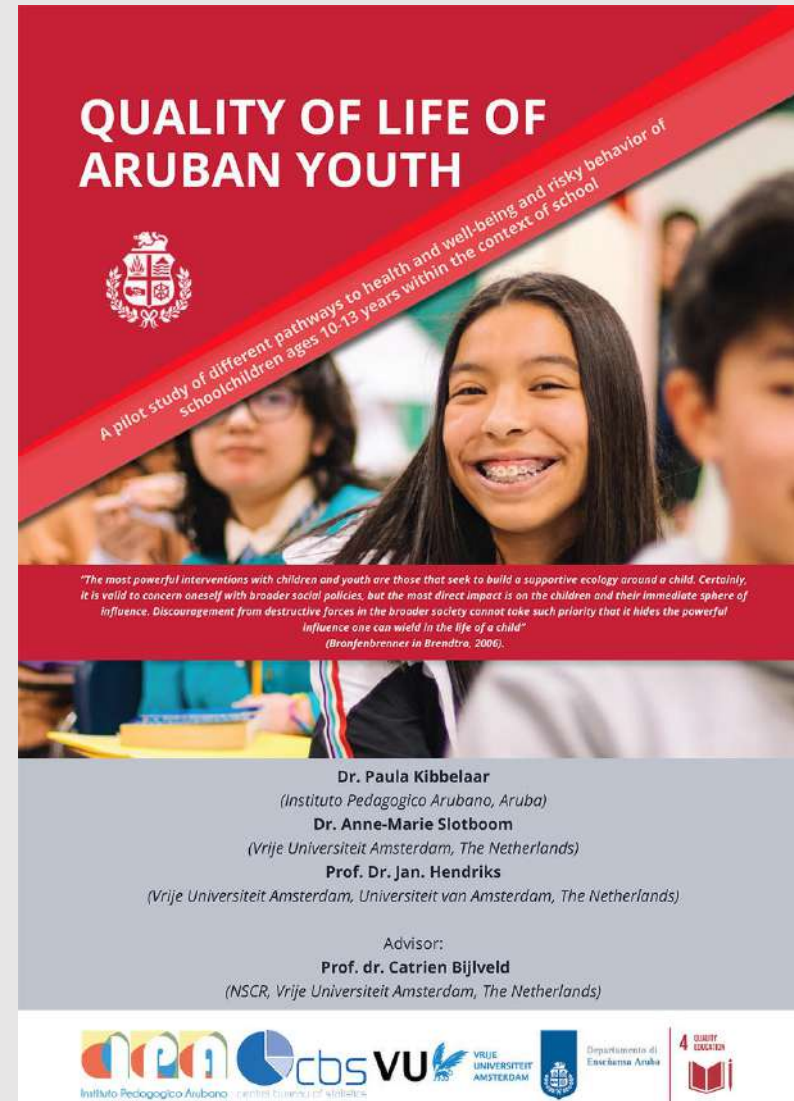


QUALITY OF LIFE OF ARUBAN YOUTH

A pilot study of different pathways to health and wellbeing and risky behavior of schoolchildren ages 10-13 within the context of school

Dr. Paula Kibbelaar (IPA)
Dr. Anne-Marie Slotboom (VU)
Prof. Dr. Jan Hendriks (VU/ UvA)



Bronfenbrenner's Ecological theory (1977)

One of Bronfenbrenner's most basic beliefs is that trusting bonds with children are the most powerful force in positive youth development.....

“Every child needs at least one adult who is irrationally crazy about him or her.”

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



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4 QUALITY EDUCATION



BIO van de researchers



Dr. Paula Kibbelaar

- Dr. Paula Kibbelaar



Dr. Anne-Marie Slotboom

- Dr. Anne-Marie Slotboom



Prof. dr. Jan Hendriks

- Prof. dr. Jan Hendriks

RESEARCH PROJECT ASSIGNED BY
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION,
IPA/CIDE SUPERVISED BY
VU/NSCR & UVA





SCHOOLBOARDS



ASSIGNED BY DPS

Representing the 3 participating schoolboards



Summary

- This pilot study examined the factors that contribute to as well as factors that (despite a risky background) contribute to a healthy development of Aruban children in the final classes of primary education.
- This research pilot is framed and aimed to contribute to the National Integrated Strategic Plan (NISP) Nos Aruba 2025, the CaFT report, the coalition agreement (MEP, POR, RED), PEN and the Aruban implementation or version of the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) number 3, number 4 and number 5 and lastly the 'Sociaal Crisis Plan' (SCP).
- One of the main objectives of this research pilot was the development of a self-report instrument that can be used as a long-term youth monitor in primary and secondary schools. The youth monitor can then be used for development of youth policies that promote health and well-being and prevent risky behaviors.
- Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Theory of Human Development (1977) was utilized as a theoretical model for this study in analyzing the results and formulating recommendations that fit in the National Education Plan and Sociaal Crisis Plan of Aruba. This model situates the child at the center, and it considers the child as an active participant in his/her learning and development.

