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Year: 2022

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## **100 Years of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry in the Canton of Zurich, Switzerland**

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Posted at the Zurich Open Repository and Archive, University of Zurich

ZORA URL: <https://doi.org/10.5167/uzh-227756>

Journal Article

Published Version

Originally published at:

Walitza, Susanne (2022). 100 Years of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry in the Canton of Zurich, Switzerland. *World Child Adolescent Psychiatry*, (23):21-22.



# **World Child & Adolescent Psychiatry**

ISSUE 23, December 2022

WPA. Child and Adolescent Psychiatry Section's Official Journal

## **100 Years of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry in the Canton of Zurich, Switzerland**



***Prof. Susanne Walitza (Switzerland)***

100 years ago, the "Stephansburg," the first clinic for children with mental health conditions, was opened at the "Burghölzli" in Zurich, Switzerland. The "Burghölzli," today the Psychiatric University Hospital of Zurich, is recognized worldwide, last but not least, because of Prof. Eugen Bleuler, one of the first directors, who, in 1908, introduced the term and picture of "schizophrenia" for the first time. In 1911, Prof. Bleuler had begun to treat children in his outpatient clinic for adults, and he had already described the potential of early therapy. The first director, specialized in the treatment of children and adolescents, was Prof. Dr. Jakob Lutz. From the very beginning, he took the position to provide care close to patients and families, and he implemented, since 1931, a number of outpatient services in almost all districts of the canton. Drs. Moritz Tramer and Jakob Lutz very much shaped the term, Child Psychiatrist, in 1933. In 1944, the children's clinic was separated from the Burghölzli; it moved away from the city to a place very close to Lake Zurich.

Switzerland was a pioneer at that time. In 1950, Switzerland, together with Finland, created the first recognized specialist curriculum for child and adolescent psychiatry. The successor of Jakob Lutz was Prof. Jules-Robert Corboz, and he was able to include child and adolescent psychiatry in the Swiss medical curriculum. His successor, Prof. Hans-Christoph Steinhausen, further developed research in the field and brought international visibility to the research.



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While, on the one hand, there was significantly pioneering activity, on the other hand, there were also some difficult years. In the time period from 1950 to 1990, the clinical services were especially focused on children, and for adolescents there was a lack of age-specific treatment capacity.

It was only 25 years ago when specialized adolescent inpatient wards in the canton of Zurich were opened again, and it took until now to have nearly enough capacity for all youth.

In 2016, the former Child and Adolescent Psychiatric Service was merged again with the Psychiatric University Hospital of Zurich. With this merger, psychiatric services now span across all ages. The Department for Child and Adolescent Psychiatry and Psychotherapy continues to work throughout the canton in a family-oriented, interdisciplinary and integrative manner. It offers a wide and diverse range of treatment in basic and specialized care. More than 500 employees are committed to the children and adolescents and their families every day. In 2022, for the first time ever, a public-private partnership, including government health, the University, and private foundations, especially the Children Action Foundation, was established. Twenty years ago, Children Action developed a program focused on prevention of adolescent suicidality. Today, prevention and early intervention should be given priority. Now, we hope that, after 100 years of dedication, we can continue this approach especially to further improve prevention and care for children and young people and their families.