



# The Mentoring Program „Balu und Du“ Basic ideas and selected results

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## Balu und Du in Germany

Overview

This presentation will give you an impression of a German mentoring program for primary school children aged 6 to 10 years.

By now 13 years of internal and external evaluation are proving the positive effects of the program on the mentees, mentors and society. Selected evaluation results will be presented. The project was initiated by the University of Osnabrueck and the Caritas-Alliance in the Archdiocese of Cologne in 2002.

The registered association Balu und Du e.V. was founded in 2005 and acts as a roof for its network of more than 70 sites all over Germany.

By integrating civic/voluntary action into educational institutions like sixth forms, vocational training colleges and universities Balu und Du manages to remain a very cost-efficient program.

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## Balu und Du in Germany

The original idea of Balu und Du was closely modelled on other mentoring programs for children and youth like Perach/Israel. Perach was a helpful partner offering advice and guidance in the initial phase of implementing Balu und Du in 2002. The University of Osnabruck and the Caritas-Alliance was involved by providing financial and structural support and human resources for the first few years.

The educational facility or social institution aiming at establishing Balu und Du has to allow for time in its employee's work load (and bear the expenses) so that the coordinator can organize the program (and its workflow) and guide and counsel the mentors.

Till now more than 7200 mentoring relationships have been arranged. More than 75 institutional partners nationwide are currently organizing Balu und Du at their location. More than 1000 mentors nationwide are currently acting as a big friend to a deprived child.

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77 sites all over  
Germany

1 site in Austria





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## How does the program work?

- selective primary-preventive mentoring program
- young adults volunteer to support an underprivileged child of primary school age for the duration of at least one year on a one-on-one basis
- mentor (Balu) and mentee (Mogli) spend an afternoon a week together engaging in activities such as exploring nature, baking, cooking, doing handicrafts, swimming, bike-riding, going to the zoo, the cinema or a museum or simply playing (inside or outside)
- Such shared “adventures” provide ample opportunity for learning in everyday situations: Learning within the program occurs informally in a non-academic setting
- Balus are accompanied in weekly guidance groups by qualified professionals, but do not follow any strict curriculum while meeting with Mogli.
- weekly written online-diaries of mentors

# Online diary tool

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## The basic philosophy: Informal Learning

**Each mentoring relationship is individual and special. It depends on:**

- Mogli's interests
- Emerging opportunities during the shared time
- Mogli's deficits
- Balu's preferences
- No Curriculum!
- No Training Courses!
- No Lectures!

### **Informal Learning**

- means to become acquainted with the challenges of everyday life
- by chance and "en passant"!

The amount of Informal Learning in our lives: 70 %

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## Objectives of the program

Our objectives and aims are as follows:

- offer underprivileged children a chance to develop positively, learn basic everyday competencies and take part in the community/society
- compensate for early developmental problems and deficits by meeting basic needs so as to prevent a negative development
- aid integration by helping the child get familiar with the German language, the city he lives in, traditions and customs; facilitate contacts outside the child's family/ethnicity; convey important social values
- to enable children to acquire skills and non-academic abilities that make success in life (and school) more likely



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## Evaluation results – internal/external

Selected evaluation  
results

### Evaluation results – internal/external

- Various evaluation studies verify the positive impact of the program.
- Since the foundation of Balu and You in 2002 internal and external evaluation studies were conducted.
- Evaluation studies are undertaken to identify how Mowglis, Baloos and society benefit from the program.
  - Internal evaluation, funded by the German Federal Ministry of Science and Research (BMWF), was executed from 2009 to 2011
  - External long-term evaluation study of Balu and You (University of Bonn)
  - Social Return On Investment (SROI) of Balu and You

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## Evaluation results – internal

Selected evaluation  
results

- Positive results encouraged us to do research in a more detailed way :
  - with a bigger group of Moglis (n=141)
  - With a control group (n=158)
  - prospective study
  - teachers were asked
  - children themselves were asked (KIDSCREEN)
  - children were tested by standardized methods
  - parents were interviewed
  - The weekly written online-diaries of mentors were analyzed
  - Mogli's hair-cortisol (in hair-samples) was tested
- The evaluation was funded by the German Federal Ministry of Science and Research (BMWF)
- And executed from 2009 to 2011

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## Evaluation results – internal

Selected evaluation  
results

- Examples of questions teachers were asked:
  - How would you rate Mogli's ability to concentrate?
  - What about his/her learning motivation?
  - How is his/her oral participation and enjoyment in class?
  - Is Mogli willing to make an effort?
  - Is there a change in inquisitiveness?

