

ABSTRACT

Adolescents' leisure behaviors can be a developmental asset for positive development or a risk factor for maladjustment. According to recent research, promotion of leisure-related life-skills is a promising means of the prevention against substance misuse in adolescence. The US-American program *TimeWise* now has been applied and evaluated in a German School context.

THE PROGRAM *TimeWise*

TimeWise aims to promote leisure-related life-skills, that indirectly influence substance use in adolescents. The program has been developed and successfully evaluated in the US (Caldwell & Smith, PSU). *TimeWise* was translated into German and also adapted to German school and leisure contexts. Teachers were facilitators of the program (six units / 50 min. each) after taking part in a one-day facilitator training session.

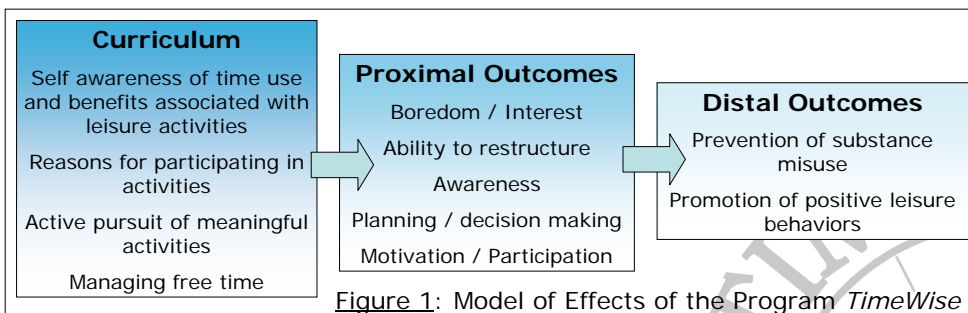


Figure 1: Model of Effects of the Program *TimeWise*

AIMS

- (1) To test practicability / acceptance of the program *TimeWise* in Germany
- (2) To assess program effects on leisure and substance use

METHODS

TimeWise was implemented in six classes of 7th graders (13 yrs., N=127) of three college-bound schools. Same aged students of three other schools not involved in a specific intervention formed the control group (N=151) (quasi-experimental design with pre-test / post-test, and 6 month follow up measurement).

RESULTS

(1) Process Evaluation

Quality of implementation was high (81% of the content was implemented completely by the teachers); *Acceptance of TimeWise* among the students was divided (49% of the student did not wish to participate in the program again)

(2) Outcome Evaluation

- No systematic short and long-term effects were found on leisure activities and substance use

DISCUSSION AND FUTURE PLANS

In contrast to the US-findings, low acceptance of *TimeWise*, and only limited positive effects of *TimeWise* were found in a German school context

- Students were already highly involved in structured leisure and came probably from school and community contexts with high resources
- Supplemental moderator analyses showed that socioeconomic status (*objective criterion*) significantly influences the efficacy of the *TimeWise* program whereas awareness of leisure opportunities (*subjective criterion*) does not make a difference

FUTURE PLANS

- Implementation of the program *TimeWise* in different school contexts (college-bound and lower-track schools)
- Selection of schools from areas with high and low socioeconomic status (SES) based on official statistics (e.g., Deutsches Bundesamt für Statistik)
- Results indicated that there is a higher need for improving leisure related skills in low SES students and lower track schools, but the intervention effects of the program were only somewhat higher than in higher track schools and students from low SES families
- Adaptations of the program are clearly needed in German school contexts

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