

Creating or increasing insight and awareness of young offenders (12-18 years) during their stay in a closed institution.

Why

The young offenders institutions wanted to incorporate the restorative way of thinking in their daily practice. They asked us if we could create a group program with victims as a central theme.

We started experimenting 5 years ago and are still evaluating and adapting our program to perfection.

Aims

Victim InSight or VIS is a victim-focused group program. This group program aims to create/increase insight and awareness into the consequences of committing juvenile crimes and the concrete consequences for the victim.

Ultimate goal

We want to change the way they think, their attitude and their behavior by increasing their insight in the effects of their crimes on the victims and society.

Program

Two supervisors of the restorative justice center give a weekly session in the young offenders institution to 6 - 8 youngsters.

The program consists of 20 hours in 7 weeks.

Aims

1. Introduction of the group program (individual)
2. Create connection and safety (group)
3. Recognition of perpetrators and victims. We look at the different consequences for the young offender (group)
4. Mid term evaluation (individual)
5. Zooming in on the victims and their consequences (group)
6. Working towards the future and own qualities (group)
7. Final interviews (individual)

Results

"Only now, I realize what crimes mean for victims. It's bad!"

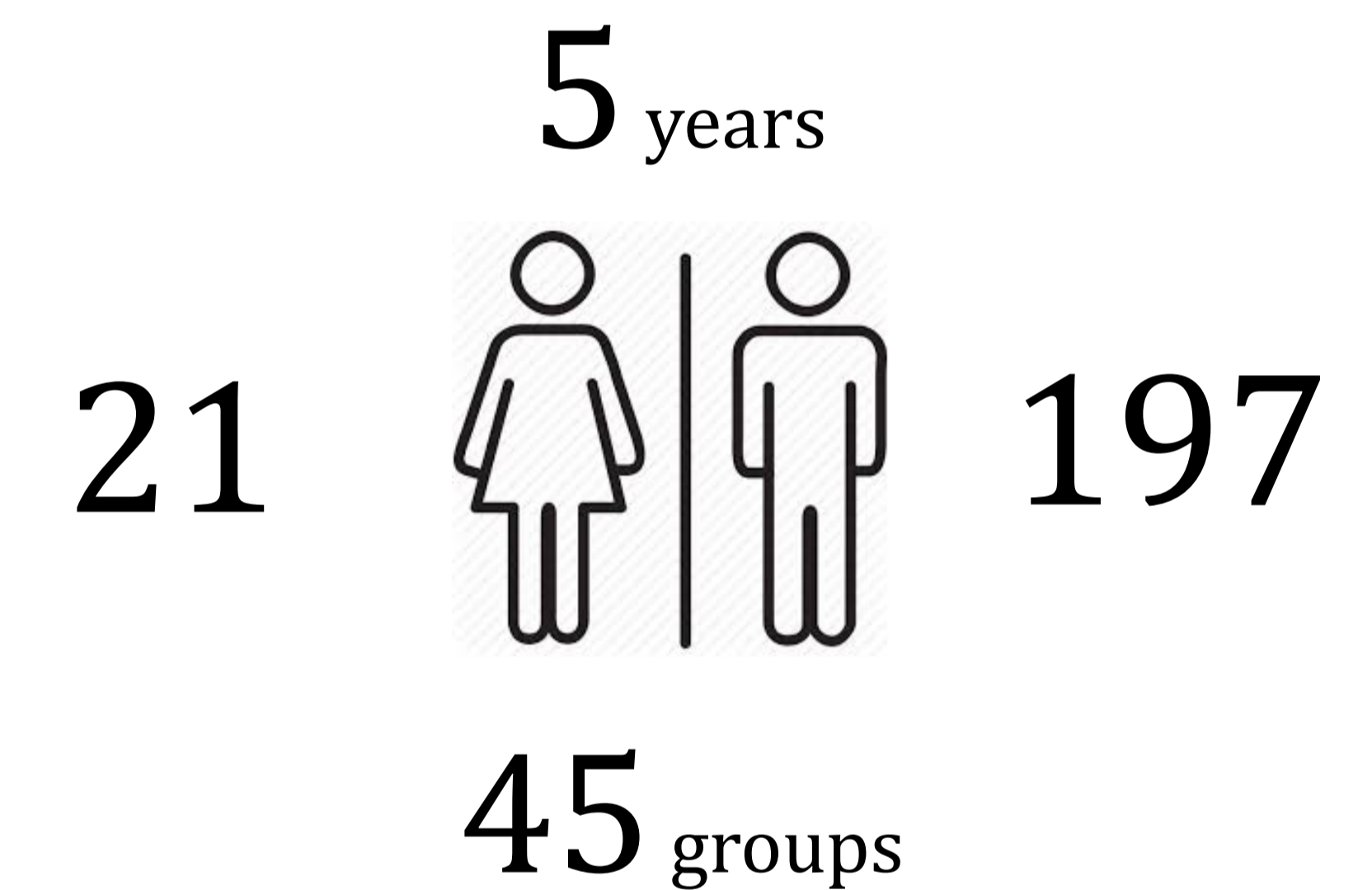
"I will think about the consequences and feelings of the victims before I make a choice."

"I didn't expect the consequences of my victim and his family to be so big."

Methods

We work with different methodologies that are informative, interactive and confrontational.

- ❖ Confrontation with testimonials
- ❖ Proactive Circles
- ❖ Experiential learning: energizers, dynamics
- ❖ Restoration



Collaborators & funds

This group program is a collaboration between young offender institutions for boys and girls and restorative justice centers.

Advice: Similar program on the east side of Flanders.

Funded by Youthcare.