



Milat Program in Schools and Kindergartens 2014/5

Evaluation Report - Executive Summary

July 2015

Program Description

Milat (Hebrew acronym for Supplementary Educational Day Program) is a national program for educational and social advancement of pupils, with an emphasis on communities in the geographic-social periphery and on populations in need of extra support. The program extends the school day with educational reinforcement, enrichment activities and individual treatments as needed. It included 40,000 children in 1,200 schools and kindergartens in the 2014/5 school year.

Purposes of the Research

The research was intended to provide indications regarding the quality of the program's activities and its contribution to the schools and kindergartens, as well as to the children.

Methodology

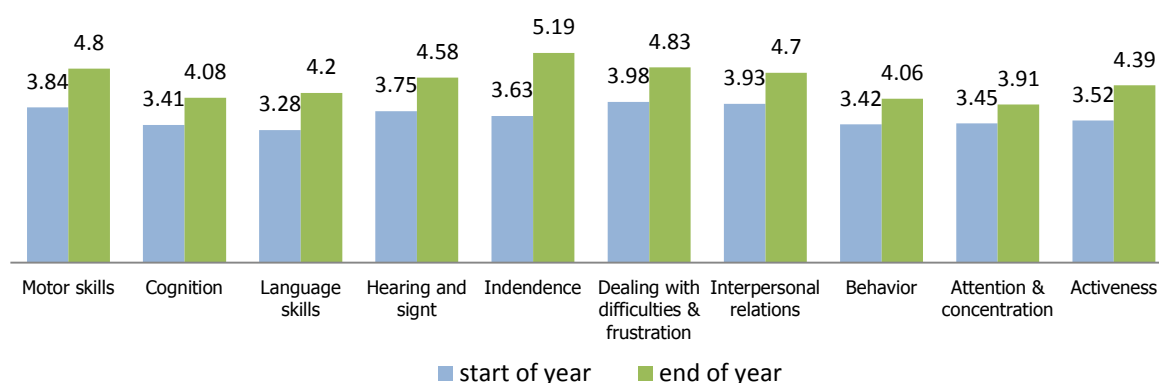
The research used online questionnaires answered at the beginning and end of the year by kindergarten teachers, home room teachers, school principals and Milat coordinators. The school and kindergarten teachers answered questionnaires that related to the impact of the individual treatment. Responses were received for 133 school pupils and 493 kindergarten children at the beginning of the year; 121 pupils and 337 kindergarten children at the end of the year. The analysis refers to children for whom there was information at both points in time. Questionnaires that examined the quality of implementation were answered by 42 school principals and 65 program staff.

Main Findings

Kindergartens

- Analysis of the kindergarten teachers' questionnaires shows an improvement in the performance of children who received individual treatments. The teachers rated the children's situation with regard to the main problem for which they were treated on a scale of 1-10; the average rating was 3.9 at the beginning of the year and 6.2 at the end – an improvement of 58%.
- Another indication of the treatments' effectiveness is the improvement in the performance of the children with the most difficulties in all the indicators, from 13% (attention and concentration) to 43% (independence).

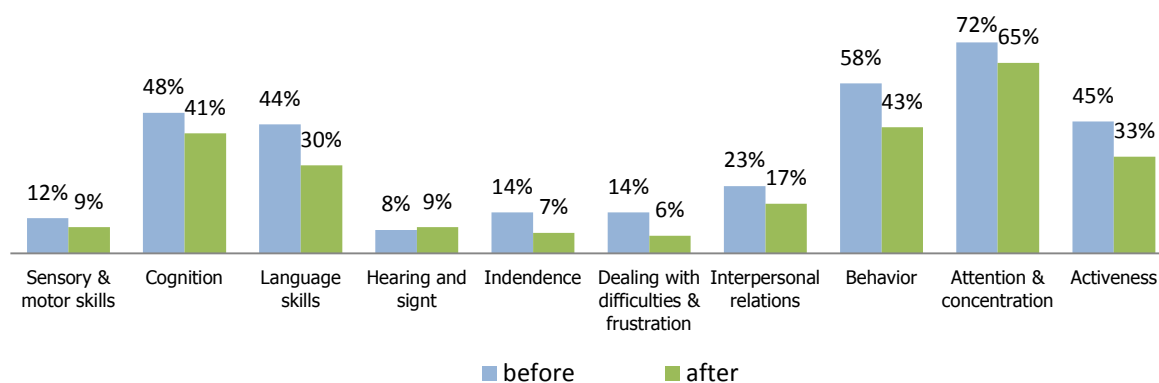
Children's performance before and after treatment *



* On a scale of 1-7

- The rate of children with special difficulties¹ also went down significantly; the biggest decrease was in the behavior indicator – from 58% of the children at the beginning of the year to 43% at the end.

Rate of children with difficulties before and after treatment



Schools

- Analysis of the teachers' questionnaires shows a significant improvement in the performance of the children who received individual treatments. The teachers rated the children's situation with regard to the main problem for which they were treated on a scale of 1-10; the average rating went up from 4.14 at the beginning of the year to 4.84 at the end – an improvement of 17%. In addition, 84% of the school principals reported that the program contributed to a great extent to improving the children's performance.
- With regard to specific indicators, the rate of improvement ranged between 2% (motor skills) to 11% (language skills and emotional functioning).

Impact on learning processes in schools and kindergartens

- More than 65% of the teachers and school principals believe that the program has a high impact on the children's educational achievements, their school performance and the school climate. The remaining teachers and principals report on a moderate impact.

¹ Rated under 4.5 on a scale of 1-7

- An analysis of the changes the children undergo as a result of the program, based on the teachers' and principals' reports, indicates an improvement especially in self-image, motivation and general school performance.

Impact of the program on school functioning

	Principals (N=39)	Teachers (N=43)
Strengthening self-confidence	26%	33%
General school performance	21%	14%
Motivation	18%	19%
Understanding the learning material	10%	
Social integration	8%	12%
Learning skills and habits	8%	9%
Scholastic ability	8%	7%
Emotional growth	3%	
Other		7%

- Milat was found to have a positive impact also on the kindergartens' activity as a whole. For example, two thirds of the kindergarten teachers report that thanks to the program they were more available to attend to the other children. A similar proportion of teachers reported that the program helped to reduce the number of referrals of children to special education committees, and that it allowed them to acquire therapy tools.

Quality of the program implementation

- The study found that the great majority of the staff act in accordance with the standards expected of them. For example, more than 90% of the school coordinators report great involvement of the staff in planning and supervision. On the other hand, the level of parental involvement and the integration of technologies in teaching are relatively low.

Main Findings

- The program was found to be effective in achieving its goals. The individual and group activities seem to benefit the children in schools and kindergartens, as indicated by a significant improvement in their performance in various educational and emotional areas.
- The satisfaction with the program among teachers, school principals and coordinators is high. Compared to the previous year, the involvement of the different parties has increased, although the parents' involvement still needs to be strengthened.
- The school teachers would like a wider range of solutions within the program, for example more enrichment activities.
- Some of the teachers report that lunch component was not used for teaching about proper nutrition.