

**Philipp Walkenhorst**

**Strategies of Violence Prevention in  
Juvenile Custodial Practice  
in Germany**

Centre for the Prevention of Youth Crime (ed.)



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in Juvenile Custodial Practice in Germany**



Arbeitsstelle Kinder- und  
Jugendkriminalitätsprävention

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# 1 The Legal and Institutional Context in Germany

§ 91 of the *Jugendgerichtsgesetz* (Juvenile Courts Act; JGG) requires that a young person serving a custodial sentence should be educated to “subsequently embrace a law-abiding and responsible way of life”. The expectation in the case of adult prisoners is that attainment of the corresponding aim should be facilitated by maximum possible approximation to the conditions of ordinary life outside prison, by measures to combat the harmful effects of imprisonment (here the aggravation of aggressive behaviour and aggressive attitudes) and by help with reintegration into life in freedom. From one point of view, the debates as to the constitutionality of the present regulatory framework for juvenile custody, and likewise the future devolution of custodial practice to the individual German states, may be open to criticism with regard to the development of agreed standards for the support to be offered. In a judgement dated 31.05.2006, however, the Federal Constitutional Court laid down fixed parameters governing legislation to be enacted by the states on juvenile custodial issues, and in view of the funding debate it will be important to keep pressing for full observance of these requirements.

General background information for the positive special preventive component of juvenile custodial sentences is supplied in the form of the Sentence Plan, which is based on the detainee management assessment undertaken at the start of the period of custody. It includes e.g. information on accommodation, training, work, regime relaxations, and preparation for discharge. These individual sentence plans and practical support measures on the one hand, and higher-level support concepts on the other (e.g. concepts developed for the individual institution or department), together with associated start-up and follow-through organisation, collectively constitute the standard framework of reference for planning and scheduling aggression-preventive and -interventive targets and measures.

For state-run subsystems such as penal institutions and closed psychiatric institutions the concept of the “total institution” was formulated, denoting an establishment characterised in its notional extreme form by a high degree of segregation from the outside world, notably hierarchical and authoritarian leadership structures and living arrangements, and partially desocialising adjustment techniques. Additional features are the concentration of young individuals with negatively sanctioned deviant behaviour partially habitualised in the course of juvenile custody, the diminishing personal autonomy of detained individuals in consequence of unvarying daily routines, other-directed care and supply maintained by institutional systems (clothing, meals), extremely limited scope for autonomous living, and the automatically building dynamic of the sentence

history as something instituted by retributive justice, not by the child and youth services, with its well-documented generally punishing-and-caring approach. These structural impediments to provision of reintegration-focused, “socialising” and civilising support point to the need to avoid coupling violence-prevention measures during custody exclusively to measures for those detained, but rather, and as a matter of principle, to have due regard also to the structural prerequisites for educative action and to ensuring its sustainability. *Allgemeiner Vollzugsdienst* personnel (approx. = HM Prison Service) are by far the largest staffing category concerned, with duties centred in supervisory, educational and provisioning functions; given their physical and also social nearness to the detainees, they have a central role in the creation of a supportive atmosphere over and above the running of day-to-day institutional life. This group must be considered with particular care during the process of developing violence-preventive strategies for use in the context of juvenile custody.

## 2 Aggression-Relevant Starting Situations of Young Detainees

As of 31.03.2005, the 7061 individuals detained in juvenile custody (including those sentenced under § 114 of the JGG<sup>1</sup>) comprised 3422 *Heranwachsende* (18-20 age-group), 2912 adults (21-24 age-group), and only 727 aged 17 or younger. The latter represent a small minority – seldom exceeding 10% – of the total numbers in custody at any one time. While it is thus hardly appropriate to speak of “juvenile” detention in the strict sense, the Constitutional Court in a ruling dated 31.05.2006 expressly – and with reference to what it called *Heranwachsende* (18-20 age group) offenders who are at the *Jugendliche* (juvenile, specifically 13-17) developmental stage – emphasised the different natures of juvenile and adult custody and the special responsibility borne by the state for the continued development of the individuals concerned. Special mention was made of social learning and its particular importance for violence-prevention, and of measures to facilitate future integration into the world of work.

