



# How the Dutch Youth Institute (NJI) contributes to safe and supportive secondary schools

The processes and experiences of creating/developing, implementing and using systems to collect and use data to inform policy and practice

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# The issue in hand

Council of Amsterdam  $\longrightarrow$  NJi

- “develop and apply a system of judging the school safety”
- “improvement for the benefit of the 84 secondary school in Amsterdam: more safety, less incidents”



## Outline of the situation

In general: inappropriate, anti-social, and/or disruptive behaviours are becoming more prevalent.

Affects staff and student safety negatively

Management of disruptive behaviours has been identified as the most troublesome issue that schools are facing \*

\* Cotton, 2001; Elam, Rose, & Gallop, 1998



## And in Amsterdam....

- A great many serious incidents in the past years
- Negative impact on the focus on learning
- Expenses for the municipal council and the tax payers; (the years of additional expenses when a student is expelled; the costs of absence through illness)



# Approach NJi

Auditing of two variables:

1. School safety  $\Rightarrow$  positive school climate
2. Caring  $\Rightarrow$  positive school climate

Caring has three tiers \*:

1. positive attention for all the students
2. support for some of them
3. timely care for (a few) students with serious problems.

\* Shinn & Walker, 2010



# School climate (safe, supportive and caring) is influenced by \*

- the leadership role and behavior;
- the morale of the teaching staff and their teaching practices in classrooms;
- the physical environment of the school;
- the characteristics and mix of students, teachers and parents;
- the connections between the school and its surrounding neighbourhood;
- the social interactions within the school.

\* Osher & Dwyer, 2006



# The auditsystem

- ISO 9001

Qs matches requirement in certification schedule; in agreement with requirements the organization itself sets; is implemented and maintained effectively

- Certification scheme with criteria

Using a great amount of international literature Ebp/Pbe

- Criteria following the PDCA-cycle

- 29 criteria Safety, 26 criteria Caring



# Auditing

The council of Amsterdam: financial support in the realization improve the quality of a safe and caring learning environment





# Characteristics

## *Time invested*

- The audit takes 5,5 hours and is carried out by two auditors.

## *Content of the audit*

- analysis of school documentation about a safe and caring learning environment
- interviews with key-persons
- observations during the review.



## Next steps

- The results are discussed with the school management ('consent')
- The management draws up an improvement plan
- The plan is elucidated in the presence of the NJi and a representative of the council
- If need be, the council provides financial support for realization



## *Preliminary results*

Meanwhile an audit was carried out on 21 of the 84 schools.

The schools are satisfied with the approach and method so far:

- audit is “penetrating”, “revealing”, “constructive” and “little bureaucratic”
- the plans for improvement they make are challenging and ambitious, but also measurable



## continuation

The NJi intends to use the audit's results for further research, knowledge development and support of schools, collaborations and the Ministry of Education.

### Investigating:

- if the amount of incidents will diminish
- schoolresults will rise
- the absence of students and rate of early school leaving will sink
- students and personnel feel more safe



**end**

Hopefully: next year some challenging results!

Thank you for your attention!

Questions?

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