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IMPACT STORIES

Psychological Interventions for Mental and Physical Health Improvement → The BIZI suicide prevention program

Research Group OSAKLINIK – University of the Basque Country (UPV/EHU)

By focusing on evidence-based psychological interventions, the OSAKLINIK research group is dedicated to improving both physical and mental health outcomes. The group's work addresses pressing public health challenges, particularly the prevention of suicide and the promotion of mental well-being across the lifespan. Through a translational approach that bridges clinical research, community outreach, and digital innovation, OSAKLINIK aims to reduce suffering, promote recovery, and foster resilience in individuals and communities.

The group's interdisciplinary focus includes the development and evaluation of interventions for depression, anxiety, chronic illness, and emotional pain, with special emphasis on suicide prevention in young people and vulnerable populations. The research also integrates psychometric innovation, digital mental health tools, and personalized strategies adapted to school, clinical, and community contexts.

Specifically, this Research Group has created the Bizi Program, an interactive, self-managed and open-access online course to promote suicide prevention in community settings, empowers communities to prevent suicide by turning awareness into action through evidence-based training. A collaborative effort led by Alexander Muela, a clinical psychologist and professor in the University of the Basque Country, who coordinated the initiative and liaised with key stakeholders, particularly Basque Health Service (Osakidetza), BIZI is the first fully online, self-paced suicide prevention program, offering around 9 hours of interactive content with theoretical modules and real-life practical cases. With over 4,000 gatekeepers trained—teachers, social workers, and community members—the program has shown a high 86% completion rate and sustained improvements in participants' confidence and intervention skills. Accessible, free, and scalable, BIZI removes barriers in underserved areas and has been recognized by the European Parliament as a model for broader implementation.

"By designing and implementing scalable psychological interventions, we aim to contribute to a healthier society, where mental health is addressed as a collective responsibility. Our work on suicide prevention is grounded in science, compassion, and the belief that early and accessible care can save lives."

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