Four major detention-specific combinations of factors relevant to violence and aggression may be enumerated:

*a) Concentration of the norm-breaking peak of young individuals with a latent disposition to violence in a youth prison*

Their offence-structures display clear changes over the period 1980 - 2002. The proportion convicted of theft offences fell to 32%. Sexual offenders – subject of much public attention, but a small category – likewise made up a smaller

1 Jugendgerichtsgesetz (Jouvenile Courts Act)

proportion of the total (falling from 4% to 2.9%). Violent offences defined as robbery with violence and deliberate bodily harm showed steady increases (robbery with violence from 17.7% to 22.8%, bodily harm up from 0.6% to 15.3%). The proportion of manslaughter offenders in 2002 was 5.4%. Taking the figures together, the period defined above witnessed a near-doubling of offences of violence, from 25.5% to 46.4%.

Teaching and learning provision for young detainees is rated as generally unsatisfactory and representing little scope for positive stabilisation in the sense of social and vocational integration after release. With regard to male detainees there are reports of prior disintegrative processes (excessive aggression, school truancy, abandoned apprenticeships, persistently workshy attitude, sustained offending). The background for female detainees is characterised by problematic family circumstances, broken parental families, alcohol and medicinal drug dependence of both parents, exiguous material resources – though a few individuals had been massively over-indulged – violence within the family, early sexual abuse, drug-taking, spending-money prostitution, running away from home, spells in institutions, early criminality, and in some cases long offending records.

*b) Concentration of utterly disparate ethnic and national patterns of expectation and behaviour without adequate means of verbal communication*

In West German juvenile detention facilities, up to 20% of those in custody are *Aussiedler* (ethnic German immigrants) and a further approx. 40% are “non-Germans” (meaning foreigners and stateless persons). Given the large number of countries of origin represented – in the case of remand centres amounting to 60 and more – national and ethnic tensions can easily arise, and sometimes open conflict. Insufficient or non-existent means of verbal communication as a result of the multiplicity of languages and dialects, a host of differing religious affiliations and ritual requirements, dietary prescriptions and prohibitions affecting believing detainees, and differences between specific ethnic and/or religious identities are indicators of further conflict areas that can spark aggression.

*c) The substantial increase in the already high potential for violence inherent in the “free” drugs market in the subculture situation of “normal” youth prison custody*

The drugs problem among young detainees has worsened appreciably. Young persons held in custody following drugs-related offences amounted to 9.3 % of the total. These are not necessarily identical with the clientele of the addicted. The latter are estimated to constitute up to 30% of male and up to 70% of female detainees, or more depending on type of sentence. Under detention conditions, those who have not previously used drugs may become addicted. Potential triggers for aggression and violence include withdrawal phenomena and the consequences of drug-taking within the detention centres (pressure on relatives, friends and others to procure drugs and smuggle them in, indebted-

ness to fellow-detainees as a result of the need to fund personal drug use, and the generally violent means used to collect these debts in the event of failure to repay them punctually).

d) The increase in the inherently high latent potential for violence to acquire attractiveness as a result of peer-group contacts in the subculture situation of youth prison custody

Over the course of a period in custody, groupings among fellow-detainees grow in social importance. Many activities are designed to win acceptance from such groups, which serve as models of context-appropriate behaviour.

Breaches of the institution's conduct rules, criticism of staff and of rules, and aggressive conduct are all positively reinforced. Conventional social behaviour norms are rejected and/or subjected to negative sanction. It is uncertain whether these situative adaptation patterns persist after release in the sense of the layman perception of prison as a "school for crime". It is rare for young multiple offenders to be observed to completely avoid former, delinquent peer-group contacts after their release. The peer-group remains the most important identification group for many in the 18-24 age-groups, particularly among the unmarried. Substantial contingents of young detainees are virtually without prospects of returning after release to intact families or non-delinquent circles of friends. Potentially helpful partner relationships are broken off after a short period in custody. Contact with the family of origin is the exception rather than the rule for many detainees. This applied only to offenders on probation who had such persons to turn to in the first place. The problem of the failure during detention to stabilise such aggression-checking and/or pro-social behaviour patterns as may have been acquired points to the need for post-custodial mentoring in the sense described above. Heterogeneous educational backgrounds and the enduring burden of a record of offending mean that violence prevention in the custodial context must face the challenge of tailoring such programmes as may exist to suit specific target groups, and to adapt them to the perspectives of young detainees both while serving sentences and after release, so as to make mutual understanding possible and ensure transfer effects.