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## Evaluation results – internal

Selected evaluation results

### Self-organization

- The ability to organize themselves helps children to structure their intentions and to act with foresight. It belongs to the set of basic competencies that form an important requisite for scholastic success and life accomplishment.

Subject	Net effect size: total group				Net effect size: extreme group			
	low	moderate	high	very high	low	moderate	high	very high
Child wrote down homework, if homework was given		0.54						1.46
Child brought his/her classroom materials (books...) to school		0.41				0.55		
Child could complete homework, because he/she took material home		0.62						1.79

Teacher's assessment of self-organization (progress after one year of mentoring)

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## Evaluation results – internal

Selected evaluation results

### Motivation and participation in school

- Adult people's educational biographies are shaped by an array of basic attitudes towards learning and new life situations. If children are well grounded in inquisitiveness, interest, and curiosity their level of proficiency is likely to increase in the years they attend school and thereafter. Hence it is important to evaluate motivation, participation and self-confidence when assessing the impact a mentoring program has on young people's lives.

Subject	Net effect size: total group				Net effect size: extreme group			
	low	mode rate	high	very high	low	mode rate	high	very high
Child's general scholastic ability	0.29					0.52		
Child was motivated to learn	0.43						0.86	
Child took part in class	0.26					0.70		
Child could complete tasks independently	0.23					0.65		
Child was confident with new tasks	0.25				0.30			

Teacher's assessment of Motivation and participation (progress after one year of mentoring)

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## Evaluation results – internal

Selected evaluation results

### Realistic self-assessment

- The following prospective survey shows that – in particular the children who overestimated themselves at the beginning of the mentoring period – became more realistic with regard to their self-image.

Subject	Net effect size: total group				Net effect size: extreme group			
	low	moderate	high	very high	low	moderate	high	very high
Child appraises his/her athletic ability realistically	0.27						0.92	

Teacher's assessment of realistic self-assessment (progress after one year of mentoring)



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## Evaluation results – internal

Selected evaluation results

### Ability to concentrate

- The effect sizes of the total group of Mowglis differ significantly from the results of the extreme group concerning concentration. According to the teachers, the total group of Mowglis improved slightly compared to the total group of control group children. The extreme group, again, shows much more considerable effects. That means that Mowglis who tended to be unable to concentrate at the beginning of the project improved and were able to concentrate much better by the end of the program.

Subject	Net effect size: total group				Net effect size: extreme group			
	low	mode rate	high	very high	low	mode rate	high	very high
Child did not appear to drift during class	0.23				(-0.08)			
Child could concentrate well in class	0.24				0.42			
Willingness of the child to make an effort	(0.14)						<b>0.87</b>	
Kaseler Concentration Test (modified)	0.21							<b>1.25</b>

Teacher's assessment of Ability to concentrate (progress after one year of mentoring)

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## Evaluation results – internal

Selected evaluation results

### Health-related quality of life (KIDSCREEN)

- The items in the ‘physical well-being’ dimension refer to fitness, activity, energy, and self-estimated (subjective) health. ‘Psychological well-being’ comprises items concerning emotional satisfaction/dissatisfaction, such as unhappiness or loneliness. The relationship to parents and the children’s level of autonomy are subsumed under ‘autonomy and parents’, while ‘social support and peers’ asks the participants to assess the quality of their social relationship to classmates and friends. ‘School environment’ refers to teachers and school, their own appraisal of cognitive achievement and ability to learn.

