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Time-out: an evaluation of rebound facilities

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Contents

1.General Introduction

In 2008 the board of the network of collaborating secondary schools in the region South Holland-West, located in The Hague, invited researchers of the Institute of Clinical Child and Adolescent Studies at Leiden University to investigate the quality and effectiveness of their Rebound facilities. Rebound facilities are out of school time-out programs for secondary school students who disturb school order and jeopardize school safety, hence show maladaptive behavior. The Rebound policy is based on two goals: (1) offering care and interventions for students who are referred, and (2) establishing a positive and safe school climate for their non-referred peers. The present dissertation is focused on the fit between referred students' characteristics and the program offered in Rebounds, the effects of Rebound facilities on students' social adjustment, and the association between leisure activities and school adjustment.

Suspension and Expulsions

A referral to a Rebound is a likely alternative for suspensions or even expulsions. The Dutch Inspectorate of Education (2013) reported a total of 5955 suspensions and expulsions in the school year 2012-2013. The suspensions lasted at least one day. These suspensions and expulsions involved 0.6% of the total student population (958.917 students). Schools register and monitor their suspensions and expulsions in the IRIS Safety and Security School System. In 2011 this system registered two trends: (1) an increase in the severity of incidents (such as theft and physical violence), and (2) a decrease in incidents in general. The frequency of incidents went down from 7,038 incidents in the school year 2006-2007 to 3,770 incidents in 2010-2011. The researchers using the register provided no convincing explanation, but suggested that results might be invalid, because not all incidences can be easily observed and registered. Overt physical aggression, for instance, is often readily observable, but more covert forms of aggression like bullying and gossiping are more difficult to observe. Further evidence that the information may be invalid comes from national surveys in which students in vocational high schools report experiences with problem behavior. These have reported continuously high levels of incidences between 1996 and 2010 (Statistics Netherlands, 2011). In addition, clientele for youth care services was growing. Use of youth care services showed a yearly average increase of approximately 7.4% from 1997 to 2007 (De Graaf, Schouten, & Konijn, 2005; Van Yperen, 2009). Rebound facilities, originally launched in 2004, in 2006 had 850 places for over 2,700 students and in 2008 1,500 places for 4,500 students (De Greef & Van Rijswijk, 2006; Van der Steenhoven & Van Veen, 2008). In approximately the same period referrals to schools for special needs education, mainly those for students with psychiatric and psychosocial

disorders (cluster 4 schools) grew with 17.5% (Van Yperen, 2009). Hence, at least doubts about a reduction of the incidences of students' problematic behaviors in school seem justified; the number of such incidences may actually have increased.

Rebound Facilities

In their yearly report for 1998 the Inspectorate of Education (1999) for the first time reported a growing need for time-out facilities that are meant to cater for the needs of students who were expelled due to their maladaptive behavior and not accepted in another school for this same reason. The murder of a secondary school deputy in The Hague in 2004 fueled the public debate regarding school safety and order in the Netherlands. In response, the Dutch Ministry of Education introduced the so-called Rebound facilities by changing the already existing time-out facilities. Rebounds were supposed to achieve drastic behavioral changes by using a strict and, if necessary, punitive educational approach towards students. In addition, they were to increase active student participation before returning the students to their mainstream schools (Van der Hoeven, 2004). Since the start in 2004 the number of available places in Rebounds increased with 8% per year (Van der Steenhoven, Messing, & Van Veen, 2012). Most students in Rebounds are boys (63%), come from junior vocational high schools (83%), and are mostly referred due to their externalizing behaviors (Kuijvenhoven, 2007). Seventy-five percent of referred students return to their mainstream school, 13% are referred to special needs classes and the other 10% are placed in other mainstream schools or apprenticeship programs (Kuijvenhoven, 2007). According to the Inspectorate of Education (2007) the Rebound facilities generally succeed in returning students to mainstream schools and motivate students, increase their academic interests, build their self-assurance, and achieve parent involvement in students' academic careers. However, the curriculum offered at Rebound facilities does not always cover students' educational needs. A variety of schools differing in educational approach, cognitive and linguistic entry requirements and contents and levels of exams refer students to Rebounds. Rebounds do not succeed in adapting to the broad variety of educational needs linked to these differences between referring schools. Furthermore, the school inspectorate reported a lack of clear referral criteria. This means that students not only differ as to the competences that school curricula are meant to influence, but also in the behaviors that schools actually appear incapable of influencing in a sufficiently positive way, and, hence, lead to referrals.

The term 'Rebound' refers to a second chance. Rebound facilities engage the students in a program aimed at behavioral change and increased school engagement, and also invest in a preparation for the students' return to the referring school (School Inspectorate, 2007; Van Veen, Van der Steenhoven, & Kuijvenhoven, 2007). Rebound facilities provide classes away from students'

school, and ensure that referred students cannot disturb instruction and learning in the schools that referred them. They function as a time-out group for six to thirteen weeks. A Rebound class has a maximum capacity of 12 students. Student have weekly homework assignments provided by their own school, and supervised by Rebound staff. In addition, Rebound facilities offer a 10 week EQUIP training aiming to improve students' moral and social skills and reduce cognitive distortions. Rebound facilities do not use set starting dates, but can cater for schools' urgent needs to provide a time-out for a problematic student at any time.

An International Perspective

Rebound is a type of alternative educational programs. Alternative educational programs serve students who are at risk for school failure within the mainstream educational system and are based on the thought that providing more individualized instructions for these students can increase school success (Lehr, Tan, & Ysseldyke, 2009). Programs may be organized within schools (i.e., traditional settings) or outside the school – in a separate building (i.e., nontraditional settings) (Aron, 2006; Lange & Sletten, 2002; Lehr, Tan, & Ysseldyke, 2009; Reimer & Cash, 2003).

Lehr, Tan, and Ysseldyke (2009) conducted a survey on so-called alternative education programs in 48 states of the USA. They found that such programs are mostly delivered in non-traditional school settings in separate buildings on the school premises or even on off-school grounds, with classrooms set aside for disruptive students. Furthermore, more than a third of the states indicated that alternative schools in their states primarily serve disciplinary purposes. The authors' review of state legislation and policy of alternative education revealed that many states have established enrollment criteria which commonly include some form of at-risk criteria like being suspended or expelled from a regular school, being disruptive in the general education environment, and being academically non-successful in a regular school. Other at-risk criteria used are frequent truancy, physical abuse, substance use, and homelessness. Most of the states also had legislation facilitating the referral of suspended and expelled students to these alternative programs, which suggests that alternative education is primarily used for students who are excessively disruptive in regular classrooms. The authors, as well as other scholars (Skiba & Knesting, 2002), suggest that eventually this will lead to alternative programs increasingly becoming "dumping grounds".

The diverse populations and unique features of such programs have made that there are hardly empirical studies on the characteristics of the students enrolled in these programs and on the program characteristics, let alone on their effectiveness (Aron, 2006; Barr & Parrett, 2001; Cox, 1999; Foley & Pang, 2006; Hosley, 2003; Powell, 2003; Tobin & Sprague, 2000; Wraight, 2010). The available studies, however, reveal that the majority of the students are poor, bilingual and belong to

minority communities (Carswell, Hanlon, O'Grady, Watts, & Pothong, 2009; Foley & Pang, 2006; Lehr et al., 2004; Powell, 2003). Some evaluation studies have found that available programs may produce short-term effects on GPA, school attendance, and a better self-esteem, but fail in reducing delinquent behaviors (Cox, 1999; Raywid, 1998). Others voice that when the programs are used for receiving suspended or expelled students the programs are nothing but a short-term solution to what often is a long-term problem, suggesting that there are little positive consequences of such exclusionary practices (Osher, Bear, Sprague, & Doyle, 2010; Skiba & Knesting, 2002). While the intention is to contribute to a safe school climate and prevent further development of misbehavior, punitive approaches to discipline have been found related to subsequent antisocial behavior (Gottfredson, Gottfredson, Pane, & Gottfredson, 2005) and increased prospects of future school drop-out (Clonan, McDougal, Clark, & Davison, 2007; Osher, Morrison, Bailey, 2003). Furthermore, bringing together antisocial students and separating them from more positively adjusted peers may increase antisocial behavior (Dishion, Dodge, & Lansford, 2006), particularly when this separation or exclusion is experienced as unfair (Van Acker, 2007).

This thesis may be seen as an attempt to avoid that Rebounds become "dumping grounds" for suspended and expelled students in the Netherlands. It clarifies the characteristics of the students who visit the Rebounds, whether these characteristics meet the formal criteria used for referrals, and whether the available curriculum fits the educational needs of the students. Last, but not least, it studies the effectiveness of Rebound facilities.

Design and Participants

The main purpose of the presented studies in this dissertation is to study the quality and effectiveness of Rebound facilities. EQUIP is an important component of the curriculum and hence, our initial goal was to analyze and evaluate the EQUIP program offered in Rebound facilities. Due to Rebound teachers desire to maintain students' privacy, we were only allowed to visit the Rebounds to supervise students' completion of questionnaires. Hence, we could not visit Rebounds frequently and were not allowed to attend and observe EQUIP lessons. Our eventual design reflects these limitations.

Data collection spanned a period of thirty months, divided in two periods. In the first period, the first ten months, data was collected online and a file analysis was conducted on (teacher) referrals. For the second period, data was collected in three Rebound facilities and in the referring secondary schools in The Hague, the Netherlands. Questionnaires were administered in students' first week in the Rebound, before starting any behavioral interventions. Rebounds do not have a set starting or entrance day. In order to respond accurately to schools' urgent needs to find an

alternative setting for disruptive students, Rebounds offer continuous access. Therefore, weekly phone sessions were used to gain information on the entrance and leave of students.

