



WORKSHOP ON INDOOR/OUTDOOR ENVIRONMENT IN KINDERGARTENS
Brindisi 21-22 November
ANTONIO LONGO – MOVIMENTO DIFESA DEL CITTADINO

Ladies and gentlemen,

we are glad to welcome you in Brindisi at this workshop on indoor/outdoor environment in kindergartens. These days kids spend more and more time in kindergartens because of modern lifestyle, as parents spend more time than in the past out of the house. Therefore it is essential in kindergartens to assured our children a right and healthy atmosphere. These days children eat in a wrong way and don't do enough physical activity. **It is necessary that school commit itself to do something to help young generations.**

In 2007 the European Parliament estimated that the number of overweight and obese children is increasing each year (+ 400.000 unites). In any case there are already 14 millions of European in these conditions (3 millions are obese children). Concerning Italy a recent survey (**Okkio alla salute**) edited by the Ministry of Employment Health and Social Policies pointed out as more than the 30% of Italian children attending the third class of the primary school, is obese or overweight.

Children wrong eating style, insufficient physical activity and sedentary habits are the main reasons of Italian childhood overweight and obesity. Many children start a new day without having breakfast (11%) or having a not good nutritional breakfast (23%). Too many calories are assumed during the snacks (82%) and almost the 25% of children don't eat fruit and vegetables. Only the 10% do exercise enough according to its own age.

In 2005 Movimento Difesa del Cittadino understood the big gravity of "childhood obesity" phenomena: our **Junior Department edited Baby Consumers**, a survey on children consumer goods, such as the food one. The research pointed out as the 66% of children eats above all pasta, the 47% prefers meat, the 36,6% cakes, the 31,7% fruit and the 31,5% ham and salami. The survey underlined also a children big embarrassment towards its body: to the question "how would you like to be?", half of the sample accepted himself but the 35% would have liked to lose weight and the 14,4% would have liked to increase its weight.

On the occasion of Baby Consumers I met doctor Margherita Caroli. We shared objectives and values in the field of childhood feeding. So we started a collaboration that brought to Periscope, (Pilot European Regional Interventions for Smart Childhood Obesity Prevention in Early Age), a European project which lasts two years and involves three countries: Italy, Denmark and Poland.

The initiative has received funding from the European Union, in the framework of the Public Health Programme.

The general objective of Periscope is to prevent child obesity between the ages of 3 and 6. To this end, the project is developing a set of intervention strategies: collecting information on parental feeding style toward their children and data on the children's habits on food, TV watching, and physical activity; promoting a correct feeding style in countries where obesity is widespread, forasmuch as Italy, Denmark and Poland are countries with different feeding, social and economic traditions.

Our Italian partners are **Brindisi Asl and another consumers association, Movimento Consumatori**. In Denmark we work with the **National Food Agency, Danish e the Techical University**, while in **Poland** the collaboration is with the **Medical University of Silesia in Katowice**.

Today we have carried out part of the project. In every country we have selected 2 kindergartens: one is acting as control group while in the other we are carrying out the interventions. Around 400 children have been involved: 200 in the control group and 200 in the intervention one. In these two samples we have collected data about parents feeding style toward their children, as well as their beliefs and behaviours contributing to the children's good health or obesity development; children's habits on food, TV watching and physical activity; beliefs, needs, and expectations of teachers, and children as well as their perception of their role in order to achieve good health. In these days we are starting the interventions in the kindergartens.

I wish that **Periscope** would reach its objectives in a so important moment for our children concerning education and health. I wish you a great job and a great staying in Brindisi.

Antonio Longo