

## Summary

### **Staff in Correctional Institutions for Juvenile Offenders and Youth Care An analysis of the employment situation and inappropriate behaviour in 2012**

This report analyses the employment situation of staff working in Correctional Institutions for Juvenile Offenders (*JJI's* in Dutch) operated by the Custodial Institutions Agency (abbreviated to *DJI* in Dutch) and Youth Care (*jeugdzorgplus* in Dutch) in the Netherlands. In March 2012 the *Internetspiegel* measurement tool was used to survey staff satisfaction levels at the sector Juvenile Institutions. A Staff Satisfaction Survey (SSS) was also carried out in 2007, using the Basic Amsterdam Questionnaire (BASAM). Four public institutions and three private institutions (including locations accommodating Youth Care) participated in the SSS in 2012.

Staff satisfaction levels are surveyed in order to provide greater insight into the views of staff on important aspects of their work and the problems they encounter in it. Numerous public sector organisations in the Netherlands use the *Internetspiegel* basic questionnaire. It covers such areas as job content, work pressure, relationships with colleagues and leadership. DJI also asks additional specific questions about safety and aggression and violence perpetrated by juveniles and colleagues. It also includes a series of statements enabling staff to indicate how they deal with juveniles.

In order to enable comparisons and plans for improvement, the Juvenile Institutions have been sent reports with the results of the survey. Additionally, this study includes a comparison of the different years in which the surveys were conducted (2007 and 2012) as a means of providing additional insight into trends in staff satisfaction and inappropriate behaviour. The report also highlights differences in the employment situation in terms of the staff's different background characteristics as well as aspects specific to particular living units. It also aims to increase understanding of the nature of inappropriate behaviour and solutions to combat inappropriate behaviour.

The employment situation is of relevance in view of the standards laid down in the Working Conditions Act (*Arbeidsomstandighedenwet* in Dutch). Moreover, research shows that there is a link between the DJI's mission and the employment situation. If the employment situation is rated more highly, it appears that institution staff are better able to offer support to inmates (Molleman & Van der Broek, in review). It is also known that aggression and violence are less likely to be experienced if the working conditions in correctional institutions are favourable (Molleman, 2011). This knowledge is not specific to *Juvenile Institutions* in the Netherlands. For this reason, the sector aims to discover whether groups of staff rate the employment situation differently on a range of characteristics. The main research question that this report attempts to answer is as follows: What is the current situation with regard to staff satisfaction within Juvenile Institutions and what differences are revealed if specific background characteristics relating to staff and living units are taken into account?

The research question is split up into several questions which are answered in the chapters:

- Which differences can be determined regarding the employment situation and inappropriate behaviour between 2007 and 2012?
- Which differences can be determined regarding the employment situation in terms of the staff's different background characteristics as well as aspects specific to particular living units?
- How describes staff the experienced inappropriate behaviour among staff and which prevention options do they present?

The survey response level in 2012 is 59%. The response group is representative of the population. The report also compares the two years in which the survey was conducted, to the extent that the same areas were covered in 2007. Comparative analyses for the different years were carried out on a total of ten areas. An assessment was also made of differences relating to background characteristics and characteristics that are specific to particular living units. Each characteristic (such as age of staff or institutional regime) was allocated to a category. The average for each category was compared in the analysis with the average for all staff. The results were obtained by means of multivariate variance analysis.

### **Comparison 2007 and 2012: employment situation and inappropriate behaviour**

The results below concern the employment situation in 2007 and 2012. Insofar as the same areas had been measured, a comparison was made between the surveys of both years. In the period between these years, an increase can be observed in staff well-being in terms of the ratings given by staff for information and communication, the amount of work, safety, relationships with colleagues, encouraging and correctional leadership by heads of department and dealings with juveniles. Staff also indicates that they now offer structure to the juveniles to a lesser extent than before. As well as offering structure, in 2012 there is a greater focus on providing assistance and support to juveniles, compared to 2007. There appears to be a greater balance in the two styles of approach being adopted.

In 2007 only the publicity held Correctional Institutions for Juvenile Offenders participated in the SSS. Between 2007 and 2012, the percentage of staff who reported to be treated in an improper manner by juveniles stays nearly the same, respective 54.1% and 53.7%. In 2012, 9.3% of staff reported having experienced inappropriate behaviour among staff, compared to 27.8% in 2007. It is not possible to determine for certain whether there has actually been an increase or decrease. In 2012, discrimination and verbal aggression were also measured in addition to physical aggression, intimidation/threats and sexual intimidation. As a result of this addition, there is a discrepancy in the measurement methods, making it difficult to compare the results relating to inappropriate behaviour. Possibly respondents previously included their reports of aggression and discrimination in the intimidation category. However, if inappropriate behaviour is subdivided into intimidation/threats, sexual intimidation and physical aggression, it does become possible to make a valid comparison.

Physical aggression by colleagues was reported less in 2012 than in 2007 (falling from 1.8% to 0.4%) and a similar fall can be seen for physical aggression by managers (from 1.5% to 0.1%). In 2012, staff experienced significantly less sexual intimidation and intimidation/threats perpetrated by both colleagues and managers. Verbal aggression and discrimination were measured for the first time in 2012. Of the 1,142 responding staff, 9.1% reported verbal aggression from colleagues and 5.5% reported having experienced verbal aggression from managers. A total of 5.4% and 1.9% of staff reported having experienced discrimination from colleagues

and managers respectively. Physical aggression experienced by staff from juveniles increased from 30.4% in 2007 to 45.2% in 2012. There were fewer reports of sexual intimidation and intimidation/threats.