### **3 Forms of Aggression and Violence in Youth Prisons**

One distinct category is represented by aggressive behavioural attitudes of young detainees that manifest themselves in violence-oriented offences or in everyday life and are brought into the custodial context by the individuals concerned after sentencing. A second category comprises (aggressive) behaviour patterns generated, or strengthened, by the structures encountered in a deten-

tion centre. The constraints of institutionally underpinned conformity and subordination, and of a high degree of de-personalisation, disenfranchisement and subjection to administrative processes, may produce a fertile soil for the growth and persistence of subjugation, compensation behaviour and aggressive or violent behaviour. Thirdly, there is the possibility of violence transferred out of the institution and outliving the period of custody. Alongside aggression motivated by rage, irritation or frustration, forms of instrumental aggression are fostered by restrictions on the availability, and increases in the cost of, everyday things such as cigarettes, chocolate, toiletries, particular branded clothing items, etc., because possession of such goods confers status and acceptance but also fosters the propensity to take them (forcibly) from others.

Violence is liable to occur in any of the following personal and interpersonal situations within the communal structure of a detention centre:

- individual detainees alone (e.g. self-harm and wilful damage/destruction),
- detainees amongst themselves (e.g. forms of verbal aggression, bullying, threats of violence, forcible subjugation of weaker by stronger in the pecking order, blackmail, pressure on day-release detainees to procure drugs),
- detainees against staff (e.g. abuse, actual threats, mutiny, hostage-taking),
- detainees vis-à-vis outside persons (e.g. by arrangement with third party),
- staff against detainees (“doings-over”),
- staff amongst themselves.

There is almost no documentation of the forms actually taken by aggressive action and violence in juvenile penal institutions in Germany, or of the dimensions of the problem. Accounts of individual incidents, memoirs of former detainees and random empirical data together constitute the current state of knowledge. Phenomena reported as typical in custody centres include: initiation rites, brutal games, infliction of physical injury, duress used for enforcement of positions and roles in the detainee pecking order, forcible debt collection by means of beatings-up, robbery with violence, or destruction of property, if debtors are prevented by shortages of desired “consumer goods” (tobacco, drugs, alcohol etc.) within the institution’s informal economy from keeping up with their debts – driven higher all the time by usurious lending rates – by pawning purchased goods; by sporadic incidents of destruction of accommodation, arson, and rebellions, all as reactions to what are perceived as unacceptably oppressive intrusions into personal rights and freedoms and personal privacy, and sometimes homosexual rape or sexual coercion (primarily in juvenile detention centres, if at all). These acts of violence make up a very small proportion of all norm breaches that become known and incur sanctions within the institution (between 1 and 2%). Of those in turn only a small proportion come to the knowledge of the prosecuting authorities. The presumption must be that there is a large area of silence within which acts of violence

committed by detainees against each other, and by staff against detainees, are hushed up and/or condoned within the subculture.

The degree to which violence-related structures and interactional patterns are preserved and consolidated depends to a significant extent on two determinants:

- behavioural dispositions and previous experience of violence that have been brought into the subculture from outside;
- measures taken by the institution to counteract a hostile atmosphere or climate of violence (regime relaxations, participation and involvement for detainees).

One component of aggressive acts and use of violence in the juvenile detention context may be diagnosed, even if it still eludes precise definition, as a reaction to conditions encountered, and may in appropriate cases be influenced through modification of the conditions under which detainees are held.

A further four factors appear to contribute to the entrenchment of subcultural structures and the associated violence-related interactions:

- Overcrowding of detention centres in combination with diminishing staffing and material resources (increased stress levels among staff and detainees alike, deterioration of the general atmosphere, leading to heightened aggressiveness),
- tighter security (under political pressure and/or following local “incidents”, e.g. assaults on staff by detainees),
- additional problems occasioned in their turn by the multiplicity of non-German-speaking detainees of different cultural background (concepts of honour, severely limited scope for verbal communication between the different ethnic groups etc.),
- the increased proportion of drug addicts and of those sentenced for drug-dealing, two groups particularly responsible for importing previous subculture experience into the institutions from outside.

