

Press release

First-ever quality label for Swiss childcare centres

- The Jacobs Foundation and KiTaS are collaborating on a quality label rating standards for Swiss childcare centres
- Introduction of the new quality label from the beginning of 2013

Zurich, 11 January 2012: The Jacobs Foundation www.jacobsfoundation.org, one of Europe's largest foundations active in the area of child and youth development, and KiTaS, the Association of Childcare Centres in Switzerland, are collaborating on a quality label for Swiss childcare centres with a view to introducing consistent and comprehensive quality standards in Switzerland for the first time. The partner project is scheduled to start at the beginning of 2012. Both partners have commissioned the University Centre for Early Childhood Education in Fribourg and its director, Prof. Dr. Margit Stamm, to develop corresponding quality standards for the planned quality label by September 2012.

A 13-member specialist committee composed of researchers, practitioners and other experts working in the field of municipal, cantonal and federal administration is overseeing the development of quality standards. Parallel to that, during the coming months the Jacobs Foundation and KiTaS will be preparing a business plan for the set-up and operation of a jointly run certification office. As of 2013, this certification centre will be responsible for the certification process as well as for awarding quality labels reflecting various quality levels.

Sandro Giuliani, Program Officer at Jacobs Foundation, explains: "After the significant increase in the number of supplementary childcare facilities in recent years, we are seeing a great need for a quality label for Swiss childcare centres in order to focus greater attention in the future on the pedagogical quality of care offered. We are convinced that such comprehensive quality standards are needed, both as a type of advertising for the childcare centres and as a means for parents to evaluate the facilities."

Talin Stoffel, director of KiTaS, says: "Our approximately 500 association members welcome the introduction of a quality label for Swiss childcare centres. The best possible quality and transparency are vital for our work, as this is the only way to ensure that we can be successful in the area of early childhood education."

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Members of the specialist committee

- Prof. Dr. Lieselotte Ahnert, Institute for Developmental Psychology and Psychological Diagnostics, University of Vienna
- Heinz Altorfer, Swiss UNESCO Commission, Bern
- PD Dr. Fabienne Becker-Stoll, Federal Institute for Early Childhood Education, Munich
- Adrian Gerber, Federal Office for Migration, Bern
- Thomas Jaun, Höhere Fachschule für Kindererziehung (Technical College of Child Education), Zug
- Francine Koch, Service de la petite enfance (Child Services), city of Geneva
- Marc Stampfli, Federal Social Insurance Office, Bern
- Dr. Heidi Simoni, Marie Meierhofer-Institut, Zurich
- Ursula Stump, Chinderhuus Muur, Ebmatingen
- Birgitta Michel Thenen (representative of SODK), Social Services Department, Canton Zug
- Bea Troxler, Social Services Department, city of Zurich
- Regula Wyrsh, Children Youth and Family, city of Lucerne
- Marianne Zogmal, Romandie Association of Directors of Childcare Facilities, Geneva

About the Jacobs Foundation

The Zurich-based private Jacobs Foundation, www.jacobsfoundation.org, was established in 1988 by entrepreneur Klaus J. Jacobs. Ever since, the foundation has focused its efforts on the development of children and youth. The Jacobs Foundation supports research projects, intervention programs and scientific institutions with 35 million Swiss francs per year. As far as its methods and approaches are concerned, the foundation is particularly committed to scientific excellence and evidence-based findings. With its investment of EUR 200 million in the Jacobs University Bremen in Germany (2006), it set new standards in the area of private funding.

History of KiTaS

The Association of Childcare Centres in Switzerland (KiTaS) was founded in 1907 as the Swiss Central Nursery Association. It acts as the national sector association for professional childcare facilities. It supports high-quality supplementary childcare. KiTaS represents around 480 trusteeships with approximately 680 facilities. KiTaS is politically neutral.

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