

Health Literacy in Childhood and Adolescence (HLCA): Exploring and Developing Theories, Concepts, and Models on Health Literacy in Childhood and Adolescence (HLCA-TeCoMo)

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Abstract (max. 300 words)

Context and background: Recent evidence has highlighted the critical impact of low health literacy on health and its importance for health promotion and prevention. Interestingly, common theoretical, conceptual as well as empirical data, fail to integrate health literacy needs of children and adolescents. This contrasts with the importance given to childhood and youth for healthy human development, and for health and well-being throughout adulthood. For the next three years, the German Health Literacy in Childhood and Adolescence (HLCA) Consortium aims to tackle this shortfall by exploring a multidisciplinary perspective of health literacy within this target group.

Aim of the study: This consortium's sub-project HLCA-TeCoMo strives to a) develop a theoretical and conceptual framework for health literacy in children and adolescents; b) adjust prominent adult health literacy concepts, linked to children's development to child health issues and needs; c) frame demands on children's health literacy over time and caregivers' and professionals' knowledge base on health literacy. The framework will provide the theoretical foundation for the sub-project "Methods of Measuring Health Literacy of Children" (HLCA-MoMChild).

Research methodology:

In the initial phase, systematic literature reviews will be conducted in close cooperation with HLCA-MoMChild. The reviews aim to scope existing concepts and models of child and adolescent health literacy, as well as relevant child development factors, while taking into account perspectives from pedagogical, psychological and sociological research. Further methods include content analysis, deductive and inductive reasoning, or expert opinion using the Delphi technique. The methodological approach will be adapted according to the project's progress and recommendations of the consortium's advisory board.

Expected findings and benefits:

Contribute to the evidence base and understanding of health literacy within children and adolescents by providing a theoretical and conceptual framework, and models that can be operationalised for assessing health literacy within the target group.