RESLEA WP3

OVERVIEW: Inventory of good practice on reaching young people (YP)

1.Country: Portugal, Associação EPIS – Empresários Pela Inclusão Social, www.epis.pt   Project leader: Diogo Simões Pereira, dsp@epis.pt
2.Target Group: Students from 12 to 18 years, with low school performance and/or track record of school failure and of dropout risk. In Portugal, in these levels of education, about 30% of students have risk of failure at the end of school year. School failure national rate varies between 14% and 20% in these levels of education (3rd cycle).
3. What is the good practice on reaching YP? What gaps/needs of YP did it cover?   These students have very low motivation to be in school, because of personal, family or socio-economic problems. This students need a specific "out of class room" empowering support (CAPACITATION), in order to overcome their major barriers to school dedication and good performance.   This method is based on two steps: (1) risk screening of students and risk clustering based in four categories – student, family, school and social context – and (2) empowering methodology and customized plans implemented by a fully dedicated mediator that has a portfolio of up to 60-80 students. With this procedures in place, objective and quasi-exhaustive criteria apply to the selection of students in risk and adequate time and intensity of intervention by the mediator allow quantitative and qualitative improvements, measured on an individual and portfolio basis.
4. What specific youth are targeted?   It is universal and fully transversal. With the screening model of EPIS, we can apply the methodology to large groups of students. This risk clustering allows us to identify different categories of risk, that will determine different levels of intervention.
5. What strategies & methodologies were used to reach the YP through this good practice?   As we use this methodology in schools, we establish partnerships with school leadership teams or local governments in the beginning of the school year, to start the screening phase as soon as possible in order to select and organize the group of about 30% of students that will probably need further help along the year. This objective is to have firs quick wins in the first year of the program.
6. What tools are used to reach the YP through this good practice?   We have the following tools:

SCREENING PHASE: scoring of risk based on four categories – student, family, school, and social context; risk analysis algorithm to identify risk clusters and further organization of portfolios for intensive capacitation, moderate capacitation and risk follow-up.

EMPOWERING/CAPACITATION PHASE: capacitation manuals with different procedures/combinations based on risk profile of the screening model; web workflow to build customized plans and measure improvements; academy format to training and coaching-on-the-field the mediators.

Along with this, we organize seminars and conferences to all the education communities where we are working, giving special attention to teachers and parents, but also social networks in the local area/community.

7. How did you evaluate the Good Practice initiative and what were the lessons learned?

This program is in place since 2007: 30.000 students have been screened and 10.000 have had intervention by 2-3 years. We have different levels of evaluation:

- By our Scientific Board, every six months to a year

- By quantitative improvement in school success rates of our portfolios of students, in absolute terms and in relative terms to the rest of school population

- By benchmarking our results among our schools and provinces and also among national results

- By opening our data-base to academia, that has already produced relevant work

8.Sources and additional information

www.epis.pt

http://planeta.epis.pt (username and password required to vsb@epis.pt)

RESLEA WP3

EVALUATION OF GOOD PRACTICE

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1. Qualitative and quantitative inputs

Main inputs, since 2007

- Private and public investment in these program: about 10 million €

- 12 locations with EPIS program from North to South of Portugal, in partnership with the Ministry of Education and Municipalities.

- 92 schools involved and 92 full-time mediators (teachers, psychologists, social technicians).

- About 30.000 students of 3rd cycle with screening of risk

- About 85% of parents allowed their kids to be submitted to the screening process, which involves the collection of personal and familiar confidential data (allowed by Portuguese authorities).

- About 10.000 in capacitation portfolios received "capacitation services" from the mediators up to 2-3 times per month (portfolios of 60 to 80 students per mediator). Sessions may vary between 30 minutes and 90 minutes and can be individual or in small groups.

- Sessions include personal assessment and coaching, personal and interpersonal skill training (time management, nutrition, health and well being routines, stress, social interaction, self-control …) and also methods of studying.

- In each location, several seminars and training sessions to students families and social networks.

- In each location, close partnering with local protection commissions for children and young people.

- 5 EPIS manuals have been written and published in Portugal, with more than 26.000 books distributed countrywide.

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2. Qualitative and quantitative outputs (achieved or expected)

Main qualitative output results

- Screening of students in risk allows an immediate quantum leap in terms of attention and input effort from stakeholders: (1) students and families get to know that they need extra work and new behaviour/rules; (2) schools and teachers focus on specific targets and develop action plans for each individual that should be shared with EPIS mediators.

- In a short period on time, a vast majority of the students in our portfolios change their attitude and dedication towards school, teachers and classes. The rate of school absence tends to decrease in a

couple of months.

- Partnering with protection commissions and with social networks allowed to help about 3% of global portfolio students/families in situations that required the participation of social security, health family assistance or eventually judicial authorities.

- Many other schools and teachers out of the 12 regions adopted partially EPIS capacitation procedures.

Main quantitative output results

- Please refer to the chapter 3 of this section.

- About 1.400 "new good students" in a period of 3 years, ie, students that started to perform well and succeeded at the year-end, after a track record of school failure.

- In a system of grades from 1 to 5 (being 1 and 2 failure levels), after 1 year, performance increase is seen not only in the reduction of 1's and 2's, but also in the increase of 4's and 5's. This means that students in risk can reach high levels of performance after a adequate period of capacitation by EPIS mediators.

