



Ministry of Security and Justice

What WORKS



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What works?and What does not?

Key outcomes from a systematic inventory of 360 meta-evaluations with a special emphasis on Preventing Juvenile Delinquency and Offender Oriented (Criminal) Justice Interventions

Presentation for the Fachtag Strafvollzug und Straffälligenhilfe 'Resozialisierung von Straffälligen – Was wirkt?'. Leonberg: Seehaus Leonberg, 24. September 2018

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Seehaus Leonberg, 24 September 2018



What will we do during this presentation?



- Personal introduction and background
- Aim of this presentation
- What works and what does not?
 - Situational crime prevention (short overview)
 - Policing (short overview)
 - Good news!: positive developments in juvenile crime
 - Juvenile Offender oriented (criminal) justice interventions (in depth overview)
- What lessons can be learned from the available offender-oriented meta-evaluations?
- Conclusions



Personal introduction and background



- Information analyst at the Research and Documentation Center, Dutch Ministry of Justice
- Policy advisor at the Strategy Unit, Dutch Ministry of Justice
- Head of the Secretariat of the European Crime Prevention Network (EUCPN), European Commission, Brussels
- Senior policy advisor at the Unit for General Crime Policy, Dutch Ministry of Security and Justice
- Research fellow at the International Victimology Institute (INTERVICT), Tilburg University, the Netherlands.
- Personal ambition to stimulate the utilisation of evidence based scientific insights into the policy making process



Aim of this presentation



- Offer insight and overview of proven effective criminal justice interventions and measures
- This insight must contribute to a policy that is effective in the criminal justice system and crime prevention field
- Partly bridge the (traditional) gap between the policy arena, research and practice
- To make synoptic the apparent complex pile of empirical scientific studies out of three knowledge domains
- To provide solutions to use the existing knowledge base



Effective situational crime prevention: what works? (short overview)



It is easier to change places than people
Opportunity makes the thief

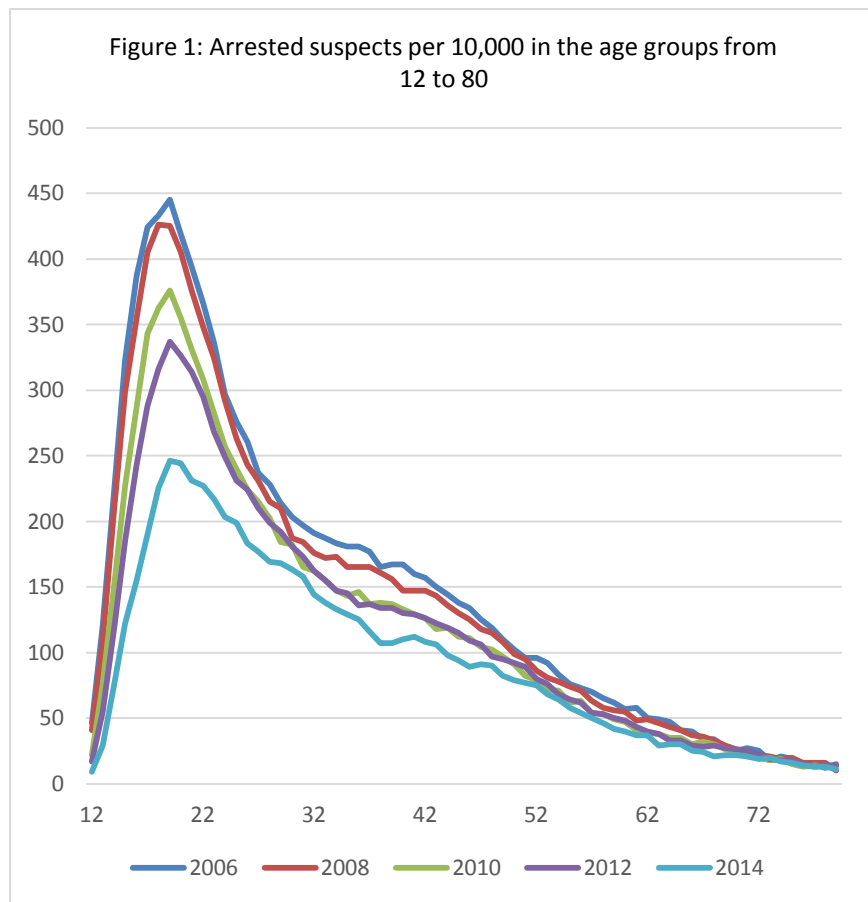
- The raising of lighting levels in (semi) public spaces
- The use of CCTV in certain locations, aimed at specific crime categories
- The use of the Secured by Design instrument
- The raising of the general security level and the restructuring of residential areas
- The obligatory inbuilt of standard security measures during the production phase of consumer goods (cars, cameras, bicycles, mobile telephones)
- Limitation of the availability of alcohol / requirements to the set-up of catering industry / responsible serving
- The deployment of supervisors / informal-social control in housing complexes, public transport and public space



