



# Targeting adolescents: bridging the gap between research and practice

**Femke van Nassau, MSc**

Dr. Carlijn van Randeraad, PhD

Prof. dr. Mai Chin A Paw, PhD

Dpt of Public and Occupational Health, EMGO<sup>+</sup>

VU University Medical Center Amsterdam



# Targeting adolescents: bridging the gap between research and practice (WP6)

## Aim:

- Create an overview of **evidence and practice-based recommendations** that will help CTs to develop actions to address adolescents living in deprived areas in the field of obesity prevention

## Methods:

- Concept mapping sessions with both **program coordinators and scientist** to reveal aspects from an insider's perspective
- Literature review focusing on recent innovative research findings and good practices in the field of obesity prevention with a focus on **how to address adolescents living in deprived areas**



# Research question

*“Think about obesity prevention with a focus on how to address adolescents living in deprived areas: What are your (practice-based) recommendations to target adolescents living in deprived areas?”*



# Methods: Concept Mapping

- A method to explore the content of *complex concepts*
- Combination of *qualitative & quantitative* research
- A structured, stepwise process
- Knowledge and experience of stakeholders is verbalized

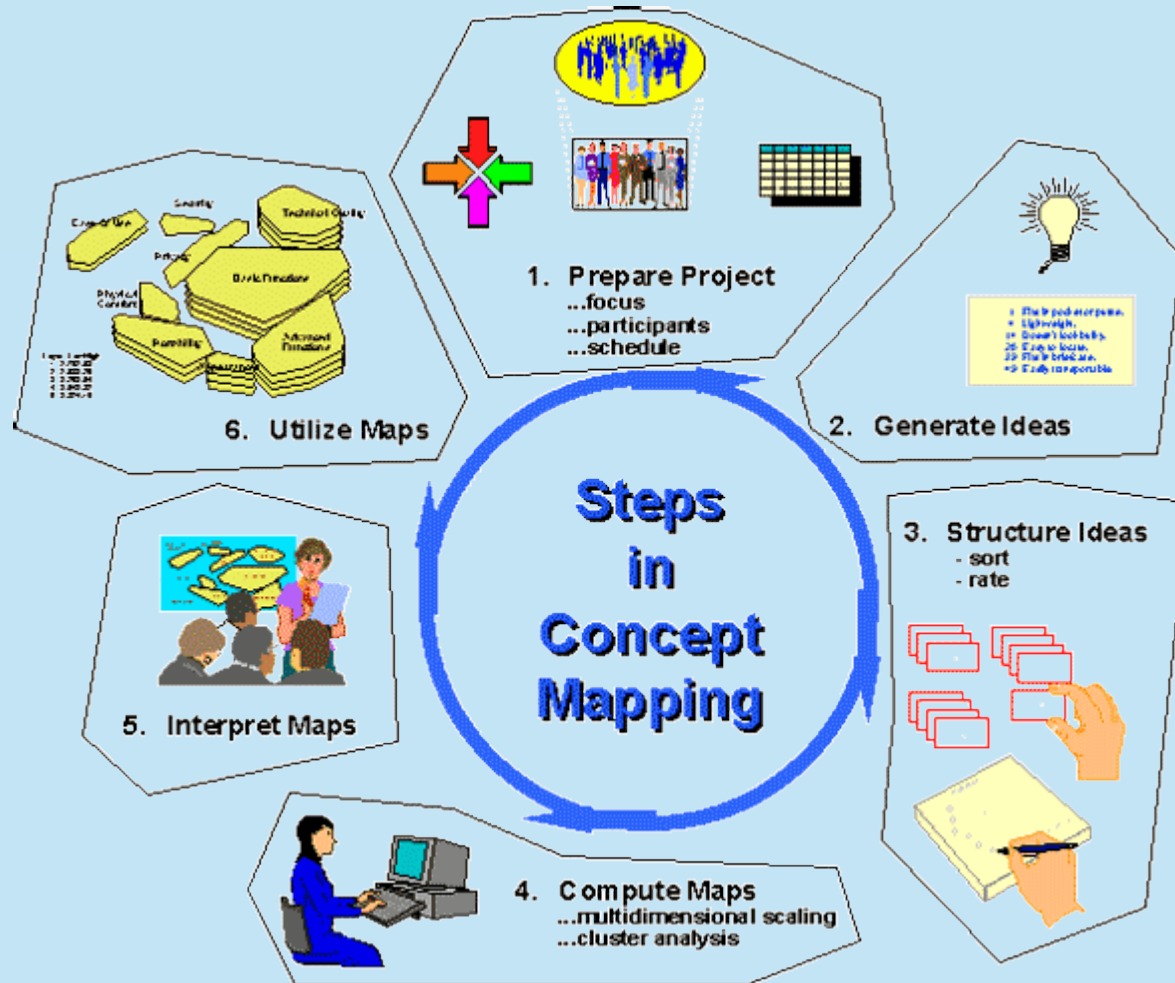


# Concept Mapping - Advantages

- Information from different viewpoints
- Information from stakeholders working with the target group
- Up-to-date information since the data are collected now in today's society



