

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 9000 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 is focused on helping young homeless people improve their overall health. The Programme is a 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



What do we want to achieve through the Programme?

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

- 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 the homeless youths at the centre in a new national policy approach. The aim is that the AstraZeneca health intervention will be an integral part of the new national policy

What activities are taking place locally?

- Based on research findings, an intervention will be developed in collaboration with homeless youth and other stakeholders. The first pilots will take place in two large Dutch cities in 2013
- Employees of AstraZeneca Netherlands are providing support to help the Stichting Zwerfjongeren Nederland strengthen their digital capabilities and take advantage of the opportunities that social media can bring to connect and engage homeless youth
- AstraZeneca Netherlands will also help with fundraising for the Stichting Zwerfjongeren Nederland

Local Partner

The mission of Stichting Zwerfjongeren Netherlands (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-term 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.

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

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