A school-community approach to influence the determinants of a healthy and balanced growing up.
Shape Up is a European project supported by the European Commission Directorate General for Health and Consumer Affairs. It has been selected for funding under the Health Determinants strand of the European Union Public Health Action Programme.
This document has been created to present the Shape Up project to local authorities and communities and to provide an overall view of all the aspects of the project, including the methodology, organisation, role of each partner, local activities, and the local and European framework to be used with the project.
The prevalence of childhood obesity is increasing throughout Europe. Governments, cities, companies and associations have devised action plans to address the causes of childhood obesity. Better nutrition (in and out of school) and more physical exercise are crucial components of any action plan.

What could be done differently? Why have these actions not been more effective? Is it because of a lack of time or a lack of ownership? Can we do more? How can we demonstrate what works?

The Shape Up partners think that it is possible to offer a new, effective and motivating framework both for research and actions. The cities participating in Shape Up have accepted this new challenge to work together with schools and design an alternative approach to address the determinants of childhood obesity, as well as promote health and wellbeing in their communities. The European Commission is supporting this approach, as it is convinced of its relevance.
The fundamental premise of Shape Up is that preventing childhood obesity and promoting health requires new ideas to convey a broader vision of the benefits of a balanced diet and regular physical activity.

Shape Up is not merely about involving children in pre-defined school-based or community-based activities, but also having them decide about the type of activities they want to implement. Participation is also about letting them decide for themselves the types of games, sports and other activities that most appeal to them.

Shape Up is not only child-centred; it also involves the school and community, including families, from the start, jointly with the child. It provides an opportunity for them all to think and talk about their lifestyles and living conditions and what they can do together to improve them.

Shape Up will not focus solely on obesity. Rather, the project will focus on a positive and critical view of food and body movement.

Shape Up is based on in-depth research, and will form a basis for further investigation. Research linked to the project will help to determine what works within specific contexts, and what is learnt from this experience will inform future health promotion activities.
Shape Up will co-fund the recruitment of two dedicated staff members in each city. These staff members will be responsible for training local community partners and monitoring the project at a city level over its three-year duration. Five European competence centres have joined forces to bring new expertise to the cities.

Shape Up will provide practical assistance to children in order to bring about changes in the daily life of the city. A Shape Up promoting group will be convened with the support of the city council to assist children, families and schools with the development of initiatives.

Shape Up will provide guidelines, materials and finance for specific health-promoting actions both in and out of school.

Cities are not alone, as 26 cities all over Europe are taking part in Shape Up. Imagine the opportunities for new exchanges, twinning, and the discovery of new cultural environments.

The Shape Up process, together with its results and achievements, will be evaluated in order to demonstrate the validity of its innovative approach.
A broader vision of nutrition and physical exercise

About food
“We don’t eat nutrition”

Childhood obesity is influenced by eating habits and general attitudes to food. However, Shape Up is based on a health concept that embraces both the absence of disease as well as quality of life. Consequently, the concept of healthy food takes into account an individual’s perspectives on food, including visual appeal, taste, social aspects, accessibility to fresh and good quality food, and the sustainable production and distribution of food.
About body movement

“Exercise is not only about sport”

Regular physical exercise involves not only formal exercise and sports but also body movement in a broader sense, for example, playing, dancing, walking and everyday mobility. It is connected to body image, as well as to the existing environmental and cultural conditions that foster children’s autonomous mobility (for instance, opportunities and appropriate spaces and paths in schools and cities).
Child participation

Dialogue and ownership
Evidence suggests that approaches focusing exclusively on changing individual health-related behaviour have proved unsuccessful. This is often because children are not given a sense of ownership regarding decisions affecting their wellbeing and, therefore, any lifestyle changes that occur are not sustainable.

What is so innovative about Shape Up?
Children have their own ideas about the issues surrounding obesity and can devise their own solutions and strategies to address these issues but, often, children are unable to implement these ideas. Shape Up hopes to make a difference by taking these ideas seriously and making them central to the community as a whole.

Shape Up will help the city to establish a dialogue-orientated and participatory approach (as opposed to ‘top down’ and ‘bottom up’ approaches), involving the exchange of ideas between professionals and young people, where children, young people and schools are viewed as active agents for change. The health promoting changes can take place in their own lives, schools, families and local communities.

School-Community collaboration
The idea of school-community collaboration is essential to the project. Through the child and the school, Shape Up aims to involve the whole community in shared reflections about healthy living conditions and lifestyles.

The collaboration between children, schools and the local community will involve different stakeholders. In some cities, key professionals are crucial partners to involve. In other cities, it might be families through intergenerational dialogue or politicians from the local setting.