Detainee practices that involve smuggling drugs and substitute substances, manufacturing them and/or dealing with them, and acts of self-harm, can also be understood as expressions of boredom, escapism, and rebellion against the institution’s conventions on behaviour.

## **4 Strategies for Violence Prevention and for Encouragement of Pro-Social Behaviour**

Youth prisons currently take widely differing approaches to the issue of prevention and intervention in relation to violent behaviour. It has been generally

rare, in juvenile detention, for policy to be based in practice on fully-fledged (educational) “strategies” for prevention of violence and promotion of pro-social behaviour. However, there certainly are instances of individual concepts being applied in various institutions, departments and residential groups, also arrangements for defined offender groups (sexual and violent offenders; drug-dependent offenders). Within the context of wider strategies, there are a number of ways of engaging directly with problem behaviour, including the following:

- institutional approach: in part, through provision of dedicated departments handling sexual and violent offenders, some of them with relevantly qualified staff (e.g. the youth prisons JVA Adelsheim, JVA Wiesbaden);
- methodology: the use of aggression-specific interventive and preventive methods (e.g. the anti-aggression training given at JVA Hamelin and in modified form in other German youth prisons), also of resource-guided concepts for reinforcement of existing pro-social behavioural dispositions;
- concept development in the form of more ambitious, theoretically underpinned experiments in communal living as a (pro-)social learning environment (e.g. the “just community” at JVA Adelsheim);
- programme-related actions such as the creation of groups of aggression offenders monitored by psychologists (e.g. JVA Iserlohn), or programmes teaching how to reduce boredom and frustration-causing factors in daily life and leisure, but also through disciplinary measures and sanctions (using the scope given for this by the existing house rules, by means of temporary suspension of leisure time, or exclusion from learning opportunities, vocational training or leisure programmes).

Indirect strategic approaches include the following types:

- system-related: e.g. attempts (where reasonable prospects of success exist) to gain a school or vocational qualification with a view to enhancement of the prospects for lawful breadwinning after release (available in almost all institutions), or elements of transition management aimed at improving the circumstances in which detainees live after release (e.g. JVA Wiesbaden, the “Projekt Chance e.V.” (Project Opportunity Association), as an aftercare project for young ex-detainees released on completion of their sentence or released early without probation mentoring, or the MABIS-Projekt in North Rhine-Westphalia), or, again, the establishment of networks linking institutions, the youth services, educational providers and employers, and in conjunction with this the opening of institution gates to movement both inwards and outwards;
- staff-centred: projects and programmes leading to further qualifications (e.g. professional ethics workshop for *Allgemeiner Vollzugsdienst* [Prison Service] staff trainers in North Rhine-Westphalia, or continued professional development for staff on topics of “Communication-Cooperation-Decisionmaking” at JVA Rockenberg).

Many such activities being barely documented, there is a need for much research on current practice. Systematic evaluations of the various preventive and interventive approaches used during custody are almost non-existent. With regard to actual practice in psychosocial prevention and intervention, there is talk of “well-meant actionism”, but no verifiable impact studies can be adduced. (Team) supervision, Balint groups and similar in-service staff mentoring are only sporadically encountered. One major problem is the inadequate flow of information both internally and between institutions, and similarly there is widespread failure to engage in mutual exchange of experience and ideas with schools, educational support providers, and the (residential) facilities run by the youth services. Increased stringency of surveillance (e.g. following attempted breakouts) and growing distrust between staff and detainees – even after granting the importance of a sense of safety and security for everyday institutional life – are consequences that jeopardise all efforts to humanise the custody experience, turn it to positive ends, and promote reintegration into society after release. Together with acute staff shortages, diminishing material resources and increased political pressure, such developments point to a return to favour of a type of custodial care that accords primacy to security and discipline, albeit bringing in its wake a corresponding intensification of subculture violence.

