



No Kids in the Middle

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1. INTRODUCTION

Title: No Kids in the Middle (Dialoog laste nimel)

COUNTRY/REGION: ESTONIA

ENTITY: Netherlands

LINK/CONTACT FOR MORE INFORMATION:

<http://www.dialooglastenimel.ee/> ; <http://kinderenuitdeknel.nl/index?lang=en>

2. DESCRIPTION OF THE GOOD PRACTICE

Target group:

Parents who are caught up in divorce and their children

Objectives:

- To develop a constructive dialogue between parents
- To help parents see better the causes and consequences of family conflicts
- To help parents notice their children and their needs in the midst of their conflicts.

Intervention structure:

The training consist of 8 group meetings for parents and for children, network meeting and two pre-interviews. In the group meetings both parents have to attend and their children. The trainings will last for 3 months. Parents and children meet at the same time in different groups. Up to 12 parents are taken in to one group. Session will last up to 2 hours and the group will meet every second week.¹

Methodology:

In the parent group, the focus is on topics, which appear in difficult brake ups. This is done by discussions and practical exercises, which focus on parenting not couple relationship. In order to participate in the program the parent has to come the pre-interview with the other parent, temporarily stop any litigation in process and attend all trainings. In order to successfully finish the program, there are 2 pre-interviews for parents where they are given an overview of the project, what to expect and what they are expected to do.²

For children the method is interactive. In the group, they are drawing, making pictures and movies, listen to music, dance, do poetry and play various games. Through the activities and talking children get to think and talk about what they feel when parents are fighting and what they can do to protect themselves from that. Group consist of children from all ages.³

¹ Dialoog laste nimel 2017, <http://www.dialooglastenimel.ee/koolitusest> 22.02.2017

² Dialoog laste nimel 2017, <http://www.dialooglastenimel.ee/vanematele> 22.02.2017

³ Dialoog laste nimel 2017, <http://www.dialooglastenimel.ee/lastele> 22.02.2017



The methodology used to train trainers is also an interactive program. The experienced therapists, who are also trainers, share their knowledge and experiences from both the parent and the child groups. Relevant theory will be shared and there is room for discussion and questions. Additionally, diverse exercises will be carried out, including role-plays.⁴

Costs related:

In Tallinn the cost for the 2-hour meeting is 25 euros per parent. The total cost of the program is 200 euros per parent. The cost includes carrying out the program, network meeting, coffee breaks and work tools. However, it is possible to ask for a compensation from the local government where the family is from. Groups for children are for free. First 3 meetings before the parent groups are for free as well.

There are also costs related to trainings for the counsellor and managers who will later conduct the program in their country. There are two options:

1. Target group study day

Counsellors and managers (with an academic degree) who are keen to learn about high conflict divorce and the existing possibilities for treatment in a group setting for one day. These include: (GZ) psychologists, educationists, socio-psychiatric nurses (SPV), POH staff, social workers, and drama therapists. Managers who consider including the program into their offer can also register. The cost for the study day is 195 euros.⁵

2. Target group two-day program

Counsellors (with an academic degree) who have substantial experience with treatment who would like to work with at least three colleagues from their own organization on 'No Kids in the Middle'. These include (GZ and clinical) psychologists, educationists, socio-psychiatric nurses (SPV), social workers, drama therapists, family therapists. The cost for two-day training is 425 euros.⁶ There is also an option for group supervision (at least 4 participants) with the price of 97,50 euros per 45 minutes. None of the listed costs includes traveling costs, this is extra.

Further information:

Pilot project in Estonia started in March 2017.

Resources available:

<http://kinderenutdeknel.nl/index?lang=en>

<http://www.dialoglastenimel.ee/>

⁴ No Kids in the Middle 2017, <http://kinderenutdeknel.nl/opleiding#werkwijze> 22.02.2017

⁵ No Kids in the Middle 2017, <http://kinderenutdeknel.nl/opleiding#inleiding> 22.02.2017

⁶ No Kids in the Middle 2017, <http://kinderenutdeknel.nl/opleiding#inleiding> 22.02.2017



Savi, M. (2016). "How to break up so that children would stay healthy?" Magazine "Psychology for you": Tallinn <http://media.wix.com/ugd/a4ecdc41e5be362afa466881f277887987ef9b.pdf>

Pere ja laps (2016). The dialog of couples caught in divorce. <http://perejalaps.delfi.ee/pere/lahutajate-dialoog-laste-nimel?id=75547909>

Kase, K. (2016). "Divorce, fights and children." Magazine "Estonian Woman": Tallinn <http://suhteabi.ee/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/EN-NKIM-jutt-sinu-laps-m%C3%A4rts-2016.pdf>

Järva Teataja (2016). "In the war between mothers and fathers, children become the weapons." http://suhteabi.ee/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/IMG_20161101_105754.jpg

[Vechtscheidende ouders en hun kinderen - Systeemtherapie](#)

3. DIMENSIONS

Please make the cross if the good practice meets the proposed items. Also, try to expand the information in each section.