For comparing referred students with their non-referred peers (chapter two, three and four) mainstream schools were recruited. Four mainstream junior vocational high schools took part in our study. All four schools were part of the network of collaborating secondary schools but only three of the schools actually referred students to participating Rebound facilities. Schools were invited to select classes with the most behaviorally problematic students (potential referrals) for participation. For chapter 4, paper three, we used a pre-posttest design and created a control group by selecting 77 students with externalizing behaviors from three of the mainstream schools. In severity their problems were comparable to the problems of referred students.

The Structure of the Thesis

The first paper, chapter 2, reports a profile analysis of students sent to Rebound facilities. This paper addresses the question what type of student is sent to the Rebound facility? The second paper, chapter 3, compares students sent to Rebound facilities and their non-referred peers on their externalizing and antisocial behaviors. It answers the question whether or not students in Rebounds and their non-referred peers do differ with respect to their externalizing and antisocial behavior, to an extent that justifies referrals to Rebounds. Furthermore, predominantly American studies suggest that ethnic minority students have a disproportionately higher chance of being referred to a special program for suspended and expelled students (e.g., Skiba & Knesting, 2002). We wanted to find out whether this is the case in the Netherlands as well. The third paper, chapter 4, studies the effect of Rebounds using a quasi-experimental pre- and posttest design, exploring changes in externalizing, antisocial behaviors and cognitive distortions. In the fourth paper, chapter 5, Rebound students are compared to non-referred students on their leisure and family activity participation. More specifically, we analyze whether leisure and family activities are associated with school adjustment. Previous studies have shown that adolescents who engage in unstructured leisure activities, without adult supervision, are more likely to develop antisocial behaviors, especially when deviant peers join in (c.f., Dodge, Dishion, & Lansford, 2006; Osgood & Anderson, 2004). Partaking in structured activities, on the contrary, have been found related to higher academic engagement and performance (Cooper, Valentine, Nye, & Lindsay, 1999; Eccles & Barber, 1999; Jordan & Nettles, 1999), lower prevalence of school dropout (Davalos, Chavez, & Guardiola, 1999; Mahoney, 2000), less antisocial behavior (Eccles & Barber, 1999; Mahoney & Stattin, 2000), and improved school adjustment (Fredricks & Eccles, 2006; Marsh & Kleitman, 2002; Vandell, Shernoff, Pierce, Bolt, Dadisman, & Brown, 2005). In addition, we explore the role of the involvement in family activities,

because time spending with family appears to be related to fewer problem behaviors and delinquency (Barnes, Hoffman, Welte, Farrell, & Dintcheff, 2007), less substance abuse (Barnes et al., 2007; Flannery, Williams, & Vazsonyi, 1999), and lower susceptibility to peer pressure (Flannery et al., 1999).

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2. Who are sent to Rebound facilities? A profile analysis of referrals

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Mitch Van Geel
Paul Vedder

The present study investigated the profile of students sent to Rebound facilities in an attempt to find out whether or not Rebounds cater for the educational needs of their students. Two hundred and ninety eight referrals were analyzed of students entering Rebound facilities from 2008-2012 in The Hague, the Netherlands. Students were mostly referred due to their externalizing behaviors; mostly disruptive behaviors and verbal violence offences. A Ward method of cluster analysis revealed two types of students sent to Rebounds: students with predominantly internalizing problems, motivation and learning related problems and students characterized by more externalizing behaviors and truancy but fewer motivation and learning related problems. The present study suggests that a one-size fits all disciplinary strategy like a referral to Rebound, which focuses on diminishing externalizing problem behavior, may not be the best solution for Rebound students.

SUBMITTED

Challenging or provocative student behavior, such as talking back to the teacher, or disruptive classroom behavior, is an issue for schools around the world (Osher, Bear, Sprague, & Doyle, 2010). Teachers find it difficult to deal with frequent disruptions during class (Frick, 2004), and feel that disruptions jeopardize good teaching and catering for students' individual learning needs (MacBeath, Galton, Steward, & Page, 2004). Frequent, less severe intrusive disruptions are the most frequently teacher reported form of disturbing behavior, followed by less frequent, but more intrusive disruptions, like verbal or physical aggression toward classmates and, even less frequent, violence toward school staff (Frick, 2004; Munn, Johnstone, Sharp, & Brown, 2007). For coping with, or resolving the disruptions or problematic behavior, schools mostly use disciplinary measures like suspensions and expulsions. These exclusionary practices are meant to punish disruptive behaviors, get rid of the source of disruptions, and should allow the continuation of regular lessons.

However, expulsions and suspensions have drawbacks. Students miss lessons and effective learning time, and instead of improving their attitude toward school, exclusionary practices contribute to an increased chance of school disengagement and dropout (e.g., Gregory, Skiba, & Noguera, 2010; Osher, Morrison, & Bailey, 2003; Suh, Suh, & Houston, 2007). Disruptive youths who are suspended from school upon their return have an increased chance to be set apart and join forces with other disruptive youths (Dishion & Dodge, 2005). A likely consequence is that the disturbing behavior continues or even intensifies (Atkins et al., 2002; Dishion & Dodge, 2005; Gottfredson, Gottfredson, Payne, & Gottfredson, 2005). This is particularly the case when the actions and attitudes of teachers and students toward the disruptive students are perceived as unfair by these students (Osher et al., 2010; Van Acker, 2007).

Although suspensions are more related to less severe, but frequent disruptive behaviors it was due to a severe incidence of student violence against a teacher that the Dutch Ministry of Education introduced the so-called Rebound facilities. These are time-out facilities for behaviorally challenging students. Rebounds prepare referred students for their return to the referring schools. These institutions are supposed to achieve drastic behavioral changes by using a strict and sometimes punitive approach towards students, and increase active student participation before sending the students back to their schools (School Inspectorate, 2007; Van der Hoeven, 2004). The number of available places have been growing ever since its start with an average increase of 8% per year (Van Veen, Van der Steenhoven, & Kuijvenhoven, 2007).

This article is about the fit between the Rebound facilities and characteristics of the referred students. Rebounds are meant for secondary school students who show maladaptive behavior in such a manner that school safety is at stake. Students diagnosed with a psychiatric disorder or with

learning disabilities are not eligible, because other schools and services are available that cater for these students' needs. Moreover, Rebounds are not meant for students with a criminal record; Rebounds should focus exclusively on students demonstrating relatively milder externalizing problems. Do schools indeed refer only students with non-criminal, non-psychiatric type externalizing problems? And if not, what type of students are being referred and how can Rebounds be adapted to the needs of these students? The analysis of entrance patterns for Rebounds as much as for other out-of-school programs is important because it allows to correct undesirable referral practices and an evaluation of the fit between referrals and the program.

Rebound Facilities

Rebound facilities provide classes away from students' school, making sure that referred students cannot disturb instruction and learning in referring schools. Rebounds function as a time-out group for six to thirteen weeks. A Rebound class has a maximum capacity of 12 students. Students have weekly homework assignments provided by their own school, and their school work is supervised by Rebound staff. In addition, Rebound facilities offer a ten week EQUIP training meant to teach antisocial youth to think and act responsibly through peer-helping and skill-streaming methods (Gibbs, Potter, & Goldstein, 1995), with a strong component of restructuring behavior accompanying cognitions of antisocial youth. The focus on EQUIP makes that Rebounds cater for the needs of students with externalizing problems.

Rebound facilities do not use set starting dates, but can at any time cater for schools' urgent needs to provide a time-out for a problematic student. Furthermore, recent studies on Rebound facilities have reported the lack of clear referral criteria allowing referring schools as well as Rebounds to specify whether reported behaviors are problematic or not (Inspectorate of Education, 2007; Kuijvenhoven, 2007). And indeed schools differ with respect to organizational, cultural, pedagogical, and didactic features. This means that some schools may lack in-school services to appropriately deal with challenging students and therefore produce more referrals than schools who have the necessary school services in place. The difference may also be reflected in, or correspond to, differences between school staffs' perceptions of problematic behaviors. This means that some schools refer students to Rebound facilities who preferably should be placed in schools for special education, or juvenile correction programs (Kuijvenhoven, 2007).

Another source of variation in students admitted to Rebounds is the placement procedure. Rebound facilities use three different referral or placement procedures: regular placements, crisis placements and placements for observational purposes. Regular placements are initiated by school specific counseling teams that take the initiative to present a potential referral to a local care

coordination team (Kuijvenhoven, 2007; Van Veen et al., 2007). This team includes representatives of schools, police, and youth care institutions and assesses the urgency and justification of a referral to Rebound. Crisis placements are mostly started when school safety is at stake because a student caused an acute situation of physical insecurity, for example by starting a fight with peers. Finally, both school counseling teams and the local care coordination team can arrange a special placement for observational purposes. The students are involved in manifest problematic behavior, but too little information is available for evaluating its nature, extent and intensity, and hence there is too much doubt about a good fit with a possible treatment. The maximum stay for these diagnostic placements is six weeks and hence shorter than regular placements. The second type of placements, the crisis placements, is likely to best fit the formal eligibility criteria of the Rebounds, because the type of problems that warrant a crisis placement are the type of problems that the EQUIP intervention is meant to deal with. The third type, observation placements, counts with students who actually may not fit Rebound as an intervention approach.