Values and ethics
All the children will be involved in the project, following the principle of equal opportunities, inclusiveness and non-discrimination. Children will be involved in ways, at levels and at a pace appropriate to their capacities and interests.

Children who have issues with weight will not be singled out or stigmatised in any way. The word ‘obesity’ will not be used with children. They will all develop their own positive views about food, diet and movement without feeling that they are excluded or marginalised.

The focus of Shape Up is on the causes of obesity rather than on the behaviour of individual children. Specific methods of participation will be developed in partnership with children that will reflect their preferred styles and mediums of expression.

The age range, gender and abilities of children will be taken into account in the ways in which the participation is structured. Children will be encouraged to take part in evaluation processes.

The right of every child to privacy on all issues related to his or her body and self-esteem will be respected.
Shape Up will help you to implement an innovative participatory model known as IVAC (Investigation-Vision-Action-Change). This methodological approach has been developed in the health education area to support teachers and adults in educating and enabling children and young people to deal with health matters in competent, democratic and efficient ways. In dealing with the determinants of obesity, the approach helps teachers and other adults to support, facilitate and guide pupils in their investigation of the issues linked to food and body movement from a number of different perspectives (e.g.: cultural, social, geographical, intergenerational, medical, etc.). Moreover, with the help of this approach, children and young people are encouraged to develop their own visions for solutions to obesity problems, and to plan and take actions initiating changes that bring their visions closer to reality. In Shape Up, these actions will be planned and carried out in partnership with schools (teachers and pupils), local authorities and other stakeholders.

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The Danish University of Education (Denmark) is an expert in educational research and development in relation to participatory health education and promotion. The DPU has developed the IVAC approach through research with schools. The DPU will develop the publication of methodological guidelines that will be available for each participating city.
Shape Up in the city

Shape Up emphasises dialogue between children and adults, and this is facilitated by the Shape Up promoting group.

Shape Up promoting group

The group has the following objectives and tasks:

- Facilitating inter-institutional, inter-departmental and community-school dialogue and relationships;
- Supporting the start-up, management and spread of initiatives and activities that truly represent the visions and action plans developed by children and their schools;
- Identifying appropriate people, resources, places and settings for the proposed actions and creating conditions for their effective realisation;
- Monitoring, recording and evaluating local results;
- Developing future programmes.

Who can be a member in the city?

Potential members for the Shape Up promoting group are people who have children's and community well-being at heart and who have operated in the neighbourhood for some time, have an in-depth knowledge of its history and present conditions and are interested in its future. Possible candidates might be: parents, teachers and/or head teachers, social workers, street and youth workers, traffic police, members of voluntary local associations, athletic coaches and play leaders, local religious figures, local businesses, local architects or planners, local health professionals, representatives of environmental or agricultural associations, local chefs, etc.

More important than each individual’s professional or scientific competence and knowledge is his or her shared enthusiasm towards the objectives (and spirit) of Shape Up and convinced motivation and availability to contribute to the success of the project.

The ideas and views of children should be strongly represented in the group. This entails regularly scheduled, child-friendly meetings at which pupils have an opportunity to present their ideas and proposals with the support of a facilitator.

It is also important that the promoting group include a senior representative of the city council or local authority who can obtain support for the community proposals for change at the highest level.
Shape Up staff

Shape Up will help the city to train two Shape Up staff members:

The local coordinator. This person must be familiar with the organisation and the dynamics of the community, and will be responsible for:

- Coordinating and managing the work of the Shape Up promoting group;
- Managing the budget and administration of the project;
- Ensuring and facilitating daily contact between schools and the local institutions in the community, and coordinating joint events and activities;
- Assuming responsibility for communication between the project stakeholders and externally with journalists and national and international contacts.

The local facilitator. This person will be familiar with school culture and the in-service education of teachers, as well as school development processes, and will be responsible for:

- Carrying out the in-service education of school teachers and collaboration partners from the local community;
- Ensuring and facilitating links between the process of the project and general school development;
- Facilitating, in collaboration with the local coordinator, a Shape Up Week, during which the project and its outcomes are made visible to the local community;
- Helping schools to manage their virtual working spaces.

Note: As the majority of communication will be in English, the staff members need to be fluent in English.

<table>
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<th>Allocation/3 years</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
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<td>Local facilitator (days)</td>
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<td>40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Contact: Raymond Lorenzo (rayloren@tin.it)  
www abcitta.org

ABCittà (Italy) is an expert in participatory design and planning processes. ABCittà is a social cooperative made up of a group of professionals with different skills and knowledge ranging over a variety of fields: the promotion of children’s rights, childhood and youth culture, human and social sciences, sustainable development, management and organisation of complex systems, urban planning and urban design, and educational and developmental psychology.
Shape Up schools

Schools play a key twofold role in the Shape Up project: introducing and guiding pupils in educational work concerning issues related to obesity and physical exercise following the IVAC approach, and collaborating with the local community partners.