Summary

- Two studies were conducted in order to gather data and information on Aruban schoolchildren, namely a qualitative study with school professionals and a quantitative study with children ages 10-13 in eleven primary schools in Aruba.
The qualitative study aimed to answer the research question “What is the perspective of school staff on factors related to the development of primary school children in Aruba?”. The quantitative study examined the perspective of children through the research question “Which factors are related to well-being and problem behavior of schoolchildren in grades 5 and 6 in Aruba?”. Data collection for the pilot study took place in May 2019.
- For the qualitative study, eleven schools participated, representing the various school organizations spread across different neighborhoods on the island. Interviews were conducted with the teachers (grades 5 and 6), the management of the schools and other stakeholders.
For the quantitative study, the developed self-report instrument was administered to children of eleven schools representing the various school organizations spread across different neighborhoods on the island. Permission was obtained from school boards and parents to approach children in grades 5 and 6 to complete the questionnaire. The sample was made up of a total 848 children (Mean age: $M = 11.66$, $SD = 1.15$). The items of the questionnaire or survey were categorized into wellbeing in general, wellbeing at school, problem behavior and individual factors, parental factors, school factors, peer factors, and neighborhood factors.

- The recommendations of this study will follow later.
- All the data have been collected and analyzed are PRE-COVID.

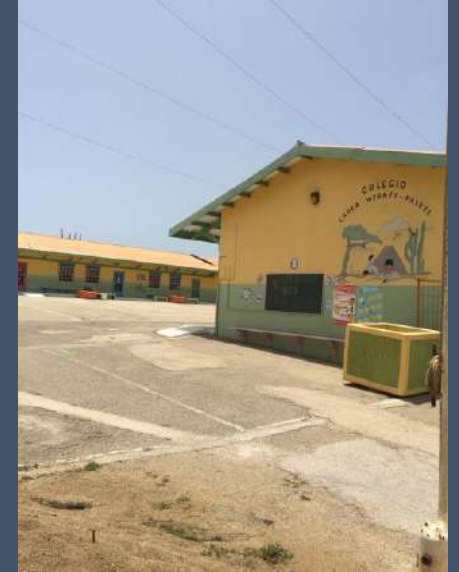
Content

Introduction

- The social and educational developments of Aruba
- Objectives of this pilot study
- Youth monitor
 - *Theoretical Framework*
 - *General framework*
 - *Individual Framework*
 - *Research questions*

Participating SKOA schools

- Filomena
- Laura Wernet
- Dominicus
- Fatima



Participating DPS schools

- Amalia
- SPO St Cruz
- Kudawecha
- Washington



Methodology (Mixed-Methods Approach)

Qualitative methods: The perspective of Primary Schools of their Pupils

Participants (school management, social workers, schoolboards and class assistants)

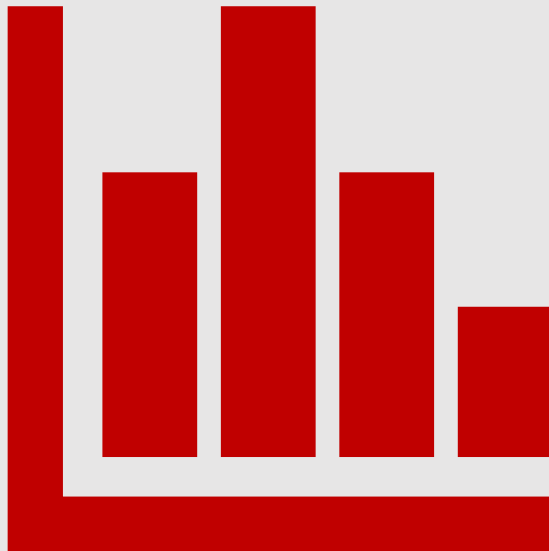
Interviews

Procedure

Qualitative analysis



Data results



Qualitative data analysis (Pre-Covid):

- School organizational context
- Neighborhood
- Households
- Language
- Wellbeing/Health

Qualitative data analysis: school organizational context

- Regarding the school context it was evident that the following topics were relevant, namely the financial situation differs a lot between the selected schools; and this has an impact how much assistants they are able to recruit, fund events and/or renovate the building or certain much needed software programs.
- the diversity of the cultural background of the pupils was notable but were not experienced overall as problematic although the migration has led to the multilingual challenges within the schools and the confrontation with different sets of upbringing practices (Haitian strict disciplinary sanctions were mentioned often by the respondents); loud and busy communication, different socio-cultural context and attitudes towards authority, hierarchy, importance of education). The non Aruban pupils were generally from Venezuela, Colombia, Jamaica, China, Philippine, Haiti and/ or Dominican Republic and while multiculturalism was not considered a huge problem it is a fact that exclusion and discrimination do happen (often).

School organizational context

- all the respondents were very clear regarding the language issue within the selected schools; Papiamento is the most spoken language within the schools and on the school yard. In some schools in Oranjestad Dutch was spoken more often and in most of the Schools in San Nicolas English and Papiamento were spoken more often. Dutch as an instruction language is almost a dead language. The respondents were positive about the SAM project although they felt they were not sufficiently updated about the results.
- The school level of most of the pupils after Primary school is MAVO. HAVO/VWO has the lowest percentage of attendance. Parents do prefer MAVO above EPB.
- The parental involvement according to the respondents was problematic; neglect, demotivation, learning disabilities, conflicts between parents, divorced parents. No money or other problems within the family household... do lead to lack of attention, of love, of security and involvement was or is a huge issue and one of the causes of problematic behavior of pupils. The respondents complained that a lot of parents were not participating sufficiently in events and declines over the years but also in the WhatsApp chatgroups this is notable. Some schools(Oranjestad en Noord) do rate the participation highly of their parents.

