

# Social and Emotional Learning in Schools: evaluation of the Norwegian version of the Lions-Quest "Skills for Adolescence" program.

<b>Submission date</b> 16/07/2015	<b>Recruitment status</b> No longer recruiting	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Prospectively registered
<b>Registration date</b> 17/08/2015	<b>Overall study status</b> Completed	<input type="checkbox"/> Protocol
<b>Last Edited</b> 29/01/2019	<b>Condition category</b> Mental and Behavioural Disorders	<input type="checkbox"/> Statistical analysis plan
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Results
		<input type="checkbox"/> Individual participant data

## Plain English summary of protocol

### Background and aims

This three-year trial will evaluate the effectiveness of a universal primary school based program called MV-2 (Mitt Valg 2, grades 5-7) in Norway (the original US version is termed the Lions-Quest "Skills for Adolescence" [grades 6-8] program). MV-2 is aimed towards helping students achieve and perform essential social and emotional skills. The program is called universal because all students in a class receive the program at the same time, and preferably all classes in one school should receive MV-2. MV-2 is supported by two studies in the US, but currently lacks a strong evidence base. MV-2 does, however, belong to the family of programs referred to as Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) programs, with more than 20 years of research behind them. It is thought that that MV-2 can have a beneficial and meaningful effect on students' social and emotional behavior as well as on their self-esteem. MV-2 is made up of 47 lessons organized in six themes: development of the school climate, social interaction and emotions, relations, critical thinking, drugs and tobacco, and formulating positive goals. The current trial is important because there is a significant number of children and young people who suffer from emotional and social difficulties. Furthermore, in many Norwegian schools, whole school models are implemented, aiming to improve the whole school environment/climate as well as students' skills. Incorporated into those models are universal programs aiming to work with students' social skills, for example, Second Step and Zippy's friends. Expanding the scope of universal programs that can be incorporated into whole school models may help disseminating models to more Norwegian schools. The main aim is to examine the impact of the MV-2 on Norwegian students' social skills and emotional wellbeing.

### Who can participate?

Schools who have not systematically implemented a universal program aimed towards students' social and emotional (such as Second Step, Zippy' Friends, MV-2) since the school year of 2012-2013. Students taking part will be in Year 5.

### What does the study involve?

Participating schools are randomly allocated to either an experiment group or a wait list control group. For the schools in the experimental group, teachers receive a two-day workshop whereby

they learn to implement MV-2. These teachers are then be expected to deliver classrooms lessons at least once a week over a two-year period. Teachers in the schools allocated to the wait list control group receive the same 2-day workshop one year after teachers in the experiment group schools. Data will be collected from the students in the classes just before the teachers attend the workshop, then after they have participated in MV-2 classes for one year, and again, when they have participated in MV-2 classes for two years. The current trial involves evaluating MV-2 “as is”, i.e. the way it is currently carried out in Norwegian schools. This involves the two-day workshop to teachers, which is led by instructors certified by Lions Club. After the 2-day course there is usually no supervision from the instructors, but there is a one-day voluntary brush-up workshop available. During the current trial data on teachers implementation of MV-2 is collected, including amount and regularity of lesson delivered, lesson duration and planning time, lesson content and structure adherence, and student engagement during lesson delivery

What are the possible benefits and risks of participating?

The MV-2 program has been used for a more than a decade in Norwegian schools along with other universal programs aiming to teach social and emotional skills. MV-2 is also recommended by the Norwegian educational authorities and supported by the Norwegian health authorities. During this period there has not been any adverse effects or risks discovered. Any ethical considerations, therefore, can be inferred from the current research design. As the current trial employs a randomization design, each student is not in a position to choose to receive MV-2 or not, the randomization unit is the school, and all students receive MV-2 as it is a universal program with lessons performed in the classroom. This does not, however, constitute an ethical problem; it is quite common in schools that students have little influence over topics and lessons taught in class during the school year. The students and their parents will receive information about the research part of the trial, namely the student surveys. Parents may excuse their children from participating in the survey, and each student can also refuse to participate in the survey. The paper-based survey will be filled out with a pen at school during class, and it will not contain any identifying information about the student, only gender and class grade (Year 5, 6 or 7). The teacher surveys will be performed by means of an electronic survey, containing person-identifying information. It will not, however, contain any identifying information about students or colleagues. Due to the person-identification, the trial is reported to the Norwegian Data Protection Official for Research.