Each school is seen as a unique setting, with its own challenges, players and solutions. It is also a significant part of a broader community setting, in which interaction with the rest of the local stakeholders is crucial in order to address childhood obesity determinants and ensure children are well equipped to take action for their own wellbeing.

Therefore, Shape Up will draw upon the work carried out in the classroom, as well as place great emphasis on the collaboration between the school and the local community; the pupils going out into the community and taking health-promoting action, and adults sharing children’s concerns in the community setting.

The project aims to include pre-school, primary, and secondary school children from 4 to 16 years of age.

It will involve a minimum of three schools per city.
How to identify the Shape Up schools

A Shape Up school should:

- Have active support from the school’s head teacher and administration in charge of, among other things, issues related to school meals, suitable places for physical activities, etc. Shape Up is a project for the entire school, and not a class project;
- Allocate sufficient time and human resources to Shape Up;
- Be motivated to explore and promote new, innovative and participatory approaches to health education and promotion that tackle the determinants of childhood obesity;
- Collaborate with the local community and out-of-school activities;
- Benefit from a unique platform in order to gain visibility and transmit innovation;
- Benefit from extra resources to involve the whole school environment – teachers, pupils and families – in Shape Up, pay for specific activities, etc.;
- Benefit from the support and training provided by the local facilitator;
- Benefit from international collaboration with a large network of European schools and cities, working with the same topic and sharing the same overall approach.

Shape Up will propose innovative contents, including teacher guidelines and other resources, to schools.
“Acting together”

The initial action plan
(June – September 2006)

The Shape Up promoting group will outline the issues and challenges that need to be addressed and identify potential local collaboration partners.

This description will form the basis for the action plan to initiate Shape Up at the local level.

The Shape Up Charter

Strong local partnerships are essential to Shape Up’s implementation. We propose a Shape Up founding document summarising the main principles, and a Shape Up Charter signed by all the local partners.

Funding will be provided to support these activities under the supervision of the Shape Up local coordinator.

Contact: Sabine Schumann (sabine.schumann@paueducation.com)  www.paueducation.com

P.A.U. Education (Spain) offers a unique mix of know-how, involving pedagogical thinking, editorial activity, database management and community building. Over the past five years, P.A.U. Education has acquired considerable experience in creating and running cooperative projects in Europe and developing countries in partnership with bodies such as the European Commission, UNICEF and UNESCO. P.A.U. Education is one of the leading European experts in the promotion of e-learning communities.
The types of project activities and actions

Guided by adults (the teachers and the members of the local community), the pupils will develop their own visions as to possible solutions related to individual and social determinants of childhood obesity. Next, pupils and adults together will create an action plan to bring about health-related changes in their school and the local community, as well as their own behaviour.

Shape Up can bring about activities such as school gardening, walking to school projects, free play opportunities, intergenerational and intercultural projects, ecological mapping of everyday life, and actions aimed at specific changes, such as participatory space design or healthier food policies in schools or in the local community.

Many of these activities could have been proposed within other frameworks. Shape Up differs in that the activities and action plans are the outcome of a joint vision shared by children and adults. As a result, they are more likely to be successful and have a long-lasting and positive effect on the health of the community as a whole.

Shape Up Weeks

A full week of local events will give Shape Up additional visibility and highlight the community activities, answering the three following basic questions:

- What have we been doing during the school year?
- How can we expand the scope of the project?
- Where are we heading?

At the end of the project, a book will be published, showcasing the events that took place during Shape Up Week and the rest of the activities that took place during the school year.

The Shape Up Weeks will be organised at the end of each school year:

- May 2007
- May 2008
The portal will be used mainly by schools, including young people, their teachers and families. Each Shape Up promoting group in each participating city will make use of the online cooperative workspaces to coordinate its local activities.

**www.shapeupeurope.net** will be operational in June 2006.

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**Schulen ans Netz** (Germany) provides services for the development of a sustainable ICT infrastructure that makes content and platforms available for teaching and learning with new media and empowers actors for the management of change. It has expertise in building e-learning platforms.

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Since April 2005, the Shape Up newsletter has been keeping participants informed and has acted as a forum for discussion and sharing ideas. Please keep using this newsletter to inform, propose, hold dialogue, etc. Shape Up is now a reality.
Shape Up relies on a unique network of 26 cities in the 25 member states. This European network will facilitate the exchange of best practices, twinning and other agreements based on specific activities. The cooperative spirit will extend beyond the project itself, as strong links are built between all participants and consolidated during regular meetings.