Neighborhoods or barrios

- The respondents stated that regarding the neighborhoods or barrios characteristics, some barrios are considered safe and secure while other barrios due to unemployment (SN) were seen as poor, unsafe, violent with gangs, drugs traffic or dealing. Unsafe barrios that were mentioned were for example Weg Fontein near Colegio Hilario Angela. Police or barrio watch have helped improve some barrios and at some schools in Oranjestad mostly the pupils are recruited all over the island and do not have a direct link with the barrio of the school they attend. Poverty, unemployment and renovation/transformation of the barrio do have an impact on the lives of the pupils(also migrants have changed the demographics). The NGO's that are active in the barrios do help out a lot for one parent households (often single mothers) or divorced parents. Noord, San Nicolas, Dakota were mentioned having a lot of poverty; Unemployment is higher in SN and single mothers do often collect social welfare.

Family/households

- A lot of single mothers or one parent households do exist according to the respondents; most of the households though are two working parents and/or with extended family in one house; in other words, a lot of blended families.
- Most of the households are lower middleclass or working class. Most of the parents have jobs but no careers and often hop from one job to another(domestic cleaning, gardening, security, tourist sector etc). Addiction does occur.
- Children from more affluent household are often more spoiled contrary to children of single parent households who are often proud of their mothers who preserved. Abuse (sexual) is taboo but happens. Neglect is the biggest issue; no breakfast, unhygienic appearances, not being picked up on time or dropped off on time and too much responsibilities at home. Although abuse was defined often as neglect

Wellbeing versus problematic behavior

- Behavioral problems=bullying, fighting or sexually unaccepted behavior incidents were mentioned. These behavioral problems arise most of the time from unstable home situations or family situations with one single parent households (single mother in most cases)according to some of the respondents.
- Communication about these issues with teachers (assistants) or social workers in the school do occur relatively well most of the time. The school doctor or dentist do visit all the selected schools.
- Some of the schools were healthy schools or *scol saludable* and their cantines do only sell healthy foods and the parents are also instructed for example to eat and buy healthy for their children (Mon Plaisir).Sexual education is still a taboo although almost all of the selected schools are participating in the Biba Amor project or other programs to teach and inform pupils in the 4th grade about their body and intimacy. The NGO Famia Plania organizes prevention campaigns, but a lot of work has still to done at home and in the schools.=

RECAP

■ Recap qualitative pilot study: Perspective of Primary Schools:

- *Lack of financial support*
- *The culturally diverse background of the pupils*
- *The struggle of Papiamentu & the language of instruction*
- *Most pupils will continue to the MAVO; small percentage to HAVO/VWO*
- *Lack of involvement of the parents*

RECAP

- **Recap qualitative pilot study: Perspective of Primary Schools regarding barrios:**
 - *Neighborhood characteristics/differences do have an impact (regarding affluent barrios, renovated and demographics)*
 - *Crime and Gangformation (girls and boys) drugstraffic or dealing, violence and*

RECAP

- Recap qualitative pilot study: Perspective of Primary Schools regarding familyhouseholds:
 - *Single parent households (most of the time single mothers' households)*
 - *Or two working parents' households/blended families(extended families at home)*
 - *Lower middle-class households with jobs not really a career, small percentage higher educated parents*
 - *A lot of households with financial problems*