- Focused and selective strategy
- Problem oriented policing
- Focus on repeat victimization
- Hotspots policing
- Third party policing
- Focused deterrence strategies
- Hot offender / prolific offender strategy



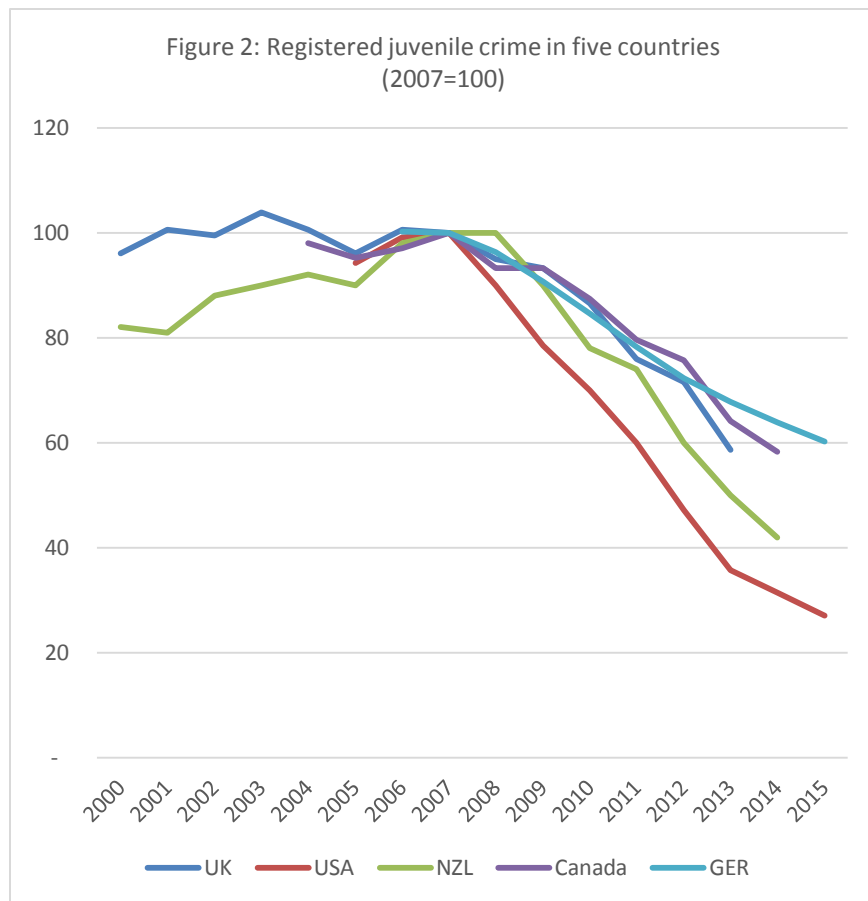
Good news!:Declining age-crime curves in The Netherlands: 2006 - 2015



- The number of arrested Dutch juvenile suspects shows a sharp decrease: between 2006 – 2015: - 60%
- According to the age-crime curves: youths aged 18/19 almost halved; youths aged 16/17 decrease 50%; youths aged 14/15 decrease 65%; and youths aged 12/13 decrease 80%
- So: the younger, the fewer juvenile delinquents!



Good news! International developments: Registered juvenile crime in five countries, 2000 - 2015



- ❖ *Germany* since 2006: - 40%; *USA* since 2006: - 75%; *New Zealand* since 2006: - 60%; *Canada* since 2006: - 40%; *United Kingdom* since 2006: - 40%.
- ❖ Also a decrease in juvenile crime in Australia, Scotland, Denmark, Belgium, France and Austria
- ❖ Between 2008 and 2014 in 25 EU-countries the **number of juvenile detainees decreased by 41,9%**
- ❖ Conclusion: The Dutch development of a dramatic downturn in registered juvenile crime is not unique.