Referral Procedures

Multiple studies have emphasized disruptive behavior as a major challenge for teachers. Conflicts arise when teachers fail in coping with the challenging students while not succeeding in providing learning opportunities for the whole class (MacBeath et al., 2004). Such conflicts may lead to referrals and provide a context that explains why referral procedures may produce false positives and false negatives. The first, a false positive, means that students are referred who may not fit the classroom, but do not fit a Rebound either. The second, a false negative, means that students who meet the criteria are actually not referred, for instance, because referring does not fit the school policy or ideology. That referrals not only depend on the extent to which student characteristics and behaviors meet particular criteria was also shown by Coşkun, Van Geel, and Vedder (2015), who found that referred immigrant students reported fewer behavior problems than referred national students. Katsiyannis and Williams (1998) showed that referrals may be made for the wrong reasons. For instance, they may reflect administrative convenience. This happens when school staff tries to avoid strict procedures for admissions into special educational services and opts for a simple but educationally suboptimal solution of simply getting rid of ‘undesirable’ students. Taken together, such results suggest that teacher appraisals of student behavior may not be flawless, and to some extent lead to incorrect student referrals. Studying referrals may therefore eventually provide useful information for teachers in regular schools as well as for educators and program developers who work in Rebounds or who adapt the interventions (Booker & Mitchell, 2011). Understanding reasons for Rebound placements might lead to reduction in referrals and optimization of the effectiveness of Rebound facilities.

Current Study

The purpose of the current study is to gain insight in characteristics and problems of students referred to Rebounds and create a basis for evaluating the fit or misfit between referred students and the Rebound. Studies on students in Rebound facilities hitherto mainly used general descriptions of student populations rather than reporting statistics on specific student characteristics and behaviors (cf. Kuijvenhoven, 2007; School Inspectorate, 2007). The current study will report the outcomes of an analysis of the referral files of Rebound students. In addition cluster analyses will be used to identify subtypes of students sent to Rebound facilities, using specific characteristics and identified problems as input. By studying the referral files, and by using cluster analyses we will gain insight in the reasons why students were referred, and we can establish which problems tend to characterize students referred to Rebound facilities. We will then evaluate to what extent these characteristics and clusters fit the Rebound institutions, namely students who show disruptive but not delinquent externalizing behavior.

The variables used in the cluster analysis refer to types of problem behaviors reported, the nature of relationships with peers and teachers, the complexity of problematic behaviors, and school related problems reflected in grades, number of suspensions, truancy, and motivation or learning attitudes. We expect to find that, given the high need of schools to have easy means to cope with problematic students (Kuijvenhoven, 2007; School Inspectorate, 2007), schools will tend to refer students even when the students are not really eligible given the earlier mentioned inclusion and exclusion criteria and given the focus of the EQUIP intervention on behavior modification. Hence, profiles of referred students may be more diversified than they are meant to be. Moreover, we expect more diversified profiles based on the fact that the different types of placements anticipate such more diversified profiles. When split out between types of placements we expect that crisis placements will correspond to placements that best fit the Rebound in that such placements most clearly take inclusion and exclusion criteria into account.

Method

Participants

For this study we analyzed 298 referrals of students entering Rebound facilities from 2008-2012. The ages ranged from 12 to 17 years (M_{age} = 14.52; *SD* = 1.16). The sample consisted of 218 (73.2 %) boys and 80 girls (26.8 %). Furthermore, the sample included 211 students (70.3%) with an immigrant background (1st and 2nd generation). Two hundred and thirty-nine students were from junior vocational high schools (80.2%), 24 from schools preparing for university education (8.1%),

nine visited other educational facilities (3.4%) and for 26 students we could not find the relevant information in their files (8.4%).

Measurement

The referral files were scored by the researchers with respect to the following categorical items: (1) the type of referral (*crisis, regular, observation placement*); (2) being discussed in a local care coordination team (*yes/no*); (3) having contact with an attendance officer (*yes/no*); (4) any family support (*yes/no*); (5) expulsion (*expelled or not*); teacher reports on: (6) externalizing (*yes/no*); (7) internalizing (*yes/no*); or (8) motivational problem behaviors (*yes/no*); (9) problematic relationship with peers (*yes/no*); and (10) problematic relationship with teachers (*yes/no*); (11) the complexity of the problematic behaviors (from 1 *very complex* to 4 *not complex at all*), (12) whether or not students attend special needs classes (*yes/no*), (13) truancy (*not at all; occasionally; frequent to very frequent*), and (14) academic performance (*pass; fail; varies*). In addition, the information in the files about types of externalizing behaviors was scored as regards the prevalence of (15) verbal violence against school staff, (16) (threatening with) physical violence against school staff, (17) (threatening with) physical violence against other students, (18) disruptive behavior during class, and (19) disruptive behavior after class but on school premises. These behavioral items (15 – 19) had a dichotomous response scale (*yes/no*). Scoring meant largely copying information from the files. How the information represented in the files had been collected could not be checked. The student records were completed by school staff.

Procedure

The present study was conducted as a file analysis. Referrals to Rebound facilities are registered in a computerized system and available through intranet. With permission of the board of collaborating schools, that manages the Rebounds on behalf of the schools and functions in loco parentis, all files from students referred between the school years 2005 and 2012 were made available for analysis. However, we used files entered between 2008 and 2012, because these were the most complete files on intranet. The referral papers and forms in the files were completed by school social workers (73.6%) or by vice-head teachers (26.4%).

Results

Earlier Attention for Students' Problems

In the present sample 75 (25.2%) students came to the Rebound through a crisis placement. One hundred and eighty five (62.1%) came through a regular placement, and 21 (7.0%) cases were not definitely referred and admitted to the Rebound, but came for observational purposes. For 19

students the type of placement was not specified in their files (6.4%). Table 1 shows descriptive data of students being discussed in local care coordination teams, and whether or not they had any previous contact with an attendance officer. Most of the students were discussed previously in care coordination teams (62.4%) and had contact with an attendance officer before their referral (63.4%). Chi-square tests revealed an association between the type of referral and being discussed in a care coordination team χ^2 (2, 270) = 21.16, $p < 0.01$. A large proportion of students who were placed due to a crisis situation were not discussed in such a team (N = 40; 58.0%), while students with a regular placement were more often discussed (N = 131; 72.4%). Earlier contacts with an attendance officer, were unrelated to referral type, but they were positively associated with students' suspension rate χ^2 (1, 249) = 5.74, $p < 0.01$. Students' suspension rate and whether or not students were discussed in care coordination teams, were unrelated.

Table 1
Descriptives of earlier attention for students' problems

	Yes (%)	No (%)	Missing (%)
Discussed previously in teams	186 (62.4%)	99 (33.2%)	13 (4.4%)
Attendance officer	189 (63.4%)	81 (27.2%)	28 (9.4%)

Behavioral Problems as Predictors of Referrals

Table 2 represents descriptive data for students' problem behavior. Referral files report that 95% of the Rebound adolescents are characterized by externalizing problem behavior. When specifying externalizing behavior, disruptive behavior (65.1% of referred students) and verbal violence against school staff (45.3% of referred students) are the most reported types. Physical violence against school staff was the least reported type of externalizing behaviors (10.4% of referred students). Around 30% of the students had problematic relations with peers as well as with teachers and chi-square statistics showed both types of problematic relationships to be related χ^2 (1, 225) = 78.75, $p < 0.01$. The most prevalent reason for problematic relations between teachers and students however, was disruptive behaviors in classrooms χ^2 (1, 228) = 18.73, $p < 0.01$ (see Table 2 for numbers and proportions).

Table 2
Descriptive teacher reports on student behavior (298 student files)

	Yes (%)	No (%)	Missing (%)
Externalizing behavior	254 (85.2%)	25 (8.4%)	19 (6.4%)
Internalizing behavior	52 (17.4%)	188 (63.1%)	58 (19.5%)
Verbal violence against school staff	135 (45.3%)	103 (34.6%)	60 (20.2%)
(Threatening with) physical violence against school staff	31 (10.4%)	206 (69.1%)	61 (20.5%)
(Threatening with) physical violence against students	79 (26.5%)	158 (53.0%)	61 (20.5%)
Disruptive behavior during class	194 (65.1%)	43 (14.4%)	61 (20.5%)
Problematic student-teacher relation	97 (32.6%)	128 (43.0%)	73 (24.5%)
Problematic student-peer relation	89 (29.9%)	147 (49.3%)	62 (20.8%)

Chi-square tests showed disruptive behavior during class and violence against school staff to be associated with the type of referral: disruptive behavior during class was related to a regular placement χ^2 (1, 220) = 18.36, $p < 0.01$, and students who used violence against school staff had a higher chance of being processed as crisis referrals χ^2 (1, 220) = 4.01, $p < 0.05$. Student overall externalizing behaviors χ^2 (1, 253) = 11.89, $p < 0.01$, and (threatening with) physical violence against peers χ^2 (1, 216) = 6.86, $p < 0.01$ corresponded to students having a history of expulsions. Students' internalizing problems χ^2 (1, 220) = 3.68, $p = 0.06$, and verbal violence against school staff χ^2 (1, 216) = 3.72, $p = 0.06$ were marginally related to having a history of expulsions. Problematic relations with peers χ^2 (1, 217) = 1.36, $p = .24$ and teachers χ^2 (1, 207) = 0.51, $p = 0.82$ were not associated with earlier expulsions.

Other School Problems and Referrals

Of the 298 referral files, 125 (41.7%) reported students' failing grades in the past year, 16 (5.3%) reported good grades, and 87 (29.0%) sufficient grades (passed). Furthermore, 93 students (31.2%) had been occasionally truant, whereas 39 (13.1%) frequently or very frequently did not come to school, and 117 (39.3%) students had never been truant. Most students (55.0%) showed motivational problems and/or a problematic work attitude (48.0%) (See Table 3). Problematic relationships with either teachers or peers were unrelated to motivational problems and academic achievements. Student motivational problems were related to students' academic achievement χ^2 (3,220) = 48.94, $p < 0.01$, whereas problem behavior was unrelated to students' academic achievement.