- After succeeding in the 9th school year, students leave our EPIS program, through a phase-out process called "take-off". About 85% of these students proceed with their studies towards the 12th school year, be it after 1 or 2 years of taking-off.

- In 2012, we hope to have the first generation of "EPIS good students" to enter in the university. Although a minority, they will be a very strong inspiration for the other generations.

3.Quantitative results in terms of academic success (achieved or expected)

We measure the improvement of each student grades every term relative to the same one in the previous year. But the most important result is the 3rd term success school rate improvement:

2009 vs 2008: success rate of 5.812 students increased 16 percentage points, from 58% to 74%.

2010 vs 2009: success rate of 3.404 students increased 3 percentage points, from 74% to 77%.

2011 vs 2010: success rate of 1.027 students increased 25 percentage points, from 57% to 82%.

This program works with "portfolio revolving", which means that we have exits and entries every year.

4. Key elements and results that could be replicable

All the elements are replicable in Portugal and Europe (OECD education standards), because they are not specific for Portugal.

In the Screening Phase, we use standard parameters (age, sex, grades, …) and international indicators (Family Apgar, Graffar, …), that would require little adaptation to other countries.

In the Capacitation Phase, we use procedures that are supported by Psychology international common practices, validated by a project team of university professors (all PHD's).

5. Potential to operate at a larger scale (scalability)

All the methodology is supported by a web digital workflow that allows multisite projects since 2007. We screened more than 30.000 students since 2007, in 12 different locations from North to South of Portugal, involving more than 90 schools and about 80 full-time mediators. This platform can be used in any broader scale.

6. Geographical dissemination on a national and international basis, in terms of share of schools and students

We have screened more than 30.000 students since 2007, in 12 different locations from North to South of Portugal, involving more than 90 schools and about 80 full-time mediators.

These figures represent more than 8% of schools and students in Portugal in the 3rd cycle. This represents the biggest screening process ever made in Portugal for these ages.

7.Lessons learned

a. Families are open for external help if we explain the objectives and methods in place – this was not our initial belief.

b. Students in risk might belong to different social and economic classes. There seems to exist an urban and rural pattern on top of parental literacy and economic conditions. Parental guidance and time spent with children are critical factors.

c. In a pilot test of 3 years, this model proved to allow significant quantitative improvement in academic performance of students in risk.

d. Different professional background of mediators is not a critical factor for the output. Dedication and methodological rigor are the most important ones – besides trust, they allow continuous work and incremental effectiveness in the mediators' sessions.

e. On-going coaching-on-the-field of mediators is critical after an initial period of class training.

f. Ideal portfolio should be between 40 and 60 students – better results tend to be reached in these conditions and it is still an efficient dimension from an economic perspective.

g. After taking-off, most of students tend to invest in school up to de 12th grade – about 85%.

h. This capacitation model can also be applied to school leavers, in order to prepare them to return to school or professional education. EPIS has already done that in one municipality with 6 school groupings with a rate of success in returning to school of more than 50% of students.

8.Key elements for pilot model of 11 months

Screening: a simplified model can be applied to select students in risk.

Capacitation: manuals and procedures can be translated to English and applied in several locations.

Mediators: teachers can be easily allocated to this type of work, provided that they have an adequate training and coaching program.

Quick wins: significant improvements in up to 30% of students in the portfolios can be reached in 6 to 9 months of capacitation.

Example of screen the EPIS IT Platform

epis
EMPRESÁRIOS PELA INCLUSÃO SOCIAL

Rede de Mediadores

👤 Diogo Simões Pereira (Direcção)

Estatísticas > Global Aluno

| Global | Screening | Capacitação | Resultados | Epis 24 |

Filtros globais

Ciclo	3.º Ciclo ▾
Colheita	▾
Ano lectivo	2011/2012 ▾
Ano	▾
Concelho	

Menu Screening:
- Autorizações
- Sinalizados
- Sinalizados/Factor
- Sinalização por Grau de Risco
- Screening Aluno
- Screening Escola
- Screening Família
- Screening Graffar
- Sinalização Mepis

Turma [ ]

Acções
- 🗑 Limpar Filtros
- 🔄 Actualizar Dados

Resultados

— Global —

	# Alunos	% Registados	% Autorizados
Número total de alunos registados	14847	100.00	-
Número total de alunos à espera de autorização	5012	33.76	-
Número total de alunos não autorizados	1435	9.67	-
Número total de alunos autorizados	8400	56.58	100.00
Número total de alunos em sinalização	30	0.20	0.36
Número total de alunos sinalizados	8201	55.24	97.63
Número total de alunos com factores de risco	4698	31.64	55.93
Número total de alunos sem risco	3503	23.59	41.70
Alunos sem risco com reunião de fecho	1728	11.64	20.57
Alunos em turmas CEF	1049	7.07	12.49

% Alunos sinalizados com factor de risco	57.29

— Situação Curricular —

	Total Alunos	
	#	%
Frequência (todos)	14056	94.67
Frequência - Aluno inscrito pela primeira vez no sistema de ensino português	6	0.04
Frequência - NEE Necessidades Educativas Especiais (com nota)	140	0.94
Frequência - NEE Necessidades Educativas Especiais (sem nota)	30	0.20
Frequência - PCA Currículo Alternativo (com nota)	131	0.88
Frequência - PCA Currículo Alternativo (sem nota)	1	0.01
Frequência (com Nota)	13632	91.82