



# BOUNCE <sup>along</sup>

raising awareness

Awareness-raising Tool  
for Parents and Frontline  
Workers

- Manual -

## COLOPHON

BOUNCE <sup>along</sup> raising awareness, Awareness-raising Tool for Parents and Frontline Workers – Manual.

This is one of the three manuals of the BOUNCE package, training and awareness-raising tools in the early prevention of violent radicalisation for youngsters and their social environment.

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Design: TRIPLECLICK DESIGN ; Printing : Fast Retail Communication

First edition : December 2014

Second edition: January 2015

Third edition : March 2017



With financial support from the Prevention of and Fight against Crime Program of the European Union  
European Commission – Directorate-General Home Affairs

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# Acknowledgements

The training tools presented, carrying the name BOUNCE, are made possible by the support of the European Commission, which supported a two year intense cooperation between Arktos npo<sup>1</sup> and the Belgian Federal Public Service Home Affairs, General Direction Security and Prevention, in the framework of the STRESAVIORA project.

We want to give special thanks to these training network partners, who contributed to the development of the tools by sharing their expertise and experience:

Thomas More Academy ([www.thomasmore.be](http://www.thomasmore.be)): their research provided the necessary handholds and frameworks for developing the tools.

the supporting boards: the Advisory Board, the Management Board.

the training network partners for sharing their experience and providing their expertise, commitment and input:

- Oranjehuis npo ([www.oranjehuis.be](http://www.oranjehuis.be))
- Ligand npo ([www.ligand.be](http://www.ligand.be))
- Alba npo ([www.alba.be](http://www.alba.be))
- Jong en van Zin npo ([www.jongenvanzin.be](http://www.jongenvanzin.be))
- Tumult npo ([www.tumult.be](http://www.tumult.be))

We would also like to give special thanks to the young people, their parents and the organisations involved during the research phase and during the national and international testing phase. Especially we thank RadarAdvies. [www.radaradvies.nl](http://www.radaradvies.nl). Their engagement in the international testing was of crucial importance for the finalization of the tools.

Finally, we thank the Belgian Federal Public Service Home Affairs in the making of the BOUNCE presentation film.

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<sup>1</sup> Arktos npo is a youth guidance and training centre that works with children and young people. Arktos npo gives training to young people, supports professionals and signals to society.

# Foreword

For some years there has been rising concern in Belgium, the European Union and worldwide about violent radicalisation<sup>2</sup>, and an increasing interest in (early) preventive tools for addressing this issue. Both young people and adults can become involved in a process of violent radicalisation. In the project, supported by the European Commission: Stresaviora - ‘Strengthening Resilience<sup>3</sup> Against Violent Radicalisation’, we have developed holistic tools that empower young people and their social environment at an early stage<sup>4</sup> and in the broad<sup>5</sup> sense. This focus on young people and their environment and on strengthening resilience is a positive one. Our experience in working with young people, parents and their social environment, combined with interesting research results<sup>6</sup>, has confirmed our feeling: change the perspective from risk to opportunity, from fear to openness and from control to empowerment, and early preventive work in this sensitive topic becomes more practicable.

We are proud to present our answers through **BOUNCE, tools for resilient young people interacting with an aware environment.**

The BOUNCE training and awareness-raising manuals (BOUNCE <sup>young</sup>, BOUNCE <sup>along</sup> and BOUNCE <sup>up</sup>), annexes, planned BOUNCE actions and additional information can be found on the project website, at: [www.bounce-resilience-tools.eu](http://www.bounce-resilience-tools.eu).

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<sup>2</sup> Violent radicalisation is the process of [an individual or group] adopting an extremist belief system [inspired by philosophical, religious, political or ideological notions], including the willingness to use, support, or facilitate violence [or undemocratic means], as a method to effect [drastic] societal change. (Euer et al., 2013). In the BOUNCE tools, ‘radicalisation’ and ‘violent radicalisation’ are two different terms. The notion ‘violent’ adds the use, approval or encouragement of violence to the term ‘radicalisation’. From this perspective, radicalisation as itself should not per definition problematic.

<sup>3</sup> Resilience: The ability to bounce back from adversity. (Euer et al., 2013)

<sup>4</sup> This ‘early stage’ means: ‘before the development of the willingness to use or support violence or undemocratic means.’ (Euer et al., 2013)

<sup>5</sup> ‘Broad’ means that the BOUNCE package does not focus on specific forms or expressions of ‘violent radicalisation’, but with a general view on all possible forms of violent radicalisation.

<sup>6</sup> In the framework of the Stresaviora project, the Thomas More Academy (BE) performed a research to provide input for the development of the training tools.

# Introduction

## What?

BOUNCE<sup>along</sup> is an awareness-raising tool that supports parents<sup>7</sup> and frontline workers. Through a wide range of tips and examples, spread over five themes, they find answers on how they can look at young people, approach them and interact with them. They are supported to do this in a strengthening, positive and resilient manner, and so can become more aware of their role in the early prevention of violent radicalisation and themes linked to it. Parents and frontline workers can also find more specific preventive ways to deal with concerns and challenging situations, and are supported in how they can find and spread information and support. Raised awareness can empower them to turn 'reluctance to act' into 'willingness to act': to be confident in approaching young people, addressing them, confront them, etc. Through such an approach, they have an important positive influence on what we strive for: **resilient young people interacting with an aware environment.**

This tool will provide viewpoints, tips, approaches and examples. These are the result of our experience in working with young people, combined with research results, and consultation and reflection with frontline workers and parents. The tips presented will not always be new, surprising or difficult. An important premise to take into account when consulting this tool is: "You haven't got to be a 'violent radicalisation expert' to be effective in the early prevention of violent radicalisation."

## For whom?

BOUNCE<sup>along</sup> is a tool for parents and for workers who are in the 'front line' in their contacts with young people during their puberty and early adolescence: the age group between approximately 12 and 18 years. These are professional workers (teachers, educators, youth workers, social workers, mentors, community police, religious leaders, sport coaches, and so on) and volunteers who work with young people. Anyone who has direct contacts with this group of young people is targeted.

Parents and frontline workers have unique positions and relationships with young people, so raising their awareness can have direct positive influences on young people. **All parents and frontline workers** can use the tips and exercises provided in BOUNCE<sup>along</sup>. The tool can also be especially helpful for those who are looking for answers to their **questions or concerns** about preventing violent radicalisation at an early stage. BOUNCE<sup>along</sup> provides support to make well-thought choices in approaching such a delicate issue.

A unique feature of this tool, is the fact that it's directed to parents as well as to frontline workers. Of course the positions of parents and of frontline workers towards young people are not the same, and each have different types of contact with young people. Also, in the large range of frontline workers, there are a lot of differences in looking at and approaching young people (for example different deontological codes). These differences should not be neglected.

On the other hand, the awareness we want to raise with this tool for parents and the broad spectrum of frontline workers, has a common ground for all. It can be the start towards a shared vision on and approach of young people. BOUNCE<sup>along</sup> can initiate actions that are useful and effective for everyone involved: young people and their social environment. These actions can serve individual parents or frontline workers, parent groups and professional teams. Even awareness-raising actions where both parents and frontline workers are engaged together, are possible.

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<sup>7</sup> By parents we mean all adults who take up a parenting role towards young people: fathers, mothers, other family members or significant others and supporting figures in the life of young people.

We invite readers to discover what items are useful for them. So feel free to mix and match elements for the personal situation or organisation.

## Awareness on what?

Most parents and frontline workers are at some point confronted with worrying signs of and concerns about (violent) radicalisation or themes that can be linked to (violent) radicalisation (changing behaviour, changes in time spending, worrying online behaviour, being withdrawn, changing interests, conflicts, aggressive language, and so on. In these situations, it's a challenge to deal with these signs in a resilient way and from a positive perspective.

Themes like harassment, peer pressure, discrimination, racism, vandalism, violence, polarisation, hate speech, extremism, etc. can also raise concerns about violent radicalisation and challenge parents and frontline workers to search for answers.

The topic 'prevention of violent radicalisation', can raise all kinds of reactions. Some examples:

- mm "How can we strengthen the resilience of young people and prevent them from initiating a process of violent radicalisation?"
- mm "I'm concerned about a young person or about a group of young people. Are they radicalizing?"
- mm "How can I support young people in their development of a positive identity?"
- mm "Where can I find information about dealing with concerns?"
- mm "Who can support our family / organisation in addressing violent radicalisation of young people?"
- mm ...

Do not expect 'the right answers' to all these specific concerns and situations. Each situation will need a different approach, and often a combination of actions. A process of (violent) radicalisation is also very complex, so each situation will need a tailored approach. **What BOUNCE<sup>along</sup> presents, is a framework for a raised awareness, which can lead to a positive and strengthening approach of young people and their social environment.** The awareness is useful before and when there are concerns, and when young people confront us with challenges.

BOUNCE<sup>along</sup> wants to answer these questions and raise the awareness of parents and frontline workers, through these five chapters:




- mm In the first chapter, we ask ourselves the question 'How do we look at young people?'. As an answer, we present **a positive point of view** on young people, on their development, their identities, and their ideals.
- mm The second chapter gives parents and frontline workers a view of 'What is resilience and how can we play a role in **strengthening resilience** of young people?'
- mm Working on **resilient relationships and communication** with young people is treated in the third chapter.
- mm The fourth chapter is designed to support parents and frontline workers in dealing with their **concerns and challenging situations.**
- mm In the fifth chapter, we give tips on how to find **information and** bring it together, and to find and set up **support** networks for dealing with the topic 'prevention of violent radicalisation'.

These five chapters can be informative and useful for parents and frontline workers. But they can become stronger experiences, eye-openers and raise the awareness in a more pervasive way, when frontline workers use them to set up awareness-raising actions and reach parents and also other frontline workers (e.g. information sessions, intervision moments, and meetings with parents) tailored to local needs.

In the BOUNCE <sup>up</sup> train-the-trainer manual, examples of exercises to raise the awareness of parents and frontline workers are presented<sup>8</sup>. These are ready to use and can also be inspirational for tailoring actions to the local reality. The evaluation of the awareness-raising actions is also treated there<sup>9</sup>. Also for a glossary<sup>10</sup> and a bibliography, we refer to the BOUNCE <sup>up</sup> train-the-trainer manual.