Neither students' grades nor problematic work attitudes and motivational problems were related to students' earlier expulsions. However, truancy χ^2 (4, 233) = 13.31, $p < 0.05$ and

motivational problems χ^2 (2, 209) = 9.21, $p < 0.05$ were related to the type of referral. The largest percentage of unmotivated (54.1%) and truant (70.8%) students had a regular placement.

Table 3
Teacher reports on school problems

	Yes (%)	No (%)	Unknown (%)
Motivational problems	165 (55.0%)	58 (19.3%)	77 (25.6%)
Problematic work attitude	143 (48.0%)	66 (22.1%)	89 (29.8%)

Cluster Analysis on Behavioral and School Related Problems

For defining student profiles we conducted cluster analysis. We used Ward's method because we do not have outliers in our data and have no reason to believe that the outcome will result in clearly unequally sized clusters (Mooi & Sarstedt, 2011). Because such analyses can be conducted on complete cases only, data of 164 of the original 298 students were included. The variables entered were gender, ethnicity, education level, the type of referral, truancy, overall externalizing and internalizing behaviors and motivational problem behaviors, relationship with peers and teachers, the complexity of problematic behaviors, and academic achievements. Two clear clusters emerged from the analysis. Cluster 1, was characterized by more internalizing problems, more motivational problems, and more problematic work attitudes, but less externalizing problems than found in students in cluster 2. Furthermore, cluster 1 showed zero truant behavior among Rebound students. Cluster 2 involved more externalizing behaviors, but less motivational problems and 100% truant behavior. Crisis placements were significantly more present in Cluster 2 (33.8%), and regular placements in Cluster 1 (81.0%).

Table 4
Frequencies by scale for the two-cluster solution (Total N = 164)

	Cluster		
	1	2	F^p
Scales	(*N* = 84)	(*N* = 80)	
Behavior problems			
Externalizing behaviors	83.3%	95.0%	5.708**
Internalizing behaviors	67.6%	32.4%	4.632**
Complexity of problems	78.6%	67.5%	2.559
School problems			
Insufficient grades	52.4%	45.0%	1.564
Motivational problems	84.5%	60.0%	12.377**
Problematic work attitude	75.0%	62.5%	2.988
Truancy	0.0%	100.0%	150.453**
Other variables			
Boys	71.4%	70.0%	.040
Ethnic background	66.7%	66.2%	.003
Junior vocational high school	90.5%	86.2%	3.242
Type of placement			10.094**
Crisis	13.1%	33.8%	
Regular	81.0%	60.0%	
Observation	6.0%	6.2%	

* p <.10; ** p <.05.

Discussion

The current study aimed to get a better view of characteristics and problems of students referred to Rebounds and to evaluate the quality of fit between referrals and the intervention that Rebounds stand for.

Our findings on disciplinary practices and referrals to Rebound facilities, resemble findings from studies in other educational settings in other countries. Referrals and expulsions in such settings rarely deal with serious offences, but often concern disruptive offences and attendance issues (Frick, 2004; Munn et al., 2007; Mendez & Knoff, 2003; Skiba & Rausch, 2006). Students were mostly referred through a regular placement procedure with externalizing behaviors, particularly disruptive behaviors and verbal violence offences. Both types of externalizing behavior were related to being involved in problematic relations with teachers and students.

As expected the crisis placements involved proportionally more frequently students with externalizing problems than the regular placements did. The crisis referrals generally were more in accordance with the formal inclusion and exclusion criteria for placements in Rebounds. The Ward method of cluster analysis revealed two types of students sent to Rebound facilities in which the first

cluster involved more internalizing problems and motivation and learning related problems. The second cluster stood for more externalizing behaviors, hundred percent truant behavior (varying from occasionally to very frequent), and more crisis referrals, but less motivation and learning related problems. This concurs with other studies showing that truant students are more likely to show risky, and physically aggressive behaviors than students who regularly attend school (Eaton, Brener, & Kann, 2008; Sinclair, Christenson, & Thurlow, 2005).

We stated in the introduction that teacher referrals may not be perfect. However, we found that most students referred to Rebound facilities actually demonstrated externalizing problem behaviors. This suggests that referrals are at least accurate in so far as that students without externalizing problem behaviors tend not to be referred. Furthermore, relatively few students demonstrated more severe problems such as violence against school staff. The majority of referrals were also discussed in team meetings, which suggests that decisions are not made on a whim. However, the first cluster reported internalizing problems, and frequent motivation and learning related problems. These are challenges that the Rebounds are not specifically equipped for. This first cluster suggests that half of the referred students need another type intervention paying more attention to students' internalizing problems, learning problems, and school motivation.

Limitations and Implications

A major limitation of the study was the dichotomous structure of variables, that is, the student were categorized as either or not presenting problem behavior. To better understand problem behavior, a more fine-grained scoring of, for instance, externalizing behaviors might have led to a better appreciation of subtypes of problem behavior. Secondly, the present study would have benefitted from a valid and standardized collection of primary data using well-validated instruments. We had to work with information from school staff without knowing how they gathered their information in the first place. This information, while being very important for students' school lives, may have been more or less accurate, valid or biased. Furthermore, the lack of baseline data or a normative standard to assess differences between referred and non-referred students, and the lack of control variables like availability and use of in-school counseling services and policies, may have jeopardized the internal validity of our study. Finally, the findings are of correlational nature and do not allow causal reasoning.

As schools try to find a way to deal with disruptive and externalizing behaviors (MacBeath et al., 2004), the present study suggests that a one-size fits all disciplinary strategy, which mostly focuses on behavioral changes, may not be the best solution for Rebound students. Our two cluster solution shows that most of the students need additional support in motivation and learning related

problems, next to their daily homework supervision. This finding resembles School Inspectorate's (2007) finding that Rebounds lack an adequate instructional climate. In settings like Rebounds students easily miss out on effective learning time (Scott & Barrett, 2004), while having relatively low grades. To catch up they run a risk of getting or feeling overloaded or rather overwhelmed with schoolwork and consequently may become even less motivated (e.g., Osher et al., 2003; Gregory et al., 2010; Suh et al., 2007). Preventive intervention programs, such as school wide positive behavior supports, which focus on specific, positive behavioral expectations, might improve school climate and support positive bonds with alienated students, rather than excluding them (Gottfredson et al., 2005; Horner, Sugai, & Anderson, 2010; Skiba & Rausch, 2006). When student behavior is not responding to such preventive interventions, more individualized and intensive support should be provided (Gage, Sugai, Lunde, & DeLoreto, 2013). However, this should not imply 'more of the same interventions, or more sanctions or punitive strategies', but rather positive, evidence-based, programs targeted to the unique learning and behavioral histories and characteristics of the students, specifying and setting goals for personal academic and behavioral achievements.

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3. Exclusionary practices in secondary schools in the Netherlands: a comparison between students sent to out-of-school facilities and their non-referred peers

Begüm Coşkun
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The present study investigated differences between students sent to out-of-school facilities (*N* = 148), also called Rebound facilities, and non-referred students (*N* = 411), in junior vocational high schools. Self-reports on externalizing and antisocial behaviors were used to compare the two samples. Referred students scored significantly higher on externalizing and antisocial behaviors than non-referred students. After controlling for age, gender, and socio-economic status (SES), an interaction effect between ethnicity and referral status was found, in which differences between referred and non-referred students on externalizing behavior were larger for national students than for immigrant students. No interaction effects were found for antisocial behaviors. In short, immigrant youths were more likely to be referred while reporting less externalizing behavior than their national peers. Practical implications in terms of possible intervention models are discussed.

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In schools, behavioral problems of students threaten classmates' well-being and affect school safety. Most schools choose to implement disciplinary systems to preserve school safety and in this way hope to maintain an educational climate conducive to students' development and learning. Since the introduction of the zero tolerance policy in the early 90's in the United States, school disciplinary actions mandated more punitive and repressive actions. Hirschfield (2008) suggests that there is an increasing similarity between such policies and policies typical of the way incarcerated juveniles are treated. The zero tolerance policy is not conducive to the positive adaptation of all youths concerned (Skiba & Rausch, 2006). While introduced to contribute to a positive and safe school climate, parts of the implementation of this policy have proven to have negative effects on school climate. Higher rates of out-of-school suspensions and expulsions were reported and these are related to a less positive school climate, lower levels of student achievement, and increased prospects of future student misbehavior and school drop-out (Clonan, McDougal, Clark, & Davison, 2007; Skiba & Rausch, 2006).

Secondary schools in the Netherlands also use exclusionary disciplinary measures, paralleling increasing school violence over the past years. The murder of a secondary school deputy in 2004 fueled the public debate regarding school safety and order. In response to this, the Dutch Ministry of Education introduced the so-called Rebound facilities. Before returning the students to their mainstream schools, Rebound facilities are supposed to achieve behavioral changes and increase students' school engagement (School Inspectorate, 2007; Van der Hoeven, 2004).

Rebound facilities are educational centers for secondary school students who are not diagnosed with a psychiatric disorder, but do show maladaptive behavior in such a manner that school safety is at stake. Currently in the Netherlands, 4500 students can avail of Rebound facilities, and available accommodations increase at an average rate of about 8% per year (Van der Steenhoven, Messing, & Van Veen, 2012). Seventy-five percent of referred students return to their mainstream school, 13% are referred to special needs classes, and the other 10% are placed in other mainstream schools or apprenticeship programs.

