Current and future child and adolescent mental health policy (CAMHP)

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There exists the need to prioritize CAMH as important policy component in EU

Relative success in raising CAMH awareness and visibility in the EU

European Pact on Mental Health and Well-being: 3 priority areas relevant to CAMH
- Youth, Education and Mental Health
- Prevention of Depression and Suicide
- Combating Stigma and Social Exclusion
CAMHEE project in the context of EU enlargement and mental health

- Project initiated in 2005, started in 2007 and finished in 2009

- Rationale: CAMH a “neglected priority” in Central/Eastern Europe

- Regional dimension: 35 partners from 16 countries (8 “old” and 8 “new”). Focus: EU enlargement and mutual learning between “new” and “old” EU member states

- Priorities:
  - development of evidence-based CAMH policies
  - shift to community based services and psychosocial intervention
  - supporting parenting skills, families with mentally ill parents
  - Addressing mental health concerns in schools

- Effective CAMH policies and practices, if addressed with higher level of political will, may positively contribute to future of Europe
Findings from the Project

Gaps
- Lack of evidence
- Weak evaluation of outcomes
- Poor governance
- Lack of involvement of stakeholders
- Ineffective use of resources
- Risk of reinforcement of vicious circle

Opportunities
- Think globally, act locally
- Effectively use the huge existing resources
- Use human rights treaties (CRC, CRPD) as effective tools
- Increase visibility of CAMH as inter-sectoral issue in political agenda
Challenges for Governments in Countries in Transition

- Develop evidence-based policies
- Change culture of evaluation in all levels (policy, services, individual cases)
- Apply human rights approach (4 guiding principles of the UN CRC)
- Avoid simple solutions
- Take account of economic arguments
- Implement modern public health approaches and reconsider role of medical model
Involvement of all relevant stakeholders

- Rights of children to be heard and taken into account
- Need for adolescent-friendly services
- Parents as a huge resource and partner in all levels of decision making
- Support NGOs as service providers and as advocates of rights of services users
- Importance of mass media in strengthening discourse
- Shift of paradigm to an effective investment in CAMH implies an active involvement of all stakeholders and broad consensus
EU 2020 Strategy: Priorities for the CAMH

- Investing in competent parenting
- Addressing violence against and amongst children and youth
- Understanding the wider social determinants of CAMH and preventing CAMH services from further medicalization
- De-institutionalization of child care services through prioritizing family support services
- Effective links of CAMH specialist teams with primary healthcare, schools and social services
How could Commission and Member States contribute to EU Strategy?

- Identify, support and replicate best practices throughout EU countries
- Facilitate synergies between current and future initiatives in education and CAMH
- Support efforts of new Member States to develop evidence-based CAMH policies and services
- Prevent Member States from retrogressive decisions with regard to youth violence and family policies
- Synergy with implementation of UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and other international treaties
- Use EU enlargement process as argument of the urgent need to invest in health and social services across the EU