## The BOUNCE package

This tool is one part of a complete package of three BOUNCE tools, complementary in use:

-  BOUNCE <sup>young</sup>: a training tool for strengthening the resilience of young people.
-  BOUNCE <sup>along</sup>: an awareness-raising tool for parents and frontline workers. (this tool)
-  BOUNCE <sup>up</sup>: a train-the-trainer tool for professional frontline workers in working with both other tools.

By combining initiatives of the three tools, a complete process can be set up in the early, positive, broad and empowering prevention of violent radicalisation. This approach takes time, repeated efforts, cooperation and energy, but also promises the best results: resilient young people interacting with an aware environment.

When a BOUNCE <sup>young</sup> resilience training programme is set up, awareness-raising actions with this BOUNCE <sup>along</sup> tool must also be set up. The best results and effects in the longer term of a BOUNCE <sup>young</sup> resilience training programme for young people will be reached when parents and frontline workers are informed, involved and aware of the themes of this tool. It's advisable for future trainers who work with BOUNCE <sup>young</sup> and BOUNCE <sup>along</sup> to engage in a BOUNCE <sup>up</sup> train-the-trainer program, that builds the competence to work with both tools. For all information about BOUNCE <sup>up</sup> train-the-trainer actions, we refer to the website [www.bounce-resilience-tools.eu](http://www.bounce-resilience-tools.eu).

*EXAMPLE: A group of eight young people of a neighbourhood leisure project, is engaged in a BOUNCE <sup>young</sup> program. Before the start, the parents are informed by the trainer and facilitators<sup>11</sup> about 'Strengthening resilience'<sup>12</sup> and the role they can play in this. During the period of trainings, a workshop for parents and youth workers is organized. In this workshop their awareness is raised about the positive perspective<sup>13</sup> on young people and on dealing with concerns and challenging situations<sup>14</sup>. After the final training for young people, parents and youth workers are involved in the evaluation of the training sessions and the awareness-raising actions.*

A BOUNCE <sup>along</sup> awareness-raising initiative, on the other hand, can exist without a BOUNCE <sup>young</sup> resilience training program. All parents and frontline workers can use the tips in their approach of and in their work with young people.

*EXAMPLE: A school organizes pedagogical sessions for the staff every three months. During one school year, three pedagogical sessions are dedicated to the BOUNCE <sup>along</sup> awareness-raising actions. The first session raises the awareness on positive viewpoints on young people and their environment<sup>15</sup>. The second meeting is an active initiation session about strengthening resilience<sup>16</sup>. The third session deals with building relationships and good communication with young people<sup>17</sup>.*

<sup>8</sup> See the BOUNCE <sup>up</sup> train-the-trainer manual, chapter 'BOUNCE <sup>along</sup> awareness' paragraph 'Awareness-raising actions'.

<sup>9</sup> See the BOUNCE <sup>up</sup> train-the-trainer manual, chapter 'BOUNCE <sup>along</sup> awareness', paragraph 'BOUNCE <sup>along</sup> evaluation'.

<sup>10</sup> See annex 1 of the BOUNCE <sup>up</sup> train-the-trainer manual.

<sup>11</sup> By 'facilitator' we refer to persons who are directly involved in the BOUNCE initiatives. A facilitator can be the trainer, he can co-organize training sessions, can be a co-trainer, an observer, someone who does the individual follow-up of participants or refers participants to BOUNCE initiatives.

<sup>12</sup> See also chapter 'Strengthening resilience'.

<sup>13</sup> See also chapter 'A positive point of view'.

<sup>14</sup> See also chapter 'Concerns and challenging situations'.

<sup>15</sup> See also chapter 'A positive point of view'.

<sup>16</sup> See also chapter 'Strengthening resilience'.

<sup>17</sup> See also chapter 'Resilient relations and communication'.





A positive point of view

# A positive point of view

## Introduction

Being aware of how we<sup>18</sup> look at young people and at preventing violent radicalisation in an early stage, from a positive perspective, is an important step in the awareness-raising process. The purpose of this part is to engage parents and frontline workers to **reflect on their own viewpoints** and initiate frontline workers to set up awareness-raising initiatives. For practice examples of exercises, we refer to the BOUNCE<sup>up</sup> train-the-trainer manual, chapter 'BOUNCE<sup>along</sup> awareness', paragraph 'Awareness-raising actions', sub-paragraph 'A positive point of view: awareness-raising actions'.

*EXAMPLE: Reframe negative topics: How can we reframe the usually negative view on (violent) radicalisation to a positive one? Do we look at the BOUNCE tools as instruments 'against violent radicalisation', or as tools for 'strengthening resilient young people in an aware environment'? Can we reframe 'radicalisation' as 'developing a strong opinion'? Can we look at having a strong opinion or ideals as a healthy way to be involved in society, or as a sign of the willingness to be someone to have an identity, to be an active citizen?*

## Positive points of view

**Belief in the potential** of young people and their environment. This seems so basic and obvious - and it is, actually. But when targeting difficult subjects, when dealing with concerns, and when doubts arise, this belief sometimes becomes shaky. A persistent belief in the potential of young people, in the own capacities as a parent or as a frontline worker, and in the potential of other sources of support is a first step towards a positive perspective.

*NOTE: This belief in potential does not mean we have to ignore or minimize our concerns, or that we can't show our concerns about young people and their environment. Concerns show us that we care about their well-being and can initiate positive actions.<sup>19</sup>*

**People are resilient:** People have the ability to adapt to all kinds of situations, they can 'bounce back' from adversity, and even 'bounce up' (becoming stronger after a challenging situation). In most cases, when people's circumstances change, they adapt and can show great resilience in dealing with this.

**What's behind behaviour?<sup>20</sup>** Negative behaviour doesn't necessarily mean there also is an underlying negative intention or negative ideal. From the young person's perspective of his own behaviour, there will be a positive intention, a positive core<sup>21</sup>. Seek that positive wish, intention or ideal that's hidden behind worrying or negative behaviour. Being aware of the distinction between behaviour and what's behind it can give a fresh perspective and lead to a different and more positive approach.

**Use positive language:** The language we use is of importance, certainly when talking about sensitive topics. The chosen words and chosen intonation say something about our point of view. The language we use about young people and their environment is a mirror of how we look at them, think about them and approach them.

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<sup>18</sup> 'We' refers to all parents and frontline workers who are in contact with young people from 12 to 18 years.

<sup>19</sup> See also chapter 'Concerns and challenging situations'.

<sup>20</sup> See also the BOUNCE<sup>up</sup> train-the-trainer manual, chapter 'Awareness-raising actions', paragraph 'A positive perspective: awareness-raising actions', exercise 'A broader perspective'.

<sup>21</sup> Based on the 'Appreciative Inquiry' (AI) method, COOPERRIDER, D., See also the BOUNCE<sup>up</sup> train-the-trainer manual, chapter 'BOUNCE handholds', paragraph 'Communication handholds', subparagraph 'Appreciative Inquiry'.

*EXAMPLE: Mostly, ‘radicalisation’<sup>22</sup> has a negative meaning. Labelling youths as ‘radicals’, gives them the message that their opinions are inappropriate. It might be very well the case that their opinions or complaints or the source of these opinions are relevant or legitimate. This vision takes away the negative focus on radical ideas or radicalizing young people. Radicalisation can even be the core, the trigger for a healthy critical sense towards society and politics, and a positive breeding ground for active citizenship. By reframing ‘radicalism’ to ‘strong opinions’ or ‘strong ideals’, the value and the wish underlying the sometimes confrontational behaviour or message, can be found (Euer, et al., 2013).*

**‘What works?,’** instead of ‘What goes wrong?’. When searching for answers to our questions, we often start from a problem, and then we try fixing what went wrong. Another, more creative way to find answers will be found when we ask ‘What works?’. To do this, we look for and discover positive personal memories and things that worked well. Then we can also find the elements that made this happen, and re-find or re-create such experiences.<sup>23</sup>

*NOTE: This does not mean we have to ignore problems or negative feelings. But our primary focus is working around positive elements and strengthening these.*

*EXAMPLE: During a meeting with teachers and parents at a school, participants were asked to answer this question: ‘Do you have an example of an occasion when the school dealt with a difficult situation concerning your child in a good way?’. This task made it possible to find the strong elements that must be kept or even reinforced in the future.*

**Accept dissensus:** In a democratic society, a diversity of opinions is normal. Dissensus through different opinions, is accepted and even valuable. Different opinions get a forum, interaction and discussion about different viewpoints is possible and valuable. Even conflicts that arise through the different viewpoints, can be looked at from a positive angle. They can be necessary for the emancipation of people. It’s good when different parties who raise their voice, can be heard, and can have influence.

*EXAMPLE: It’s allowed to hold demonstrations to support and spread a strong opinion. Activism can be a positive and healthy way to show a strong opinion.*

**(Super-) diversity<sup>24-25</sup> as a challenge:** How do we look at diversity, super-diversity and differences between people? Are these differences problems or challenges? Can we accept the presence of different cultures, nationalities, beliefs and religions, subcultures, social backgrounds and the complex mix of these in society? Seeing these issues as challenges we must accept together creates openness and stimulates creativity to find positive, constructive answers.

*EXAMPLE: Stimulating intercultural contacts (in the broad sense<sup>26</sup>) can move young people to get to know and understand other persons, backgrounds and cultures. It can motivate young people to have a positive attitude towards differences between people and to accept challenges in dealing with diversity.*

**Identity is dynamic:** Young people and adolescents are developing their identity and are in search for their identity. This means several aspects of the person can change. Experimenting, changing looks, interests, ideas, ideals, and behaviour is mostly normal and shouldn’t raise too much concern. The dynamicity of identity can shine a positive light on the way we look at young people. Behaviour (also radical, or deviant behaviour) can be age-related, and is to some extent normal in a process of growing up and in searching for and creating an identity.

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<sup>22</sup> In the BOUNCE tools, ‘radicalisation’ and ‘violent radicalisation’ are different terms. The notion ‘violent’ adds the use, approval or encouragement of violence to the term ‘radicalisation’. From this perspective, radicalisation as itself should not be per definition problematic.