# Concept Mapping-steps



# Concept Mapping

## Step 1: Preparation of the concept mapping session(s)

- Select participants
- Seeding statement in order to guide the generation of statements (*needed for step 2*)



# Concept Mapping

## Step 2: Generation of statements

- Individual brainstorm
- Each statement should contain one idea
- In bullets, short statements
- Nominal group technique
- Process continued until no new statements come up
- Each statement is written on a numbered label to facilitate sorting





# Concept Mapping

## Step 3: Structuring of statements

Expand sidewalks	Promote affordability of locally produced fruit and vegetables	Withdraw selling licenses of fast-food outlets in the neighbourhood	Install a duty on sugar-sweetened beverages to reduce consumption	Stimulate parental participation	Show the detrimental effects of too much sugar in the diet	Organize consistent positive feedback by role models for modifying their	Take into account the environmental determinants of behaviour	Organize group discussions in schools to encourage children to focus on becoming independent	Focus on becoming independent
Use ICT as an intervention to break up sedentary time	Reduce deprivation regarding income	Increasing "healthy" vending in public places	Improve the curricular framework	Provide educational healthy eating sessions for parents in various settings	Organize neighbourhood sports events without "unhealthy" sponsorship	Provide activities with role models	Provide parents with skills to provide a more structured family	Improve compliance among teachers in school-based interventions	Do not focus on obesity alone
Control exercise habits outside school	Utilize free green space for community growing projects	Improve implementation in classroom curriculum-related interventions	Subsidized access to youth friendly leisure centres in the deprived	Provide subsidies for children (payable monthly) in order enable	Organize peer groups with parents aiming reduction of sedentary	Brief intervention training around healthy physical	attractive materials	Restrict junk food marketing to children	Improve the accessibility of the healthy choice regarding physical
Set up a spatial planning measure to restrict junk food outlets in residential	A "whole family approach" programme around weight	Reduce deprivation regarding housing	increase gymnastic lessons in local schools	Set up a social media campaign around steps of unhealthy for healthy	Keep the threshold for behaviour change low	Provide safe bike lanes	improve the accessibility of the healthy choice regarding foods in the	Address healthy foods, physical activity and sedentary behavior	include popular role models to increase the image of physical
Ban unhealthy foods from school canteens	Reduce traffic	Help parents to take care of their own problems so they have more energy to take care of their	Control sponsorship of sporting events by junk food companies	Organize peer groups with parents aiming to increase to play with physical (e.g. safe, active, safe)	Provide a diverse range of opportunities to play with physical	Set up a social media campaign to promote adequate sleep	focus on acceptance by peers	Teach children self-regulatory skills in school	Consider what is important for adolescents
Ban vending machines from schools	Promote accessibility/awareness of locally produced fruit and	Free access to youth friendly leisure centres in deprived	Control eating habits outside school	Use self-regulatory devices as an intervention to reduce sedentary	increase safety (e.g. through neighbourhood watch)	improve the availability of the healthy choice regarding	Downgrade the availability of the unhealthy choice regarding	improve the accessibility of the healthy choice regarding healthy	Support family involvement as key factors for making healthy
Provide practical support information around cooking on a	Install speed limits in residential areas	Use ICT as an intervention to reduce sedentary time	Consider the heterogeneity of the ethnic background of the neighbourhood	Provide School fruit	involve their parents throughout the project (from early beginning of program development to	Use self-regulatory devices as an intervention to break up sedentary	Downgrade the availability of the unhealthy choice regarding	focus on self-efficacy	Restrict junk food marketing to adolescents
Reduce deprivation regarding education	Raise the tax on computer games considerably	Provide daily contact with the participant population during the	Low intensity of interventions	Provide educational healthy eating sessions for adolescents in various settings (schools, supermarket	increase availability of "healthier" food options on menus and competitive	Food education in schools with an emphasis on when to eat	Food education in schools with an emphasis on when to eat	Support of school-staff involvement as key factors	Organize long-term commitment of school innovations
improve the willingness of parents to lobby for a change in lifestyle of their	Make sure that there is no competition (outside summer vacations)	Reduce programs for the extended periods of out-of-school time (outside summer vacations)			Organize peer groups with parents aiming to increase knowledge on healthy food	Downgrade the availability of the unhealthy choice regarding physical activity in the school	Downgrade the availability of the unhealthy choice regarding physical activity in the school	Organize long-term commitment of school resources and innovations	Work in partnership with local, nationally sports teams and to promote healthy lifestyles