Scope and development in Juvenile Delinquency



- Over the last seven years the juvenile delinquency rate has fallen in the Western world
- For the majority of youth, committing offenses is a temporary phenomenon in terms of time, scope and seriousness
- Peers in class rooms and on the street play an important role in offending behaviour
- **Conclusion:** Juvenile delinquency rate is falling, it occurs only among a limited number of youth → there is no need for a moral panic

Declining juvenile crime: A number of major explanations

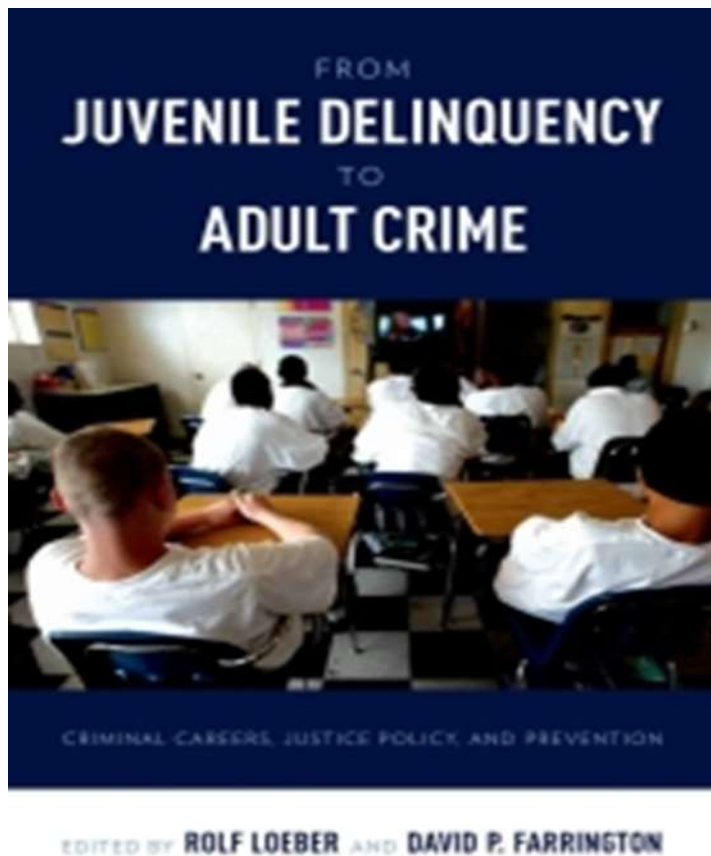
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- There has been a significant and prolonged 'juvenile crime drop' in The Netherlands and many other advanced countries.
- First dominant explanation: technological developments → rise of the smartphone / Internet online gaming → change in leisure time
- Second dominant explanation: due to crime prevention measures it has become more difficult to commit crime → next to this, committing crime has become less acceptable
- Third dominant explanation: decrease in risky behaviour, less alcohol / drug use and abuse, less dropping out of secondary-school
- Fourth dominant explanation: applying evidence based (criminal justice) interventions on the basis of 'what works principles'



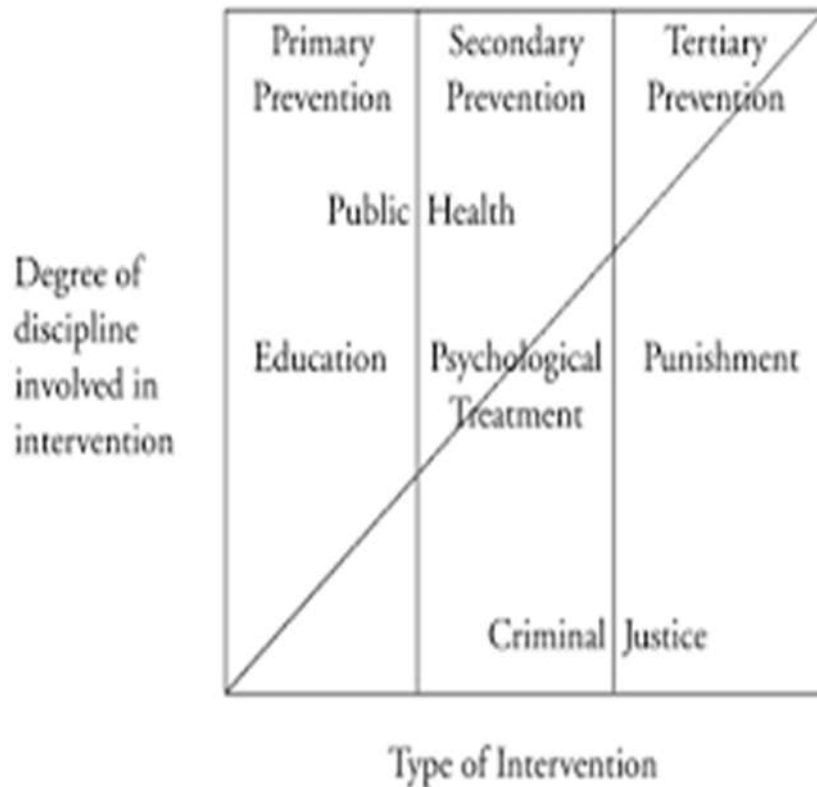
A small group of 'persistent delinquents'