Thirty years of research on office referrals, suspensions, and expulsions in the United States has shown that particular students received a disproportionate share of disciplinary interventions (e.g., Bryan, Day-Vines, Griffin, & Moore-Thomas, 2012; Skiba, Michael, Nardo, & Peterson, 2000).The overrepresentation of male minority students in exclusionary discipline practices has been a consistent finding (e.g., Gregory, Skiba, & Noguera, 2010; Raffaele Mendez & Knoff, 2003; Skiba, Horner, Chung, Rausch, May, & Tobin, 2011; Thomas, Bierman, Thompson, & Powers, 2008). Studies

on disproportionality in school discipline practices have not been conducted in the Netherlands so far.

Disproportionate Discipline and Exclusionary Practices

Disproportionality in disciplinary measures occurs when particular groups of students, relative to their proportion in the population, experience overrepresentation or underrepresentation in disciplinary referrals (Children's Defense Fund, 1975; Skiba & Peterson, 1999). Most studies on disproportionality issues have computed a composition index by comparing the number of persons affected by a particular measure (e.g., expulsions) to the total number of similar persons not affected by the measure. The label "similar" refers to similarity in a particular category, e.g., age, ethnic background or gender (Hosp & Reschley, 2003). Studies on disproportionality in school discipline practices have shown a race and gender bias (e.g., Bryan et al., 2012; Skiba et al., 2000). In the United States, research since the 1970's has documented that African American students (Raffaele Mendez & Knoff, 2003; Skiba et al., 2002), and more recently, Hispanic and American Indian students (Wallace, Goodkind, Wallace, & Bachman, 2008) experience more than twice as many disciplinary measures as Caucasian students. In a recent study with about 5000 English course teachers, Bryan et al. (2012) found that students' race or ethnic background significantly contributed to the prediction of referrals to school counselors for disruptive behavior. Moreover, for both English and Math courses, teachers were likely to refer more boys than girls; these teachers were influenced by previous disciplinary infractions and the accompanying expectations of future infractions. Students' socio-economic status is also an important predictor for referrals, but may be contaminated with students' ethnic background (Skiba et al., 2000). Yet, recent studies (Bryan et al., 2012; Skiba et al., 2011; Wallace, Goodkind, Wallace, & Bachman, 2008) clarify that even after controlling for socioeconomic status, race and gender remain significant predictors of referrals.

Teachers most often mention physical aggression among students as a reason for suspension. However, the majority of infractions appears to be nonviolent and includes attendance issues (Richard et al., 2003), disobedience (Raffaele Mendez & Knoff, 2003), or classroom disruptions (Raffaele Mendez & Knoff, 2003; Skiba & Rausch, 2006). An observational study of teacher-student interactions in school found school suspensions not to be the outcome of serious disruptions but of communication styles and negative interpretations of communication contents and accompanying behaviors, such as asking attention in an argumentative manner (c.f., Vavrus & Cole, 2002). Townsend (2000) found that particularly teachers of European American origin may interpret the more energetic and expressive communication style that characterizes many African American students as offensive or combative. Furthermore, acceptance of stereotypes regarding particular

minority groups may amplify reactions to relatively minor authority infractions (Townsend, 2000), or lead to student referrals to alternative, semidetached school programs (Casella, 2003).

Immigrant Youths in the Netherlands

Though in the Netherlands immigrant youths' well-being on average is at least as good as of their non-immigrant counterparts (Van Geel & Vedder, 2010), they also describe experiences of discrimination (Berry, Phinney, Sam, & Vedder, 2006), and experience poorer socio-economic conditions than national youth (Herwijer, 2009). At a political level there is moderate support for multiculturalism in the Netherlands (Banting & Kymlicka, 2004), but many Dutch nationals voice concerns about the multicultural society (Arends-Tóth & Van de Vijver, 2003), hold negative opinions, especially concerning the Muslim immigrants (Gonzalez, Verkuyten, Weesie, & Poppe, 2008; Pew Research Center, 2005), and prefer not to live in neighborhoods with high concentrations of immigrants (Gijsberts & Dagevos, 2005). It is difficult to judge whether these negative opinions concerning immigrants in general will affect referral rates, but in a previous study in the Netherlands it was found that Moroccan (mostly Muslim) youths who were incarcerated tended to be incarcerated for relatively lighter offenses than their native Dutch incarcerated peers (Veen, Stevens, Doreleijers, Van der Ende, & Vollebergh, 2010).

Current Study

By receiving students who are perceived as problematic in school, Rebound facilities aim to contribute in helping restore or maintain a positive school climate for the non-referred students and teachers of the referring school. The majority of students referred to Rebound facilities are immigrant youths from junior vocational high schools (about 70%); the type of schools in the Netherlands visited by most immigrant adolescents (Statistics Netherlands, 2013). The three largest groups are youths with a Moroccan-Dutch, Turkish-Dutch, and Caribbean-Dutch background. In adolescence youths from these groups report more externalizing problems than national youths (e.g., Van Oort et al., 2007).

This study will investigate differences between students referred and students who are not referred to Rebound facilities to find out whether or not referrals are based on relevant characteristics. Students' referred to Rebound facilities are expected to score higher on externalizing and antisocial behaviors than non-referred students. Aforementioned studies show exclusionary practices to be influenced by processes affecting the objectivity and consistency of discipline referrals (e.g., Irvin, Tobin, Sprague, Sugai, & Vincent, 2004), resulting in an increased chance for male minorities to be referred (e.g., Gregory, Skiba, & Noguera, 2010; Raffaele Mendez & Knoff, 2003; Skiba et al., 2011). Instead of disproportionality index calculations, the current study focuses

on differences in reported problem behaviors between referred and non-referred immigrant and national youths. Based on previous studies on disproportionality in exclusionary practices in the USA (Bryan et al., 2012; Skiba et al., 2000; Thomas et al., 2008) and on the overrepresentation of immigrant youths in pre-trial detention in the Netherlands (Veen et al., 2010) we hypothesized in the current study that:

(1) referred students score higher on externalizing and antisocial behaviors than their non-referred peers;
(2) immigrant youths in Rebound facilities report less externalizing and antisocial behaviors than national youths in the same Rebound facilities;
(3) score differences in externalizing and antisocial behaviors between referred immigrant students and non-referred immigrant students are less than the score differences between referred national students and non-referred national students.

Method

Participants

Rebound students. Initially there were 170 high school students from three Rebound facilities in The Hague. We excluded students attending higher levels of secondary education due to their small number. This resulted in 148 junior vocational high school students as participants in the current study with ages ranging from 12 to 16 years (M-age =14.35; *SD* = 1.14). The sample consisted of 104 boys (70.3 %) and 44 girls (29.7 %), and included 41 European- Dutch students (27.5 %), 34 Turkish-Dutch (22.9%), 28 Moroccan-Dutch (18.8%), 18 Caribbean-Dutch (12.7%), and 28 immigrant adolescents with another background (18.1%) like Iraqi and Polish. Of these immigrant students 32 (29.9%) were first generation immigrants and 75 (70.1 %) second generation immigrants.

Non-referred students. This group included 411 students from four junior vocational high schools. The sample consisted of 201 (48.8%) male and 204 (49.5%) female adolescents aged 12 – 16 years (*M* = 13.57, *SD* = .99). Most students were European-Dutch (160, 38.8 %), 49 were Turkish-Dutch (11.9 %), 59 Moroccan-Dutch (14.3%), 62 Caribbean-Dutch (15.1 %), and 81 adolescents had another background (19.7%). Most immigrant students (195, 77.7%) were second generation. The others were first generation.

Measures

A survey consisting of several scales was administered to the students. The survey began with general questions about demographics such as age, gender, educational level of respondent and

parents, and birthplace of respondent and both parents to decide on a respondent's status as a first or second generation immigrant.

Socioeconomic status was measured with the Family Affluence Scale (FAS, Curry, Elton, Todd, & Platt, 1997). A sample item of this scale is: 'How many computers does your family own.' The scale contains of four items. Since each item has different response categories, Cronbach's alpha could not be computed. The FAS has been found to have good criterion validity (Boyce, Torsheim, Currie, & Zambon, 2006), and to significantly correlate with reports of parental occupation (Currie et al., 1997) and parental reports of socio-economic status (Andersen et al., 2008).

To assess *externalizing behavior* we used two subscales of the Dutch version of the self-report screening measure Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ, Van Widenfelt, Goedhart, Treffers, & Goodman, 2003). The scores from both subscales namely, hyperactivity/inattention (e.g., 'I am restless, I cannot stay still for long') and conduct problems (e.g., 'I get very angry and often lose my temper'), denote externalizing behavior. Both subscales demonstrated adequate test-retest reliability, and adequate concurrent validity with the Youth Self Report version, for Dutch youth (Muris, et al., 2003; Van Widenfelt, et al., 2003). Furthermore, the scores from both scales showed good convergent and discriminant validity (Goodman, Lamping, & Ploubidis, 2010). The Cronbach's alpha found in the current study is .76.

For measuring *antisocial behaviors* and cognitions that support their manifestation, we used the How-I-Think Questionnaire (HIT-Q, Barriga, Hawkins, & Camelia, 2008; Nas, Brugman, & Koops, 2008). The HIT-Q is developed to measure self-serving cognitive distortions and antisocial behavior. In our study we used the Dutch version of the HIT-Q (Nas et al., 2008) which contains 39 propositions or statements with a 6-point Likert response scale, from *disagree strongly* to *agree strongly*. The questionnaire represents self-serving cognitive distortions (e.g., "If someone is careless enough to lose a wallet, they deserve to have it stolen"). Every scale has at least two items which belong to an antisocial behavioral category. The categories can be divided into an overt behavior scale, with the categories opposition-defiance and psychical aggression, and a covert behavior scale such as on lying and stealing. Furthermore, the questionnaire comprises anomalous response items and positive fillers to encourage full use of the questionnaire. HIT-Q demonstrated good psychometric qualities and proved to be a reliable measure for antisocial behavior (Wallinius, Johansson, Larden, & Dernevik, 2011). Furthermore, the Dutch translation of the HIT-Q has an adequate construct and concurrent validity and reliability (Nas et al., 2008), which is also demonstrated across samples collected in junior vocational high schools in the Netherlands (Van der Velden, Brugman, Boom, & Koops, 2010). The Cronbach's alpha's in the present study for the referred group is .89 for covert

behavior, and .90 for overt behavior. The Cronbach's alpha's for the non-referred group is .85 for covert behavior, and .83 for overt behavior.