<sup>23</sup> Based on the ‘Appreciative Inquiry’ theory, COOPERRIDER, D.

<sup>24</sup> Super-diversity is a term first described by Steven Vertovec, and is a term intended to underline a level and kind of complexity surpassing anything previously experienced in a particular society.

<sup>25</sup> See also the BOUNCE <sup>UP</sup> train-the-trainer manual, chapter ‘BOUNCE handholds’, paragraph ‘The role of the trainer’, item ‘Intercultural competence’.

<sup>26</sup> By ‘broad sense’ of culture we mean cultural origin, social background, subculture, life circumstances, etc.

*NOTE: Knowing that identity is dynamic does not mean we must become indifferent to what young people do, or that we have to ignore our concerns.*

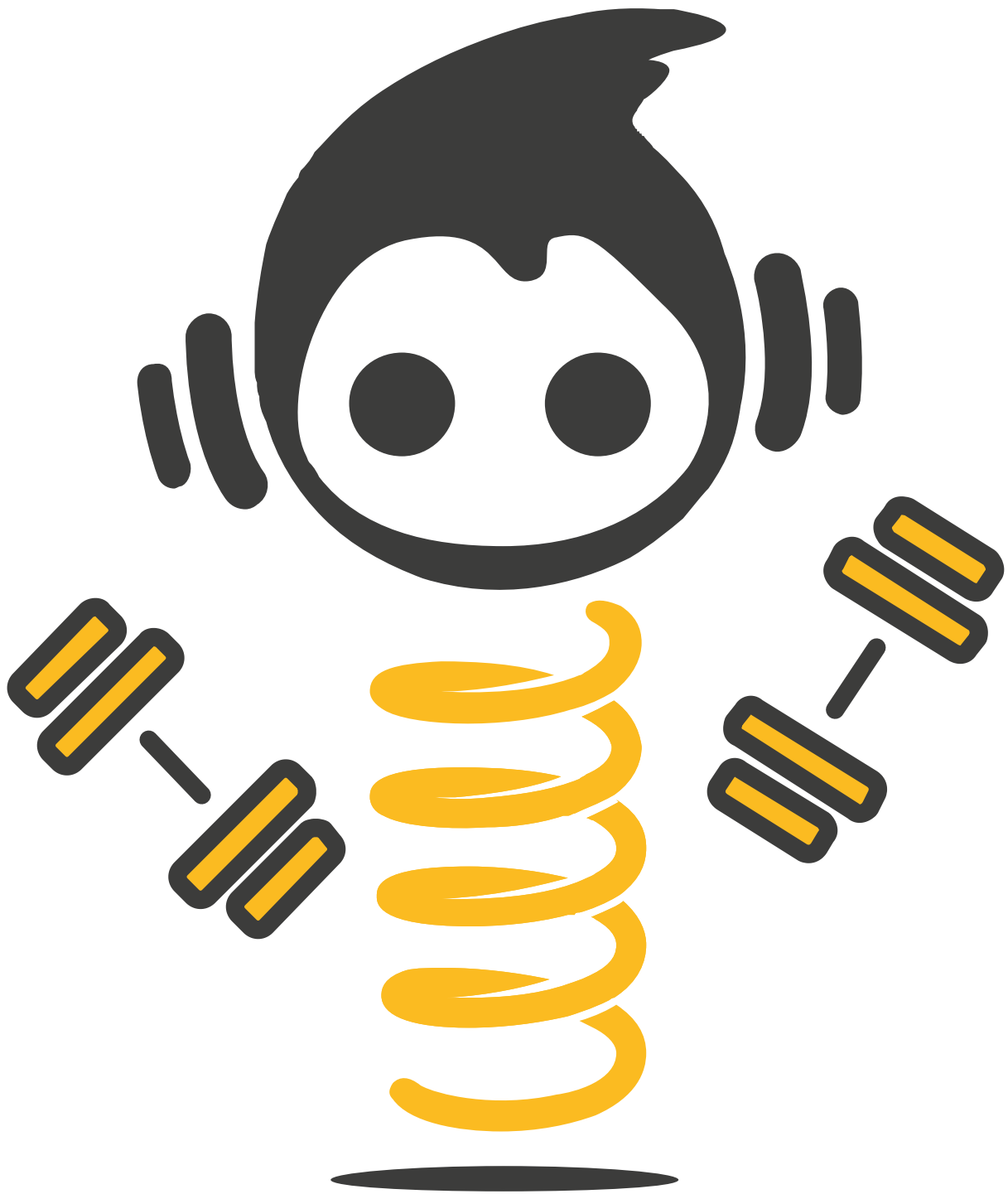
*EXAMPLE: Go back in time to your own adolescence, or think about peers you knew at that time. How did your and their identity develop? How 'radical' were you or others around you during that period? Did that change through time? What positive elements of that period can you or others take along from those experiences? What can you learn from this when looking at young people now?*

**Identity is multiple:** All people have different roles, different parts of their identity that are linked to different social situations and relations. Some aspects are always present, or can be very visible, other aspects may be more hidden. No person can be narrowed down to one aspect of his identity. Accepting this can create an openness and positive view and understanding of these different aspects of identity.

*EXAMPLE: In BOUNCE<sup>young</sup>, young people mark meaningful places on maps and interact about what these places mean for them, and about what this means for their identity and the connections they have with places, things, other people, and so on.*

**Be self-reflective:** Everyone has his own opinions and his personal ideals and values. It's important to think about and realize what the personal opinions and views are. They are the motives for the way we react and for our preferences in dealing with for example strong opinions. Also preconceptions, prejudices and stereotype images can stand in the way of a good reaction. Only when we are aware of the own viewpoints, we can place these next to those of others. If we expect young people to question themselves, and if we stimulate them to broaden their perspectives, it's also important to question our own viewpoints and reactions and look at things from another angle.

*EXAMPLE: The personal situations and living conditions of young people and their parents can be very different from the living conditions of a frontline worker. It's also probable that their opinions about subjects differ a lot. It's a challenge for everyone not to take their own personal reference framework as being the only truth. Acknowledge and appreciate different viewpoints and the differences in opinions that come along with this.*



Strengthening resilience

# Strengthening resilience

## Introduction

Parents and frontline workers have a significant part to play in strengthening the resilience of young people. Everyday situations are full of opportunities to do this. Contacts with family, friends, strangers, societal institutions, media, events, and so on can all serve as learning opportunities. Being alert and using these opportunities to strengthen the resilience of young people, is a task for all adults. To be able to do this, adults need their own resilience, and can set an example for the resilience of young people. Parents and frontline workers can work on strengthening the resilience of young people, and at the same time, strengthen their own resilience.

Specific approaches and training sessions for young people provide opportunities for young people to strengthen their resilience. Of course, we refer to the BOUNCE<sup>young</sup> programme as a good example for this. As described before, a BOUNCE<sup>young</sup> training programme will always be set up in combination with BOUNCE<sup>along</sup> awareness-raising actions.

- ☺ In the first paragraph, the concept of ‘resilience’ is explained. We sum up some aspects of resilience, to give good understanding of what this can mean for young people.
- ☺ The second paragraph explains the BOUNCE<sup>young</sup><sup>27</sup> resilience training programme for young people.

The awareness raised on the theme ‘Strengthening resilience’ is designed to stimulate frontline workers to set up awareness-raising actions concerning this theme, and to involve parents and frontline workers in this. Practice examples of exercises are presented in the BOUNCE<sup>up</sup> train-the-trainer manual, chapter ‘BOUNCE<sup>along</sup> awareness’, paragraph ‘Awareness-raising actions’, sub-paragraph ‘Strengthening resilience: awareness-raising actions’.

## Resilience

Resilience is the ability to ‘bounce back’ when being confronted with challenging situations or adversity. It means being ready for things to come, dealing with and learning from events, and even becoming stronger after challenging experiences (‘bouncing up’). It’s having the awareness and competence to prepare for and to deal with challenging situations in a positive, strong and (self)-respectful way. Resilient people can develop and consciously choose strategies to deal with all kinds of situations.

Resilience is a mix of physical, emotional, social and mental awareness and competency. This ‘word cloud’ shows what resilience can mean in real life situations. Each individual young person will have his strengths and challenges. Strong resilience is not the simple sum of all these aspects, but a personal combination of different aspects. Everyone comes across different challenges throughout life. Depending on the individual, social and cultural situation of young people, different aspects of resilience will be needed to overcome situations. This means that the aspects of resilience needed will be different for every young person and at any time. The word cloud is not limitative.

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<sup>27</sup> For a thorough view on this training programme and the content of the training sessions, we refer to the BOUNCE<sup>young</sup> resilience training tool.



## BOUNCE<sup>young</sup> – resilience training for young people<sup>28</sup>

### What is BOUNCE<sup>young</sup>?

Opportunities can be provided for young people to strengthen their resilience by setting up a BOUNCE<sup>young</sup> resilience training program. In BOUNCE<sup>young</sup>, young people are given a chance to strengthen a wide range of aspects of resilience (see above). The training programme has been developed through combining literature study, input from young people (through interviews), international good practices and the experience of a network of partners from academic, educative and welfare organisations.

Here, we present to parents and frontline workers a short view on the BOUNCE<sup>young</sup> resilience training programme for young people, directed to the age group between approximately 12 and 18 years (puberty and early adolescence). The core of the programme is a series of ten active group sessions, each dealing with a different aspect of resilience.

<sup>28</sup> A lot of information of this paragraph is also and more thoroughly treated in the BOUNCE<sup>up</sup> train-the-trainer manual.

The ten training sessions have these central themes:



**Who and what?:** getting to know each other and resilience training.



**Group work:** working together in the group.



**Talents and strengths:** working with the talents and strengths in the group.



**Standing strong:** learning to stand strong.



**Staying strong:** using standing strong in social challenging situations.



**Can you feel it?:** working with feelings and emotions.



**Information and influence:** dealing with information and influence in a healthy critical way.



**Think about it:** being aware of how we and others think and strengthening critical thinking styles.



**Connected identity:** being aware of the personal identity and connections we have.'



**Future proof:** looking confident and resilient at the future.

## What is the role of parents and frontline workers in BOUNCE<sup>young</sup>?

The training sessions of BOUNCE<sup>young</sup> can be an important factor for strengthening young people's resilience. The effect of the training programme can be enhanced by involving parents, frontline workers and other support figures in the young people's social environment. They can play a facilitating role so young people can transfer the content of the training sessions to their daily lives.