## **5 Targets and Target Groups for Aggression-Prevention and -Intervention During Custody**

*Erziehungshilfen* (socio-educational provisions) in the present context may be described as provisions co-constructively empowering the recipient to live life with due regard for his or her own rights and freedoms and for those of other human beings, to earn money lawfully even under suboptimal conditions, and to enter into and remain in satisfying and mutually supportive social relationships. The guiding principle of educative action during custody is Article 1 of the German Constitution: “Human dignity shall be inviolable”. No form of aggressive and/or violent behaviour that harms others can be compatible with this principle. Over and above this key philosophy, a number of aggression-specific prevention and intervention objectives can be enumerated: avoidance and inhibition of antisocial, aggressive conduct, positive reinforcement of appropriate and desirable social behaviour, and acquisition and control of social behaviour by learning from models. Proposals for a juvenile custodial practice designed to promote positive social attitudes and to reduce aggression cannot be submitted in isolation from its ambivalence about its own nature and ambivalent interpretation of the educational injunction enshrined in § 91 of the *Jugendgerichtsgesetz* (Juvenile Courts Act). Given that the basic thrust of juvenile custodial sentencing is “punitive” and disciplinary in character, it is important to emphasise the “transforming” character of the educative measures that are

to be deployed. It is not a matter of young detainees adapting to given surroundings and institutional routines: the points of importance are attainment of personal maturity, responsible decision-making and autonomy, active self-directed learning and socially creative integration in life after discharge. It is not enough to respond to conflicts, quarrels, acts of violence with formal disciplinary sanctions alone: these things need above all to be worked through and made use of during the period of custody, with the help of mediation, conflict resolution and victim-offender mediation/dialogue, as learning opportunities for behaviour options for use in freedom.

The distinction made above between aggressive attitudes brought into custody from outside, those partly generated by the conditions encountered in custody, and those that are brought away after custody ends, demonstrates the need for prevention and intervention strategies during the period of custody to take proper account of relevant circumstances prior to and subsequent to that period. This is largely a question of tertiary-stage prevention and intervention, because rule-breaking and offending (in many instances undetected anyway) have already been committed prior to institutionalisation and have been accompanied by their respective learning effects.

The direct target groups and dialogue partners in violence-preventive work in juvenile detention centres, viewed in terms of a biopsychosocial explanatory model, are in the first place the young detainees themselves and then their co-determination bodies, as the forum in which the broad theme of aggressive and violent behaviour used to impose the demands of self-interest, i.e. instrumental aggression, but also expressive aggression as a consequence of inadequate control, needs to be talked through again and again. They have to be made fully aware of the non-negotiable primacy of the civilised norms of community life under custodial conditions as elsewhere; they have to witness life with this priority lived out before them in exemplary and credible fashion and, furthermore, asserted and enforced, through the instrumentality of appropriate institutional, departmental and residential-group norms and specific support programmes, by interventions which set out to encourage, but also do not shrink from setting clear limits. Great importance attaches also to the men and women staffing the institute (particularly those of the Prison Service, who have the most constant and closest contact with the young detainees, but also the professional practitioners from education, psychology, medicine and social education, and the chaplaincy team): in theory, all these individuals work in close harness, their contributions meshing, with the overall task of shaping the institutional custody experience in everyday practice in a manner consonant with the upholding of human dignity, implementing this ideal through needful methodical actions based on daily mutual consultation. Those with directorial responsibility for institutions, and corresponding control over the custodial period's balance of empowerment and restriction, will either need to be persuaded of the opportunities, side-effects and unlocking of material and per-

sonal resources that flow from violence-preventive custodial policy, or, as the case may be, offered support in their espousal of plans of action tending in the same direction.