In addition, 62.5% of staff reported having experienced aggression from juveniles in the previous year and 20.8% of staff said they had experienced discrimination from juveniles. The fall in intimidation/threats observed in 2012 may be explained by an actual decrease. It's also possible that the fall can be explained by the fact that respondents previously included their reports of aggression and discrimination in the intimidation category.

### **Employment situation: divided according to staff characteristics**

An analysis was conducted of the extent to which the ratings for the employment situation varied when a range of different staff characteristics are taken into account. According to this, 81% of staff in the 20-29 age category reported having experienced aggression and violence from juveniles in the last twelve months. For staff in the 50 and over age category, this figure was 51%.

Female staff are more positive than men about various aspects of the employment situation. For example, women indicate that they provide support and structure to juveniles to a greater extent and are more likely to apply the motivational interviewing method (*motiverende bejegening* in Dutch) in their work. Motivational interviewing is a method in which staff tries to stimulate juveniles to participate in activities and to prepare for their future. Women also state that they feel safer at work and 58% of them report having experienced aggression and violence from juveniles in the last year, compared to 72% of men. Staff in the highest education level category are more negative in their judgement of the amount of work than the average of all staff, whereas staff from the lowest education level category are more positive about this. Staff in the highest education level category give a more positive score with regard to the approach adopted towards juveniles. Differences between staff in public and private institutions were also examined. This comparison covered the Correctional Institutions for Juvenile Offenders only. Youth Care were excluded from the analysis since these are restricted to private institutions only, which could distort the results. Staff in a private institution are more positive in their judgement on a range of specific aspects of the work, the extent to which they experience exhaustion, the governance of the organisation, the leadership styles, the extent to which they offer structure to juveniles and a variety of aspects covered by the theme integrity and safety.

If one looks at the differences between staff in Correctional Institutions for Juvenile Offenders and in institutions providing Youth Care, it is worth noting that staff in the latter are more positive about the governance of the organisation, offering structure to juveniles and their professional motivation.

### **Employment situation: divided according to departmental characteristics**

An analysis was also conducted of whether group leaders (staff on living units which interacts directly with juveniles) in Juvenile Institutions rate the employment situation differently depending on different background characteristics in the living units. Group leaders in the different institutional regimes show few differences with regard to the average for all group leaders. Group leaders in long-term standard security institutions (*Normaal Beveiligde Inrichting (NBI) voor langdurig verblijf*) are relatively positive about the amount of work. In addition, 87% of them state that they have experienced aggression and violence from juveniles in the last year, compared to the average of 93%. In living units with a short-term standard security regime (*NBI regime voor kort verblijf*), group leaders are more negative about the way in which the organisation is governed, whereas group leaders in a closed

(*gesloten*) regime are more positive about this than the average. Group leaders in an open regime are more positive about the works council. The difference between living units based on the occupancy percentage was also examined. Group leaders in living units with a lower occupancy percentage (0%-70%) are more positive about the amount of work and report less aggression and violence from young people (84%). Group leaders in living units with an occupancy percentage of 71%-85% are more positive about dealings with juveniles and relationships with colleagues. In living units with occupancy levels of 96% or more, group leaders have a more negative judgement than average about the amount of work, social and emotional leadership and the morally-conscious behaviour of colleagues.

### **Insights in inappropriate behaviour and prevention options**

Open questions were posed in order to obtain more detailed information about the nature of inappropriate behaviour among staff. A portion of the respondents (11%) completed this question. The picture that emerges with regard to the inappropriate behaviour of colleagues and managers is that it primarily concerns incidents of verbal aggression such as verbal abuse, shouting and bullying. Of the 1,142 staff, 2.5% described an incidence of verbal aggression in their response to the open question. There were also reports (2.2%) of incidents in which staff experienced a situation to be threatening/intimidating. These generally concerned situations where there was disagreement about absenteeism, leave or the duty roster. Comments with sexual connotations (1.5%) and discriminating comments (1.7%) were also regularly made by way of a 'joke', according to respondents. Reports of sexual intimidation primarily concerned comments, wolf whistling and ogling/leering. Discriminating comments primarily concerned people's ethnic origin or religious beliefs. Respondents were also asked to identify solutions to combat inappropriate behaviour among staff in the future. Solutions identified by respondents tended to focus on actions and measures at the level of management/the organisation and team level. There is a need for a management/organisation that listens, shows involvement, is visible and that takes more immediate and firmer action. Respondents also feel that there is a need for a change of culture. In teams, the solution primarily involves calling individuals to account for inappropriate behaviour and discussing it with them. Respondents also indicated a need for an anonymous reporting point or independent person to whom complaints may be made.

The significant and relevant differences show which categories of staff are more positive about their working conditions and which are more likely to encounter inappropriate behaviour from colleagues and aggression and violence from juveniles. This information can be used to distinguish groups at risk and develop specific staff policy to protect these risk groups against aggression and violence. In addition, policy can help improve the way in which the employment situation is rated. The information obtained from the open questions can provide useful additional input for this.