion and Sports with Handicap“

A project to bring pupils closer to inclusion and disability

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Introduction To bring inclusion closer to pupils we started the project “Inclusion and Sports with Handicap” in cooperation with a local integrated school. The purpose was to raise the children’s awareness for people with disabilities and for an inclusive education system.

Topics of the project

Theoretical input

- Information
- Discussion
- Reflexion

Contact with handicapped people

Simulation of different disabilities

Sports for people with disabilities



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Methods

For measuring changes in attitude towards peers with disabilities we analysed written questionnaires before and after the project using the “Chedoke-McMaster Attitudes Towards Children with Handicaps Scale” (CATCH) which is one of the most complete instruments in this field and includes all three attitude components (Vignes et al., 2008). The CATCH-score is generated as described by Rosenbaum et al. (1986) by encoding negatively worded items, summing items, dividing sums by the number of items and multiplying by 10. Differences between the questionnaires were tested by Wilcoxon signed-rang test. In ten lessons within six weeks 32 participants aged 15-16 took part in the project. Out of the 32 data sets 13 were analysed. 11 were excluded because of incomplete data in both questionnaires before and after the intervention. Further 8 were not considered because of answering more than 25% of the questions with “I can’t decide”.

Results

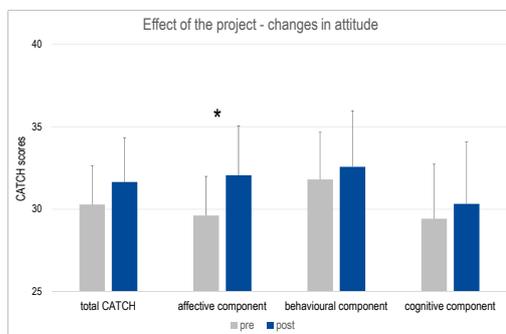


Fig. 1: Effect of the project – changes in attitude (total CATCH score and attitude components)

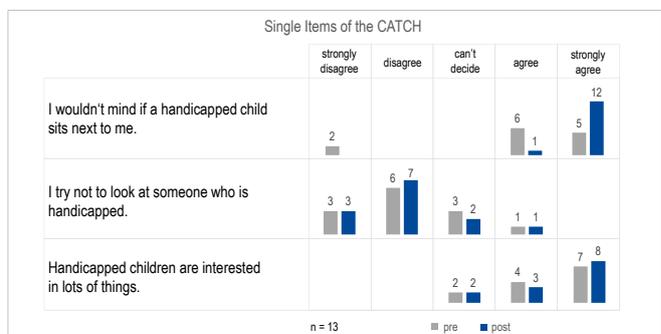


Fig. 2: Single items of the CATCH

While there were significant changes ($p = .013$) in attitude in the affective sector, no significant changes can be found in behavioural and cognitive components and total CATCH-score (Figure 1). Representative questions out of 36 are shown in Figure 2.

Discussion

Even after a relatively short period of six weeks the attitude towards people with disabilities changed measurably and in case of attitude even significantly. Pupils came in contact to people with an impairment and empathized with them. In conclusion, a comparably short sensitization period is sufficient to raise children’s awareness for people with disabilities and inclusion.

References

Rosenbaum, P. L., Armstrong, R. W., & King, S. M. (1986). Children’s attitudes toward disabled peers: A self-report measure. *Journal of Pediatric Psychology*, 11(4), 517-530.
Vignes, C., Coley, N., Grandjean, H., Godeau, E., & Arnaud, C. (2008). Measuring children’s attitudes towards peers with disabilities: A review of instruments. *Developmental Medicine & Child Neurology*, 50, 182-189.

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