**mm** When a BOUNCE<sup>young</sup> resilience training programme is set up, parents, caretakers and other frontline workers are always informed of the content and the goals of the training sessions.

*EXAMPLE: Parents and frontline workers may become aware of the training sessions through flyers, personal contact with a trainer or facilitator, or through an information session. They may also witness or even experience (parts of) the training sessions.*

**mm** Parents and frontline workers are also involved on a more profound level, through BOUNCE<sup>along</sup> actions organized by frontline workers<sup>29</sup>.

<sup>29</sup> See also the BOUNCE<sup>up</sup> train-the-trainer manual, chapter 'BOUNCE<sup>along</sup> awareness', paragraph 'Awareness-raising actions'.



*EXAMPLE: The educative staff of a welfare organisation from where out young people are engaged in a BOUNCE<sup>young</sup> resilience training programme, take part in an awareness-raising action about 'resilient relations and communication'.*

**mm** After completing the programme, evaluation<sup>30</sup> actions are set-up, where parents and frontline workers take part in.

## Features of the training sessions

These terms describe the features of the BOUNCE<sup>young</sup> resilience training programme:

- mm** Group work
- mm** Action and interaction
- mm** Reflection
- mm** Fun and playful atmosphere
- mm** A positive look at young people, identity, ideals and challenges
- mm** Mutual respect and self-respect
- mm** Involvement of the social environment (parents, frontline workers,...)
- mm** Guidance through the training programme by a permanent trainer, a co-trainer, and possibly an observer.

## Why is BOUNCE<sup>young</sup> developed?

The main goal of the BOUNCE<sup>young</sup> resilience training programme is: 'Preventively strengthening the emotional, physical, social and mental awareness and resilience of young people towards a positive identity in constructive connections with their social environment.'

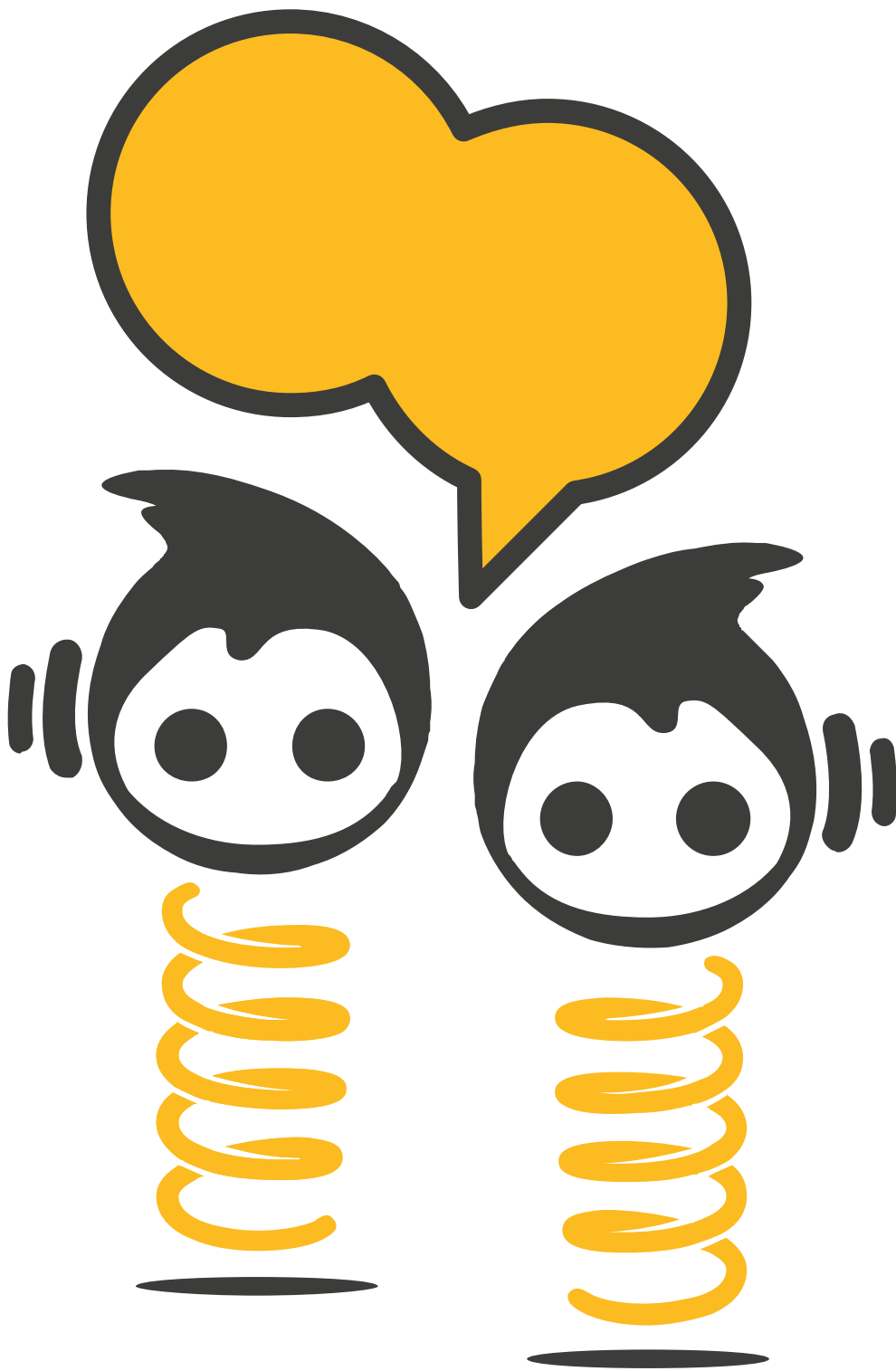
The BOUNCE<sup>young</sup> training sessions want to serve as a form of early, positive and broad prevention of violent radicalisation<sup>31</sup>. Young people who have a healthy resilience, are self-aware, are confident, have a healthy critical spirit, and will be able to react appropriately to all kinds of situations, and to all kinds of influences. They can 'bounce back' from adversity and even become stronger after experiencing challenging situations.

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<sup>30</sup> See also the BOUNCE<sup>up</sup> train-the-trainer manual, chapter 'BOUNCE<sup>young</sup> training', paragraph 'BOUNCE<sup>young</sup> evaluation', and chapter 'BOUNCE<sup>along</sup> awareness', paragraph 'BOUNCE<sup>along</sup> evaluation'.

<sup>31</sup> This message must be given with some precaution. A good understanding and explanation of what is meant by strengthening resilience as early prevention of violent radicalisation, and how we look at it, is important. For this, see the chapter 'A positive perspective' in this manual, and the BOUNCE<sup>up</sup> train-the-trainer manual, where the viewpoints on the theme 'prevention of violent radicalisation' are explained.





Resilient relations  
and communication

# Resilient relations and communication

## Introduction

Building a relationship often happens in a spontaneous way, luckily. Certainly a parental relationship is built through a mostly spontaneous way of interacting. Approaching young people can be challenging, certainly when young people are in puberty and adolescence. Thus this approach can ask more than just being spontaneous. A question parents and frontline workers tend to ask is: “How can we build up and maintain a good relation and communication with young people?” A strong relationship and good communication can certainly strengthen the resilience of young people, and also influences the resilience of the adults in their social environment in a positive way. It’s the basis to build on when reacting to concerns or challenging situations<sup>32</sup>.

The positive points of view and the awareness of resilience and resilience training, presented in the previous chapters, can already be very useful for building up and maintaining a relation of trust and dialogue with young people. In what follows, we give some more specific tips to strengthen and maintain this relation through resilient communication that stimulates honesty and openness.

Examples of awareness-raising actions in the framework of resilient relations and communication, are presented in the BOUNCE <sup>up</sup> train-the-trainer manual, chapter ‘BOUNCE <sup>along</sup> awareness’, paragraph ‘Awareness-raising actions’, sub-paragraph ‘Resilient relations and communication: awareness-raising actions’.

## Relation and communication tips

**Safety first:** When approaching young people, ask yourself if the situation is safe for them: ‘Are there other young people around?’, ‘Does the location seem safe?’, ‘Can I ask this from him right now?’,... If young people feel safe, there is better chance of positive communication, and the build-up or maintenance of a good relation. An unsafe situation can block the situation or even cause adversity. Young people, both in groups and individually, are sensitive to psychological safety.

*NOTE: The situation must also feel safe for the parent or the frontline worker who approaches the young people. When this is not the case, the parent or frontline worker may have to ‘stretch’ his own boundaries, or try to influence the situation to a safer one, or change the circumstances.*

*EXAMPLE: If a young person is picked out of a group to speak about a sensitive topic, this can feel very unsafe for him; the bystanders greatly influence how the young person will react. Postponing the message until an individual moment can be useful. In ‘safe groups’, this same type of interaction may be no problem at all.*

**Positive interactions** with young people build and strengthen a relationship. Take opportunities to have regular, positive contacts with young people. This creates a safe space for dialogue, even when situations are more challenging. Some tips how to do this:

**mm Show interest and appreciation.** Show that you are interested, that you are curious. Discover and appreciate how young people live their lives.

*EXAMPLE: Before a sports training session starts, the coach has a short chat with the young people. He<sup>33</sup> shows interest in other activities and interests of the young people, and in their lives.*

<sup>32</sup> See specific tips in the chapter ‘Concerns and challenging situations’.

<sup>33</sup> For easy legibility, we use the male form in the whole text.

**mm Play:** When possible, set a playful atmosphere. Laughing together, having a sense of self-relativity, using humour, can make a big difference in the relation and communication. It can take away pressure, relieve the weight on a subject, and initiate motivation.

*NOTE: Avoid misunderstandings by using humour. For example a youth worker uses a fist bump as a way of greeting a young person and says 'Fist bumps are more hygienic than hand shakes'. This could be misunderstood by the young person as a signal the social worker finds he has a lack of hygiene.*

**Give feedback:** Pay attention to what young people do well and take opportunities to confirm this. Confirm what young people do well and do this in a consequent way: to all young people, fairly. This can be done by words, and by non-verbal encouraging signals. Focus more on opportunities to give positive feedback than an correcting reactions. When you need to correct young people, do it in a constructive way.