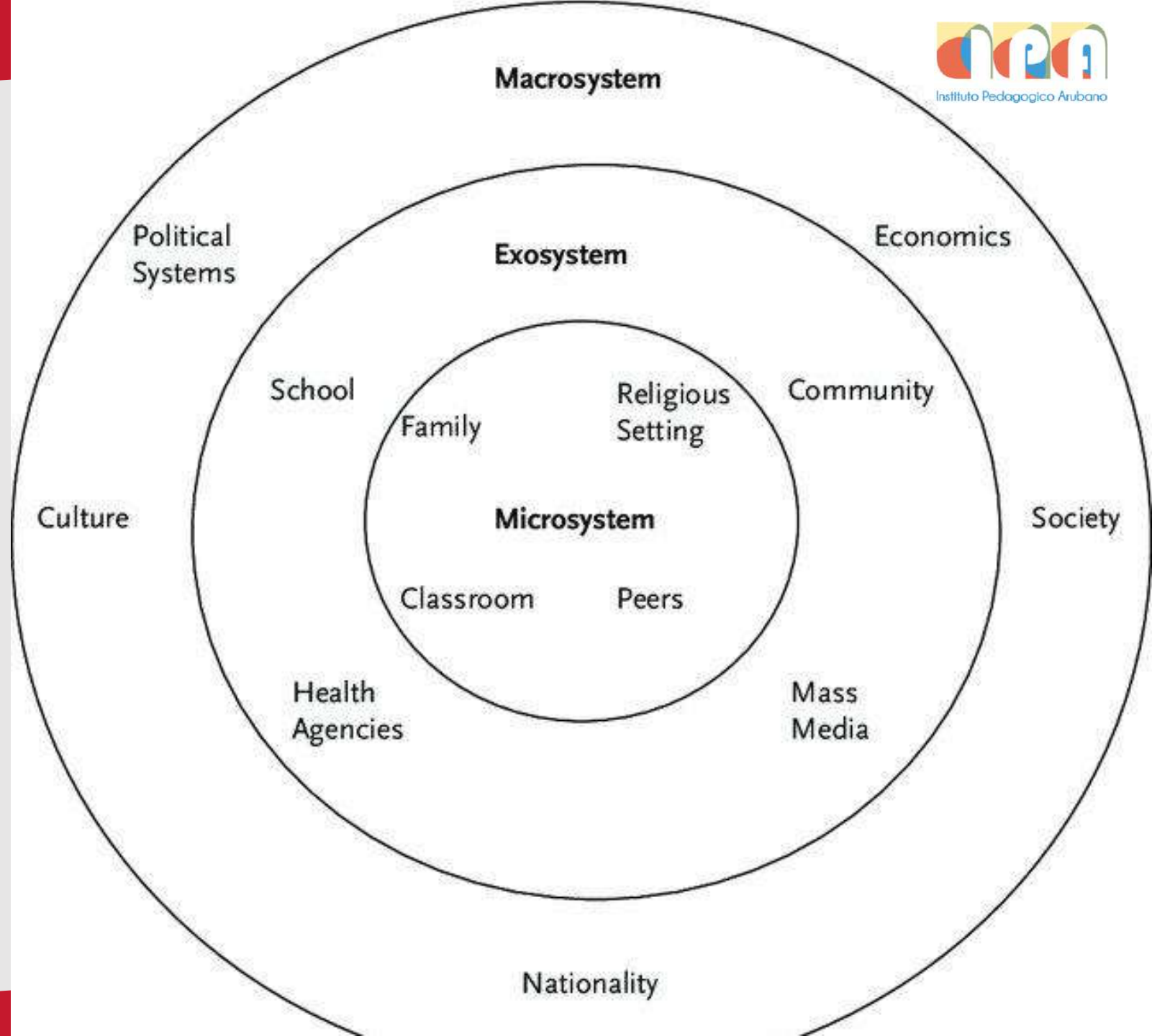
RECAP

- **Recap qualitative pilot study: Perspective of Primary Schools regarding language;**
 - *Papiamento is the most spoken language at all the selected schools although some of the schools in Oranjestad do speak more Dutch and or English; as in SN more English or Papiamento*
 - *Teachers not sufficiently informed or updated about the status of the SAM pilot*

RECAP

- Recap qualitative pilot study: Perspective of Primary Schools regarding wellbeing/health:
 - *Regarding mental health issues: behavioral problems such as bullying, fighting or sexually unaccepted behavior incidents do often occur; unstable homes or single parents households, financial problems*
 - *Schooldoctors and dentist do visit the selected schools and some of the schools do belong to healthy schools. Schoolteams do teach parents what to buy and eat.*
 - *Sexual education (programs and projects) is still taboo (Famia Plania is on it) and Biba Amor is initiated*

BRONFENBRENNER'S ECOLOGICAL THEORY (1977)



