

European Crime Prevention Award (ECPA)

Annex I

Approved by the EUCPN Management Board in 2018

Please complete the template in English in compliance with the ECPA criteria contained in the Rules and procedures for awarding and presenting the European Crime Prevention Award (Par.2 §3).

General information

1. Please specify your country.

Germany

2. Is this your country's ECPA entry or an additional project?

It is intended to be Germany's ECPA entry.

3. What is the title of the project?

Optimization of an educational and treatment intervention for offenders with aggression and addiction problems in a sociotherapeutic ward within a secure youth custody centre [Optimierung eines **Behandlungs-** und **Erziehungsangeobts** für Gefangene mit **Gewalt-** und **Suchtproblemen** in einer sozialtherapeutischen Haftstation des Jugendstrafvollzugs] - BENGALO

4. Who is responsible for the project? Contact details.

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5. Start date of the project (dd/mm/yyyy)? Is the project still running (Yes/No)? If not, please provide the end date of the project.

Starting from 01/10/2014 until 31/07/2018 (funding period). The work on detailed data analyses and further publication of results is still ongoing.

6. Where can we find more information about the project? Please provide links to the project's website or online reports or publications (preferably in English).

No project website is available. Related publications are:

Baldus, C. & Thomasius, R. (2018). Ein Behandlungs- und Erziehungsangebot für junge Gefangene mit Gewalt- und Suchtproblemen im Jugendstrafvollzug – erste Ergebnisse einer kontrollierten Studie. *Sucht*, 64 (Supplement 1), 48-49.

Baldus, C., Lachmanski, A. & Thomasius, R. (2018). *Endbericht - Optimierung eines Behandlungs- und Erziehungsangebots für Gefangene mit Gewalt- und Suchtproblemen in einer sozialtherapeutischen Haftstation des Jugendstrafvollzugs (BENGALO)*. Hamburg: DZSKJ.

Baldus, C., Stocker, O., Thiel, A., Hoang Le, T. & Thomasius, R. (2015). Optimierung eines Behandlungs- und Erziehungsangebots für Gefangene mit Gewalt- und Suchtproblemen in einer sozialtherapeutischen Haftstation des Jugendstrafvollzugs – das Projekt "BENGALO". *Suchttherapie*, 16 (Supplement 1), S11.

7. Please give a **one page** description of the project (**Max. 600 words**)

The aim of the presented project was to develop, implement and evaluate a new innovative educational and treatment intervention (called BENGALO) for young male offenders, who currently serve their closed custody sentence and have a history of aggression and addiction problems. The project was implemented on the sociotherapeutic ward of the secure youth custody centre of the city of Hamburg at Hahnöfersand (Jugendstrafanstalt Hahnöfersand). The project was conducted by the German Centre for Addiction Research in Childhood and Adolescence and was funded by the Justizbehörde of the city of Hamburg (legal authority). The evaluation study also involved the youth custody centre in Hameln, which granted access to a control group.

The educational and treatment intervention BENGALO was designed for application in weekly group sessions over six months for cohorts of young male offenders, who report of dissocial behaviour and impulsivity, show a history of illegal substance use and are fit for participation at a group-level intervention in German (e. g. with regards to language skills). The BENGALO intervention intends to foster self-regulation skills of participants, to reduce impulsive, aggressive and dissocial behaviour, to motivate participants for abstaining from illegal substances and risky alcohol use and to establish a self-perception, which chooses a future lifestyle without resorting to criminal offences. With these goals, BENGALO paves the way for effective crime prevention, because it motivates and enables young offenders to refrain from illegal conduct. Methods from motivational interviewing (Miller & Rollnick, 2002), cognitive behavioural therapy, dialectic behavioural therapy (Linehan, 1996) and the "Good Lives Model" (e. g. Barnao, Ward & Robertson, 2016) were integrated into the BENGALO-intervention.