*NOTE: It can also be strengthening to confirm what we consider as normal behaviour expected at all times.*

*EXAMPLE: Non-constructive negative feedback: 'You always interrupt when I'm talking'. Constructive negative feedback: 'I need you to be quiet while I'm explaining; I'll let you react in a moment.'*

**Role model:** Sometimes we might think we have no role to play: 'I can't mean anything in preventing violent radicalisation', or 'I'm not educated for that.', or 'My influence is too little to make a difference'. The challenges where we as parents and frontline workers stand for, can seem too big, so there can be doubt about the own role and the positive strengthening influence. Young people learn amongst other ways, by imitation of role models. Parents and frontline workers have an important role model function. Realize and trust on the impact of your own messages and behaviour. Often the positive, strengthening influence is in the little things we do. And young people themselves can be empowered to act as positive role models for their peers as well.

*EXAMPLE: How you talk about your vision on all kinds of subjects can have a great influence on the images young people develop on these subjects. (Krols, et al., 2013). This can work in a positive as well as in a negative way. A parent who is (in)tolerant towards people with a different opinion, can have an important influence on the tolerance of his child.*

*NOTE: Interviews with several young people have shown that role models are often to be found first in one's own family, but friends, teachers or others can also be role models. (Krols, et al., 2013) This conclusion relativizes the assumption adults may have that young people are mostly influenced by their friends and peer groups. They mostly see adults as the first examples or role models.*

**Give choices:** Present alternatives to young people, let them participate and make decisions in all kinds of situations. Seek actively for opportunities where young people can find creative solutions, make a choice and can feel heard. An opportunity to make a choice feels better than a choice made for them. It challenges them and gives energy. It's empowering, stimulates problem solving skills and emancipates young people.

*NOTE: Letting young people experiment with the choices they made, and even letting them fail, can strengthen resilience. Try to turn these failure experiences into learning experiences.*

*EXAMPLE: When rules and agreements need to be made, it's advisable to let young people participate in the creation of these rules and agreements. They will feel more connected to them and it's likely they will abide by these agreements and rules more spontaneously, and even correct others who don't abide by them.*

**Open agenda:** Especially as a frontline worker, explain your purpose and be clear on what you want to reach with your approach. When young people understand why they are spoken to, or what the goal of the interaction is, there is a good chance they also will open up more easily. Also inform young people about the policy of the organisation: How parents are reached and informed, how

frontline workers work together, how parents and frontline workers are in contact,... Let young people know that these connections exist and how they are used.

*EXAMPLE: When BOUNCE training and awareness-raising actions are set up, it can be difficult to speak about the topic 'prevention of violent radicalisation' to the participants and their network. There is a possibility that the intention of the BOUNCE initiatives may be misunderstood. It's advisable to give a clear view on the purpose of the training sessions<sup>34</sup> and the awareness-raising actions. When this is explained with an open agenda, the participants and their network will most probably understand it.*

**Body language and position:** Know what effect your non-verbal signs can have. Eye contact, facial expression, physical contact, the way you sit or stand,... all influence communication. Non-verbal language is an important part of communication.

*EXAMPLE: Sitting in front of a young person with one's arms crossed is a more threatening and closed position than facing him at a 90 degree angle with loose arms.*

**Listen more than you speak:** if we want to understand how young people think, feel, live, and so on, we must let them talk freely, and take the time to listen. Advice and solutions, surely meant well, often come too fast. Give young people the feeling they can be heard and that what they share, matters. Silence can give time and space to think, and mustn't be avoided.

**Communication in different layers<sup>35</sup>:** When interacting with people, different ways of communication are possible. When building up a relationship, there will usually be some superficial interaction at first, with chat about daily life (the weather, learning to know each other, discussion of what, who, when, interests, school, work, etc.). After some time, there will also be interaction about attitudes and emotions (wishes, concerns, dreams, feelings, views, etc.). For interaction about attitudes and emotions, the relationship needs trust. In a good relationship, everything can be expressed.

*EXAMPLE: In a BOUNCE<sup>young</sup> resilience training program, the subjects of communication and interaction in the first training sessions will generally be more about interests, daily life, and so on... After a few sessions, there will be more interaction and openness about emotions, opinions, identity, aspirations, connections, values, ideals, etc.*

**Follow-up young peoples' communication:** Know how young people communicate with each other and with others, and discuss this. The media and communication channels they use, regularly change (use of new mobile apps, forums, chat rooms, etc.). Showing interest in both the channels of communication and the content of their communication, can strengthen open dialogue. It can be the precondition young people need to address adults for advice or concerns about this. It can also make adults alert in a healthy way towards the communication of young people.

*NOTE: Do this without being too controlling. It's more about having notice and understanding of how young people communicate. Showing interest in this can be enough.*

**Non-violent communication<sup>36</sup>:** We want young people to show respect towards themselves and others, and we expect them to communicate in a resilient way. Keeping our 'role model' function in mind, it's useful to be non-violent in our communication. It's a challenge to discover how often we tend to use a form of violence (power, pressure, forcing another, insulting, ignoring, yelling,...) in our communication. As a reaction to 'violence' in the broad sense, we get resistance from the other person or group we are communicating with.

*EXAMPLE: Historical figures, famous persons, such as, for example Martin Luther King, Nelson Mandela, and Mahatma Gandhi, can be used as examples of people with strong ideals (freedom fighting, counter speech and rebellion against the current policy, and so on) who chose to be non-*

<sup>34</sup> See also the chapters 'Introduction' and 'Strengthening resilience' of this manual, and the BOUNCE<sup>up</sup> train-the-trainer manual, chapter 'BOUNCE<sup>along</sup> awareness', paragraph 'Setting up BOUNCE<sup>along</sup> initiatives'.

<sup>35</sup> See also the BOUNCE<sup>up</sup> train-the-trainer manual, chapter 'BOUNCE handholds', paragraph 'Communication handholds', subparagraph 'Layers of communication'.

<sup>36</sup> See also the BOUNCE<sup>up</sup> train-the-trainer manual, chapter 'BOUNCE handholds', paragraph 'Communication handholds', subparagraph 'Non-violent communication'.

*violent in their communication. In their communities and times, they were 'radicals'. They achieved things through their radical belief and even more through the way they chose to do this: in a non-violent way. Their non-violent way of communicating is an important reason why they are such strong examples for a lot of people.*

**Be yourself:** Being aware of how you interact with young people, must not lead to playing a role. Make sure you act naturally. If your approach seems artificial, young people will not take you seriously. Being yourself can also mean that you can show your own errors or weaknesses (if relevant), and that you can discuss your personal experiences that relate to what young people experience.

*NOTE: Frontline workers can use their personality in approaching young people, and use this for a professional relationship. At the same time, they must make sure that personal experiences and emotions do not become the topic. Use personal experiences and reflect on them in a generalized form.*

*EXAMPLE: A frontline worker can interact with a young person about a frustration. Being himself can mean the worker refers to his own experience of feeling frustrated in his youth, and link this to the frustration of the young person, without putting his experience or emotions of that moment central.*

**Strengthen media literacy:** The combination of media (television, newspapers, magazines, internet, smart phones, forums, websites, social media, radio, etc.) and the accessibility of media for young people provides them a wide range of opportunities to be informed, to discover new things, to interact with others,... So here again, the positive aspect is important. Parents and frontline workers can have concerns about the influence of media (and mostly the internet) on young people. Interacting about these media and by this, strengthening the media literacy of young people, strengthens the resilience in relations and communication. The critical attitude young people need online is not so different from in real life situations or towards 'classic' media<sup>37</sup>, or from other influences in daily life. So a lot of everyday situations provide learning opportunities to strengthen the (online) critical sense.

*NOTE: In most cases, blocking young people's access to media will not be a solution, because they have access to them almost everywhere.*

*EXAMPLE: A lot of interesting programs, workshops, campaigns and websites stimulate media literacy. Using these can be an important strengthening factor for young peoples' resilience, for example the 'No Hate Campaign', a youth campaign of the Council of Europe for human rights online, to reduce the levels of acceptance of hate speech and to develop online youth participation and citizenship, including the internet governance processes. [www.nohatespeechmovement.org](http://www.nohatespeechmovement.org)*

**Hold difficult conversations:** Overcome personal hesitation and allow difficult conversations to take place, instead of avoiding them and leaving the issues in the hands of the individual. In discussions and debates, involve all opinions, mainstream, side stream, strong opinions,... and give young people the feeling that they are being heard and understood. In most cases, young people are eager to share their points of view and to explain themselves. Hold these difficult conversations with both young people and colleagues, parents and other frontline workers.

*NOTE: Strong opinions are allowed: A strong or radical opinion in itself is not per definition problematic. There are only a few (legal) restrictions on what people may say in public. And there are even fewer boundaries about what they think or do in the private sphere.*

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<sup>37</sup> In the BOUNCE <sup>young</sup> resilience training program, a healthy critical sense towards information and influence is treated thoroughly in the training session 'Information and influence'.



Concerns and challenging situations



# Concerns and challenging situations

## Introduction

While the preceding three chapters dealt with more general awareness about our view on young people, about strengthening resilience and about relations and communication with young people, this chapter focuses on a more specific level. Parents and frontline workers may face concerns and all kinds of challenging situations. The viewpoints and tips from the previous chapters, form the basis to deal with these more specific situations. They can already put some concerns into perspective, or strengthen the willingness to react in a resilient way.

This part gives tips and examples for parents and frontline workers how to deal with questions like:

- 🌀 ‘How can we distinguish normal behaviour from worrying behaviour?’
- 🌀 ‘How can we **react to our own concerns** about possible radicalization processes?’ (For example change of behaviour, strong opinions, changing interests and time spending, worrying online behaviour, being withdrawn, conflicts, aggressive language, etc.)
- 🌀 ‘How can we deal with **challenging situations** regarding violent radicalisation or situations linked to it?’ (For example negative peer pressure, harassment, repeated conflicts about opinions, discrimination, racism, vandalism, violence, provocation, polarisation, hate speech, extremism, etc.)

