



Flemish youth care Users perspective

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Youth care in Flanders

- 2013: new decree Integrated Youth Care
- 2004: decree rights of children in Youth Care



Goals of Flemish youth care

- Socialisation of care
- On time access to youth care
- Guaranteeing continuity in youth care
- Dealing adequately in cases of unsafety
- Offering aid in cases of crisis
- Participation of clients

Two practice focused research projects

1 Perspective of youngsters and parents

- Artevelde University College
Children's right commissary
Child Guidance centres Ghent
- Cases youth care
- Semi-structured interviews youngsters (6), parents (6)
- 'Union trade' youngsters in youth care, professionals, representative parents

2 Perspective of children 6-12 years old

- Artevelde University College
- Cases youth care
- Semi-structured interviews children (20)
- Visualised
- Accent on participation of children

Project 1: youngsters and parents

Questions

- According to youngsters and parents, what is required for an 'Integrated' youth care?
- How can care givers succeed in creating 'Integrated' youth care, taking into account the perspective of youngsters and parents

Results

- Socialisation is a reality
- Youth care is still too demanding, not supplying
- Shortage
- Complex procedures
- Not fitting with dynamics of the family
- No trajectory counselor
- Importance of basic professional attitude and skills
- Mutual understanding

'Truth or dare' - brochure



Project 2: children from 6 - 12 years old

- Accent: child's participation
- Questions:
 - What are feelings, needs and expectations of children from 6 up to 12 years old on their participation in youth care from their own perspective?
 - What are suitable tools to work participatory with children from 6 up to 12 years old?

Informed consent →



Items →



Conclusions on youth care

- The children were generally well-informed and satisfied with the level of participation
- Participation ≠ involving children as much as possible but rather ...
 - Creating the necessary conditions for children to be informed, speak up and ask questions
 - Letting the child decide whether and how it wants to be informed and involved

Conclusions on suitable tools

Boundary conditions

- Participation is more than a tool or a method, it is especially about the researcher's/practitioner's attitude
- Importance of a meaningful informed consent
- Create openness and trust, give children autonomy
- Keep the introverts in mind! (make sure you also involve children who are less verbal, more silent, who don't speak up immediately ... use triggers)
- Concretize, visualise
- You need space and time

<http://www.arteveldehogeschool.be/hetkindindejeugdhulp>



Next step: European project

- Communication with younger children in Youth care, social services (social work)
- Exchange of expertise
- Teaching/training module
- Tool box/online platform
- Erasmus+ ?

References

- Ackaert, L., Eerdekens, W., Schoevaerts, I., Vandenbussche, E. (2016) Waarheid, durven of doen? Ervaringen van jongeren en ouders met jeugdhulp. Brussel: Kinderrechtencommissariaat.
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- Vandenbussche E., Eerdekens W., Ackaert L., Schoevaerts, I. (2016). Integrale jeugdhulp, en wat met de school? Welwijs, september 2016.
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