



## Prevention of Violence and Group-focused enmity

In common parlance, the understanding of prevention as preventive action has become established. Prevention usually refers to negative behaviour which early pedagogical action is supposed to prevent. Another basic idea of prevention is expressed in the directive: *Act and take precautions to avert negative consequences in the future*. We can base this on the assumption that caring early on and precautionary actions prevent worse things from happening and help to save costs. With regard to the methodological-didactical orientations of the respective prevention concepts, a common component can be identified. Namely, that prevention is more effective when positive behaviour patterns are communicated and supported and positive development scenarios are presented rather than putting up threatening scenarios or trying to discourage by threatening negative consequences (cf. Gugel 2006).

Thus, the concept of prevention almost automatically focuses on individuals. This also leads to criticism of the concept itself asking as the central question: How can prevention of violence and discrimination, or group-focused hostility respectively, succeed in a society that is itself often permeated by violence and discrimination? Ultimately, it is not possible without criticizing the power structures of society.

In addition, various concepts of prevention distinguish a triad in a similar way: Primary prevention refers to prevention in the true sense, i.e. education and sensitization before negative tendencies arise. Secondary prevention in turn means the early recognition of negative tendencies which enables measures to be taken in time - e.g. in professional socio-pedagogical relationship work. Tertiary prevention is the last step in this triad and refers to the area of intervention, i.e. the averting of (further) crimes.

### Prevention of violence

Violence prevention requires the question, which form(s) of violence a practice project should deal with and which causes and conditions are present. For the prevention of violence, a differentiated and critical concept of violence is therefore absolutely necessary. In accordance with the assumption that violent action has its origin in social conditions and arises and happens in direct relation to and in dependence on structural living conditions, violence prevention must take into account both individual behaviour and the cultural, social and political levels of conditions. Accordingly, the World Health Organization WHO (2002; 2004) warns that measures whose conceptual design relates exclusively to the individual behavioural dimension and not also to the complex network of personal, structural and cultural factors, or rather meets them exclusively at the individual level, are not suited or only very partially suited for an offer of violence prevention. The WHO mentions the following guidelines of qualitative requirements for violence prevention projects: to include all forms of violence, to be guided by research results and theoretical knowledge, to start measures as early as possible, to aim for a long-term perspective, to make necessary differentiations, to strengthen positive



behaviour, to strengthen social competence, to apply multi-functional, multi-level strategies, to act together, to form networks, and to evaluate projects.

#### Prevention of group-based enmity

Prevention of group-focused enmity includes measures and projects that are designed to educate about power relations and discrimination and to raise awareness and critical thinking in people. This means in concrete terms providing information and stimulating discussions of the following central questions: What is discrimination, and what does it have to do with power relations? What are expressions of discrimination? Who benefits from them? Who suffers from them? To which extent am I myself affected? What can be done to support those affected? In this respect, prevention is also closely linked to the reflection of one's own attitudes and prejudices.

It is also possible to ask which social changes are needed to reduce discrimination. Ultimately, discriminatory attitudes are not only the result of evil thoughts of individuals but also the expression of a social structure in which power, resources, and opportunities for participation are distributed very unevenly.