Quantitative Methodology

1

Quantitative methods: The perspective of Primary schools of their Pupils

2

Participants

3

Measures

4

Procedure

5

Analysis: SPSS methods

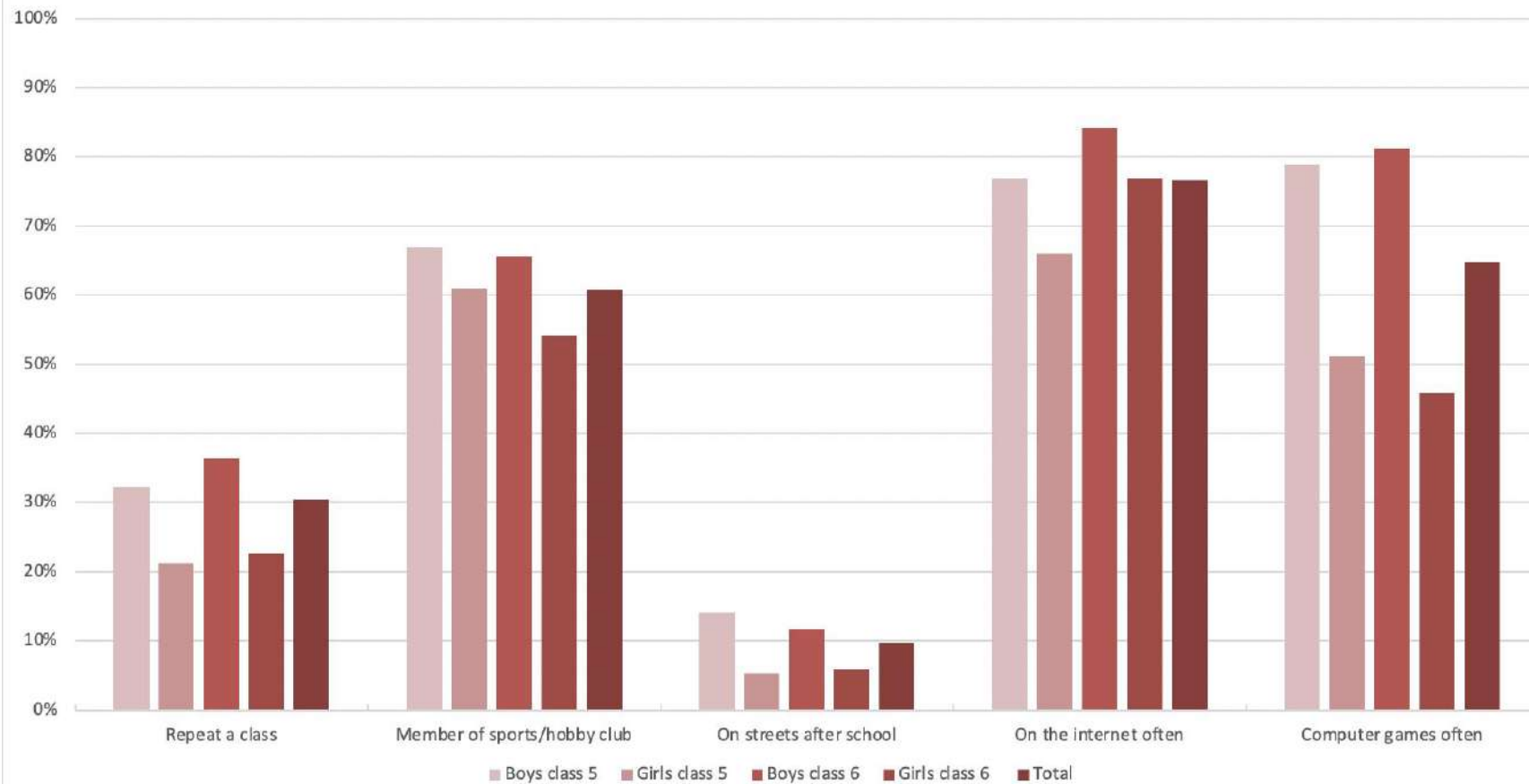


Data results

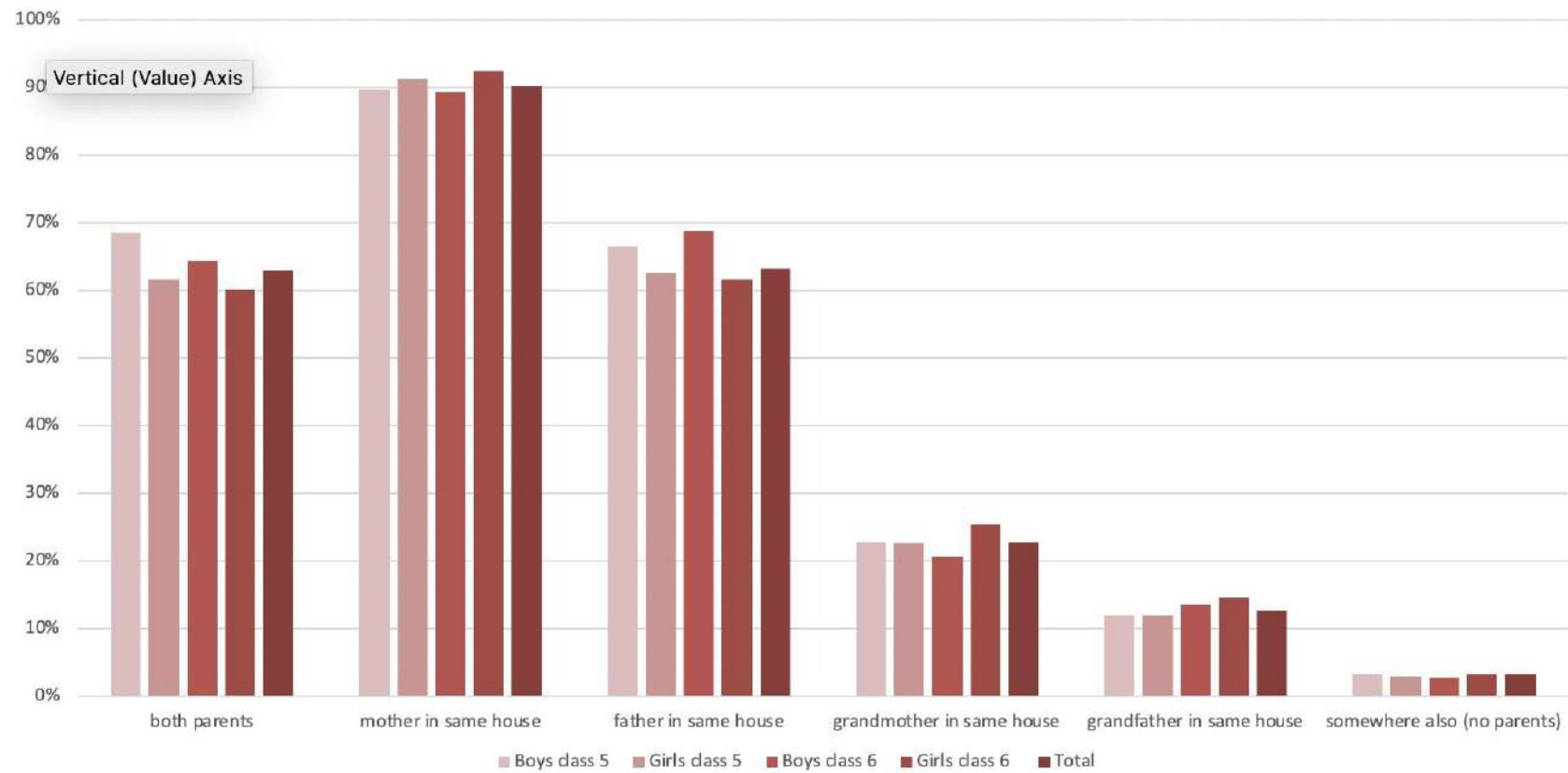
Quantitative data analysis(surveys):