Procedure

For the present study data was collected from referred and non-referred students in the Hague, the Netherlands. Questionnaires were administered in students' first week in the Rebound, before starting any behavioral interventions. Four mainstream junior vocational schools took part in our study. Three of these schools actually referred students to the participating Rebound facilities.

To make sure that referred and non-referred students would be as comparable as possible, schools were invited to select classes with the most behaviorally problematic students (potential referrals) for participation. Data on both Rebound facilities and mainstream schools were gathered by researchers and research-assistants. Letters of informed consent were given by teachers to parents of students on mainstream schools. During intake, Rebound teachers were asked to inform and verbally ask respondents' parents for their consent. Participation was voluntary. Participants were assured anonymity and confidentiality.

Statistical Analyses

Differences in age and socio-economic status between the referred and non-referred students were analyzed with one-way ANOVAs. Chi-square difference testing was applied to test differences in gender and ethnicity proportions between the referred and non-referred students. To investigate differences in externalizing and antisocial behaviors between referred and non-referred students, MANOVA was conducted using a 2x2x2 design (ethnicity x gender x referral status). Interaction effects between ethnicity (nationals vs. immigrants) and referral status (referred vs. non-referred) on problem behavior were analyzed with MANOVAs. Age and SES were included in the MANOVA as covariates, referral status, ethnicity, gender as fixed variables, and externalizing, overt, and covert behaviors as dependent variables.

Results

Preliminary Analyses

Age, gender, and ethnicity were compared between the referred and non-referred students. An ANOVA showed that the Rebound students (M = 14.35, SD = 1.14) were older than the non-referred students (M = 13.65, SD = .86), F (5, 559) = 62.79, p < 01, Cohen's d = .73). A chi-square test demonstrated an unequal distribution of boys and girls between the referred and non-referred students, χ^2 (1,554) = 19.13, p < .01; boys were overrepresented among Rebound students whereas

the gender distribution was balanced among non-referred students. Furthermore, a chi-square test demonstrated that there were proportionally more immigrant students in Rebound facilities than in mainstream schools: χ^2 (1, 561) = 5.38, p < .05, odds ratio = .62. An ANOVA with socioeconomic status as the dependent variable yielded that Rebound students reported lower socioeconomic circumstances (M = 9.27, SD = 1.77) than their non-referred peers (M = 10.53, SD = 1.86, F (1, 446) = 47.18, p < .001, Cohen*'s d* = .69). Our preliminary analyses showed both referred and non-referred students to be significantly different with regard to age, gender, ethnicity and SES. The following analyses were therefore controlled for these background variables.

Between Group Differences in Externalizing and Antisocial Behaviors

After controlling for age, gender, ethnicity and socioeconomic status, results showed significant differences in externalizing and antisocial behaviors between referred and non-referred students. Mean scores and standard deviations for the variables socioeconomic status, externalizing behaviors, covert behavior and overt behavior are provided in Table 1 for both the referred and non-referred students.

Table 1
Means, standard deviations, and ANOVA's of the main study variables

			M	*SD*	*F*(*p*)1	*F*(*p*)2
1. Externalizing behavior (SDQ)	Rebound	National	13.72	3.00	23.96**	79.52**
		Migrant	11.58	3.60		
	Non-referred	National	10.78	3.22	21.63**	
		Migrant	9.76	3.27		
2. Overt behavior (HIT-Q)	Rebound	National	3.16	.87	1.46	61.50**
		Migrant	3.01	.89		
	Non-referred	National	2.33	.71	2.48	
		Migrant	2.46	.78		
3. Covert behavior (HIT-Q)	Rebound	National	2.80	.71	.71	17.80**
		Migrant	2.61	.87		
	Non-referred	National	2.32	.62	.48	
		Migrant	2.37	.69		
4. SES (FAS)	Rebound	National	9.53	1.76	1.38	47.18**
		Migrant	9.15	1.77		
	Non-referred	National	11.32	1.64	68.19**	
		Migrant	9.72	1.71		

* p <.10; ** p <.05; *** p <.001
1 ANOVA's between nationals and migrants per school type and study variable
2 ANOVA's between referred and non-referred students per study variable

Correlations between the variables included in this study are provided in Table 2. Externalizing behaviors showed the highest effect size ($F(1,363) = 59,206$, $p < .01$) with a partial eta square (η^2) of .14. Furthermore, referred students scored higher on overt and covert behavior (overt behavior ($F(1,363) = 38,961$, $p < .01$, $\eta^2 = .10$, covert behavior ($F(1,363) = 10.969$, $p < .01$, $\eta^2 = .03$). Boys were characterized by more covert behavior than girls ($F(1,336) = 6.485$, $p < .05$, $\eta^2 = .02$). Boys and girls did not differ in overt and externalizing behaviors.

Table 2
Correlations between the main study variables

		1	2	3	4
1. Externalizing behavior	Rebound	-			
	Non-referred	-			
2. Overt behavior	Rebound	.621**	-		
	Non-referred	.408**	-		
3. Covert behavior	Rebound	.541**	.780**	-	
	Non-referred	.344**	.770**	-	
4. SES	Rebound	.023	.070	.016	-
	Non-referred	.099	.013	.021	-

* p <.05; ** p <.01.

Differences Between Referred Immigrant and National Students

A MANOVA was conducted to test for differences in externalizing, antisocial behaviors between referred and non-referred students. Gender, ethnicity, and referral status were entered as fixed variables, and age and SES as covariates. Results revealed a main effect for ethnicity (see Table 3). National students reported more externalizing behaviors than immigrant students ($F(1,363) = 28.591$, $p < .01$, $\eta^2 = .08$). Overt and covert behaviors did not significantly differ between national and immigrant Rebound students. National students in Rebound facilities reported more externalizing problems than their immigrant peers. Our hypothesis was thus confirmed for externalizing behavior only.

Interaction Effects Between Ethnicity and Referral status

A MANOVA was conducted to test for interaction effects between ethnicity and referral status. A significant interaction effect was found between ethnicity and referral status for externalizing behavior ($F(1,363) = 8.440$, $p < .01$, $\eta^2 = .02$; see Table 3). This interaction effect supports our hypothesis that referred national students report more externalizing problems than their referred immigrant peers, and that the difference in externalizing behavior between referred and non-referred immigrant students is smaller than the difference between referred and non-referred national students. This result indicates disproportionality in exclusionary practices, in particular, immigrant students referred to Rebound facilities report less externalizing problem

behavior than referred national students. A comparable interaction effect was not found for covert behavior ($F(1,363) = 3.356$, $p = .07$, $\eta^2 = .01$) or overt behavior ($F(1,363) = 2.479$, $p = .11$, $\eta^2 = .01$).

Table 3
Multivariate effects for ethnicity, referral status, externalizing, and antisocial behaviors

		F	*p*	η^2
Ethnicity	Externalizing behavior	28.591	.00	.08
	Overt behavior	.138	.71	.00
	Covert behavior	1.540	.22	.00
Referral status	Externalizing behavior	621.224	.00	.14
	Overt behavior	24.219	.00	.10
	Covert behavior	5.359	.00	.03
Ethnicity X Referral status	Externalizing behavior	8.440	.00	.02
	Overt behavior	2.479	.12	.01
	Covert behavior	3.356	.07	.01

Discussion

In the current study differences in externalizing behavior, and overt and covert antisocial behaviors between students referred to Rebound facilities and their non-referred peers were investigated. Overall, we found clear differences in externalizing behavior, and overt and covert behavior between referred and non-referred students, with Rebound students scoring higher on externalizing behavior, and overt and covert antisocial behaviors. As expected, we also found an interaction effect between ethnicity and referrals, specifically, differences between referred and non-referred students on externalizing behaviors were larger among national students than among immigrant students.

Socio-economic circumstances in which immigrant children grow up are generally worse compared with their national peers (Herwijer, 2009). These socio-economic circumstances are related to more behavioral problems (Bradley & Corwyn, 2002) ; However, in line with previous studies (Bryan et al., 2012; Skiba et al., 2011; Stevens & Vollebergh, 2008, Wallace et al., 2008) the present study suggests that referrals are not completely explained by students' socio-economic status. In addition, immigrant youths were more likely to be referred while reporting less externalizing behavior than their national peers. This concurs with earlier research in the juvenile justice system in the Netherlands. Recent work on incarcerated adolescents in the Netherlands has shown similar trends: ethnic minorities were more frequently arrested for less serious offences and lower levels of psychiatric symptoms than their Dutch national counterparts (Veen et al., 2010; Vreugdenhil, Doreleijers, Vermeiren, Wouters, & Van den Brink, 2004).

Our findings did not support our hypotheses for covert and overt behaviors, in which we expected these behaviors to show the same interaction pattern as we found for externalizing behaviors. Particularly, mean scores on overt problem behavior, such as physical aggression and oppositional-deviance, were similar between national and immigrant students in the referred group. These results suggest that disproportionality only holds for less severe externalizing behaviors, such as hyperactivity and mild forms of conduct behaviors during classes, whereas antisocial behaviors do not explain disproportionate exclusions. This reflects the mission of Rebound facilities to cater for the needs of students with mild problem behavior without psychiatric diagnoses (Van Veen et al., 2007).