The intervention was evaluated using a non-randomized controlled trial. Data of n = 54 participants were assessed at study entry/ before the BENGALO intervention (t0), after 6 months /after the BENGALO intervention (t1) and six months after t1 (t2; follow-up). The BENGALO intervention could be successfully implemented: within two and a half years, four cohorts of young offenders comprising a total of 31 participants received the full BENGALO intervention, all participants also provided evaluation data. 23 young offenders at the youth custody centre in Hameln (Jugendanstalt Hameln), participated at the evaluation study as a control group. They received only the usual offers within the youth custody centre Hameln (treatment as usual). Outcome data were collected on emotional self-regulation, substance use, aggression and impulsivity.

To assess possible effects, we compared the BENGALO intervention group's data to the data of the control group. For first analyses, we were especially interested in substance use outcomes and outcomes relating to emotional self-regulation, especially using functional strategies to cope with tension and distress and levels of anger and hostility towards others. Latter served as a proxy for aggression, which is much more undesirable in a secure custody centre. With regards to substance use, no reliable effects were found. We believe this is due to the reluctance of study participants to report of substance use while in custody, which is prohibited. However, concerning emotional self-regulation, several desired effects could be shown: Levels of anger and hostility could be significantly reduced in the intervention group, while they did not change in the control group. BENGALO participants reported of increases in levels of functional emotional self-regulation strategies while the control group did not. Though these results have to be interpreted with caution, because intervention and control group did differ with some respect, we see the BENGALO intervention as promising. This is even more so, because BENGALO participants generally gave the feedback they found the intervention enjoyable, relevant and helpful. The BENGALO intervention is manualized and can therefore be easily transferred to other institutions.

(600 words)

I. The project shall focus on prevention and/or reduction of everyday crime and fear of crime within the theme.

8. How does the project contribute to crime prevention and/or the reduction of crime or the fear of crime? Does it focus on raising citizens' awareness or does it apply other mechanisms? (**Max. 200 words**)

The BENGALO project is intended to benefit young people, who already displayed illegal behaviour that resulted in being sentenced to a prison term. We believe that crimes are often committed by a relatively small proportion of people with a history of antisocial behaviour and a propensity for future criminal behaviour. This is supported by Moffitt's paradigm of adolescent-limited vs. life-course persistent antisocial behaviour (Moffitt, 1993). We believe crime prevention is most effective when targeting young offenders with this propensity for life-course persistent antisocial behaviour. When describing this target group, their history of ongoing (illegal) substance use and history of impulsivity and aggression as a way to release anger and tension stand out and serve as the key fundament of their criminal activity (e. g. Miller, Vachon & Aalsma, 2012) – in retrospect and possibly their future. We believe that current approaches do not adequately take into account this constellation. In order to prevent crime, we believe it is of utmost importance to target these behaviours: that is to motivate and enable young offenders to reduce substance use and illegal conduct and to release anger and tension in a non-impulsive, non-violent way.

(190 words)

II. The project shall have been evaluated and have achieved most or all of its objectives.¹

9. What were the reasons for setting up the project? Was this context analysed before the project was initiated and in what way (How, and by whom? Which data were used?)? In what way did this analysis inform the set-up of the project? (**Max. 150 words**)

The reasons for starting the project was to develop a new way to deal with young offenders with aggression and addiction problems, who have a high risk to maintaining illegal activity. The project based on an established cooperation between the German Centre for Addiction Research in Childhood and Adolescence (DZSKJ) and the Justizbehörde Hamburg, the institution, which oversees secure custody centres in Hamburg. In a previous, project tackling young offenders' problematic cannabis use (project "CAN Stop"), whose evaluation also integrated the University of Rostock, we had established a data base: here and in the literature we found out that both substance use and ways of emotional self-regulation form the core of young offenders' problems (e. g. Baldus, Haavelmann, Reis & Thomasius, 2014). The evaluation of "CAN Stop" was successful and so the DZSKJ and the Justizbehörde Hamburg intended to deepen efforts for young offenders by setting up the BENGALO project.

