

ROTTERDAM OFFENSIEF

Rotterdam is the only major city in the Netherlands that rejuvenates, instead of aging. Which means that there is a lot of talent to be found among the current generation of young students, and with great potential for future employees and entrepreneurs. The Rotterdams Offensief, a collaboration between the ROC Albeda College and the ROC Zadkine (MBO) is responding to these opportunities and ensures that young students are able to get the most out of themselves.

The Rotterdam Offensief originated in 2009 from a close collaboration with five departments, namely Youth & Family, Social Affairs, Justice, **VROM/WWI** and OCW (OCW= ministry of culture and education). In addition, the community of Rotterdam supports the Rotterdams Offensief from the start which expands the local network (neighborhood partners, entrepreneurs, etc.) daily.

The Wijkscholen (district schools) guides overloaded students back to school and/or work in a positive way by involving their social/physical environment. In this overview you can read all about de Wijkscholen, of which there are currently three active in the city of Rotterdam.

WIJKSCHOLEN

The Wijkscholen are facilities of Rotterdam, aimed at young students aged from 16 to 23 years without formal education, with this no basic qualifications, no employment and with complex problems in several areas. The Wijkscholen offers an intensive program with a combined approach to health care, education and works with the aim to bring positive change in behavior so that young students are able to move forward in formal education or the labor market.

The program is characterized by a small-scale and personal approach. The young students get an individual coach and are further guided by a full team of coaches, teachers, health/care professionals and craftsmen. In addition to general counseling young students are also supported by professionals in solving their personal problems. The Wijksschool works from customization in both the programming and the path length. Each participant is enrolled in a training, AKA, at the Albeda College or Zadkine, and receive scholarship.

FOR WHOM?

The Wijkscholen are for Rotterdam go-getters: young students from 16 to 23 years whom lack in mainstream education and care, but whom won't give up. In other words, these are young students who want to achieve something (education and/or work) in life, but got stuck in the regular system and don't have the skills (yet) to overcome certain obstacles. These young students have, at the time of registration at the Wijksschool (often repeatedly) dropped out of the regular schooling system and therefore lack the required educational qualifications. In addition, they have no structural or regular jobs and they have problems in at least three areas of self-reliance = for learning, health, finance, behavior, housing, etc. In terms of these habitats the students have reached their current upper limits of their range.

*An education qualification is achieved with a minimum of a HAVO diploma or completed a mbo 2 (vocational training 2).

APPROACH

Students are able to apply daily at the Wijkschool and get assigned to a coach. This coach will guide them in conducting a personal program plan which is prepared and based on each individual student. The Wijkschool works from customization in both the programming and the path length. Which means that the program is based on the shortest route, but as long as necessary for the participant. Each participant of the Wijkschool is registered to a AKA training of the ROC and will receive scholarship during this program. The content of the AKA training is integrated into the program of the Wijkschool; which is working towards an education certification.

Within the program the students will work towards the development of their personal identity and teaches them to take responsibility for their own tasks, behavior and goals. Success is built on the basis of their potential – each step at a time - and then celebrated with the students and their environment. It can be presentations of a neighborhood project, the issue of a certificate or to reward positive participation in an internship, job or educational part of the program (see also ‘program’).

PROGRAM

The program at the Wijkschool is composed of four phases. Phase 1 and 2 take place at a location at the Wijkschool and consists of 20 weeks. If the students are adequately prepared after 20 weeks and have developed their personal identity during these weeks, he or she will successfully continue at a ROC location and will be coached towards an desired and reachable career. Phase 3 will take place here and the student will begin a Professional Practice Training (BPV), combined with further professional education. Phase 4 is the conclusion of the process: the Aptitude test and the AKA official certification.

The program at the Wijkschool combines the AKA education with tasks from clients in the area, professional care and support in areas where students get stuck. The tasks are an important part of the process to develop personal identity. This goes under close supervision of craftsmen, the coaches and teachers. In addition there are (district) projects undertaken by the students and (if it's useful for their tasks) through electives they can get certificates such as SCC (Safety certificate), HACCP, deal with a cash register or apply for a reach truck certificate.

The education component consists of Dutch, Math and Career & Citizenship. This offering is closely linked to the teaching that the student will follow in phase 3 and 4 of the program. In a variety of workshops the students will work in groups on personal development and employee skills that will help these students in the implementation of projects in the district and/or internship at local businesses.

The district projects are based on activities adding value to the neighborhood (residents) and the students learn that their contribution is important for their environment. The residents and visitors of the district, so far as possible, will be involved in the projects. All activities and development of these students are recorded and evaluated in a personal competency AKA portfolio.

ACCOMPANIMENT

Supporting the students in the Wijkschool is intensive, because we work in small integrated teams of coaches, teachers, health professionals and craftsmen. The coach has the role of

‘director’ on the overall trajectory of the students. The care professionals are part of the ZDT (Care and Action Team). In addition to general guidance by the coach, students of the Wijksschool can also ask questions about housing, (mental) health, social environment, police and justice, finance and labor. The student will be guided in all aspects needed and are accompanied in formal education again or can start working.

ACTIVATION & REGISTRATION

The Wijksscholen have a outreaching form of student recruitment. In other words, students are being approached on the streets, in community centers, (sports)clubs, and so on.

This means that organizations which are active in the neighborhoods are asked to join and collaborate in the complete program. This way of ‘outreaching’ work is realized in collaboration with welfare organizations, volunteers, Jongerenloket (Youthdesk = our commissioning company), ROCs local authorities.

Registration always takes place at the Jongerenloket of the municipality of Rotterdam. When a student is notified he or she will be invited for an interview and registration.

Sometimes it seems that some of these students do not fit the mold of our target group at de Wijksscholen, sometimes because of problems that are larger than expected, and/or unforeseen circumstances. In that case, the student will be escorted to a different route by the Jongerenloket. By partnering with the Jongerenloket, the Wijksscholen are capable of redirecting a youth to a more suitable form of care or in some cases (job)counseling