

The Healthy Primary School of the Future

Dr. Nina Bartelink

Postdoc at Maastricht University

n.bartelink@maastrichtuniversity.nl

The Healthy Primary School of the Future (HPSF)

- ✓ Initiators: **school board**
- ✓ Integrating health promoting changes in **whole school system**
- ✓ **Add-in** instead of add-on
- ✓ Health-promoting school approach
- ✓ Broad collaboration of local partners

Top-down vs bottom-up

Two top-down changes initiated



Contextualization through bottom-up involvement

Impact of HPSF

- ✓ Contextual action-oriented research approach (CARA)
- ✓ Disruption: lunch
- ✓ Favourable effects on children's BMI, and their dietary and PA behaviours
- ✓ Similar health promoting changes do not lead to similar effects!
- ✓ National interest: pilot schools continue, other schools join, lobby to national government

Key learning points

- ✓ Integrating health promotion in schools **takes time** and **needs bottom-up involvement**.
- ✓ To contextualize and realize all changes **continuous feedback loops** are needed among the people in school and between the school and external partners.
- ✓ **Top-down expertise and external practical support** are important for initiating a (disruptive) change.
- ✓ One-size-fits-all does not exist. Each school has its **own unique context**.

Building block for the statement

Context matters!

Preparation: Use enough time to adapt the intervention to the local context

Implementation: Continuous feedback loops are crucial to ensure that the intervention still fits to the local context.