(150 words)

¹ For more information on evaluation, see Guidelines on the evaluation of crime prevention initiatives (EUCPN Toolbox No.3): <http://www.eucpn.org/library/results.asp?category=32&pubdate>

10. What were the objective(s) of the project? Please, if applicable, distinguish between main and secondary objectives. (**Max. 150 words**)

The primary objective of the project was to develop, implement and successfully evaluate an innovative intervention to reduce problems of young offenders with a history of aggression and addiction problems in order to help them picking up a future lifestyle without resorting to illegal activity. As a secondary goal, the intention was to establishing an effective intervention, which is manualized and thus easily transferable to other institutions (e. g. in investigative custody centres or other institutions working with young offenders with a similar problem background), if successful. In order to evaluate the effects of the BENGALO intervention, we established a non-randomized, controlled design. In it we focused on emotional self-regulation, levels of anger and hostility, and substance use as primary outcomes, and impulsivity, aggression and attitudes towards substance use as secondary outcomes.

(132 words)

11. Has there been a process evaluation? Who conducted the evaluation (internally or externally?) and what were the main results? Which indicators were used to measure the process? Did you make changes accordingly? (**max. 300 words**) - for more information on process evaluation, see *EUCPN Toolbox No.3, p.9-10 & part 2 - section 2A*

The BENGALO project's process evaluation focused mainly on the following topics:

- (1) reach of the target group (including possible drop-outs of BENGALO participants),
- (2) possible obstacles for young offenders to participate at BENGALO,
- (3) participants' and intervention deliverers' satisfaction with BENGALO and
- (4) an adaptation of intervention contents after a first pilot-test.

Process evaluations were done internally, but with predefined tools and goals and with different stakeholders' perspectives to control the process and foster a certain objectivity through triangulation. We used our sociodemographic study data, institutions' records on participants and intervention delivery to evaluate participant reach (1). Any cases, in which BENGALO participants dropped out of the intervention, were recorded as were any communicated or assumed causes. Project meetings were used to integrate perspectives of researchers, secure custody centre's staff, BENGALO deliverers and DZSKJ and custody centre project leaders and discuss implementation challenges, possible barriers for intervention participation (2) and satisfaction with the BENGALO intervention (3). All meetings were protocolled to allow for content analyses. We found that communication and language skills were the greatest barrier for young offenders to participate at BENGALO, another barrier was set when offenders' planned further stay was too short to merit inclusion in the 6-months BENGALO intervention. Overall satisfaction with the BENGALO intervention was good, BENGALO deliverers reported greater satisfaction with the programme in participant cohorts, which comprised participants who had sufficient German language skills to follow the programme and were motivated to work on behaviour patterns which participants themselves deemed problematic. To adapt intervention contents, we held regular intervisory meetings, especially in the first cohort of young offenders, who participated at BENGALO. We analysed intervention contents and how contents resonated with participants after each session. If necessary, BENGALO contents was modified accordingly and changes were integrated in the BENGALO intervention manual (4).

(299 words)

12. Has there been an outcome or impact evaluation? Who conducted the evaluation (internally or externally?), which data and evaluation method

where used and what were the main results? Which indicators were used to measure the impact? (**Max. 300 words**) - for more information on outcome or impact evaluation, see EUCPN Toolbox No.3, p.7-9 & part 2 - section 2A

We used an outcome evaluation, which focused mainly on the project's target variables concerning outcomes, which we deemed relevant for young offenders' future development. We believe that these behaviour changes will help young offenders to refrain from illegal conduct in their future and thus make an important contribution to crime prevention.

Outcome evaluation was done internally. To help control bias, we strictly discerned between the preparation phase of the project, in which all evaluation procedures and aspects of the evaluation design were developed, and the implementation and evaluation phase. Evaluation procedures were laid out in a study protocol, which was submitted to the responsible ethics committee (Ärztchamber Hamburg) prior to programme implementation and evaluation.