- Background characteristics of the sample
- Prevalence of well-being, well-being at school and risky or problem behavior
- Prevalence of factors associated with well-being and problem behavior
- Regression analyses of well-being and problem or risky behavior

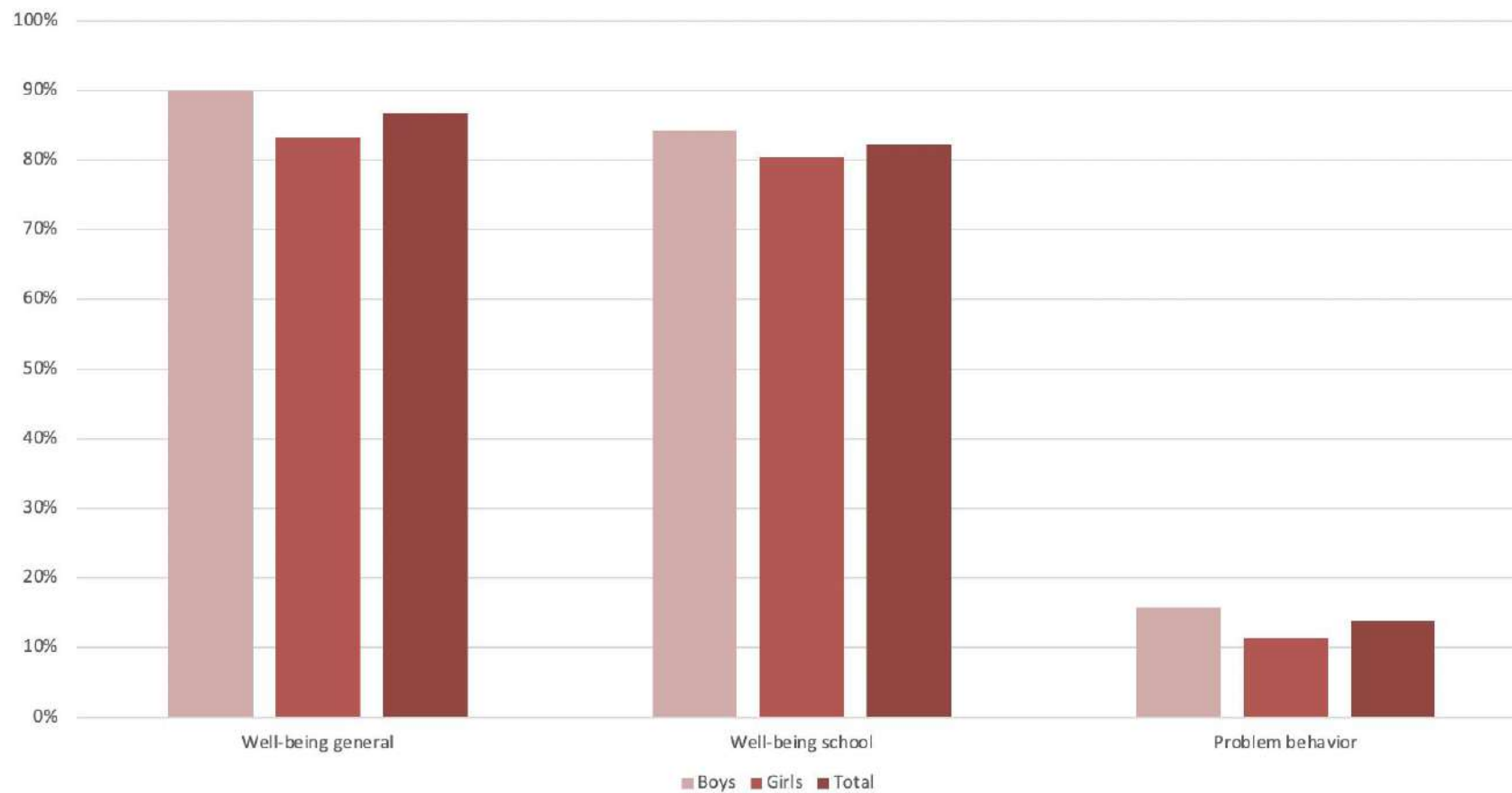
Grade repeating and leisure activities Aruban schoolchildren ages 10-13