3.1. EVIDENCE OF POSITIVE AND/OR PROMISING RESULTS IN ORDER TO ELIMINATE CORPORAL PUNISHMENT

Training/Education

The program increases the use of positive disciplinary methods for parents and educators/teachers:

- Promoting the positive parenting (promoting positive relationships, care and development the child's capacities, offering recognition and guidance to the child, establishing limits that allow the full development of the child).
- Offering alternative educational strategies to corporal punishment, that promotes democratic family educational model.
- The program promotes to caregivers, the knowledge and skills for protect the children.
- The program promotes a positive dynamic and healthy family relationships.

Promotes protection

- The program will focus attention on children to understand their worries and circumstances.
- The program works on emotional education as a protective factor for violent behavior.



Empowerment

- The practice provides skills for children, promote their resilience and resources to deal with situations of violence.
- The practice promotes and improves parental skills such as: behavior of control and emotional self-regulation.

Living environment approach

- The program has references to the real living environment of parents and children (social environment, living environment, etc.).
- The program takes into account, cultural differences in the intervention.

Formal networking

- The program implies networking and cooperation with other Institutions: with comprehensive services for care, recovering, children reintegration, teens at risk or victims of corporal punishment.
- There is a networking/cooperation with other stakeholders in the local and professional environments.
- The program is included in the structure of the national/regional system and it depends on several people.

Training/Education: The goal of this project is to turn parents' conflict into a less destructive one. It aims to provide parents with new ways to deal with existing conflict areas so that the kids can feel safe again and develop in a good environment. The program aims to teach parents who are going through divorce how to raise the children as a team even if they are not a couple anymore.

Promotes protection: There is a separate group for children that meet up at the same time when parents have their groups. In that children group are given to chance to express their feelings and worries what they have with their parent's divorce. They also have the opportunity to explain what relationships they have with their parents. Through activities and talking, the children are thought how to manage their feelings and how they can protect themselves in the process.

Empowerment: In 2015, there were 3328 registered divorces in Estonia. Out of these divorces, 30% are faced with the question how to split their assets and time with children. Moreover, 15% of divorces become very problematic. The couples who delay the divorce process make the whole situation very hard to handle for family members and for people outside the family network (friends, colleagues, lawyers, specialist working with children etc.). The ones who suffer the most are however children. Research have found that the more there are conflicts in a divorce the more serious psychosocial consequences children may have. The program "No Kids in the Middle" is very effective in case of divorces where conflicts are very big and parents need help for emotional self-regulation. The program also helps to establish positive and working parental skills between parents and children after the divorce. The program help parents to reach



agreements with the child's best interest in mind so that children can grow up in a stress free and healthy environment.⁷

Living environment approach: As in many other social programs these programs too takes into account the individual aspects of the family. That is why parents have to make 2 pre-interviews before taking part of the group sessions. The second pre-interview also includes the child/children. This will give the counsellors an overview of the background of the parents attending the group and helps to make sure that they will benefit from the group. In the pre-interview it is very important to see if the parents will be motivated enough to attend all the training meetings.

Formal networking: Parents may be referred to the program via child protectors, counselors, lawyers, mediators or court. Therefore, there is some networking between governmental organizations.

3.2. DATA ON IMPACT OF THE PRACTICE

Effectiveness of the elimination of corporal punishment

The practice has demonstrated a good impact on:

- The decreases of corporal punishment.
- The increase in positive interactions parents / mother / infant caregivers.
- The increase in timeshare.
- The improvement of communication and resolution of conflicts without using corporal punishment.
- A significant increase in knowledge, skills and confidence of parents or caregivers.
- An improvement of the welfare of the participants.

Sustainability of the impact

- The effects on the target group are sustainable.

Due to the fact that the program will start in Estonia from April 2017, there is currently no impact data available.

3.3. COMPREHENSIVE NATURE

Please, tick the items the practice address to:

Dimension 1: Social and cultural context towards corporal punishment and alternative methods (including MEDIA analysis)

- The program promotes support and guidance to parents in developing a responsible parenthood that will reduce corporal punishment.
- The program supports teachers and school support staff in improving their skills and management skills of non-violent learning methods.
- It involves parents and tutors through established participatory Organizations (AMPA and others), prevention and elimination of corporal punishment.

