Welcome

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The Dutch system

The current Dutch system for juvenile incarceration consists of one type of high security facility for young offenders. In 2015, there were seven high security facilities spread across the country.

From 2015, the department of justice, along with the prison service and other stakeholders, has been designing a new system, whereby:

1) Young people will be placed in either a low security or high security facility, based on their assessed level of risk and need of care or treatment.

2) Small scale facilities for young people on a criminal charge can be combined with small scale facilities for certain young people on secure care orders.

3) Two high security facilities are shut down and five small scale facilities will be opened.
What is a small scale facility?

- A Small-Scale Facility (KVJJ) is a facility where young people stay close to their own living environment with a lower security level than in the current Judicial Youth Institution (JJI).
- The aim is that care and education or employment are continued or started up as much as possible during their stay.
- Positive elements in the network of the young people can be retained and existing care, treatment, education and / or work can continue.
- The KVJJ offers young people tailored relational and physical security, supervision and guidance within a positive learning and residential climate.
- The young people and their network are in charge of the care-plan as much as possible.
- To make the care-plan successful, a range of organisations is involved with the facility, such as probation services, care providers and the municipality.
Implementation

- KVJJ Amsterdam was opened as a pilot project in 2016 and now has a permanent status;
- KVJJ Limburg opened in April 2020;
- KVJJ Noord opens January 2021;
- KVJJ Rotterdam and KV The Hague will open July 2021;
- All facilities have space for eight young people on remand or in the last phase of their custodial sentence.
Case example

Dutch Judicial Small Scale Facility
This is Koen
Without a small scale facility

- He is 12 years old;
- He got in a very life threatening fight with another boy;
- He uses a lot of physical aggression to other children;
- School can’t handle him anymore;
- The extra preventive rules are not enough to help him to change his dangerous behaviour;
- He has to go to the youth prison ....😊
This is Koen
He stays at a small scale facility

- He is 12 years old;
- He stopped with (physical) aggression to other children;
- He can still continue his own school;
- He makes his own plan for the future with his parents, probation officer, school and other youth care providers.
- He can stay in his own environment, close to his parents, family and positive friends;
- He and his family can start with the treatment he needs together, in his own environment
- It’s a very small step back to his home, his own environment.
- He has more freedom and relational security.
This would be Koen
At a Judicial Youth Prison

• He is 12 years old and stays between 10 older boys, behind bars en heavy doors;
• His probation officer wil stop until he is free again;
• He can go to an different intern school, with new different intern threatment;
• He lives far from his parents, family and friends
• His parents can call en visit him within the visitors room; he has less freedom....
• When he is released he has to start all over again at his own environment, which is still the same as before.
This is Koen
At the small scale facility

- He is 12 years old and his parents, family, probation officer, youth care can visit him all the time and he can visit them;
- He makes his own relational safety and guidance plan;
- He can go to his own school independently with relational security (there is contact possible with Koen all the time and school can also call for help/guidance);
- He can practice with his own plan for the future with his parents, probation officer, school and other youth care together in his own environment;
- The environment is more friendly, with more guidance, fewer other youth with criminal problems, it looks more like a second home, where he can cook, study, see his parents, family and friends en build or continue positive problem solvings skills, contacts and hobby’s.
It is a good chance
For Koen; he is growing,
the relational safety works well for him.
RESEARCH

Screening -> Local facility -> Follow-up

QUANTITATIVE

QUALITATIVE
SECURITY

PHYSICAL

PROCEDURAL

RELATIONAL
Feeling safe is not about the structures of a building, feeling safe is about the people around me.
STAFF-YOUTH INTERACTION

Connecting and aligning with young people, their world and logic

- Loving care
- Empowerment
- Genuine connection
- Staff as a role model
- Respect for mutual boundaries
COLLABORATION

Collaborating with young people to build on protective factors

- Youth ownership over trajectory
- Autonomy and responsibility
- Learning by trial and error
- Staff as coach
- Clear structure and boundaries
STAFF PRESENCE

- Prevention
- Observe, intervene and de-escalate
- Available for support
- Informal activities
RESULTS

• Experienced safety is high
• Less deviancy training
• Motivation is high
• Positive working climate and job satisfaction
• Wide support: staff, young people, caregivers
PROTECTIVE FACTORS

70% continued, 37% initiated

94% continued, 53% initiated

Accessible frequent contact; Active caregiver role

Follow-up

3 – 26 months (median 10)
N=49 (78% response rate)

- 72% structural daytime activity
- 64% lives at home
- 63% good involvement network
- 50% satisfied
- 15% closed institution
Some nuance...
→ Not a solution for every problem
→ Not a quick-fix
→ Complex population, complex context

Conclusion
✓ Secure, safe and therapeutic environment
✓ Not all youth need high security measures
✓ Key elements may be applied in other settings
✓ Wide support: government, professionals, youth and parents
IMPLEMENTATION

Phased and enough time

In collaboration with all stakeholders

Involving the community

Project manager

Learning by trail and error

Trust in those directly working with young people

Selection, training, supervision and management

Monitoring and evaluation