*EXAMPLE: A boy aged 14 years regularly talks about immigrants. He ‘doesn’t like them’. A teacher notices he draws swastikas in his diary. A conversation with the boy shows he has no extremist worldview. He doesn’t even know a lot of foreigners, but his parents don’t like foreigners, either. He drew the swastikas out of boredom, and he found it exciting.*

The tips of this chapter want to strengthen the confidence of parents and frontline workers to act resilient to these concerns and in these challenging situations.

Some exercises on raising awareness about dealing with concerns, are presented in the BOUNCE<sup>UP</sup> train-the-trainer manual, chapter ‘BOUNCE<sup>along</sup> awareness’, paragraph ‘Awareness-raising actions’, sub-paragraph ‘Concerns and challenging situations: awareness-raising actions’.

## Dealing with concerns

**Pay attention to change:** Young people change: gradually or sometimes very suddenly and they tend to experiment with behaviour, looks, language, opinions, and so on. These changes can and must in the first place be seen as normal, healthy signs that young people are in search of an identity<sup>38</sup>. Sometimes the changes become worrying signs (for example not going to school, bad school results, aggressiveness, isolation, etc.). Parents and frontline workers are usually the first to pick up these changes and may have concerns about violent radicalisation. They are also the first who can respond to these changes. How they do that is of importance. The tips from the previous chapters, provide a good basis for setting up interaction about these concerns.

*NOTE: In this tool you will not find a list of possible or certain signals or worrying signs that must be taken into consideration when trying to recognize a possible (violent) radicalisation process. Because of the complexity of such a process, and the early preventive focus of the BOUNCE tools,*

<sup>38</sup> See also chapter ‘A positive point of view’, tip ‘Identity is dynamic’.

*we choose not to do this. On the other hand, the combination of tips presented here and in this tool, can be helpful in analysing situations that raise concern.*

*EXAMPLE: Adults can have concerns about young people: A parent can be concerned because his daughter spends a lot of time online. A teacher can be concerned because an adolescent spends a lot of time on the streets, and so on. Parents and frontline workers can question if their concerns are valid. The answer is 'Yes'. There is nothing wrong with a concern. Being concerned is okay and is a healthy sign that we care about the well-being of the young person.*

**Show concern:** Give attention to these changes in dialogue with the young person, say what you see, talk about it with the young person in an open, accepting way. It's a risk to think it will pass as such if you give it time. The attention you give a young person by showing that you notice things that change, and allowing and trying to understand them, is important. This can prevent or de-escalate a possible problematic situation. When you do this from your personal perspective and concern, young people tend to listen to this and accept the message.

*NOTE: When showing concerns to the young person(s), try to find a balance between paying attention to the concerns, and at the same time trying not to be too suspicious.*

**Share concerns**<sup>39</sup>: Be open about your concerns and worries, share them with others around you (another parent, a teacher, use a team-moment to show your concern,...). In many situations, talking about your concerns will already broaden perspective on the situation, and give rise to one or more possible answers. At the same time, certainly in the case of sensitive topics, think about the consequences of signalling concerns: try to see the risks and benefits for all persons and groups involved. Take these concerns away from the informal sphere and put them on an official agenda.

*EXAMPLE: In a welfare organisation, signals and concerns about young people can be a fixed point on the agenda of the weekly meeting about young people.*

*EXAMPLE: A youth worker who signalled his concern about increasing vandalism (graffiti, tags,...) in a neighbourhood to a police officer, had no clue this would lead to a wave of identity checks by the police in the neighbourhood. This gave a lot of residents and young people the feeling of criminalisation.*

**Place concerns in a broad perspective:** When trying to discover how to react to a concern, make a good analysis of the situation: social and emotional well-being, the interests, the things that go well and don't go so well, important events in the lives of young people, interactions between young people, behaviour of others,... all can be part of this analysis. The overall situation of the young person can show a broader perspective and make it possible to choose if further intervention is necessary and how to intervene. This may make it easier to see what requires further attention and what can be left alone.

## Dealing with challenging situations

When we are confronted with a **strong opinion**, or with an upcoming or present **conflict or violation of boundaries**, it's not always easy to react in a resilient way, and at the same time take care of the involved persons and relations. Some tips can assist parents and frontline workers to react resilient.

*IMPORTANT NOTE: Avoid ignoring, pressuring, moralizing, trying to be persuasive, judging and chastising. All these ways of reacting cause resistance, certainly when opinions are strong, or in the case of a conflict. These reactions can have the effect of further polarisation of the opinion and drive young people to search for confirmation elsewhere (peer groups, internet, etc.). Preventing people from sharing their strong opinions, or telling people to shut up doesn't change their opinions, except possibly to make their views more entrenched and give them a grudge. Giving the message they may not have certain thoughts, may create a feeling like 'they are all against me', as well as isolation and injustice.*

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<sup>39</sup> For more information about interacting with other adults about concerns, see the chapter 'Information and support'.

*EXAMPLE: A group of teachers were asked: 'What are the worst imaginable ways of reacting to a discriminative statement of a pupil?'. Some of the answers: 'not reacting, excluding, ridiculing, humiliating, being furious,...' Teachers found these reactions to behaviour counterproductive, because they give little or no space for a constructive solution.*

*Through these 'worst imaginable ways', an openness about mistakes in addressing young people we may tend to make, was created. In the second part of the exercise, ideas on the 'most desirable ways' were searched and found<sup>40</sup>.*

## Reacting to strong opinions

**Engage in dialogue and ask questions:** This shows your interest in how a young person thinks and feels. When a young person gives a strong opinion, ask good questions to clarify and explain their viewpoints. By keeping the dialogue open and experiencing the positivity of dialogue (also about difficult subjects), there is a good chance the situation can also be looked at in a less problematic way.

Also in group, it's good to give room to these strong opinions, and to allow the conversation between young people to take place. All who is involved can learn from these moments. At the same time, the time and energy spent on this strong opinion may not have a negative influence on the group or on the organization. The well-being of all must be taken into account in deciding to continue the dialogue or not.

*NOTE: The question 'Why?' can seem judgemental to the receiver. 'What makes you say that?' can be an alternative way of asking for more explanation.*

Two types of good questions are:

**Neutral and open questions:** These questions don't imply judgement and give a chance to reflect. Through these neutral and open questions, we can get a better view of the opinion, and the motives, values and wishes behind the strong opinion.

*EXAMPLES:*

- *What makes you say that?*
- *Do you have experiences you want to share about this?*

**Appreciative questions<sup>41</sup>:** The approach of appreciative inquiry searches for the positive wish and ideals behind the strong opinion. The idealism is a point of reference for dialogue. This is a non-judging, but accepting way of taking what is said. It does not necessarily mean the opinion is approved. The appreciation can also be in the acceptance that a young person shares an opinion. Appreciative questions allow young people to be themselves and really say what they think, feel, experience, and so on...

*EXAMPLES:*

- *What do you find good in that?*
- *What are the benefits of that for you?*

*NOTE: The way questions are asked (intonation, loudness, speed, etc.) and the body language used have an important influence on the neutrality, openness and appreciation of questions. A calm and controlled attitude supports the openness, neutrality, and appreciation of questions.*

**Give attention to the emotional layer<sup>42-43</sup>:** There always is an emotional layer in an opinion. Interact about the emotion and the personal experience of the young person who gives a strong opinion. We can interact about the emotion we think to recognize in the young person, like injustice

<sup>40</sup> This exercise is thoroughly explained in the 'BOUNCE <sup>up</sup> train-the-trainer manual, chapter 'BOUNCE <sup>up</sup> awareness', paragraph 'Awareness-raising actions', sub-paragraph 'Concerns and challenging situations: awareness-raising actions', exercise 'The worst imaginable way / the most desirable way'.

<sup>41</sup> See also the BOUNCE <sup>up</sup> train-the-trainer manual, chapter 'BOUNCE handholds', paragraph 'Communication handholds', subparagraph 'Appreciative Inquiry'.

<sup>42</sup> See also chapter 'Resilient relations and communication', item 'Communication in different layers'.

<sup>43</sup> See also the BOUNCE <sup>up</sup> train-the-trainer manual, chapter 'BOUNCE handholds', paragraph 'Communication handholds', subparagraph 'Layers of communication'.

or frustration. Also we can acknowledge and even express our own emotions as a receiver, explaining honestly what the effect of the strong opinion is.

*EXAMPLE: 'Am I right if I see some frustration in what you just said?'*

**Confront:** Strong opinions can be challenged, but the challenge should be constructive and sensitive. Mirroring, challenging a way of thinking, providing an alternative vision can make young people reflect about their strong opinions. To be able to do this, a relation of trust and dialogue is a condition. Stress that young people are responsible for their own choices, and also for the consequences of their opinions and choices. Confrontation can also consist of giving young people information that is correct. When it's obvious the opinion is based on wrong information, giving the right information can be very useful.

*NOTE: There is a thin line between confronting and pressuring reactions (see above).*

**EXAMPLES:**

☞ *Do you have an experience where this was different?: This question can challenge a dichotomised way of thinking (duality – thinking / us versus them - thinking).*

☞ *What consequences does this bring along for others?*

☞ *Can you understand there are people who think different?*

**Block:** Stopping the interaction about an issue. When strong opinions are shared in a group, and the atmosphere hardens to a point where there is no more view on a positive outcome, the trainer can block the situation. If possible, the dialogue can be taken up later on with the group or on an individual level.

**Include:** Keep involving young people who seek confrontation, who try to create division between groups. When these young people can stay involved in a community, and can keep participating in activities, there are chances for critical dialogue through these contacts. Insist on this as far as possible, rather than excluding and rejecting those with strong ideals.

*EXAMPLE: In a school, the class teachers kept an eye on a group of radicalizing young people, and at the same time engaged them in an ongoing dialogue where they challenged their extremist view in an enquiring and positive manner.*

## Violated boundaries<sup>44</sup> and conflicts

Unlike all items treated above, which have an early preventive approach, in this part, we may say there is a problem to be taken care of. The problem can imply that respect and safety for others and / or self-respect are at stake, or that if the strong opinion shifts to a situation of violent radicalisation,... We give tips to deal with two kinds of problematic situations:

☞ **Boundaries** of young people, adults, others, the organisation, etc. are at stake or disrespected, meaning there are individuals or groups or systems that need to be protected, and / or the boundaries need to be shown, restored, or changed.