We used a non-randomized, controlled evaluation design with pre, post and 6-month follow-up assessments which allowed to compare BENGALO intervention participants to a control group of non-participating young offenders. Assessments were done using questionnaires integrating a set of well-established psychometric scales measuring emotional self-regulation, levels of anger and hostility, aggression, identity development, impulsivity, personality factors and history of hyperkinetic disorders. Measures were complemented with records of substance use, criminal charges and sociodemographics. We assured participants confidential and pseudonymized use of data, especially regarding reports of undesirable and/ or prohibited behaviours (e. g. substance use while in custody). Moreover, clinical interviews were used to assess participants' psychopathology and intelligence. Interviews and assessments were conducted by research staff other than BENGALO intervention deliverers whenever possible.

We conducted logistic regression analyses (30-day substance use prevalences) and mixed models using change scores of emotional outcomes as dependent variable for intervention and control group. Several desirable results were obtained: levels of anger and hostility decreased in the intervention group but not the control group and intervention group participants showed increased levels of functional emotional self-regulation (Baldus & Thomasius, 2018).

(298 words)

III. The project shall, as far as possible, be innovative, involving new methods or new approaches.

13. How is the project innovative in its methods and/or approaches? (**Max. 150 words**)

The project is innovative in that it integrates steps to solve several problem areas of young offenders, which often play a key role in their illegal conduct. To our knowledge, there are currently no evidence-based interventions available, which focus on substance use problems and emotional self-regulation as target outcomes. While separate techniques used in the BENGALO intervention existed before (e. g. "CAN Stop" as an intervention against problematic cannabis use; dialectical behavioural therapy for emotional dysregulation), we have considerably adapted and streamlined them for use with young offenders in the context of secure custody centres: for example we eased necessary language skills and requirements regarding self-reflection and referenced to past criminal conduct and an optimistic and desirable future without illegal activity through the "good-lives" approach. Through its group-approach, the BENGALO intervention is rather cost-effective and makes use of participant group dynamics as an additional momentum of change.

(147 words)

IV. The project shall be based on cooperation between partners, where possible.

14. Which partners or stakeholders were involved in the project and what was their involvement? (**Max. 200 words**)

The project was conducted by the German Centre for Addiction Problems in Children and Adolescents (DZSKJ), who conceived of the study, designed the project and evaluation approach, developed the BENGALO intervention on the basis of current research status, implemented the intervention, conducted data assessments, processing and analyses. It was also responsible for project reporting and presenting project contents to the scientific community. The Justizbehörde Hamburg financed and supervised the project, it was involved in project meetings and gave important impulses and support regarding programme implementation. It is also the supervising institution for the cooperating Justizvollzugsanstalt Hahnöfersand, at which the BENGALO intervention was implemented. The secure custody centre for young offenders in Hameln (Jugendanstalt Hameln) provided access to study participants of the control group. Prior to the inclusion of control participants, the Bildungsinstitut des niedersächsischen Justizvollzugs, the responsible supervising authority of the Jugendanstalt Hameln approved of all planned procedures.

(148 words)

V. The project shall be capable of replication in other Member States.

15. How and by whom is the project funded? (**Max. 150 words**)

The project was funded by the Justizbehörde der Freien und Hansestadt Hamburg, Amt für Justizvollzug und Recht, Abteilung Justizvollzug, Drehbahn 36, 20354 Hamburg, Germany. Ongoing analyses after the active project period and after reporting to the Justizbehörde are now conducted using own resources by the German centre for Addiction Research in Childhood and Adolescence (DZSKJ).

(55 words)

16. What were the costs of the project in terms of finances, material and human resources? (**Max. 150 words**)

The project was funded with a yearly amount of 46.127 € across three years. The funding was reserved for a half-time researcher (psychologist; 29.776 €), funding for a freelance collaborator, who assessed interview data (2.328 €), a student research assistant (6.336 €) and overhead (7.687 €). This amounts to a total funding of 138.381 €.

(55 words)

17. Has a cost-benefit analysis been carried out? If so, describe the analysis, including how and by whom it was carried out and list the main findings of the analysis. (**Max. 150 words**)

No cost-benefit analysis has been carried out, because project resources were limited.