Where is the study run from?

Oslo and Akershus University College of Applied Sciences (Norway)

When is the study starting and how long is it expected to run for?

November 2015 to December 2019

Who is funding the study?

“Det er Mitt Valg” foundation, part of the Lions Club Norway (Norway)

Who is the main contact?

Dr Børge Strømngren

Borge.Stromgren@hioa.no

## Contact information

Type(s)

Scientific

**Contact name**

Dr Borge Stromgren

**ORCID ID**

<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7841-5693>

**Contact details**

Oslo and Akershus University College of Applied Sciences

Post box 4 St. Olavs plass

Oslo

Norway

0130

+47 97424499

Borge.Stromgren@hioa.no

**Additional identifiers****Study information****Scientific Title**

Evaluation the efficacy of the Norwegian version of the Lions-Quest "Skills for Adolescence" program "Mitt Valg 2": a cluster randomized controlled trial with a wait-list control

**Study objectives**

The primary aim of the proposed research is to examine the impact of the Loins-Quest "Skills for Adolescence" (the Norwegian version is termed MV-2 for the current trial) program on the emotional and social wellbeing in Norwegian primary schools through a three-year wait-list control cluster randomized controlled trial. The aim will be achieved by addressing the following objectives:

1. To determine the effect of MV-2 on a variety of primary and secondary outcomes for children and teachers

**Student outcomes:**

Hypothesis 1: Students in experiment group schools; i.e. delivering MV-2 from day one (after T1), will after a one-year period (at T2) report significant improvements in the following primary outcomes:

1.1 Emotional wellbeing and problem behavior

1.2 Social and emotional skills

1.3 Self-Esteem

Hypothesis 2: The reported primary outcomes listed under hypothesis 1 will be sustained or improved after two years (T3)

Hypothesis 3: Students in wait-list control schools: i.e. delivering MV-2 one year after experiment group schools (after T2), will at T2 not report significant improvement in the primary outcomes listed in hypothesis 1

Hypothesis 4: After three years (at T3) students in the wait-list control group will report similar effects in primary outcomes as students in hypothesis 1

Hypothesis 5: The hypotheses 1 to 4 will be equally applicable to the secondary student outcomes:

5.1. Student-Student relations and Student-Teacher relations, and norms toward school

5.2. Bullying and Victimization

Teacher outcomes:

Hypothesis 6: Teachers in experiment group schools; i. e. delivering MV-2 from day one (after T1), will after a one-year period (at T2) report significant improvements in the following primary outcomes:

6.1 Students social skills and school engagement

6.3 Students problem behavior in the classroom and school environment

Hypothesis 7: The primary outcomes listed under hypothesis 6 will be sustained or improved after two years (at T3)

Hypothesis 8: Teachers in wait-list control schools: i.e. delivering MV-2 one year after experiment group schools (after T2), will at T2 not report significant improvements in the primary outcomes listed in hypothesis 6

Hypothesis 9: After three years (at T3) teachers in the wait-list control group will report similar effects in the primary outcomes as students in hypothesis 6

Hypothesis 10: The hypotheses 6 to 9 will be equally applicable to the secondary teacher outcome school climate

Implementation variability:

Hypothesis 11: The quality of the implementation of MV-2 will be associated with variability of the outcomes listed in hypotheses 1 to 10. Implementation quality variables will be:

11.1. Amount and regularity of lesson delivered

11.2. Lesson duration and planning time

11.3. Lesson content and structure adherence

11.4. Student engagement during lesson delivery

## **Ethics approval required**

Old ethics approval format

## **Ethics approval(s)**

Norwegian Data Protection Official for Research, 23/06/2015, ref: 43838

## **Study design**

Single-center cluster-randomized controlled trial with a wait list control

## **Primary study design**

Interventional

## **Study type(s)**

Prevention

## **Health condition(s) or problem(s) studied**

Social and emotional skills and emotional wellbeing

## **Interventions**

MV-2 (the Norwegian version of the original US version termed the Lions-Quest "Skills for Adolescence" [grades 6-8] program) is a universal and curriculum based SEL-recommended program for students in the school Years 5-7 (<http://secondaryguide.casel.org>). The program is developmentally sequenced as well as adopted to the Norwegian educational authorities commitment initiative called "The Knowledge Promotion." The MV-2 school manual consists of 47 lessons organized in 6 themes:

