



KlasseContact: off sick... but still in the classroom!

The KlasseContact project in the Netherlands

The KlasseContact project was initiated by Mooiste Contact Fonds/KPN and Ziezon, the Dutch network for sickness & education. Since 2008 this project has enabled children with a chronic or severe illness who cannot attend school for a prolonged period, to take lessons in their own classroom with their own teacher. The implementation of KlasseContact is handled by EDventure, the association for education advisory agencies in the Netherlands.

Why is KlasseContact so important?

KlasseContact helps prevent chronically ill schoolchildren from becoming socially isolated. Isolation can occur when pupils are unable to attend school for a prolonged period of time and miss out on contact with their classmates. KlasseContact allows them to keep up with lessons as much as possible, so they don't fall behind with schoolwork as much, making it easier to resume a normal school life after recovery. Research jointly conducted by Mooiste Contact Fonds/EDventure with Erasmus University Rotterdam in 2011 showed that use of KlasseContact has a beneficial effect on social contacts experienced by chronically ill children and on ongoing school performance.





Why is KlasseContact so important?

KlasseContact helps prevent chronically ill schoolchildren from becoming socially isolated. Isolation can occur when pupils are unable to attend school for a prolonged period of time and miss out on contact with their classmates. KlasseContact allows them to keep up with lessons as much as possible, so they don't fall behind with schoolwork as much, making it easier to resume a normal school life after recovery. Research jointly conducted by Mooiste Contact Fonds/EDventure with Erasmus University Rotterdam in 2011 showed that use of KlasseContact has a beneficial effect on social contacts experienced by chronically ill children and on ongoing school performance.

How does KlasseContact work?

Whether at home or in the hospital, the sick child can actively join in with lessons using a webcam and a KlasseContact laptop. The pupil uses a mouse to activate the camera in the classroom and read from the blackboard or zoom in on classmates. There is a 'web chair' in the classroom. This is a mobile video/audio unit, which uses internet to make an audio-visual connection between the school and the pupil, whether at home or in the hospital. So the chronically ill child is still effectively in the classroom. At the start of each new lesson, the web chair is taken to the next classroom by the pupil's 'buddies'.

How many chronically ill children has KlasseContact helped?

755 chronically and severely ill schoolchildren have been given a KlasseContact connection since 2008 (statistics from August 2012). On average, 200 children a year are hooked up to a KlasseContact connection. The organization behind the KlasseContact project has estimated that the number of children a year who are eligible for KlasseContact adds up to around 1,250.

What does KlasseContact wish to achieve?

The parties cooperating in KlasseContact would like to scale-up the project in the near future to eventually reach the entire target of 1,250 chronically ill pupils who can be given access to a KlasseContact connection. They are looking for new sponsors to achieve this scale-up. The sponsors' readiness to contribute towards KlasseContact is vital to expanding the project.

Contacts

Mark Versteegen,
Mooiste Contact Fonds/KPN, Director,
mooistecontactfonds@kpn.com

Annemarie Kaptein,
EDventure, Director,
akaptein@edventure.nu

 **kpn**
Mooiste
Contact
fonds

EDventure
vereniging van
onderwijs
adviesbureaus

 **Ziezon**
landelijk netwerk ziek zijn & onderwijs