

Summary

From December 2006 to May 2007 ITS conducted an evaluation, commissioned by the Research and Documentation Centre (WODC), of the FF Kappe pilot project in the Municipality of Rotterdam. The main question of the research was: *what are the assumed active mechanisms of FF Kappe, in what context would they work and is it possible to identify side effects?*

The research was conducted with the aid of literature study, interviews with the persons involved and an analysis of documents and registration files, including those of the police.

In 2006 and 2007 the Municipality of Rotterdam conducted a pilot project under the name FF Kappe ('Cut it out'), aimed at curbing youth nuisance behaviour. FF Kappe is inspired by the Acceptable Behaviour Contracts (ABC) and Anti-Social Behaviour Orders (ASBOs) in England. ABCs are voluntary arrangements to agree that the persons involved will stop acting in an anti-social manner or be a nuisance. They also offer support or assistance to the persons involved and, possibly, to their families. ASBOs are legal orders that summon individuals to stop displaying certain behaviour, a breach of which constitutes an offence. ASBOs can be made public and the neighbourhood and the local authorities play an important role in their reinforcement. FF Kappe also uses two instruments: a voluntary agreement (i.e. not a formal legal contract) possibly followed by a behaviour order. Some elements of the English approach, particularly regarding publicising behaviour orders ('naming and shaming'), are not allowed in the Netherlands.

Below is a summary of the design of the Rotterdam pilot project. The target group of FF Kappe consists of youths aged between 12 and 24 who repeatedly cause a lot of trouble in their neighbourhood. A selection of these youths is offered a so-called FF Kappe contract, which clearly outlines what kind of behaviour they should not display. Both youths and parents should sign the agreement. The FF Kappe contract proposal and the (lack of) contract signature are recorded in the youths' personal files. With this contract in hand they gain access to care. Offering care has been deliberately left out of the FF Kappe contract in order to keep the contract as concrete as possible and to focus on their behaviour. The need for and availability of care is assessed after the contract proposal. During the course of the pilot project it was decided to also approach those youths who had not signed the contract and offer them care.

If a youth fails to abide by the contract, the mayor can impose an FF Kappe behaviour order. A breach of this FF Kappe order can lead to criminal persecution.

The working method of the FF Kappe pilot project is based on the assumption that there are active behavioural mechanisms causing the youths to abandon their nuisance behaviour and start behaving more normally (in sociological terms: displaying more conformist behaviour). The literature study conducted within the framework of this pilot project confirmed these assumptions and also pointed to other possible behaviour mechanisms. These are often based on theories about the prevalence and the occurrence of criminal behaviour. The mechanisms that played a role, to different extents, in the FF Kappe project are summarised in the diagram below. Each element contributes to the occurrence of conformist behaviour, but most elements are also interdependent. The conditions for a good functioning of the behaviour mechanisms are that the youths involved live in the neighbourhood, are not addicted to alcohol or drugs, attend school (in case of

compulsory school attendance), are not engaged in rehabilitation programmes and have one or more parents/carers who are aware of the contract and the actions it involves. If one or several conditions are not met, this will have a negative influence on the desired effect.

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1. **Signing a contract with a youth from the target group**
 - >> Stronger commitment to agreements in case of negative sanctions after breach of contract
 - Stronger commitment to agreements in case of rewards with personal care
 - Stronger binding target group to neighbourhood community
 2. **More monitoring of target group by the police**
 - >> Higher chance of addressing the target group
 - Higher chance of being caught
 - Higher perceived chance of being caught
 - More information about the target group
 3. **More specific police action**
 - >> Higher chance of being caught
 4. **More commitment parent(s)/carer(s) to the contract**
 - >> More trust from parents
 5. **More collaboration police-care workers**
 - >> More information about the target group
 - Stronger files
 - More specific police action
 6. **Higher chance of being caught**
 - >> Higher chance of being caught provided agreements have been made about 'sanctions' for those who get caught.

(>> = most probably leads to)

The pilot project in Rotterdam was intended to 'see if FF Kappe is effective' and to gradually find out what the best approach would be. For this, FF Kappe focused, in principle, on youths who caused a lot of trouble in one area of Rotterdam and who occasionally displayed punishable behaviour. They were also, in principle, youths who were not engaged in rehabilitation programmes and youths who could still be reached for regular care on a voluntary basis. These criteria have not been completely met during the pilot project (see below). In general, the working method of FF Kappe only clearly took shape during execution. The search for and, often, finding of solutions for bottlenecks during the execution of the FF Kappe project has produced a number of learning effects. The most significant ones are summarised below.

- For a long time it was unclear who would be proposing the FF Kappe contracts and how. Various officials (from social care services, the Municipality, the municipal district, the police) have reasons not to do so, due to their other work duties. Eventually, the *Stadsmarinier* (City Security Officer) was selected. He managed to propose the contract to a substantial number of youths. It will be important, during a follow-up of FF Kappe, to clearly agree *beforehand* who at what level will be responsible for the contract proposals and the way the proposals are being made.
- The legal sustainability of the FF Kappe order as a tool to maintain public order was questioned during the pilot project. It has since become clear that in the first case, submitted by the Public Prosecution, the police judge of the Court of Rotterdam found behaviour instructions in the form of an FF Kappe order acceptable.
- The youths selected for FF Kappe were hardly willing to sign the agreement. This raised the question whether they should then still be offered care. Eventually, it was agreed to also talk with those youths who did not want to sign the FF Kappe contract about possible access to individual care. These talks, led by the Intensive Case Manager of Delfshaven, have been important to document that some youths explicitly reject help to change their behaviour.

- A relatively large number of youths, with a too serious crime history, have been selected. For this category the desired intervention of FF Kappe (first a voluntary contract including access to social care, (possibly) followed by a behaviour order) has been less suitable. It is expected that a 'lighter' group will be more accessible, with more proposed contracts and more signed contracts.
- Despite its clear structure the pilot project lacked clear direction, which caused a lot of delay during execution. The official commitment at central municipal level was stronger than at municipal district level where the pilot project was effectively conducted. The high turnover of staff did not benefit the project either. Giving strong directions will be an important aspect of a possible follow-up of FF Kappe.

We do not have hard figures to substantiate a claim that the FF Kappe pilot project has contributed to a reduction of nuisance in the neighbourhood in question¹. However, we believe that the way in which the problems of the FF Kappe project have been solved during implementation or how they can be solved in the future – so that the desired behaviour mechanisms will be more active than during the pilot project– offers a perspective to try and curb (part of the) nuisance behaviour in this way.

¹ The update of the inventory of problematic youth groups in the autumn of 2007 in the Delfshaven municipality gives a slight indication that the neighbourhood where most of the FF Kappe youths come from has become a little bit quieter.