Limitations

To the best of our knowledge, the present study is the first to investigate the quality of referrals to Rebound facilities. This is an important step towards future attempts to improve the procedures and adapt the criteria used in referral procedures. However, several limitations must be kept in mind when interpreting the results of this study. One of the limitations is the cross-sectional design which only offered correlational data and precluded examining causal pathways. The study would have benefitted from qualitative observations or content analyses of discipline codes of teachers or discipline referrals, which may have led to a clearer distinction between behaviors that in the current study may have been labeled too easily as problematic. A better knowledge of what behavioral problems stand for and what behaviors are characteristic of students referred to institutions like Rebound facilities is important for preventive, remedial and other educational measures. A further limitation of the present study is the use of self-reports. Additional teacher reports on externalizing and antisocial behaviors would have served an important function of continuously monitoring the validity of measures and the information they provide. Nevertheless, we used well validated self-report instruments, investigated repeatedly in Dutch and ethnically diverse youth samples (Achenbach et al., 2008; Nas et al., 2008; Richter, Sagatun, Heyerdahl, Oppedal, & Roysamb, 2011).

Implications

Findings from this study suggest that referrals to Rebound facilities parallel the existing international data on disproportionate disciplinary practices for the past 30 years. In particular, externalizing behaviors were identified as contributing to the disproportionate referrals to Rebound facilities.

Promising school-wide behavioral programs promoting culturally responsive management practices to reduce the risk of disproportionate referrals have been developed and implemented, albeit small scale (Bohanon et al., 2006; Fallon, O'Keeffe, & Sugai, 2012; Nelen, 2010; Sugai & Horner,

2002; Vincent & Tobin, 2011; Vincent et al., 2011). The school wide positive behavioral support (SWPBS) intervention model, for instance, is designed to prevent maladaptive student behavior and to ensure that all students are part of the best evidence-based academic and behavioral practices. SWPBS is characterized by premises such as, clearly defined appropriate and inappropriate behavior, proactive teaching to monitor these defined behavioral standards, and continuous web-based collecting of discipline referrals and its evaluations (Sugai & Horner, 2002). This program has shown consistent effectiveness in decreasing disciplinary infractions and increasing school safety perceptions (Barrett, Bradshaw, & Lewis-Palmer, 2008; Flannery, Sugai, & Anderson, 2009). However, information on disciplinary patterns disaggregated by students' ethnic background suggests that disproportionality is still present after implementing SWPBS (Kaufman et al., 2010; Vincent et al., 2011), which suggests that the implementation of only positive behavioral programs or objective database registration and monitoring of referrals is not sufficient (Vincent et al., 2011). Treating every student the same is conceptually not equal to being culturally responsive, which requires adaptation to students' personal needs. Therefore, recent studies have suggested expansion of key features of the SWPBS program to enhance cultural responsiveness among teachers (Vincent et al., 2011), by training them to appreciate cultural diversity and avoid a colorblind approach (Cartledge & Kourea, 2008; Singleton & Linton, 2006), while emphasizing cultural equity by responding effectively to the differing needs of ethnic minority students (Monroe, 2009). Through this approach we may perhaps minimize the referral of students due to cultural misunderstandings, and only refer the students that really need the help of a Rebound facility.

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4. Out-of-school facilities in the Netherlands: do they influence cognitive distortions and externalizing behaviors?

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Rebound is the name for time-out facilities in the Netherlands meant for students referred by regular schools. These facilities are for students with behavior problems who disturb classes. Rebounds use the EQUIP program designed to make antisocial youth think and act responsibly. The present study aimed to investigate the effects of Rebounds using a quasi-experimental pre-, and posttest design. The sample included 87 Rebound students and 77 at risk students recruited from junior vocational high schools (total M_{age} = 13.92, *SD* = 1.11). A two-way repeated measures ANOVA showed no improvements for cognitive distortions, antisocial, and externalizing behaviors for Rebound youths. This study shows that Rebound facilities in the Netherlands are not as effective as they intend to be.

SUBMITTED

After the heated public debate in response to the murder of a school deputy by a student in 2004, the Dutch government introduced Rebound facilities as an additional means to preserve school safety (Van der Hoeven, 2004). Students of secondary schools, who show maladaptive behavior but are not diagnosed with a psychiatric disorder and have no criminal record, may be referred to these facilities. Rebounds offer temporary (approximately three months) 'shelter' to students with behavioral and educational problems (Van Veen, Van der Steenhoven, & Kuijvenhoven, 2007) that are so highly disruptive and so difficult to handle that available in-school support services do not suffice for these students. By receiving these problematic students Rebounds help to restore or maintain a positive school climate for the students and the teachers of the referring school. A second goal of Rebound facilities is to prepare the referred students for a return to their school, or for placement in another school. This is what 'Rebound' stands for: providing students a second chance rather than removing them from school permanently. Most of the students are referred due to their externalizing behaviors, such as antisocial and aggressive behaviors, during classes. There is a yearly increase of about 8% in the number of students referred to Rebound facilities. Today the Netherlands has more than 4500 places available in Rebound facilities (Van der Steenhoven, Messing, & Van Veen, 2012). Rebound facilities use the EQUIP program to reduce students' antisocial behavioral manners. Many comparable cognitive-behavioral interventions have been found successful in reducing problem behaviors (Hollin & Palmer, 2009; Landenberger & Lipsey, 2005; Pearson, Lipton, Cleland, & Yee, 2002). However, previous studies on the EQUIP program have shown contradictory outcomes (Helmond, Overbeek, & Brugman, 2012; Liau et al., 2004).

Rebounds and EQUIP

Rebounds function like regular schools. Students attend full days and are working on assignments they get from teachers of the referring schools. When working on their assignments they are supervised by Rebound staff. Working on school assignments is meant to make sure that students do not miss curricular contents covered in their regular classes, which could hamper their return to their regular class. Some Rebound students even may benefit from the individualized attention from the supervisors, allowing them to learn better than they would have in their regular class.

In addition to this attention for regular curricular contents, Rebounds offer EQUIP as a focused intervention. EQUIP aims to teach antisocial youth to think and act responsibly through peer-helping and skill-streaming methods (Gibbs, Potter, & Goldstein, 1995). The peer-helping method is based on the Positive Peer Culture (PPC) model (Vorrath & Brendtro, 1985) aiming to change the negative peer pressure into a positive peer culture through targeting mutual responsibility by helping and learning from each other (Gibbs et al., 1995). The skill-streaming method is based on the

Aggression Replacement Training (ART; Goldstein & Glick, 1987), with a strong component of restructuring behavior accompanying cognitions of antisocial youth.

The current study evaluates the effectiveness of Rebounds. Our design does not allow to focus on separate elements of Rebounds, like the EQUIP-intervention. Nevertheless, EQUIP is an important element of Rebounds. Studies on the effectiveness of the EQUIP program, mainly conducted on incarcerated youth, have so far shown inconsistent results (Helmond et al., 2012; Liau et al., 2004). Leeman, Gibbs, and Fuller (1993) reported increases in social skills and reduced recidivism among incarcerated youth. A study by Nas and colleagues (2005), again conducted in a youth prison, did not find any improvements for social skills and moral judgments, but cognitive distortions were found to decrease among the participants. A recent meta-analysis conducted on 18 studies on behavioral interventions for the reduction of cognitive distortions and externalizing behaviors, showed a small effect on cognitive distortions (d = .27). Moreover the relation between cognitive distortions and externalizing behaviors was found to be weaker for more severe forms of delinquent and aggressive behavior than for milder forms (Helmond, Brugman, Overbeek, & Gibbs, 2012). The authors suggest that interventions that aim to reduce cognitive distortions and subsequently externalizing behaviors, would be more effective for less severe forms of problem behavior. Because Rebound students are mostly referred due to their externalizing and disturbing behavior, which is supposedly less severe than the problems of incarcerated youth (Van Veen, Van der Steenhoven, & Kuijvenhoven, 2007), we expect Rebound facilities to be an effective intervention for referred youth.

Current Study

Externalizing behaviors are assumed to be based in or in any case accompanied by self-serving cognitive distortions (Barriga, Landau, Stinson, Liau, & Gibbs, 2000; Dodge, 1993; Maruna & Mann, 2006). These rationalizations are self-centered and do not or hardly reflect signs of worries about or care for others (Gibbs et al., 1995). The aim of the present study was to investigate the effects of Rebounds particularly with respect to externalizing and antisocial behaviors and cognitive distortions. We used a pre-posttest design and created a control group by selecting 77 students with severe externalizing behaviors from three mainstream schools. Based on mainly the study of Helmond et al. (2012) we hypothesize improvements on externalizing, antisocial behaviors and their cognitive distortions in the Rebound group, and no reductions for the control group.

Method

Sample

Experimental group. A total of 170 Rebound students recruited from three Rebound facilities were initially included in the study. Due to truancy, early transfers to (new or the same) mainstream schools, and referrals to external youth care services or juvenile youth centers, a total sample of 87 Rebound students remained in the program until we had completed the posttests. One-way ANOVA's between Rebound students who stayed in the program and students who left the program early or could, for another reason, not partake in the posttest showed no significant differences on the dependent variables on the pretest (externalizing behavior: F (1, 160) = 1.45, p = .23, overt behavior: F (1, 138) = .03, p = .86, covert behavior: F (1, 141) = 1.20, p = .28). The ages of students in the experimental group ranged from 12 to 16 years. The mean age was 14.07 years (SD = 1.13). The sample consisted of 61 (70.1 %) boys and 26 girls (29.9 %). The sample included 77 percent students with an immigrant background (N = 67).