Target groups for indirect approach notably include the *Anstaltsbeiräte* (approx. = members of board of governors), who in their capacity as representatives of the public are in a position to support violence-preventive interventions and innovations and to call attention to failings and support needs. Further groups in this category are parents, relatives and associates of the young detainees, in as far as they are capable of exerting constructive influence on the respective detainee's social integration. The personnel training centres attached to the individual state judiciaries have the expertise to brief Prison Service personnel – whose role is crucial here – on the priority assigned to prevention of aggression and violence, on principles of diagnosis, mediation and conflict resolution, and on intervention strategies. The federal states' Ministries of Justice, and in some cases the regulatory authorities, are important negotiation partners with regard to the granting of human and material resources for purposes of constructive custodial sentence design and of initiation and management of (educational) innovations relevant to the development of an “opportunity sentence” with violence-preventive characteristics, and at the present moment relevant also to the impending new legislation in the wake of the decisions on federalism. The relevant Ministerial bureaucracies must refrain from setting up the templates for the federal state legislation on youth sentencing either as economy models or – in variants that hasten to anticipate the demand – so as to provide a “tough regime”, and instead follow the guidance of the Constitutional Court by structuring them “with particular regard to supportive effect”, and also to put real effort into convincing departmental colleagues of the rightness of this approach. Particular attention should be paid to all violence-preventive and -interventive measures and planning opportunities, as freedom from violence and freedom from fear are the essential foundations for the reciprocally determined objectives of the realisation of social integration as the purpose of sentencing and of the state's protective duty to ensure the safety of all citizens.

Training establishments, employment providers and other institutions must be involved as far as at all possible in the reintegration of young detainees after release and must be encouraged to offer training or employment to these young people along with assurances of professional mentoring, with the aim of stabilising their first attempts to settle into norm-compliant work habits and social behaviour patterns. Probation officers and the youth services can contribute to the stabilisation of acquired positive behavioural dispositions by providing counselling and help in finding accommodation, indicating opportuni-

ties for work and employment, debt regulation, and help in coping with everyday conflicts<sup>2</sup>.

Politicians, the media and the public are important dialogue partners, who – most of all at this time of the federalism debate, the consequent need for new legislation, and also some problematic moves towards a more rigorous crime policy (*Kuschelpädagogik* [approx. = “soft on crime”]) – need to be persuaded of the desirability and sustainability of supportive, qualitatively excellent, comprehensive detention services in line with the modern understanding of effective schooling and residential special education. They also need to have it demonstrated to them that the associated requirement for appropriate staffing and equipment is reasonable.

Sponsoring bodies both inside and outside the schools system are cooperation partners, particularly in areas with severe social problems, when it is a matter of using a detention period to gain knowledge of the early origin, maintenance, and reduction or abandonment of aggressive and/or violent behavioural attitudes, then feeding such knowledge into educational practice outside the custodial context and advice about avoidable errors in educational practice with available expert knowledge. Where there is sufficient identity of interest, schools and higher education institutions can offer fruitful cooperation in the development, trialling and evaluation of sustainable, setting-specific approaches to violence prevention and intervention (e.g. JVA Iserlohn and Dortmund University).

## **6 Prospects and Perspectives for Violence-Preventive Action in Juvenile Custodial Practice**

The multiple causation of the development and persistence of aggressive behavioural tendencies necessitates a systematic curricular basis for the actively violence-preventive learning content transmitted through juvenile custodial practice. Concentration on academic or vocational qualification alone is relatively ineffective. In view of the known existence of a “hidden curriculum”, of substructures running contrary to the official supportive intentions and the concomitant behavioural norms, and of generally dissocial everyday experience and subcultures, the scope available to such dispositions must be reduced and positive options offered.

2 Holthusen, Bernd/Schäfer, Heiner (2007): Violence Prevention Strategies in the Child and Youth Services in Germany with Reference to Young People Aged 13 and Up.

Download: [www.dji.de/youthcrime](http://www.dji.de/youthcrime).

Elements of a (pro-)socially oriented curriculum for the target group of young detainees in a *direct* sense – that is, aiming to reduce dissocial and reinforce (pro-)social, or at least non-aggressive behaviour – are:

- Information on the standards and guiding principles of current law and of its implementation,
- addressee-oriented study of the ethical and normative foundations of human social life and information on the direct and indirect effects, costs and benefits associated with socially appropriate, norm-respecting behaviour in everyday life,
- fully detailed information on the official behavioural norms and expectations applying in the institution, the reasons for them and the modalities of their enforcement,
- provision of opportunities to influence these ordinances,
- information on all factors linked to the development and persistence of aggressive/violent behaviour (including that occurring during detention),
- study of the consequences of aggressive behaviour for victims and in addressee biography,
- confrontation with neutralisation techniques and uncritical downplaying of personal violent behaviour, personal guilt and restitution,
- systematic training to develop behaviour patterns incompatible with aggressive behaviour, delivered in the context of specific training programmes (anti-violence training, social education, also first-aid courses etc.).

