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Reducing child mental ill-health in schools: Should we reallocate municipality resources?



Lisa Wellander
Social Pediatrics
Women's and Children's Health
Uppsala University
lisa.wellander@kbh.uu.se



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Child mental ill-health is a major public health problem

- 15-25 % of Swedish children have mental ill-health
 - ADHD
 - Psychosocial problems
 - Depression
 - Anxiety
- Government: it should be prioritized
- Risk factors: should be prevented early!
- School is an important arena





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What is the cost of child mental ill-health in school?

An example from a municipality:

- Special support in school (143 children):
 - Teacher
 - Personal assistant
 - Special education group for 8 children

Equation:

- Salary for special support * Numbers of children

Example:

- Teacher * Children with depression/anxiety
- 26 000 * 6



Total municipality cost

Mental ill-health	Total cost per month (SEK)
Depression/anxiety	156 000
Psychosocial problems	287 293
ADHD	1 237 576



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There must be a better way!

Now: Reactive approach

What if: Preventive approach?



Preventive interventions

School program	Mental health indicator	Cost per child (SEK)	Total running cost (SEK)	Improvement in mental health indicator (%)
Good Behaviour Game	Aggressive behaviour	128	1 656	Boys: 6 Girls: 14
Comet For Teachers	Conduct Problems	213	2 760	26
FRIENDS	Anxiety	141	1 833	31
SET	Anxiety	1097	14 214	60



Mental ill-health and special support	Cost of action per child and month (SEK)	School program	Mental health indicator	Cost per child (SEK)	Equivalent to serving number of children in a school program
ADHD – Personal assistant	18 780	Good Behaviour Game	Aggressive behaviour	128	146
Psychosocial problems – Special education group	4 424	Comet For Teachers	Conduct Problems	213	88
Depression/Anxiety - Teacher	26 000	FRIENDS	Anxiety	141	184
Depression/Anxiety - Teacher	26 000	SET	Anxiety	1097	23



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Is it a good idea?



Cacilo Bîmekull Design 2009





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Conclusion:



Cecilia Björnkull Design 2009



- **Yes, it is important to consider the opportunity of reallocating resources to preventive interventions**
- **Further studies are needed**