Subject	Net effect size: total group				Net effect size: extreme group			
	low	mode rate	high	very high	low	mode rate	high	very high
Physical well-being	(0.16)							1.19
Psychological well-being	(0.09)					0.54		
Social support and peers	0.20				0.20			
Autonomy and parents	(0.04)						0.78	
School environment	0.27						0.90	

Teacher’s assessment of health-related quality of life (progress after one year of mentoring)

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## Evaluation results – internal

Selected evaluation results

### Personal hygiene

- Some of the mentees are deficient when it comes to personal hygiene, such as oral hygiene or showering regularly. If Baloos notice a deficiency in this area, they endeavor to support Mowglis in this delicate field of interaction (material is available in seminar rooms, such as picture books, games, implements suitable for children...). Again, the children who suffer the greatest from an unclean appearance benefit most of all. The example of washing their hands after having used the bathroom is presented here: Mowglis were asked whether they wash their hands after going to the toilet.

Subject	Net effect size: total group				Net effect size: extreme group			
	low	mode rate	high	very high	low	mode rate	high	very high
Do you wash your hands after going to the toilet?	0.25							1.24

Teacher's assessment of health-related quality of life (progress after one year of mentoring)

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## Evaluation results – internal

Selected evaluation  
results

## Stress relief – coping with stress

- Mowglis' ability to cope with stress is associated with physical reaction, the hormone cortisol is considered an indicator of stress level.
- Can mentoring help to reduce Mowglis' stress – or help them to cope with stress?
- How does the style of mentoring affect the stress level, as indicated by hair cortisol?
- the activities and interaction of the Baloo-Mowgli tandems was recorded in the diaries
- A too compliable style of mentoring – possibly combined with a lack of assertiveness and erratic meandering – fails to reduce Mowglis' pressure of stress

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## Evaluation results – internal

Selected evaluation  
results

## Sustainability

- How do mentees develop after the year of mentoring?
- three-part evaluation study to learn about the sustainability of the attained outcome
- online-survey with Balus who had completed their mentoring years ago
  - The earlier tandems (2002–2007) stayed in contact over 6 months in 39,13% of cases
  - from 2008, the contact persisted in 53,59% of cases
- interviews with parents whose children were Moglis some time ago
  - Parents described their children as more autonomous, secure, open-minded, relaxed, and happy
- repetition of assessment by teachers who evaluated Moglis when they took part in the program
  - Moglis' ability to concentrate improved, even beyond the end of the mentoring year

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## Evaluation results – internal

Selected evaluation results

- What are the benefits for the mentors? („Balu und Du“ as Service Learning program)
- Study to measure the growth of key competencies
- Significant differences to their fellow students are visible once Balus have been involved in the mentoring program for about one year.
  - “I notice if somebody needs a bit of encouragement”;
  - “I learned that stamina and persistence is worthwhile, when dealing with uncommunicative and withdrawn people”;
  - “You can learn a lot, without being aware of the learning process”;
  - “I can establish contact to official persons to put my plans into action”.
- A control item provided no significant difference. This competence was neither requested nor trained in the program
  - “I know ways and means to research study-related information”



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## Evaluation results – internal

References

- H. Müller-Kohlenberg, S. Drexler (2013): Balu und Du ("Baloo and You") - A Mentoring Program: Conception and Evaluation Results. In: Michael S. Shaughnessy (Hrsg.) Mentoring: Practices, Potential Challenges and Benefits, Nova Science Publishers, New York, P. 107 – 123
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## Evaluation results – external

University of Bonn

- A long-term evaluation study of Balu and You is conducted by a team of economists of the University of Bonn
- To investigate if Balu and You has a causal effect on the development of children
- Gold standard
- randomized control trial in 2011
- 700 families with children who are in 2nd or 3rd grade
- 200 children were randomized and registered for Balu and You
- In 2013 the children's families were invited again to interviews
- Cooperation with the Socio-Economic Panel (SOEP)

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## Evaluation results – external

SROI – Social Return  
on Investment

- Social Return on Investment (SROI) Analysis is a method for understanding the (environmental, social and public economic) value being created by organizations.
- In collaboration with Social Impact Consulting we authored the report that presents the Social Return on Investment (SROI) analysis of Balu und Du. The aim of the report is to explain, in understandable terms, how we went about calculating and estimating the SROI of the program until 2071.
- SROI number of 4,25 to 8,08 Euro for each Euro that is invested in the program
- Leverage effect of 1,58
- The German language publication is available for download (80 pages).
- <http://valueforgood.com/#publications>



[www.balu-und-du.de](http://www.balu-und-du.de)