*Indirectly* the concern here is with all content elements relating indirectly to introduction or stabilisation of non-aggressive and/or (pro-)social behaviour, for example:

- Course material leading to academic and vocational qualifications to improve lawful earning prospects following release from custody,
- With a judicious degree of detainee cooperation, active promotion of meaningful ways of occupying unstructured free time (and combating boredom) within the centre's daily routine,
- intensive language tuition, aimed at cognitive differentiation, increased range of perception and interpretation, and a counteractive effect to prison jargon, tuition for German detainees with restricted linguistic code as well as for others who have an immigrant background and poor German,
- Physical and relaxation training for body awareness and sensitisation to the functioning and integrity of the human body,
- ethical sensitisation using everyday content, for familiarisation with alternative value judgments and situation-readings (value-clarification concepts or similar),
- Provision of multiple opportunities for positive self-experience by way of pro-social, norm-compliant, non-aggressive activities and commitment (ar-

tistic/creative, sporting, handcraft-related, and through participation in competitions, inside or outside detention),

- Development of perceptions of differentness by opening the detention centre to bring about frequent encounters with “ordinary”, well-integrated, non-delinquent young persons from backgrounds similar to those of the detainees, for familiarity with models of socially integrated, non-violent living,
- Arrangement of situations allowing detainee groups to take responsibility, free of direct staff involvement, for structuring their daily activities, and creation of situations of self-proving, such as those currently being trialled in the “Just Community” project at JVA Adelsheim,
- with a view to the post-release period, survival techniques, which must be both lawful and realistic, for coping successfully with everyday life including the contingencies of unemployment and homelessness, and provision of helpful contact details for useful institutions and organisations.

Education (in the broader and narrower senses) and development support in juvenile custody amounts to “making it possible to learn” in the sense of limited corrections (learning how to learn, learning to remedy school weaknesses, read, write, do sums, organise one’s day; learning how to cope with life, modify one’s social behaviour, handle stress and aggressive impulses constructively, break the drug habit; learning to work and keep on working, learning that such learning can be successful, that one has something to show for it, receives recognition, etc.). Creating and continuing to provide such learning opportunities can make sense only if the professionals concerned are themselves convinced that it makes sense. Educational methodology can only be valid when it is underpinned by the educational ethos and by the fundamental positive conviction that young detainees have the capacity to develop and the positive ability to learn.

Pedagogical work with young people in detention centres, like the educational effort in general, is essentially relationship work – with learners whose capacity for relationships has been impaired. Conditions on the ground are if anything inimical to relationship-building, given the pattern of transfers within and between institutions, and the lack of aftercare provision. Pre-release preparation, mentoring / contact support at release, and the crucially important “aftercare” stage need continuity on the personnel level – but is by no means always assured. The assessment and balancing of the roles of juvenile detention centre, youth services, probation service and educational therapy service urgently needs continuity of balanced supervision and support during and after the period of custody.

For dealing with expressive forms of aggressive behaviour, the following methodological points are recommended:

- use of specific training programmes aimed at control of impulsiveness, rage and irritation, and unwarranted readings of situations, also at the development of self-control and of alternative conflict-coping strategies, relaxation procedures in conjunction with constructive stress management,
- extensive use of sporting, “fair play”-requiring activities aimed to develop rule observance and self-control as well as improving prospects of social integration through introduction to sports clubs after release,
- judiciously balanced use of essentially encouraging educative techniques (praise, encouragement, support, regime relaxations etc.) to reinforce norm-appropriate social behaviour and of limits-defining interventions (reminders, exhortations, criticism, punishment) in response to unacceptable norm breaches,
- grasping of every opportunity given by normal everyday communication for early recognition and prevention of ill-feeling or conflicts in the sections and residential groups, also use of everyday conversational exchanges to provide detainees with feedback on conduct and to influence attitudes,
- appreciation that the everyday social contiguity in the institution offers scope for routine daily training in social behaviour modes with corresponding feedback loops, e.g. through the writing of student reports and the like,
- clear reduction of avoidable frustrations and disappointments in the institution’s everyday life (artificial shortages/overpricing of purchasable goods; reduction of boredom and vacant time, particularly over weekends and statutory holidays),
- provision during leisure hours of wide range of animative activities to achieve reduction of violence-conducive, unsupervised, unplanned and unaccompanied media consumption resulting from boredom,
- accommodation in residence-group units to promote sense of responsibility and constructive handling of everyday frustrations and annoyances, but with the staffing ratio kept at level sufficient to inhibit the development of negative subcultures,
- self-review by all contributing professionals focusing on their own coping behaviour and role-model performance together with the effects of their behaviour on the young detainees,
- involvement of parents, guardians and relatives and partners, if any, in order to sensitise them to progress in detainee conduct, also to activate stabilising networks for the post-release period.

For containment of instrumental forms of aggression the priorities are:

- systematic identification of detainees using such techniques,
- deployment of linguist staff in sections in which languages other than German are being used as an instrument of domination,

- coordinated passing on of information and use of agreed procedures by all professionals concerned, to preclude playing off of any one professional against others,
- duty of openness and provision of clear information to detainees as applicable in the event of their behaviour becoming subject to special surveillance and checks,
- as a matter of course, readiness to use available learning and support programmes in line with conditions imposed by the institution,
- immediate penalising of proven attempts to subjugate or blackmail,
- temporary solitary confinement / segregation of any detainee exceptionally active at subculture level,
- maintenance of relations with the young detainees as far as possible on a level that ensures good mutual understanding – with a view not least to early and accurate assessment and interpretation of developments when they occur.

In the case of all the considerations presented here, the effects that must be reckoned with are effects of social desirability of behaviour displayed in the compulsorily imposed setting of a detention centre, a different matter from a “true” reform of attitude and behaviour. They can probably never be wholly eliminated. Some hope attaches to the fact that custodial practice designed to meet the educational needs of minors and the 18-20 age-group can convey the special value and importance of credibility and the actual persuasive of the work carried out daily by the staff members. This means that in violence prevention the target group is not the young detainees alone, but includes the professionals equally, in their efforts to make detention into a supportive environment. Accordingly, these final remarks include a reminder of the essentials of violence-preventive custodial management on the part of centre staff. The key points are as follows: the development of full conviction with regard to the staff member’s personal educational task and its fulfilment to professional standards at the respective workplace; principled aversion to violence, aggression, bullying, lack of respect for other human beings, racism and extremism on the part of the institution’s staff; the staff member’s own behaviour to be unambiguous, to be professed and practised in unity with colleagues, in real-life situations visibly pro-social and respectful of human dignity; systematic inculcation of non-aggressive and non-marginalising use of language; the teaching and practice of techniques of de-escalation and mediation in everyday conflict situations; training in recognition of positive behavioural developments occurring in individual detainees; competence in using the precision instruments of professional feedback communication; specific command of the developmental psychology and developmental education theory relevant to the 16-20 age-groups and of the educational challenges posed by this cohort and of the support strategies appropriate to it; and observance of a humane coherence and consistency in the support component of detention, qualities that constitute his

or her individual – and on occasion pro-social – deviation-preventive, creative contribution.

From the long-term perspective, it would be advisable, while maintaining the justified considerations of safety and public order as foundations of a supportive and reintegration-oriented approach to juvenile custodial practice, to align such practice, in its functions of prevention and control of aggression and violence and of promotion of non-aggressive, if possible also actively pro-social forms of behaviour, with a revised self-definition as “good schooling”, in the sense of good preparation for a punishment-free, lawfully conducted life in freedom. With this self-definition, the educational principle – as an incentive to learning, as a provider of (pro-)social learning opportunities – acquires a new interpretation that is both appropriate for our time and appropriate to the basic developmental psychology of the 16-20 age-groups, one that aims above all to encourage appropriate and non-violent behaviour and accords only a secondary emphasis to limits-setting, the prevention of inappropriate behaviour.

## 7 Literature

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