- A small group of some 5% roughly commits 33% of all serious offenses
- Accumulation of factors: personal characteristics combined with an unfavourable situation; poor verbal capacities; weak ties to school; joining peer groups; and use of alcohol and drugs
- In this extreme group, chronic delinquency seems to be rooted in their early years
- **Conclusion:** 5% of juvenile delinquents are persistent delinquents. They account for 33% of all serious offenses. After adolescence their crime rate falls.



Identifying risk and protective factors of juvenile delinquency



- Intervention methods to prevent juvenile delinquency must address a range of risk and protective factors
- Preventing juvenile delinquency in a child's life can pay significant dividends by reducing crime rates and crime related expenditures
- More important it can help children avoid the consequences of delinquent behaviour by increasing their chances of leading law-abiding and productive lives



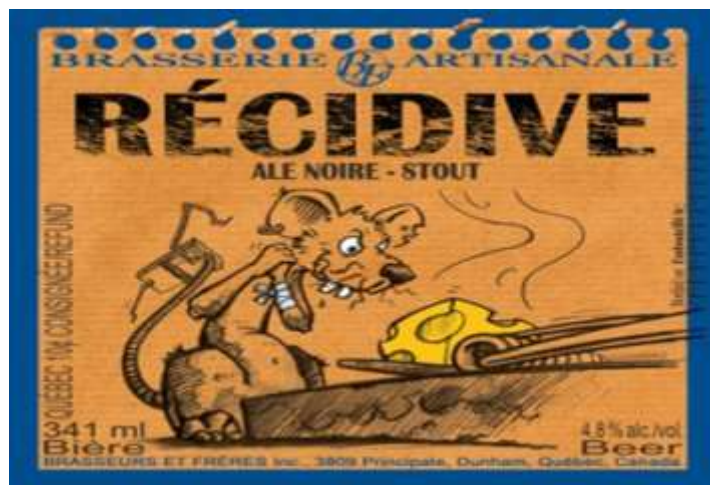
What works-principles (Andrews & Bonta)

- **Risk**
(intervention fits to the degree of risk)
- **Need**
(direct intervention at dynamic risk and protective factors)
- **Responsivity**
(motivation, learning style, possibility to profit from intervention)
- **Treatment program** (evidence based)
- **Program-integrity** (quality assurance, model adherence)
- **Professionalism and competence** (training, supervision)

Assessment is
the critical key
to effective
interventions



Effective criminal justice interventions aimed at juveniles: What works?



- Some criminal justice interventions have **negative** effects. This means more reoffending → **Scared Straight, Shock incarceration, Boot camps**
- **Effective** interventions include: **Child raising support, Cognitive behavioural therapy, Employment guidance, Parent training, Mentoring programmes, Community sanctions, Interpersonal skills training / self control mechanism, Anger management**
- There is evidence that criminal justice interventions can be cost effective
- **Conclusions:** Purely repressive interventions tend to give a negative or poor result. Keep children as long as possible outside of the formal criminal justice system.