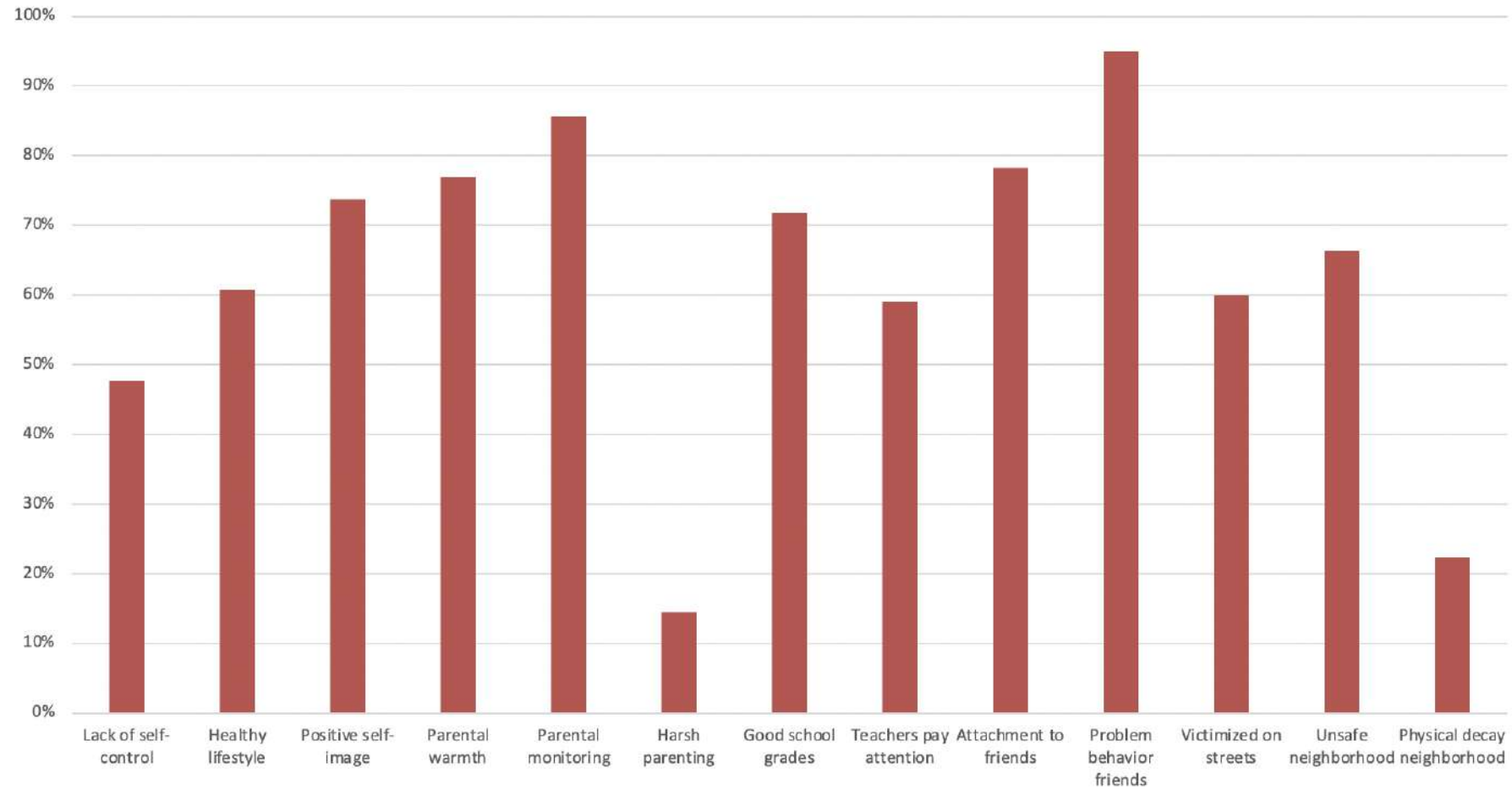
Living situation Aruban schoolchildren ages 10-13



Well-being and problem behavior of Aruban schoolchildren ages 10-13



Prevalence of factors associated with well-being and/or problem behavior



Recap surveyresults

- Recap quantitative pilot study: Pathways to healthy or Risky development
 - *Many Aruban children seem to do reasonably well*
 - *A considerable percentage showed signs of low well-being and problem behavior at a relatively young age*
 - *Factors associated with well being and problem behavior are different, promoting well-being and reducing problem behavior need different approaches*

Recap survey results

- Recap quantitative pilot study: Pathways to healthy or Risky development
 - *Repetition percentage is high, particularly in the first three grades of primary school.*
 - *Special attention for the differences between boys and girls regarding problem behavior*

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A pilot study of different pathways to health and well-being and risky behavior of schoolchildren ages 10-13 years within the context of school

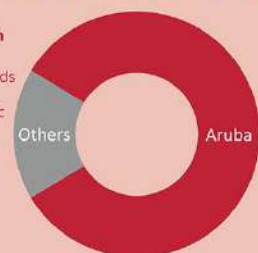


PARTICIPANTS
were 48.5% girls and 51.5% boys



COUNTRY of birth

Curacao
Caribbean Netherlands
Colombia
Dominican Republic
Haiti
The Netherlands
Sint Maarten
Suriname
Venezuela
Others



INCOME OF HOUSEHOLDS
with children 0-17 years (2019)