☞ There is a **conflict** between young people on an individual or group level, or between young person(s) and parent(s) and / or frontline workers.

Again, in all these situations, the tips presented in the previous chapters of this BOUNCE<sup>along</sup> manual are useful. An important one to repeat here, is '**Accept dissensus**<sup>45</sup>': a conflict as such shouldn't always be seen as problematic.

<sup>44</sup> In the BOUNCE tools, a boundary can be a law, a rule, an agreement made, a personal limit, physical integrity, a mental boundary, etc.

<sup>45</sup> See also chapter 'A positive point of view', tip 'Accept dissensus'.

**See the whole picture:** A situation can have different backgrounds. Invest in discovering the background to the situation in order to decide how to approach it. Distinguish the person, his behaviour and what's behind the behaviour<sup>46</sup>: avoid making personal remarks. When we are involved in or witness a conflict, or when we confronted with our own values, this tendency may occur. When trying to restore a boundary or a conflict, try to work on both the behaviour and what's behind it, without judging the person. The behaviour can lead to a sanction, but the conversation about what drives the person (values, ideals, personal issues, etc.) is most important.

*EXAMPLE: A physical fight between two small groups of young people takes place at school. One group exists of young people with native roots, the other group has foreign roots. Three possible backgrounds to this situation are described. These will show another concern, and ask for another approach:*

**mm** *The young people have previously been involved in incidents with each other. Repeatedly, messages about distrusting each other and hate were heard before. Both groups have no trust in the school system, the government or rules.*

*In this case, concerns about possible polarisation and racism may arise.*

**mm** *In a neighbourhood where these young people spend time, there have been conflicts between two larger groups over claiming a square where young people gather. Both of these larger groups have different ethnic backgrounds.*

*In this case, there are other causes to the conflict than polarisation, racism or radicalisation.*

**mm** *One young person of the group with native roots has spread hate speech about the other group. He made and spread a violating song with insults towards the other group. He mentioned he would like to 'teach all these foreigners a lesson'.*

*In this case, concerns about possible violent radicalisation may arise.*

**Acknowledge all roles in a conflict:** to have a conflict, there are always at least two parties. Dare to question the different roles of those involved in the conflict. If there is an important involvement of the parent or frontline worker in the conflict, the approach may require a third party who can guide the restoration work (see further).

Focus on what connects the individuals involved instead of what divides them. When opinions are strong and this leads to a conflict, the parties will not always reach consensus, but there may be other chances to connect them.

*EXAMPLE: What can be connecting between two arguing persons, is to accent the fact that the have different, but both strong opinions, that each are founded on a positive value.*

**Pick your battles:** When there is a violation of boundaries or a conflict, it's possible parents or frontline workers doubt if they must intervene. "Is it good to react? Do we have to react to every conflict or violation of boundaries?" Yes, it's important to at least give the signal you notice what's going on and you don't approve it. It isn't possible to intervene in every situation, but try not just to let it pass by. Not reacting may imply silent approval of the situation. Picking your battles means there is a choice about how to intervene, and you pick the situations that deserve the extra attention. This consideration can take all kinds of factors into account. We may want to consider some things before reacting:

**mm** Can they resolve the situation on their own? Believe in the potential and let the involved persons resolve the situation themselves.

**mm** Is the intervention in proportion to the situation? In some cases, the energy spent on intervention, is excessive in relation to the facts.

**mm** Can my intervention have a stigmatizing effect? An intervention can bring along the risk that young people feel stigmatized. It can be a confirmation for a young person he is the one they look for, and want to tackle. This can have the effect of a more opposing position.

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<sup>46</sup> See also chapter 'A positive point of view', paragraph 'Positive points of view', tip 'What's behind behaviour'.

**Set boundaries and interact on them.** Be clear on what the boundaries are and explain why they are there. Each family, organisation or other context has its boundaries, found in (written or unwritten) rules and agreements. Use the framework of boundaries of the context, and be clear on these boundaries. When possible, explain the origin of these boundaries. All good boundaries have a decent explanation. Violating boundaries can have a consequence or even a sanction.

*EXAMPLE: Use 'red lines' and 'green lines' to interact on boundaries. Red lines are part of a non-negotiable framework. This framework has to be referred to. There are no excuses, and clear consequences when crossing these boundaries. After setting the 'red lines', you can look how you can work on the personal issue. Green lines are discussable, depend on the group and the situation or circumstances, are made in dialogue with all involved, and can change to what is acceptable for a group or situation at that time. Consensus in these green lines is crucial. When these lines are crossed, there must be reaction, but there is not a clear consequence.*

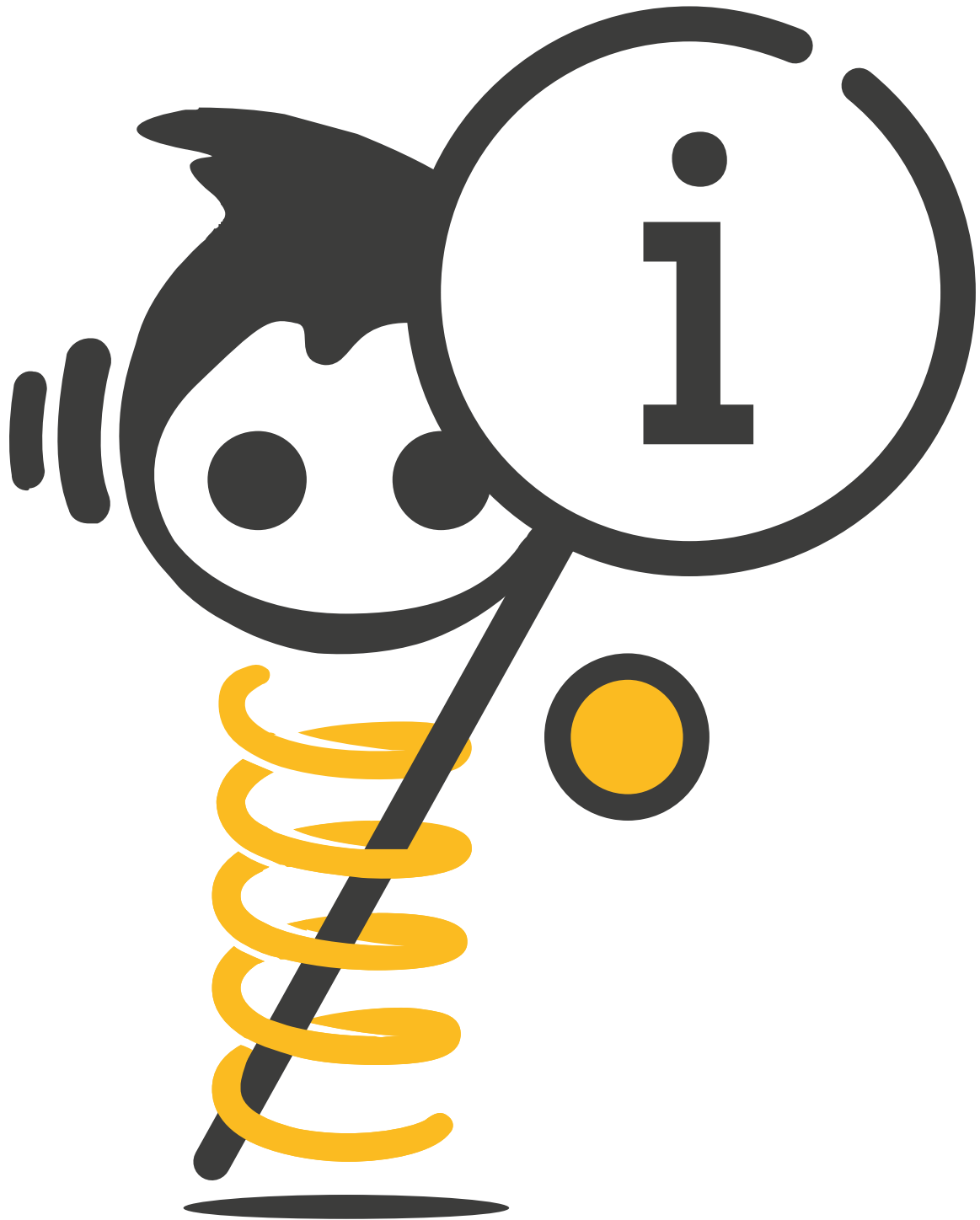
**Pick it up later:** When a conflict is too big or not manageable at that moment, or the influence of the group in a conflict is too big, choose to take up the issue at a later time. If the approach afterwards happens on an individual level, all individuals involved must play their parts. It can also be good to inform the rest of the group of the actions taken. So they realise that the situation is taken serious and is been dealt with.

**Holding on:** When a violation of a boundary or a conflict was really bad, it may happen that some persons or organisations have used all possibilities and can't further invest in the involved young person(s). In such cases, it's important to seek in which ways other sources of support can take on a role. These can make or restore contact, or seek for chances to restore the relations, if possible. The goal is to not give the young person the feeling that he's left all on his own, and there are no more chances. Don't completely let go of the young person or don't give up on them. Always try to make sure there is some perspective.

**Restoration**<sup>47</sup>: After a violation of a boundary or a conflict, and in the case of a sanction, invest in restoration. Restoration appeals to the responsibility of everyone involved in a conflict. The focus is on the damage that is caused through the conflict or through the violation of boundaries, and on the restoration of that damage. The facts, emotions and mutual expectations of the parties in the conflict get attention. The goal is that all parties are able to proceed without frustration or other ongoing negative emotions.

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<sup>47</sup> See also the BOUNCE <sup>UP</sup> train-the-trainer tool, chapter 'BOUNCE <sup>young</sup> training', paragraph 'BOUNCE <sup>young</sup> equipment', subparagraph 'Restoration'.



Information and support

# Information and support

## Introduction

A question parents and frontline workers may be confronted with, is: 'Where can we find information and support that help us in dealing with our concerns and with challenging situations?'. This question often arises when situations are at that moment worrying or challenging.