Features of effective behavioural programmes: Reducing recidivism among juvenile offenders



- Most programmes have a small (but certainly not negligible effect) effect → on average there is a 12% improvement
- 25% of the programmes show a reduction of recidivism of 30%
- Duration, intensity **risk levels**
- Targetting on **criminogenic needs**
- **Responsivity** taken into account
- Only high-quality and intensive approaches produce results



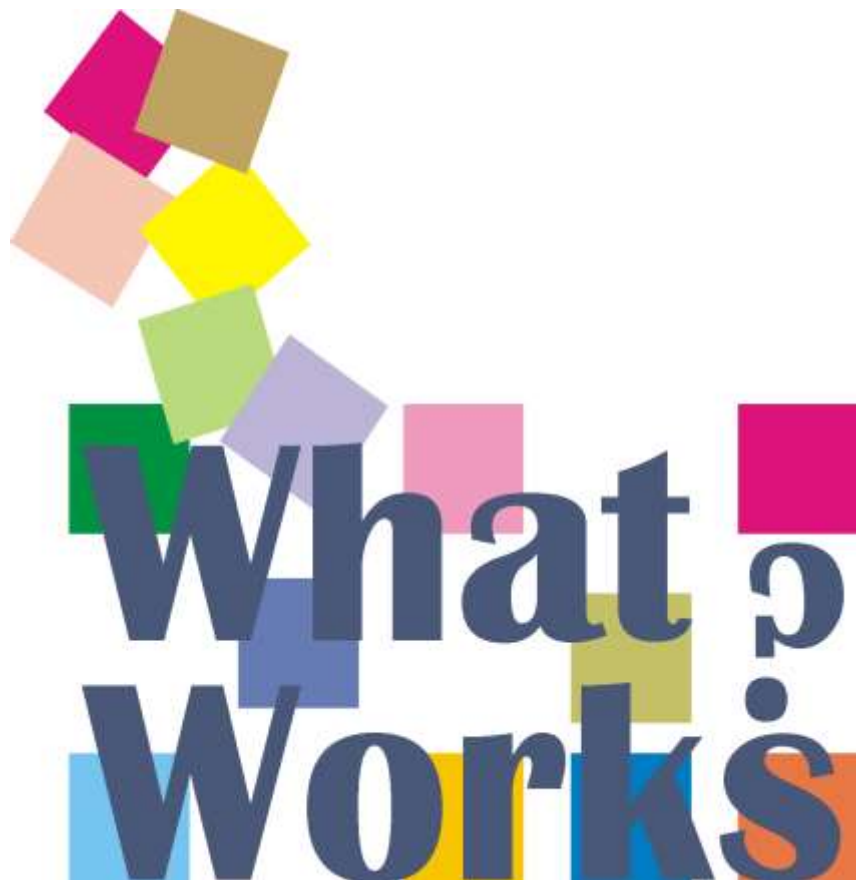
Conditions for effective interventions to prevent Juvenile Delinquency



- Focus on high risk cases: interventions are directed at young offenders that run a very high risk, given their personal and social circumstances
- Quality is a must: intervening effectively presumes high-quality interventions
- Balance between incentive and punishment: interventions both have a disciplining and encouraging nature
- **Conclusion:** It is possible to achieve major effects with interventions that curb the build-up of delinquency or promote or speed up the “breakdown”. Focus, Quality and Balance are key conditions.



Early intervention: opportunities and pitfalls



- Meta evaluations show effects of 15% reduction in problematic behaviour
- There is a great variety in effects
- Most of the pre-schoolers who show extreme problematic behaviour do not turn out chronic delinquent adolescents or adults
- Early interventions also have negative consequences for a child. Labelling a child may have implications by ending up in the justice system.
- **Conclusion:** The sooner the better, but is never too late. Early intervention may have positive, but also negative effects for the child.



Some cautionary remarks: do no harm!



- No single risk factor is sufficient to explain juvenile delinquency
- Intervention methods must account for the wide range of individual, family, peer, school and community risk factors
- Still many gaps exist in our knowledge base about development and prevention of juvenile delinquency
- Use confinement sparingly and only to respond to serious offending
- Use restitution and community service more often
- Avoid collateral consequences of adjudication, such as public release of juvenile records that reduce opportunities to a prosocial life



Conclusions



- Preventing juvenile delinquency in a child's life can pay significant dividends by reducing crime rates and crime related expenditures
- More important it can help children avoid the consequences of delinquent behaviour by increasing their chances of leading law-abiding and productive lives
- Juvenile delinquency is a rather stable fact, it occurs only among a limited number of youth → there is no need for a moral panic
- To achieve major effects with interventions Focus, Quality and Balance are key conditions
- Purely repressive interventions tend to give a negative or poor result
- Keep children as long as possible outside of the formal criminal justice system → DO NO HARM!
- There is an accumulation of evidence that we can be optimistic about what works in juvenile delinquency prevention



Finally, good luck with the project 'juvenile prison in free forms', up to the next fifteen years!