18. Are there adjustments to be made to the project to ensure a successful replication in another Member State?

In order to adjust the BENGALO intervention for use in other Member States, some knowledge about concepts regarding the handling of young offenders is important. The BENGALO intervention was conceptualized for weekly closed group sessions across at least 6 months in a secure custody centre for juvenile offenders and this idea is surely transferable to other Member States. We think it would be possible to transfer the intervention to other implementation settings, in which young persons with combined aggression and substance use problems can be targeted, this may be Member State-specific and depending on how social, health and legal systems are designed in the respective country. However, we see little possibility to shorten the minimum time length of the BENGALO intervention without undermining its original evidence-base. For intervention delivery, we worked with psychologists, but see a possibility for delivering the intervention also by trained social workers, education specialists or medical doctors with some psychotherapeutic background. For programme delivery, a weekly time frame of 3-4 hours should suffice for preparing sessions, delivering sessions, following-up sessions and organization issues. The BENGALO intervention is available through the DZSKJ in German language. A necessity for the successful replication of the BENGALO intervention in non-German speaking Member States would be the translation of the BENGALO intervention manual. If the project is chosen for the European Crime Prevention Award, we would be willing to use prize money to support translation and transfer efforts.

19. How is the project relevant for other Member States? Please explain the European dimension of your project.

Crime is a problem throughout the whole European Union, and while general crime rates across Europe are decreasing throughout the recent years, (<https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/>) there is still a substantial fear of crime in the general population. When it comes to questions of sanctioning illegal conduct and helping to prevent future crime, a special focus is repeatedly set on young offenders, because they make up a group of persons, who are at high risk for resorting to illegal conduct in the future. Throughout Europe, researchers and specialists are working together, to target young offenders (e. g. the European Social Network conference "Service cooperation for prevention and intervention against youth offending"), because crime prevention is fruitful for the public sector, poses possibilities for fiscal relief and helps young persons and their surroundings to escape the troubling experiences associated with crime.

The association with criminal behaviour and deficits in emotional self-regulation is a robust finding throughout studies in diverse countries, and could be supported by researchers throughout different European countries (e. g. Cuervo, Villanueva, Gonzalez, Carrión & Busquets, 2015; Koiv, 2016).

While substance use by young people across Europe (e. g. ESPAD report, 2015) and legislation towards illegal substance use differs, drug use is a concern in European detention facilities for young offenders (e. g.

http://www.emcdda.europa.eu/attachements.cfm/att_231389_EN_UK33_Guidance%20%20youth%20offending%20services.pdf). While efforts are taken to prohibit drug use in prisons, we believe that it is not sufficient to ban drug use in detention facilities, because this does not motivate and enable young offenders with substance use problems to stay away from illegal substance use.

We believe the general idea of BENGALO, that is to prevent crimes by enabling a target group at great risk for future illegal conduct to change qualities, that lead them into illegal activity, namely (illegal) substance use and impulsive and aggressive behaviour, is a route to crime prevention with great potential across all Member States.

Please provide a short general description of the project (abstract for inclusion in the conference booklet – **max. 150 words**).

The aim of the presented project was to develop, implement and evaluate a new innovative educational and treatment intervention (called BENGALO) for young male offenders, who currently serve their closed custody sentence and have a history of aggression and addiction problems. The project was successfully implemented on the sociotherapeutic ward of the secure youth custody centre of the city of Hamburg at Hahnöfersand (Jugendstrafanstalt Hahnöfersand). The project was conducted by the German Centre for Addiction Research in Childhood and Adolescence and was funded by the Justizbehörde of the city of Hamburg (legal authority). The evaluation of BENGALO followed a non-randomized controlled design. The BENGALO intervention was delivered in weekly group sessions over six months. The BENGALO intervention intends to foster self-regulation, to reduce impulsive and aggressive behaviour and to motivate to abstain from substance use, which are key processes for illegal conduct. The evaluation showed significant effects on central outcomes.

(150 words)