1. Development of a positive school climate,
2. Social interaction and emotions,

3. Relations,
4. Critical thinking,
5. Drugs and tobacco
6. Formulating positive goals

Lessons are organized according to scientific criteria practices (SAFE: Sequenced, Active, Focused, Explicit) and consist of three phases:

1. Explore
2. Experience
3. Expand

Some lessons contain homework assignments; therefore a pacing with a new lesson every other week seems reasonable in order to cover the whole curriculum during the Years 5-7, making it possible to deliver 16 lessons in Year 5, 16 lessons in Year 6, and 15 lessons in Year 7. It is also possible to work with lessons every day for a shorter period of time, thereby compressing the delivery of the program to 6 weeks during each school year. The actual organizing of the lesson delivery is for each school to decide. Although the current trial focuses on the MV-2 manual for the school and the school delivery, there also exists information material and activity suggestions for parents. Again, it is up to each school to decide whether information to and cooperation with parents will be included, Lesson pacing and delivery organization, as well as parental cooperation, will be a comparator between implementing schools.

### **Intervention Type**

Behavioural

### **Primary outcome(s)**

Students:

1. Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ): it provides measures of emotional difficulties, conduct problems, hyperactivity/inattention, peer problems and pro-social behavior. It is widely used internationally
2. Social Emotional Assets and Resilience Scales–Children Short Form (SEARS-CSF): it provides measures of core SEL-competencies such as self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making
3. Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventor–School Short Form (CSEI-SSF): it provides measures of a core SEL-competency such as self-esteem, both general and with peers

Teachers:

1. A self-developed screening scale that provides information about students' pro-social competencies and engagement in school activities. It is inspired by the the SSIS Performance Screening Guide
2. Problem behaviors in school (PBS): it provides information about how often the teachers' had to manage problem behaviors in the classroom and school environment during the last week

Data will be collected from the students in the classes just before the teachers attend the workshop, then after they have participated in MV-2 classes for one year, and again, when they have participated in MV-2 classes for two years.

### **Key secondary outcome(s)**

Students:

1. School climate (SC): it provides information about the perceived school climate and contains

scales covering relations between students, school norms among students, and emotional support from teachers/ student-teacher relations

2. Bullying and victimization (from the Olweus Bullying Questionnaire-Revised): it provides information about how often the students have been bullying or victimized during the last couple of months

Teachers:

1. School environment-Openness in communication: it provides information about teachers' perception of the openness in communication at their school, and has shown to be a predictor of implementation quality

Data will be collected from the students in the classes just before the teachers attend the workshop, then after they have participated in MV-2 classes for one year, and again, when they have participated in MV-2 classes for two years.

**Completion date**

31/12/2019

## **Eligibility**

**Key inclusion criteria**

1. Students in Years 5, 6, and 7, in schools eligible to participate
2. All full time students in participating schools will be considered as potential participants
3. Parental consent will be based upon information letters to parents prior to the data survey, which informs parents that they may excuse their child from participating in the survey

**Participant type(s)**

All

**Healthy volunteers allowed**

No

**Age group**

Child

**Sex**

All

**Key exclusion criteria**

Students in schools that do not meet the inclusion criteria

**Date of first enrolment**

01/11/2015

**Date of final enrolment**

26/05/2016

## **Locations**

**Countries of recruitment**

Norway

### Study participating centre

Oslo and Akershus University College of Applied Sciences

Post box 4 St. Olavs plass

Oslo

Norway

0130

## Sponsor information

### Organisation

Oslo and Akershus University College of Applied Sciences

### ROR

<https://ror.org/04q12yn84>

## Funder(s)

### Funder type

Research organisation

### Funder Name

“Det er Mitt Valg” Foundation, part of the Lions Club Norway.

## Results and Publications

### Individual participant data (IPD) sharing plan

The datasets generated during and/or analysed during the current study are not expected to be made available due to the attrition of dosage data planned to be collected from teachers. Consequently, there is no point to analyse student and teacher data collected at T1 and T2.

### IPD sharing plan summary

Not expected to be made available

### Study outputs

Output type	Details	Date created	Date added	Peer reviewed?	Patient-facing?
<a href="#">Basic results</a>		29/01/2019	29/01/2019	No	No