1 least important 2 somewhat important 3 moderately important 4 important 5 most important

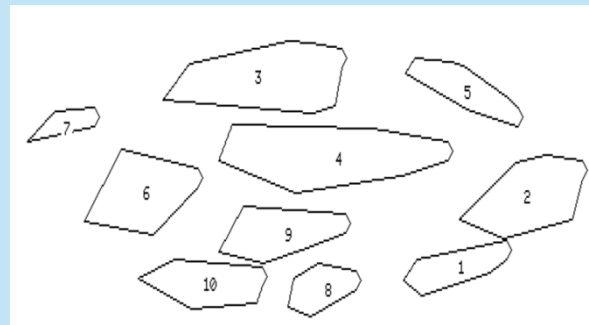
Instruction: Get cards from below and place them on the canvases



# Concept Mapping

## Step 4: Representation of statements

- The data of all participants are brought together into a computer program
- Decide on # of clusters
- The computer program makes a concept map consisting of clusters of statements in a two-dimensional plot.



# Concept Mapping

## Step 5: Interpretation of concept maps

- Splitting or merging clusters
- Suggest to replace statements to other clusters (individual)
- Group consensus about the cluster names



# Concept Mapping

## Step 6: Utilize concept maps

→ Putting the results into practice



# OPEN Concept Mapping

## Seeding statement

*“Think about obesity prevention with a focus on how to address adolescents living in deprived areas: What are your (practice-based) recommendations to target adolescents living in deprived areas?”*



# Concept Mapping-participants

## Program coordinators

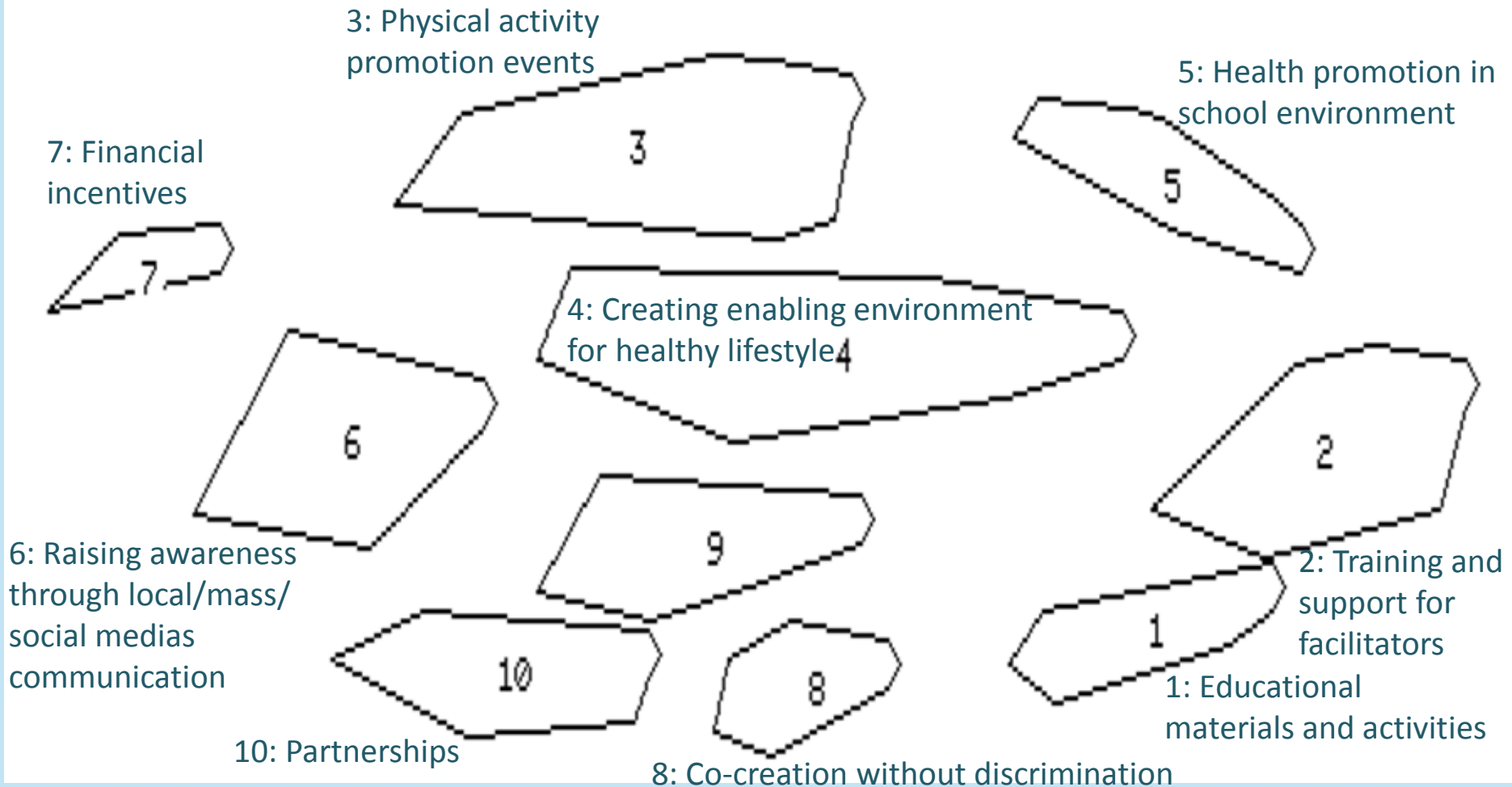
- N = 6
- Statements n= 98
- Clusters n= 9

