

Young Health Programme in the Netherlands

While the health of young people in the Netherlands is generally improving, the health of young people in lower income and lower educational background groups is getting worse¹.

This is especially true for the approximate 9,000 young people who are 'officially' homeless, with many more living in similar circumstances without being registered². A significant number of the young people involved have health issues such as addiction, poor dental health, mental health problems and sexual and reproductive health issues. Access to health services is a particular challenge.

The Young Health Programme in the Netherlands focused on helping young homeless people improve their overall health. The three year programme, which has now come to an end, was in partnership with the Stichting Zwerfjongeren Nederland (Foundation for Homeless Youth Netherlands), a national youth homelessness NGO that aims to improve the situation of homeless youth in the Netherlands.



AstraZeneca 

Young Health Programme

A global community investment initiative

in partnership with

SZN 
stichting zwerfjongeren nederland

Young Health Programme in the Netherlands



What did we want to achieve through the Programme?

To ensure the Programme made a real difference to the lives of vulnerable young people, a health intervention was developed in collaboration with homeless youth, as well as other key stakeholders such as health insurers, healthcare providers, government agencies and NGOs.

What activities are taking place locally?

- Based on research findings, an intervention was developed in collaboration with homeless youth and other stakeholders
- Employees of AstraZeneca Netherlands have collaborated with the Stichting Zwerfjongeren Nederland to design further interventions to help raise awareness for homeless youth and their health
- AstraZeneca Netherlands has helped with fundraising for the Stichting Zwerfjongeren Nederland

What has been achieved so far?

- Research was carried out by the partnership, working with a leading research group at the Radboud University, who reviewed the existing knowledge, data and programmes related to the health of adolescents and youth in disadvantaged situations, to develop a firm base for a health intervention for homeless youth
- Together with a group of homeless youth, a health intervention has been developed, based on the work of the Radboud Research Group
- AstraZeneca advised and brought in 'thinking power' to a new programme 'Off the streets' that brings all relevant national and local stakeholders together. The programme aims to put the needs of homeless youths at the centre in a new national policy approach. The aim is that the AstraZeneca health intervention will be integral part of the new national policy

Local partner

The mission of Stichting Zwerfjongeren Nederland (SZN) is to sustainably improve the situation of homeless youth in the Netherlands by raising national awareness of youth homelessness, bringing together relevant stakeholders and encouraging active participation of homeless youth themselves. The Foundation was formed in 2003 after the Dutch Platform Young Homeless and the Stray Children Foundation Netherlands decided to join forces. The Foundation has a long-time involvement with homeless youth and children. The Stray Children Foundation was involved in the creation and support of 'Living-Learning Working Hostels' from 1989, which led to the founding of the first youth hostel for homeless youth in 1994.

References

1. Netherlands Ministry of Health, Youth Monitor 2010
2. Research done in July 2011 by HHM Bureau, commissioned by the Netherlands Ministry of Health