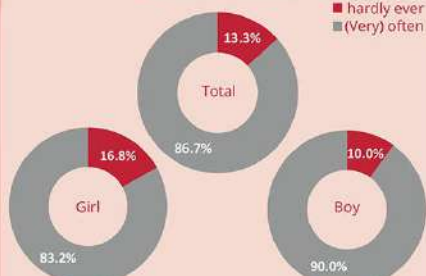
NEIGHBORHOOD

■ hardly ever
■ (Very) often

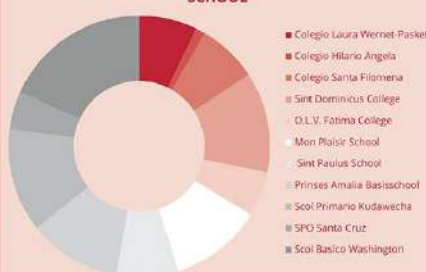


GENERAL WELL-BEING

■ hardly ever
■ (Very) often



SCHOOL

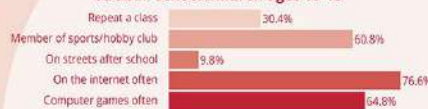


CLASSROOM

■ hardly ever
■ (Very) often

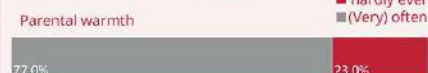


GRADE REPEATING AND LEISURE ACTIVITIES
Aruban schoolchildren ages 10-13

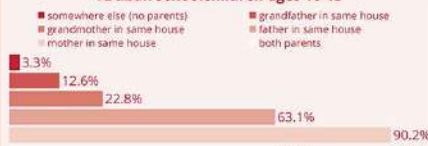


PARENTS

■ hardly ever
■ (Very) often



LIVING SITUATION
Aruban schoolchildren ages 10-13



KID

■ hardly ever
■ (Very) often



MACROSYSTEM

EXOSYSTEM

MICROSYSTEM

Bronfenbrenner's Ecological theory (1977)

MONITORING

1. Monitor all children on child, family, school, friend and neighborhood characteristics related to well-being.
2. Monitor all children on child, family, school, friend and neighborhood characteristics related to antisocial and possibly delinquent behavior.
3. Specifically monitor children starting in grade 5 by using the newly developed survey and repeating this every two years until they finish secondary school.

MICROSYSTEM (child, family, classroom, peers)

4. Develop tools to improve self-control in children. Many children do experience problems with concentration and paying attention.
5. Improve healthy family relationships, which is especially important for girls.
6. Improve the possibilities for teachers to pay attention to individual children, especially those who are at risk for developing antisocial behavior and/or developing mood problems.
7. Continue focusing on the relationship between native language and language of instruction.
8. Improve health-related behavior.

MESOSYSTEM (e.g. relations between family and school)

9. Approachable parenting support.
10. Stimulate parent participation at school.

EXOSYSTEM (social context which influences child through microsystem, e.g. neighborhoods/barrios, health agencies)

11. Increase neighborhood safety to increase well-being and possibilities especially for girls to expand their social environment safely.

AND FINALLY

12. In view of the expected negative effects of the COVID-19, it is even more important to closely monitor the development of children in Aruba.



Source: Quality of Life of Aruban Youth, 2020
Pilot Census, 2019

Recommendations: Monitoring

Microsystem(child, family classroom, peers)

1. Monitor all children on child, family, school, friend and neighborhood characteristics related to well-being
2. Monitor all children on child, family, school, friend and neighborhood characteristics related to antisocial and possibly delinquent behavior.
3. Specifically monitor children starting in grade 5 by using the newly developed survey and repeating this every two years until they finish secondary school.
4. Develop tools to improve self-control in children. Many children do experience problems with concentration and paying attention.
- 5.Improve healthy family relationships, which is especially important for girls.
- 6.Improve the possibilities for teachers to pay attention to individual children, especially those who are at risk for developing antisocial behavior and/or developing mood problems.
- 7.Continue focusing on the relationship between native language and language of instruction.
- 8.Improve health-related behavior

Recommendations

Mesosystem (e.g relations between family and school)

- 9. Approachable parenting support
- 10. Stimulate parent participation at school

Recommendations

EXOSYSTEM(Social context which influences child through microsystem, e.g. neighborhoods/barrios, health agencies)

- 11. Increase neighborhood safety to increase well-being and possibilities especially for girls to expand their social environment safely

FINALLY

- 12. In view of the expected negative effects of the COVID-19, it is even more important to closely monitor developments of children (and their environments) in Aruba.

Recommendations



This study was framed within the context of three important SDGs, as formulated by the United Nations and which were selected as important for Aruba.

The results of this study fit within Bronfenbrenners's ecological theory of human development (1977) and the Positive Youth Development model of Catalano et al. (2004). It is shown that the negative interactions between the child and his micro-environment can result in developmental problems, which, if not addressed, may continue into adolescence and beyond. However, protective factors on the other hand can help build resilience in children and adolescents (Jain et al., 2012).

Follow-up



Questions



Feedback



Corrections



Suggestions &
adaptations



Seminar



Workshops



Presentations



Follow-up Youth
Monitor Aruba



Policy