## Scientists

- N = 5 (ENERGY, TEMPEST, IDEFICS, HELENA, HEALTH 25)
- Statements n= 100
- Clusters n= 9



# Concept Mapping-program coordinators



# Concept Mapping-program coordinators

## Clusters program coordinators – most important:

### 1: Educational materials and activities

*- provide simple guidelines for a balanced lifestyle*

### 2: Training and support for facilitators

*- provide an education program for parents (become a good example for their kids)  
- educational activities directed to small groups (e.g. one class of pupils)*

### 3: Physical activity promotion events

*- provide alternatives for children's leisure time*

### 4: Creating enabling environment for healthy lifestyle

*- set up a Nutrition and Obesity Prevention Centre in the municipality, for adolescents and their parents*





# Concept Mapping-program coordinators

## 5: Health promotion in school environment

## 6: Raising awareness through local/mass/social medias communication

- *organize continuous social media campaigns (FB, YouTube)*
- *regular communication with target groups (parents, teachers, children)*

## 7: Financial incentives

- *subsidize activities aimed at promoting physical activity habits targeting families of adolescents living in deprived areas*

## 8: Co-creation without discrimination

- *engage adolescents in the process*
- *apply participatory approaches throughout all stages of the intervention*

## 9: Partnerships

- *collaborate with local structures (e.g. stakeholders, community settings, youth organizations, local council)*



# Concept Mapping-program coordinators

## Clusters program coordinators – most feasible:

### 1: Educational materials and activities

- *direct access to printed educational information materials on healthy lifestyle*
- *direct access to online educational/information materials on healthy lifestyle*

### 2: Training and support for facilitators

- *educational activities directed to small groups (e.g. one class of pupils)*

### 3: Physical activity promotion events

- *create contests*

### 6: Raising awareness through local/mass/social medias communication

- *inform parents about programs via school*
- *organize continuous media campaigns*

