

Early Childhood Interventions

Figures, Data and Facts 2023

FRÜDOK Annual Report

Marbler, Carina; Sagerschnig, Sophie; Scolik, Fiona; Winkler, Petra (2024): Frühe Hilfen. Zahlen, Daten und Fakten 2023. FRÜDOK-Jahresbericht. Gesundheit Österreich, Wien

Summary

Background

Early childhood intervention aims to provide (expectant) parents and families with small children in stressful life situations with needs-based support and thereby promote health equity. Since the beginning of 2015, regional early childhood intervention networks have been set up or expanded in all provinces according to a national model. In 2023 the nationwide expansion took place and early childhood intervention is now available to all families in need.

Methods

Information on these families and the family support provided is recorded by family supporters in the standardised documentation system FRÜDOK. The National Centre for Early Childhood Intervention (NZFH.at) administers this documentation system, carries out plausibility checks and analyses the information obtained each year. The results are published descriptively in the form of this FRÜDOK annual report, supplemented by structural characteristics of the regional networks and the results of the feedback survey.

Findings

In 2023, a peak of 3,975 families were newly referred to regional networks by a wide range of professionals or contacted a network themselves. 3,674 families were supported throughout the year, 2,336 of them were newly supported in 2023 and 1,440 family supports were completed. A further 709 families took advantage of short-term support.

Nationales Zentrum Frühe Hilfen, Stubenring 6, 1010 Wien, <http://www.fruehehilfen.at/>

67 percent of family supports started during pregnancy or in the first three months of the child's life. In line with the objectives of the early childhood intervention, the families supported had various social, psychological and/or medical burdens. In 2023, a particularly large number of families at risk of poverty (58 percent), single-parent families (~25 percent), mothers with migration experience (44 percent) and families with children who showed signs of developmental delay or disorder (around 10 percent) or who had an increased need for therapy or care (around 15 percent) were reached.

One in five families gave written feedback at the end of the support, expressing great satisfaction. 86 percent of families would use the early childhood intervention again if they needed support and would recommend it to other families.

Conclusion

The nationwide expansion of early childhood intervention in Austria was made possible with funding from the EU programme "NextGenerationEU" in the framework of the Austrian Resilience and Recovery Plan and was completed in 2023. The regional early childhood intervention networks have now been able to support significantly more families in their specific life situations, reduce their burdens as much as possible and activate (existing) resources.

Keywords

Frühe Hilfen, early childhood intervention, documentation