Of course this BOUNCE<sup>along</sup> awareness-raising tool as such, can be a useful source of information and support, alongside the other BOUNCE tools. But we must try to look further, and see this BOUNCE package as one source of information and support, in combination with many others. Also, when it comes to more specific preventive or curative questions, this BOUNCE package may not provide the right answers to the concern or challenging situations.

As described further, we want to stress that it may even be better to have sources of information and support before these concerns or challenges occur.

This chapter gives tips on how to find information and to use, involve in and set up support networks in the early preventive and positive approach to violent radicalisation and themes linked to it (for example negative peer pressure, harassment, repeated conflicts about opinions, racism, vandalism, violence, provocation, discrimination, polarisation, hate speech, extremism...).

*NOTE: This chapter cannot provide local and specific answers to the question of where to find information, because of the European dimension of the project 'Stresaviora', in which the BOUNCE tools originate. Each user of the tool will have to do his own search for information and support. The tips can guide this search.*

A first part of this chapter is dedicated to guidelines on being informed and sharing information. The second part deals with how parents, frontline workers and organisations can find, use and set up support networks.

*NOTE (for frontline workers): These tips about information and support can stimulate organisations to set up prevention initiatives in the global prevention policy of the organization. If this prevention policy is coherent, carried and shared by all who is involved, and supported in the long term, this will have a positive influence on the climate of the organisation. Such a positive climate can be considered as the best general prevention<sup>48</sup> of all kinds of situations, including the issue of violent radicalisation.*

An example of exercises to raise the awareness of parents and frontline workers about information and support, can be found in the BOUNCE<sup>up</sup> train-the-trainer manual, chapter 'BOUNCE<sup>along</sup> awareness', paragraph 'Awareness-raising actions', subparagraph 'Information and support: awareness-raising actions'.

## Finding information

There is a lot of information available for parents and frontline workers. But it's not always easy to find suitable information. The information is often not centralized, there is little or no overview. Some tips on how to find relevant information:

**Subscribe** to literature and newsletters or on publications for parents and frontline workers: a lot of organisations offer regular updates on relevant topics or initiatives concerning young people. These

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<sup>48</sup> See the BOUNCE<sup>up</sup> Train-the-Trainer manual, chapter 'BOUNCE perspectives', paragraph 'Prevention', subparagraph 'General prevention'.



can be interesting to find tips and tricks, to experiment with new methods, to be up-to-date with developments in the field of young people, prevention, education, etc.

**Current affairs awareness<sup>49</sup>:** The news provides a good view of what goes on in a society and in the lives of young people. Daily, there is a stream of information, articles, news facts, and so on, about all kinds of topics. Combine different media and at the same time approach them with a healthy critical sense. This can help to see and understand different opinions, to form an opinion, and to pass information to young people, parents and other frontline workers.

*NOTE: Not all information is reliable, a sense of relativation is advised as to what information is relevant. Take this into account when interacting about actuality. A healthy critical sense can contaminate others to also be critical.*



**Search to find:** The internet, libraries, specialised organisations and persons can provide information. Research, literature, websites, and so on provide information about all kinds of subjects. Be informed by mixing and matching different sources. By searching, discovering, reading and processing information, in a relatively short time a parent or frontline worker can be a 'self-made' specialist on all kinds of themes.

*NOTE: A side-effect of being informed is that we may be 'over-informed', and overreact or be too concerned. Selecting information, combining different reliable sources and being critical towards the available information is advised.*

**Spread information:** When you find information that is interesting for you and for others, or when you have a successful experience, spread this to parents, colleagues and others who may also be in search for this information. There are numerous ways to spread information.

**Know:** Knowing some frameworks of reference can be strong handholds in the prevention of violent radicalisation and topics related to it. Using these reference frameworks to refer to when possible, towards young people, parents and the social environment, can be useful.

**EXAMPLES:**

-  *The European Convention on Human Rights, by the European Court of Human Rights, of the Council of Europe<sup>50</sup>*
-  *The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child<sup>51</sup>*

**Learn:** Education and experience are important and provide a firm base to work with young people and their social environment. The fields of youth work, education and well-being of young people change quickly, along with societal changes. A wide range of solid and new methods and visions about working with young people is available. Training, educational programmes, study days, and guidance are advised if who works with young people want to find answers to the challenges they come across in their job.

## Finding, using and setting up support

Parents and frontline workers can take initiatives to find support networks, but also to participate in support networks and to co-create them. Tips<sup>52</sup> for finding, using and creating a network of support:

**See the value of networks:** An internal (inside a family, organisation, community, etc) and external (with other organisations, families, communities, etc.) oriented support network can be very relevant to bring together gathered information, to discuss, to broaden perspectives, to choose a strategy and set up actions. Parents, frontline workers and organisations connecting as a team, and open to other sources, can together deal with situations of concerns and challenging

<sup>49</sup> See also the chapter 'Resilient relations and communication', paragraph 'Relation and communication tips', tip 'Strengthen media literacy.'

<sup>50</sup> The Council of Europe, The European Convention on Human Rights, by the European Court of Human Rights, 2010, [http://www.echr.coe.int/Documents/Convention\\_Eng.pdf](http://www.echr.coe.int/Documents/Convention_Eng.pdf)

<sup>51</sup> The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child: <http://www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/crc.aspx>

<sup>52</sup> Some of the tips are more useful for frontline workers than for parents, because they are only for use within organisations.

situations. A network provides a multi-agency perspective. Also, and even better, before there are concerns, such a network can prove its early preventive value. Through the early setting up of such networks, the base for interaction and cooperation is already there when concerning or challenging situations occur.

**Dare to approach others:** Family, friends, trusted people, frontline workers, social services,... all can be sources for support. Dare to share concerns and ask for support. Frontline social services are there to work with parents and other frontline workers. Be on the offensive, and try not to be withheld by emotions of shame, distrust, and so on, which may be irrational.

*NOTE: If needed, ask whether confidentiality is guaranteed when talking about sensitive topics with support persons or organisations.*

*EXAMPLE: In Belgium, parents of young people who left the country to go to the war in Syria, formed a group and organized meetings together. They found comfort and support and could discuss their experiences, and worked together to find out how they could deal with these difficult situations.*

**Learn from each other:** Inform colleagues, other parents, young people about information found, media information, study days attended, educational approaches, etc. Spread new information in the available networks, and if possible put items on the formal agendas of organisations.

**Set up a support structure:** If there is no suitable support structure, try to signal this lack and so initiate people and / or organisations to organise the required support themselves. This will mean that information, concerns, challenges, and so on can get a forum. Again, it's advisable to do this before concerns or challenging situations occur.

*NOTE: A support structure doesn't need to be newly built. It can be based on existing initiatives and forums.*

*EXAMPLE: In a neighbourhood, a weekly 'family salon' is organised by a social service. During the afternoon, parents, children and other inhabitants can come for a drink, a chat, informal meetings, and advise on all kinds of situations. A professional frontline worker is available and can provide support and refer to other services if needed.*

**Intervision:** Using existing forums or setting up internal or mixed forums for discussion and intervention: interaction on a trustful and open basis about vision, concerns, questions, ideas,... can be very enriching. It provides opportunities to talk about concerns, check them with others, and analyse the issues together to have a more objective and qualitative image of the situation and possible approaches. Intervision fits into a culture where colleagues can discuss on an equal footing and give feedback to each other in a safe environment.

**Agree on roles:** In organisations, it can be interesting to appoint different roles and to be clear about the content of these roles to everyone involved.

*EXAMPLE: A youth welfare organisation has a staff member who intervenes in situations of restoration<sup>53</sup> and can guide a restorative process. Another staff member is the contact person for parents. A volunteer is a 'buddy' and a trusted person for the complaints and worries of young people,...*

*NOTE: These agreements on roles may not lead to ignoring a situation because it doesn't fit in the role.*

**Network of key figures:** Think about what key figures can be involved in working around difficult themes. Key figures can be parents, public figures, persons in the networks of young people,...

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<sup>53</sup> See also the BOUNCE<sup>UP</sup> train-the-trainer tool, chapter 'BOUNCE<sup>young</sup> training', paragraph 'BOUNCE<sup>young</sup> equipment', subparagraph 'Restoration'.

*NOTE: Create and use the connections between organisations, frontline workers, parents and other key figures when there are no concerns, conflicts or other challenges. Set up and maintain these connections when things go well.*

**Network of organisations:** Make use of existing networks, or when they are not present or the existing networks are not sufficient, organise the networks you need. Find and connect with local and supra-local initiatives and services that can give information, and can provide support. Also find out what significant others and supporting adults can be involved around young people there, and who can play their part.

*EXAMPLE: Make a list of possible organisations to connect with, and take initiatives to make the contacts. Make sure the expectations, questions or reasons for contact are clear.<sup>54</sup> These can be social services, sport clubs, religious organisations, and so on.*

**An integral preventive approach:** When working with young people in preventive initiatives, include their environment. Search for opportunities to support the integrality of initiatives. The message for frontline workers is: 'Don't hesitate to involve parents when possible'. The message for parents is: 'Don't hesitate to involve frontline workers when searching for support'. Also think about which supporting persons or services you can inform, involve, and ask support from, alongside parents and frontline workers.

**Create specialists:** In organisations, it's possible for staff members to become the 'inside specialist' in certain matters. They can spread the knowledge, experience, tips and tricks within and outside the organisation. They can take part in training sessions, study days, lectures, etc.

**Organize information sessions, debates, educative sessions...** Parents and frontline workers can, individually or jointly, organize information sessions, debates and educative sessions for other parents and / or frontline workers. Such sessions can for example break the silence and embarrassment of speaking on sensitive topics. They can also initiate further actions.

*EXAMPLE: An information session about identity of young people and radicalisation can be organised for parents, with a broad scope on all kinds of forms of radicalisation, and all kinds of identity expressions. When this is approached from a positive angle and with a focus on everyday situations, there is a good chance that this will create connections, understanding and growth of commitment to set up positive actions.*

**Involve specialists:** Sometimes one's own expertise is not enough, and specific knowledge and experience from outside are needed. A third party who can take action (informing, providing guidance, giving training, and so on), can be very valuable, supportive and reinforcing.

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<sup>54</sup> See also chapter 'Awareness-raising actions', paragraph 'Information and support: awareness-raising actions', exercise 'Support network'.

**Notes** \_\_\_\_\_

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