Shape Up experiences, achievements and results will be disseminated and shared with the European Commission, the European Network of Health Promoting Schools and the broader community interested in research as well as health promotion and health education.

Local partners: who are we?

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Shape Up staff in the participating cities will have the opportunity to share experiences and ideas during regular network meetings. To make these exchanges more fruitful, the Shape Up network will be divided into three regions.
Evaluation, dissemination and visual code

The evaluation of the project
Shape Up uses an evaluation approach known as ‘realistic evaluation’, which seeks to determine what works, how and for whom. An essential part of the evaluation is the development of indicators at the macro and micro levels. These indicators reflect Shape Up’s objectives, and also the priorities set by the participating schools, cities and local communities.

The evaluation will use both qualitative and quantitative methods (such as surveys, interviews and focus groups) to examine changes in individual empowerment and competence, as well as the structural determinants of childhood obesity.

At the same time, the participating cities, including the schools and local partners, will be encouraged and supported to develop their own evaluation process.

The dissemination of the project
Shape Up will be a reference for further innovation. Research papers will be published in European journals. Experiences and successes will be shared with the media and other stakeholders throughout Europe. Results will be presented at the closing conference in 2008 and shared with the European Network of Health Promoting Schools.

Shape Up aims to be a source of inspiration for all European schools and cities with an interest in influencing the causes of childhood obesity. The Shape Up local partners in all 26 participating cities will be sharing practices and experiments.

Contact: Derek Colquhoun (D.Colquhoun@hull.ac.uk)

The Institute for Learning at the University of Hull (United Kingdom) is recognised as a research centre of excellence in learning and teaching, both nationally and internationally, whilst continuing to have a particular commitment to serving the educational needs of the local region. The Institute for Learning has a proven track record in the evaluation of school-based health projects and has achieved national recognition for its work.
Shape Up visual code

The local partners will benefit from a joint image to strengthen their actions and their sense of belonging to a network.

This visual code will consist of a logo and a set of applications for all types of materials and activities to be developed during the project.
 Coordination, organisation and schedule

Shape Up is coordinated by P.A.U. Education and the DPU Research Programme for Environmental and Health Education.

26 cities in 25 European countries are participating in Shape Up.

Competence centres involved in the project: P.A.U. Education (Spain), DPU (Denmark), Hull University (United Kingdom), Schulen ans Netz (Germany) and ABCittà (Italy).

During the project period, a number of international meetings and seminars (kick off meetings, capacity building seminars, teacher training courses, etc.) are carried out for local representatives. These activities form key elements of a supporting structure for the local projects.

The end of each school year will culminate in a Shape Up Week, during which local activities and results will be presented, disseminated and discussed at the local level.

Schedule

• Kick-off meeting (June)
• Regional meetings (September)
• Regional meetings (February)
• First Shape Up Week (May)

2006

2007

Sum Up

January-June 2006
• Preparation
Local development and health projects in the 26 cities and their schools are the core elements of Shape Up. Projects will be carried out during the following school years: 2006/07 and 2007/08.

The project will run over a three-year period, from 01.01.2006 to 31.12.08.

Guidelines, resources, models and methods will be developed and provided for local stakeholders (e.g.: teachers, key people, community members, etc.) to support and stimulate the local processes. The IVAC approach constitutes the main element of the approach and the guidelines.

The project will be evaluated during the entire process using a variety of evaluation techniques. Experiences and examples of best practices will be documented and published during the course of the project and distributed to all European countries as part of a wider dissemination process.

An interactive ICT portal will be developed in order to stimulate the mutual exchange of experiences, support and dissemination processes during the whole project period.

September 2006-June 2008
- Two full school years of implementation

June-December 2008
- Evaluation and dissemination of results
Supporting Shape Up

European Commission Directorate General for Health and Consumer Affairs (DG SANCO)
http://europa.eu.int/comm/dgs/health_consumer/index_en.htm

Shape Up is a European project supported by the European Commission Directorate General for Health and Consumer Affairs. It has been selected for funding under the Health Determinants strand of the European Union Public Health Action Programme.

Kraft Cares
www.kraft.com

Shape Up is supported in part by a grant from Kraft Cares, the community partnership programme of Kraft Foods. Kraft is proud to be a partner in this EU-wide school and community programme that extends to all 25 member states as part of its Healthy Lifestyle Initiatives to help communities around the world encourage healthy lifestyles in children and their families, with particular emphasis on the school environment. Kraft has supported a number of healthy lifestyle programmes worldwide, developed through strong local partnerships, to help address critical needs facing communities.

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