⁷ Dialogo laste nimel 2017, <http://www.dialoglastenimel.ee/koolitusest> 22.02.2017



- The practice promotes the child-youth movement through the creation and / or consolidation of representative organizations in communities.

Dimension 2: Legal framework conditions and other procedural, judicial frameworks related with the implementation of the law

- The practice responds to the objectives of education and social reintegration provided by law.
- It is consistent with the existing legal framework for protection of violence against children and teenagers, to ban explicitly corporal punishment.

Dimension 3: Awareness and training efforts concerning corporal punishment and alternative methods:

- The program raises awareness about the importance in eliminating corporal punishment.
- The practice provides training about corporal punishment elimination methods.

Dimension 4: Resources available on positive parenting techniques and complementary knowledge

- The practice provides resources available on positive parenting techniques and complementary knowledge.

The program aims to improve parents' cooperation with each other to raise children in a positive way and as a team. It also teaches parents to be able to have a dialogue with each other and with their children. This kind of teaching will also improve parent and child relationships and conflict solving skills which will also lead to the reduce of the use of corporal punishment as a way to raise children.

All resources for positive parenting techniques and complementary knowledge are available on the following homepages: <http://www.dialoglastenimel.ee/> and <http://kinderenutdeknel.nl/index?lang=en> .

3.4. INNOVATION

- The program has an innovative character, or implies innovative aspects (e. g. actual knowledge, new ideas or methodology, etc.).

The program is different from other programs mainly for two reason: they work with 3 therapeutic dialogical spaces (parents, children and network around the family) and the counselling and therapy is done in groups rather than individually. For children the therapy is done through play therapy to help them better express themselves. Therapists support curiosity, open dialogue, openness to the unexpected, responsiveness, spontaneity and creativity. The groups provide the opportunity for children to witness their parents taking



responsibility for them, while providing parents the opportunity to witness how their children are experiencing their current situation.

It is also unique because in order to join the program parents have to stop any legal any legal processes that are currently on going in court.

3.5. COST-EFFICIENCY

- The cost-efficiency is adequate.
- There are no lower cost alternatives to achieve the same impact.

In Estonia there hasn't been a research about whether this program is more cost-efficient in compared to other programs. However, calculations have been made to estimate how high the costs would be when implementing the program. The total cost of implementing the program here in Tallinn has been estimated at **22 277,89 €**. The costs include the following:

- **Salaries for professionals (including pre-interviews, network meeting and group sessions for parents)- 13 695,76 €**
- **Room rent- 3650,00 €**
- **Catering- 1280,00 €**
- **Office material (paper, colours, pencils, etc.)- 858,00 €**
- **Communication costs (internet and phone bills)- 332,97 €**
- **Transportation costs- 480,00 €**
- **Translation of the training material- 495,00 €**
- **Cleaning (after training)- 24 €**
- **Webpage domain and renewal of the page - 212,16 €**

Promotion of the program (leaflets, workshops)- 1250,00 €

3.6. TRANSFERABILITY POTENTIAL

There is access to the methodology and how the program has been implemented (e. g. process description, manual etc.).

The program has already been successfully transferred to another region.

The program can be transferred to other frame conditions in international contexts:

The program does not rely too much on specific aspects of the national/regional system.

The program does not depend too much on one/few specific professional qualifications and/ or profiles.

The program can be transferred if the material, program or license are paid.

All trainings can be requested via the „No Kids in the Middle“ website as in company training for at most 18 staff members at an organization. These trainings are exercised in the Netherlands, but on request they can also be implemented abroad. These days and trainings about 'No Kids in the Middle' are coordinated by the LOCK, the National Educational Centre for Child Abuse. LOCK



provides professionals from different backgrounds with a differentiated offer of expertise. This is offered by professionals with broad field experience in the area of child abuse. With respect to educational offers, LOCK specializes in a holistic approach to child abuse and in trainings in diagnosis and treatment. LOCK organizes study days and two-day trainings about 'No Kids in the Middle', both of which are open for registration. The two-day training can also be given in company. Afterwards supervision will be provided to support the organization while it implements and executes the group methodology. Experienced therapists and trainers are regularly asked to speak at conferences and to share their experiences with the methodology.⁸ The program has been now implemented in Estonia and first groups will start working in the beginning of April.

⁸ No Kids in the Middle 2017, <http://kinderenuitdeknel.nl/opleiding#werkwijze> 22.02.2017