

## **ITN SmartAge at „Kinderuni Wien “**

Among several other things the ITN SmartAge Network also wants to reach out to the general public to communicate the latest findings in the field of ageing research and cognitive dysfunction in old age. At Vienna we participated in this years “Kinderuni” to also involve the youngest in our society and offered a workshop in our filed of research. The “Kinderuni” at the university of Vienna is a yearly summer holiday program for children between the age of 7-12 years. It provides children with the opportunity to attend lectures and workshops and get a first impression of life at the university of Vienna but also generally in academia. We offered a workshop with the title „Können Ballaststoffe schlau machen?“ (“Are dietary fibers able to make you smart?”) for 25 children which was completely booked out. Within 2,5h the 25 children between 10-12 years learned some basics about fibers, their properties and their benefits for the body by exploring games, small experiments and questioners. We started the workshop with a quick brainstorming about dietary fiber to see how much they already know and explained to them what we are doing in our Ph.D. project. The children were then divided in smaller groups and we started the first experiment to learn more about the characteristics of fibers in the gut compared to starch as a symbol for carbohydrates in plants. In the next step, we applied the new knowledge about fibers and tried different food items (e.g. self-baked bread and cookies, fruits and vegetables) and guess how high the fiber content was. This was the favourite station for all children! After trying everything and ranking each item, they checked in a nutrition table if they were right. This resulted in heated discussions about why they couldn´t rank everything in the right order and we finished this task with a very needed ice cream break! In the last round, we learned how the fibers work in the body, which diseases they can prevent, and also how they can help our brain. All in all, we had a very lively workshop with interested kids and not only did the kids learn something about fibers but we got practice in teaching! Here we would like to thank our whole team for helping to prepare this workshop and especially to our three master students who helped us to supervise the kids!



Kinderuni Wien – Team



Workshop table