Reducing School Failures – a comprehensive action plan for health and regional development

- The experience of Region Västra Götaland (VGR) Sweden
Region Västra Götaland

Two main responsibilities:
1) Health authority and health care provider – 53 000 employees
2) Regional development
- 25% of Sweden’s trade
- Major transport hub in Scandinavia
- European top position in R&D investments
- Strong clusters

- 1.6 million inhabitants
- 24 000 km²
- 49 municipalities
- Major city: Gothenburg
VG2020 – our regional strategy

- EU2020 → VG2020 → Our everyday work
- A region for everyone
- All inhabitants in Västra Götaland shall have the opportunity to grow and develop through; education, training, work and good communications. Exclusion must be combatted and social and economic differences reduced. Diversity among inhabitants is a resource that needs to be better utilized
Proportion (percent) students leaving compulsory school and eligible for secondary school in each of the 49 municipalities in Västra Götaland 2017

From a public health perspective:
- The health is generally good
- The health gap is increasing
A complex challenge

- The individual child
- The socio-economic and cultural background
- The school organisation
- The education system
Absence leads to alienation

- Social exclusion, no self-confidence
- Mental illness – depression, anxiety, sleeping problems
- Not eligible for further studies
- Unemployment
- Addiction
The Common Goal for joint action

- Every student must leave elementary school and upper-secondary-school with complete grades.

- The common goal contains work and activities that are both generic and specific. The generic activities are universal and addressing all children while the more specific activities are targeting children at risk and/or with specific problems.
Five target areas for joint action

- Promote sustainable cross sector cooperation
- Promote mental health and fight the consequences of mental illness
- Stimulate the joy of studying
- Reduce the negative impact that migration has on school achievements
- Reduce the impact of social determinants and risk-factors
From Region Västra Götaland’s Activity plan

- Promote sustainable cross sector cooperation – Organize workshops and meetings with policymakers from different departments
- Promote mental health and fight the consequences of mental illness – Implement a toolkit for primary care services to promote inclusiveness and equal parenthood
- Reduce the negative impact that migration has on school achievements – Build capacity for healthcare staff in giving appropriate services to migrant populations
- Stimulate the joy of studying – Develop tailor-made Adult Education in residential environments through “The Regional Folk high schools”
- Reduce the impact of social determinants and risk-factors – Build on evidence through developing a common regional school health database
A strong focus...

- On something tangible,
- On something that is clearly understood and makes sense
- Every stakeholder and partner is able to recognize its own responsibility and willing to bring it to the table
The upcoming process

- Being creative and keeping up the momentum
- Embedding change into existing structures
- Evaluate and monitor progress
- Trusting the process
Thank you!

- For more information, visit our website [www.vgregion.se/fullfoljdastudier](http://www.vgregion.se/fullfoljdastudier)
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Cross-sector collaboration
Key messages

- **Find a common purpose** emphasize the potential of the common good.
- **Do background analysis** in order to assess the characteristics of the situation.
- **Involve and empower other sectors**
- **Emphasize governance** processes involving people and power over constructing a formal framework of structures.
- **Create ownership** and involvement from all stakeholders.
- **Joint mobilization requires leadership** characterized by courage and willingness to take risks.
Trust the process

Be a sounding board that moves in-between the stakeholders like a free agent (or a broker or convener), and guide the process by being receptive and flowing with it rather than controlling it. Trust that the stakeholders will jointly make the ‘best informed’ decisions.