### 8: Co-creation without discrimination

- *voluntary participation in the program*



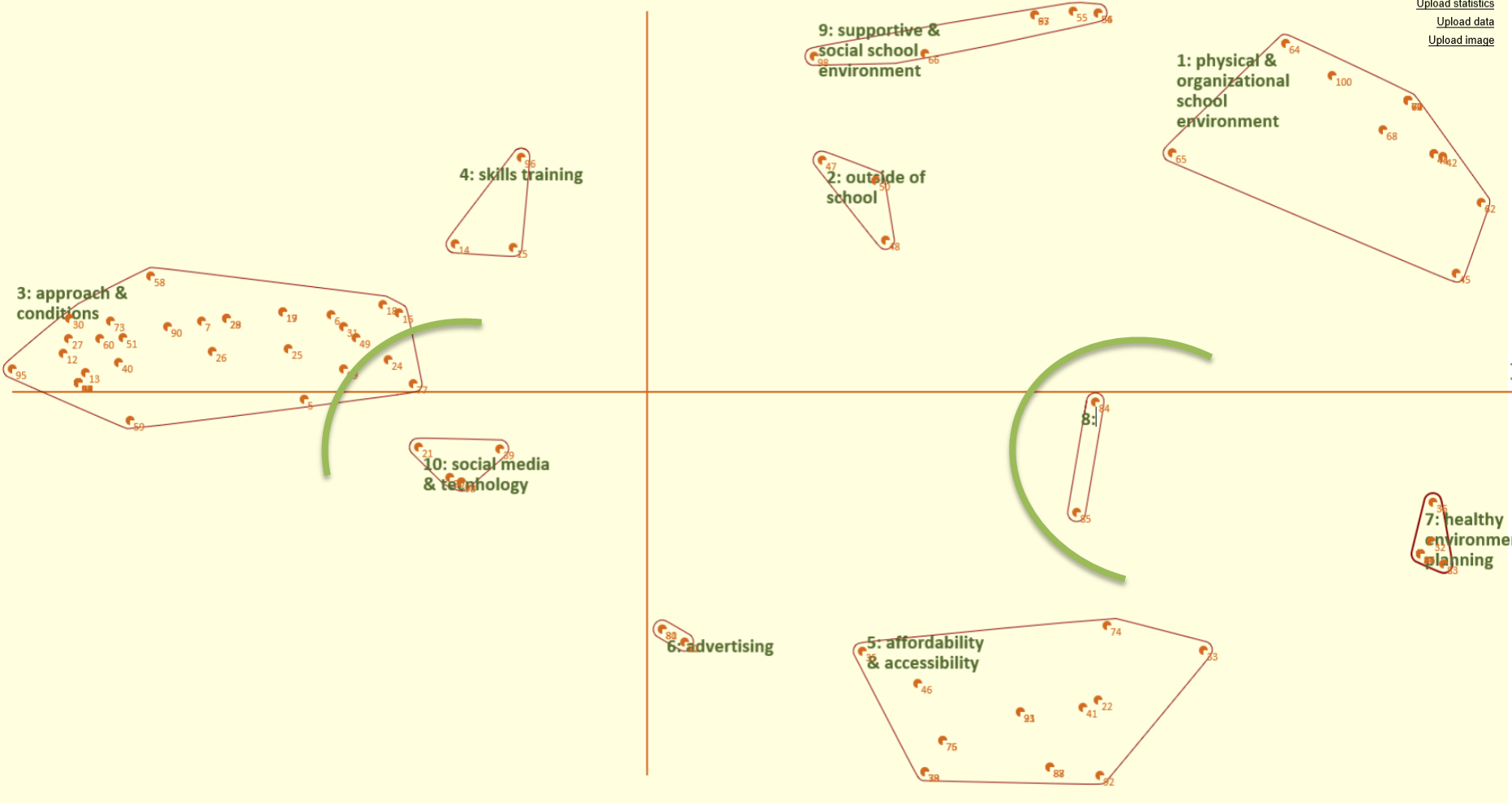
# Concept Mapping-scientists

capacity building/ bottom up

Upload statistics  
 Upload data  
 Upload image

individual

non-individual



top down/regulation



# Concept Mapping-scientists

## Clusters scientists– most important:

### 1: Physical & organizational school environment

*- improve the accessibility of the healthy choice regarding foods in the school environment*

*- improve the accessibility of the healthy choice regarding physical activity in the school environment*

### 2: Outside of school



# Concept Mapping-scientists

## Clusters scientists– most important:

### 3: Approach & conditions

- *involve the adolescents throughout the project (from early beginning of program development to implementation)*
- *consider what is important for adolescents*
- *stimulate parental participation*
- *provide parents with skills to provide a more structured family environment*
- *support family involvement as key factors for making healthy lifestyle changes*
- *involve the family to support the changes in the home environment*
- *address healthy foods, physical activity and sedentary behavior together*

### 4: Skills training

### 5: Affordability & accessibility



# Concept Mapping-scientists

**Clusters scientists– most important:**

**6: Advertising**

**7: Healthy environmental planning**

- *take into account the environmental determinants of behavior*
- *set up a spatial planning measure to restrict junk food outlets in deprived areas*
- *promote active travel to school/work*
- *provide safe bike lanes*

**8: Supportive & social school environment**

**9: Social media & technology**



# Bridging the gap between research and practice

## Recommendations

1. Involve adolescents in the design & deliver of the program
2. Invest in family/parental capacity building
3. Provide and support healthy school food & PA environment
4. Regulate exposure to unhealthy messages/ advertising/ nudging
5. Facilitate safe and active travel



# What's next?

→ Putting the results into practice

Questions:

[c.vanranderad@vumc.nl](mailto:c.vanranderad@vumc.nl)

[m.chinapaw@vumc.nl](mailto:m.chinapaw@vumc.nl)

[f.vannassau@vumc.nl](mailto:f.vannassau@vumc.nl)

