

“Tina et Toni”: Prevention through play

Addiction Suisse’s comprehensive prevention program “Tina et Toni” was launched especially for the smallest members of our society. It’s designed to help children develop the skills they need to manage the challenges of everyday life. Participants aged four to six learn to be more independent, forge friendships, consider difficulties and problems from a healthy distance and ask for help when they need it. Roger Neining, President of the KPMG Foundation, explains why the Foundation supports the project and why it’s particularly important to him.

Super simple stories in everyday settings show children of a young age how to deal with tough topics. Tina and Toni are kangaroo twins. The tales of their everyday adventures cover a wide range of subjects as they discuss their worries, fears and sad times. They also talk about things they enjoy as well as their curiosity about growing up. The series explores topics like the experience and rejection of being different, and introduces resources and approaches that every child can use to overcome difficulties.

Audio stories for more self-confidence

Addiction Suisse provides audio stories on a variety of everyday topics that children can listen to in their own care setting, whether that be kindergarten, daycare, nursery, supervised lunches or other structured programs for this age group. Once the children have listened to the story, it’s time to talk about the topics raised. The institutions also have access to resources that they can use to create



targeted activities and games adapted to the needs of the specific group. For example, a blindfolded child is guided by one of the other children through an obstacle course made of plastic bottles. This exercise builds trust in others and strengthens self-confidence. Another suggested activity is to have the children lie on a large sheet of brown paper and draw round each other. The physical variety between the individuals is plain to see, which helps the children become more sensitive about differences.

Key topics for early prevention

It's more important than ever for children of a young age to learn how to be independent, to make friends, integrate in a group and, particularly, to accept differences. With this in mind, Addiction Suisse launched this prevention project in 2011 and has been expanding the topics, stories and activities for care givers ever since. The KPMG Foundation has donated a total of CHF 25,000 to the project.

We asked Roger Neining, President of the KPMG Foundation, to tell us why the Foundation supports this particular project and why it's especially important.

How does the KPMG Foundation support Addiction Suisse's project?

Roger Neining: The Board of Trustees decided to support Addiction Suisse in two installments. As one of the conditions, we asked them to send us an interim report on how the first donation was spent and how the project team intended to use the second payment. After reading the report we were only too happy to release funds for the second installment.

What made KPMG decide to support this project specifically?

Roger Neining: Contributing to the education of young people is one of the key priorities of the KPMG Foundation's Board of Trustees. Preventing addiction is an important aspect and helping children develop strong life skills is a particularly effective approach. The "Tina et Toni" project combines exactly these two elements.

Why is it important to support projects in Switzerland?

Roger Neining: Although most of us in Switzerland are very well off – materially at least – mental health is a growing concern. Problems can affect any one of us, or someone we know. At the same time, the impact of psychological issues on our society is in many ways like a giant loan. Those affected are suffering here and now, right in our midst. We want to invest now to avoid a bigger debt in the future.

What makes this project different to others?

Roger Neining: "Tina et Toni" is aimed at children aged between four and six years. It's designed to support the youngest members of society forge friendships, develop independence, tackle difficulties and know when and where to ask for help. Acquiring these skills boosts self-esteem and makes for a harmonious relationship with parents, students and teachers. It gives children a toolbox they can use for the rest of their lives. This project also tackles prevention with enthusiasm and motivation, rather than a moralizing undertone.

Why do you think it's so vital to start prevention programs early, i.e. with children?

Roger Neining: It's like they say: Prevention is better than cure! I think it's particularly true in this case. There are certain skills that will set a child up for a successful life. These include learning strategies to tackle problems and worries, and discovering how to live harmoniously alongside others.

