

## **A short description of the youth care organisation IJS e.V., Dusseldorf, Germany**

### **1. Foreword**

In Germany, the government is required to administer „*Hilfen zur Erziehung*“, translated „statutory socio-educational provisions for children with problems“, in fulfilling its responsibility toward children, youths and their parents. The legal basis is found in the Child Youth Services Act article 6, section VIII, pp. 27.

The state grants priority to the voluntary organisations over the statutory bodies in the implementation of this law. Traditionally, these tasks were taken on by the larger charitable organisations, which provide up to 150,000 and more children and youths each year in the Federal Republic of Germany with residential care und counselling outside of the families of origin. This care took place mostly within foster families or group programs.

In the mid-eighties an increasing number of children and youths reacted with massive refusal toward these concepts. The first individual socio-educational projects and forms of care began to emerge.

The IJS (Individual Youth Service) organisation based in Dusseldorf participated substantially and contributed considerably over the years to the establishment of the new concepts as standard programs of „*Hilfe zu Erziehung* - statutory socio-educational provisions for children with problems“.

### **2. The Organisation**

The IJS organisation was established in the year 2002 as a non-profit charity organisation, based in Dusseldorf, Germany.

IJS is acknowledged as a voluntary organisation in youth work and youth welfare services by the city of Dusseldorf and it possesses a license, according to section 45 of the Child and Youth Services Act, issued by the youth welfare and youth services office for the Rhineland region.

As with all establishments in youth work and welfare services, IJS is subject to state controls executed by the corresponding regional government youth office and under professional supervision, in individual case, exercised by the local youth office in charge.

Valid, flexible rates are agreed upon by the state commission for remuneration of North Rhine Westfalia. These rates are accepted by all local authorities and are legally binding.

Funding of the IJS youth support is guaranteed by the government.

IJS e.V. is a member of:

- DPWV, (largest non-confessional association of voluntary welfare organisations in Germany)
- Federal Association of Experimental Education

- Bundesarbeitsgemeinschaft A.I.M., the working party of all individual youth work bodies in Germany

IJS lead the development of the self-commitment declaration service agreement for the Federal Association of Experimental Education for projects abroad. The FAEE acts in agreement with the foreign office of Germany and should, within the framework of voluntary controls, ensure the quality of these projects.

IJS is engaged by more than 40 departments of community services in the entire Republic of Germany for its projects and individual concepts, and beyond this, works in intensive partnership with all major organisations in the field of youth work and welfare services.

### **3. The idea – the concept**

Since the organisation came into existence, more than 500 of the most difficult children and youths have been cared for by the social workers at IJS e.V.. Of these youths, 30 spent extended periods of time abroad or in travel projects.

At the end of the projects more than 90%

- were able to complete a secondary education
- entered an apprenticeship, vocational training or employment
- were able to live in their own apartment or shared living situation
- proved their ability to accept responsibility for living an independent life.

IJS is currently in charge of 60 children and youths as well as their families within their original social settings, and 10 youths in travel projects in Europe and Australia.

The ages of the young people under care range from 6 to 19 years.

The proportion of females to males is 50% each.

The duration of an average stay is between a couple of months and more than five years.

Criteria for exclusion from IJS projects do not exist.

IJS attends mainly to children and youths who, because of their personal backgrounds, are considered to be difficult.

They are often battered or abused and markedly distrustful of adults. They have evaded, for this reason, all previously attempted approaches and have responded to educational programs with massive non-compliance and occasionally, the educational programs appearance of pathological deviancies.

They have no chance within the traditional system and a return to their original families must be avoided.

For such cases IJS has a proven, successful, and above all, professionally esteemed comprehensive concept at its disposal. On the other hand, it encompasses a wide spectrum of individual programs.

Common to all of these are the following basic ideas:

- Each biography of a child or youth is unique and requires an individual approach.
- Only flexible strategies of action, as opposed to rigid concepts allow for long term relationships.
- The actual needs of the child or youth are the determining factors. The positive resources of each individual must be recognised and supported.
- The emotional chemistry between the social worker and subject must fit.
- Only a **professional relationship-based** program with a long-term layout can inspire and support motivation to change.
- Young people need beneficial conditions, require the opportunity for experience or adventure activities, which help them to develop their potential.

#### **4. The Personnel- Social Workers**

The activities of IJS are coordinated through its headquarter in Dusseldorf with two additional outposts in Moers and Wurzburg/Bavaria.

Qualified administrative personnel and corresponding management are employed at these locations.

In the area of youth support, IJS works in co-operation with a pool of more than 80 professional social workers on a long term basis.

The youth workers possess state recognized certifications in youth or child-care work or counselling, and others have diplomas in social work, therapy, teaching or psychology. Most of them have years of professional experience in dealing with difficult children and youths and additionally, high standards of systemic und therapeutic qualifications. Volunteers or laymen as responsables are not employed.

#### **5. The Finances**

IJS is a trustworthy partner with financial clout, in the field of youth welfare services. It is financed through its services in tending to difficult children and youths, its social projects in Germany and abroad.

For each individual case, rates are agreed upon with the local youth office, for the duration of the intervention, financed through public spending from the local government. The rates include costs incurring for and during intervention, and are secured through contracts to this effect.

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