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| **Forskarskolan i hälsovetenskap (FiH)**Chris Bengtsson, Samordnare |  |

**FORSKNINGSPROJEKT för PRESUMTIVA DOKTORANDER att söka inför erbjudande om studieplats i Forskarskolan i hälsovetenskap och antagning som doktorand till Karolinska Institutet med kursstart 4 september, 2023**

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| **Huvudhandledare:** | Kristi Sidney Annerstedt, Associate ProfessorKristi.sidney@ki.se0709 2020 81 |
| **Projekttitel:** | Implementation and evaluation of a school-based family support program A Healthy School Start to promote child health and prevent overweight and obesity in Stockholm (IMPROVE) |

# Sammanfattning doktorandprojekt *(max 1 sida)*

## Background

An unhealthy diet and lack of physical activity are among the most important risk factors for the disease burden in Sweden and globally increasing the risk of obesity, cardiovascular diseases, type 2 diabetes (T2D) and several forms of cancer, making multisectoral prevention efforts essential. In Sweden, the prevalence of obesity in both children and adults has increased three-fold over the last four decades. Moreover, obesity is a major contributing factor to social inequalities in health and is approximately 2-3 times more prevalent in disadvantaged areas compared to more affluent neighbourhoods.

Parents are key in shaping the food and meal environment of their children, providing opportunities for physical activity as well as transmitting social and cultural norms. Schools are ideal settings for the delivery of health promotion and prevention programmes, and effective programmes are characterized by a large degree of parental involvement. Many research-based programmes have been developed for this purpose, but fail to be ***scaled up successfully*** and sustained over time, due to lack of effective implementation. This doctoral plan will provide urgently needed new knowledge on how to sustain multisectoral action to prevent chronic diseases and reduce health inequalities from an early age in diverse community settings.

## Aim/Research questions

The aim of this 4-year doctoral study is to test the implementation strategies and assess the scalability of the Healthy School Start Program (HSSP) at the municipal level while maintaining positive effects on health outcomes in children.

1. What are the critical success factors for implementation and scaling-up of the HSSP?
2. Which implementation strategies are most effective to achieve high fidelity of the program?
3. Can HSSP reduce the social inequality gap in the proportion of children with high BMI and parents at risk for T2D?
4. What is the cost-effectiveness of the Healthy School Start program to prevent obesity in school aged children and reduce parents’ T2D risk?

## Methods

This is a mixed method thesis utilizing qualitative in-depth interviews, hybrid type 3 cluster-randomized implementation effectiveness trial, longitudinal cohort study and a cost-effectiveness.

## Planned studies

Sub-study 1: Critical success factors for implementation and scaling up of the HSSP

Sub-study 2: Fidelity evaluation of the implementation strategies for the HSSP

Sub-study 3: Social inequality among children and parents in the HSSP

Sub-study 4 Cost-effectiveness of the HSSP

## Significance

How to reach sustainability of an effective intervention has not been very well studied globally, let alone in Sweden. The ultimate impact of health innovations depends not only on the effectiveness of the intervention, but also on its reach in the population and the extent to which it is implemented with high fidelity and sustained. Therefore, this new knowledge on how to systematically implement, scale up and sustain a health promotion programme among children in diverse contexts while maintaining effectiveness is much needed.