Creating an atmosphere where each child in preschool can flourish in harmony with their environment

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Introduction

- Childhood mental health promotion
- Salutogenic approach
- Positive early life experiences
- Young children spend a large amount of time in preschool
- Unique opportunities to promote mental health

Aim

To illuminate teachers’ views of what they do in ordinary work to promote mental health among preschool children.
Method

Design
• A qualitative study with a descriptive and exploratory design

Informants and data collection
• Six focus group interviews with preschool teachers

Data analysis
• Qualitative content analyses

Ref: Graneheim and Lundman 2004, Hsieh and Shannon 2005
### Results

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Structured world

Follow up
“When we changed our attitudes, the child changed, too. It is important how we look at activities and how to change them, instead of changing the child” (focus group 3).

Collaboration with parents
“I really believe in relationships, get to know, come close, primarily with the parents. If we win their confidence, we also automatically win the children’s confidence” (focus group 1).
Pleasant climate

Interaction in play

“...if it never is someone who sees you do not get to play with others or always get the role, for example as the dog... if you are given a role in preschool, it is easy to label oneself that I have this role” (focus group 2).

Spirit in the work team

“If we enjoy ourselves and feel good in our team, I think it is reflected directly to the children” (focus group 4).
Affirming the child

Confirm
“You must have a sense of feeling in every situation and for every little child. How much can this child manage, how much can I push, how much encouragement is needed? This is an incredible balancing act” (focus group 1).

Understand emotions
“We show pictures with happy, angry and sad faces... then they can practice, how it feels when I'm happy, and how it feels when I'm sad... much of this of course is to make them feel good mentally” (focus group 1).
Conclusion and implication

• Picture of teachers’ views of what they do
• Knowledge and inspiration
• Results- and discussion publication
• Education – new study
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