

Strengthening Mentoring Programmes through a National Campaign

Facilitator and room number: Szilvia Simon, Julia Schermann, Claudius Baritz; 1.201

Documented by: Alena Lohnert

Number of participants: 11

Starting hypothesis:

Julia Schermann and Claudius Baritz work for the national campaign “Aktion zusammen wachsen (AZW) – Bildungspatenschaften stärken, Integration fördern” of the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth. They perceive themselves as an integration campaign, which strengthens educational mentoring and promotes integration.

Sequence of content:

During the session the facilitators presented the campaign targets, their instruments including the website with a database, publications, conferences, expert meetings as well as their federal service centre. Iain Forbes, who participated in the session, also explained his work at the Scottish Mentoring Network.

Main facts presented by the facilitators:

The heart of the AZW is its database presented at the website www.aktion-zusammen-wachsen.de. On one hand, it provides information and knowledge developed by the participating mentoring projects (>950 projects). On the other hand, newcomers looking for projects in their region can find a huge variety of programmes on the database. Furthermore, AZW connects practitioners online, but also through conferences and expert meetings. Finally, the AZW federal service centre, a unique institution, provides general advice and help to mentoring projects.

Three main questions raised during the discussion:

Why was mentoring chosen as an intervention method?

How did the idea of a national campaign evolve?

Is competition or judgement of mentoring programmes, e.g. through the “project of the year/month” a good or a bad thing?

Result/s of Session:

In beginning of 2008, when AZW was established, it was a time when mentoring programmes started to be easily realised and the number of programmes scaled up. There was no special social pressure in which the campaign was started. However, evaluation showed that there was a need to support mentoring programmes through a platform such as AZW.