Control group. A total of 348 mainstream school students were recruited for the present study. The final control group contained 77 students who demonstrated levels of externalizing problem behavior comparable to those found in the Rebound students. The mean age of the control group was 13.75 years (SD = 1.07). The sample consisted of 37 boys (48.1%) and 39 girls (50.6%), and included 39 percent students with an immigrant background (N = 30).

Rebounds and the EQUIP Intervention

Rebound facilities offered the 10 week program EQUIP next to daily schoolwork supervision. Teachers in the Rebound facilities who administered the EQUIP intervention were all qualified to run the program. Students sent to Rebounds are required to stay at least six weeks before they can either return to their school or are sent to another institution This means that part of the students cannot complete the EQUIP program. Another challenge is that Rebounds do not have a set starting or entrance day. In order to respond accurately to schools' urgent needs to find an alternative setting for disruptive students, Rebounds offer continuous access. As a consequence students may enter the EQUIP program when it is underway already. The maximum capacity per EQUIP group is 12 students. Each week the EQUIP intervention contains three mutual help meetings and two other meetings (Gibbs et al., 1995). During mutual help meetings the students, with the help of each other, are enticed to identify and correct thinking errors. The other meetings focus on anger management, social skills training, and social decision making. Each meeting lasts up to 90 minutes.

Measures

Socioeconomic status. Socioeconomic status was measured with the Family Affluence Scale (FAS, Curry, Elton, Todd, & Platt, 1997). A sample item of this scale: 'How many computers does your family own.' The scale has different response categories for the separate items, therefore Cronbach's alpha could not be computed, but the FAS has been found a valid indicator of socio-economic status (Boyce, Torsheim, Currie, & Zambon, 2006).

Externalizing behavior. Externalizing behavior was assessed using the sum of the two subscales 'hyperactivity/inattention' and 'conduct problems' of the Dutch version of the self-report screening measure Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ, Goodman, 1997). Scale items (in total five) for hyperactivity/inattention are e.g., 'I am restless, I cannot stay still for long', and for the subscale conduct problems (in total five items), 'I get very angry and often lose my temper'). Cronbach's alpha's were .76 (pretest) and .67 (posttest). The Dutch version of the SDQ showed good convergent and discriminant validity, also in ethnically diverse groups (Goodman, Lamping, & Ploubidis, 2010; Muris, Meesters, & Van den Berg, 2003; Widenfelt, Goedhart, Treffers, & Goodman, 2003).

Self-serving cognitive distortions and antisocial behaviors. Cognitive distortions and antisocial behaviors were measured with the Dutch version of the How-I-Think Questionnaire (HIT-Q, Nas, Brugman, & Koops, 2008). The HIT-Q originally was developed to measure self-serving cognitive distortions with 39 items covering four categories: self-centered; blaming others; minimizing/mislabeling; and assuming the worst (Barriga et al., 2001). A sample item is "If someone is careless enough to lose a wallet, they deserve to have it stolen." The items also cover four types of antisocial behavior: opposition defiance, physical aggression, lying, and stealing. The Dutch version of the HIT-Q showed good construct validity and reliability (Nas et al., 2008; Van der Velden, Brugman, Boom, & Koops, 2010). Cronbach's alphas for cognitive distortions and antisocial behaviors in the current study varied between .74 (pretest) and .81 (posttest).

Fidelity. To assess the fidelity of the EQUIP program, we used five items from a list of 66 criteria originally used for evaluating the fidelity of EQUIP for residential care (EQUIP Netherlands, 2009), which closely followed the EQUIP curriculum and manual (Gibbs et al., 1995; Potter, Gibbs, & Goldstein, 2001). The five items used measured: (1) students' language proficiency, (2) students' ability to function in groups (3) the severity of students' problem behavior, (4) the frequency of lessons, and (5) the structure (contents) and order of the EQUIP lessons.

Procedure and Statistical Analyses

Data for the experimental as well as the control group was collected in the highly urbanized western part of the Netherlands. In the experimental group questionnaires were administered in students' first week in the Rebound, before starting the EQUIP program. The post-test was completed at the end of students' Rebound stay. Data for the control condition were collected on regular schools in the months September and October, at the start of the school year, by researchers and research-assistants. Letters of informed consent were given by teachers to parents of students on mainstream schools. On Rebound facilities, teachers were asked to inform and ask parents for their consent. To assure anonymity only first names were used to link data from pre- and posttest. Furthermore, participants were assured confidentiality of their data. The participating EQUIP trainers were invited to complete an EQUIP fidelity questionnaire. All trainers (*N*=6) completed the list.

To analyze whether the effect of EQUIP statistically differs from that for the control group, we used a repeated measures ANOVA with a between subjects factor (Rebound/ control) (Nieuwenhuis, Forstmann, & Wagenmakers, 2011).

Results

Fidelity

Most Rebound students have an immigrant background. The fidelity questionnaires completed by six trainers showed that only three of them were the opinion that the Dutch language proficiency of the students was sufficient to warrant good understanding. Moreover, four trainers doubted whether students in their EQUIP groups were sufficiently competent to function in a group, which is a prerequisite for participation. Also, four trainers suggested that students have problems that warrant psychiatric intervention (an exclusion criterion for Rebound). Three trainers indicated that not all planned EQUIP meetings actually took place. Five trainers evaluated that both the order of meetings and the frequency were not as planned. The order and structure of specific meetings, like the introduction, equipping meetings, mutual help meetings and meetings to learn how to cope with anger, were changed according to at least four trainers. Together the trainers provided a worrying picture of the program fidelity.

Preliminary Analyses

Table 1 showed SES not to be related to cognitive distortions, externalizing and antisocial behaviors. Antisocial behaviors were highly correlated with cognitive distortions. Externalizing behaviors showed a strong positive relation with cognitive distortions and antisocial behaviors.

Table 1
Correlations between the main study variables

	1	2	3	4
1.SES	-			
2.Cognitive distortions	-.116	-		
3.Covert antisocial behavior	-.076	.931**	-	
4.Overt antisocial behavior	-.111	.942**	.762**	-
5. Externalizing behavior	.080	.544**	.500**	.518**

* p <.05; ** p <.01.

The experimental and control group differed in gender ratios, with proportionally more boys present in the Rebound group (F (1, 63) = 4.072, p = .07). Furthermore, the control group scored significantly higher on socio-economic status (control group: M = 10.73, SD = 1.81, Rebound group: M = 9.32, SD = 1.85, F (1, 159) = 23.26, p < .01, Cohen's d = .79). In addition, proportionally more immigrant students were present in the Rebound group than in the control group students (χ^2 (1,164) = 24.475, p < .01). No significant age differences between the experimental and control group (F (1, 63) = 4.072, p = .07) were found. Since gender and SES differed significantly between the experimental and control group, following analyses were corrected for these background variables. One-way ANOVA's on pretest scores for externalizing behavior (F (1, 161) = .139, p = .71) and covert behavior (F (1, 145) = 1.871, p = .17) yielded no statistically significant differences between the experimental and control group at the pretest/baseline. Table 2 presents means and standard deviations. For cognitive distortions (F (1, 135) = 5.667, p < .05, Cohen's d = .42), and overt behavior (F (1, 139) = 6.607, p < .05, Cohen's d = .44), however, the analyses yielded significant differences with the Rebound group reporting more cognitive distortions and overt behaviors than the control group. A multiple regression analysis, controlling for gender and SES, showed cognitive distortions for both groups to be a predictor for externalizing behaviors with a medium effect size (β = 2.614, p < .01, R^2= .341).

Effects of Rebound

Using a two-way repeated measures ANOVA comparing Rebound students and control students, and controlling for gender and socio-economic status we found no significant differences between pre- and posttest scores on externalizing (F(1,157) = 2.061, p = .153, η^2= .02), cognitive distortions (F(1,125) = .064, p = .800, η^2= .01), overt (F(1,129) = .003, p = .954, η^2= .00), and covert

antisocial behavior ($F(1,133) = 0.068$, $p = .794$, $\eta^2 = .00$), meaning that Rebound students did not change more than non-referred students between pre- and posttest for externalizing, overt, and covert antisocial behaviors, and cognitive distortions.

Table 2
Effects of Rebound on externalizing, cognitive distortions, overt, and covert behavior

	Experimental group				Control group					
	Pre-test		Post-test		Pre-test		Post-test		*F*	η^2
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*		
Externalizing behavior	8.05	3.81	7.23	3.35	8.24	2.59	9.95	2.06	2.06	0.02
Cognitive distortions	2.86	.77	2.52	.69	2.57	.61	2.69	.80	.06	0.01
Overt antisocial behavior	3.02	.78	2.69	.76	2.68	.77	2.81	.97	.01	0.00
Covert antisocial behavior	2.65	.82	2.38	.72	2.49	.57	2.57	.78	.07	0.00

Discussion

In this study we compared Rebound students with a selected group of at risk students recruited from junior vocational high schools to analyze whether or not Rebounds influence cognitive distortions and externalizing behaviors. Results suggest that Rebound is not more effective for Rebound students than the regular school program is for non-referred at risk students: Rebound did not change students' cognitive distortions, externalizing behavior and overt and covert problem behaviors. We had expected that the EQUIP program, as an important building block of Rebound programs, would have had a stronger impact, but is as is our non-significant results corroborate the findings of a recent study on the effects of the EQUIP program with incarcerated, antisocial youth in the Netherlands (cf. Brugman & Bink, 2011; Helmond, Overbeek, & Brugman, 2012).

An easy explanation for the disappointing findings can be found in the fidelity information; EQUIP was not implemented as intended, and in many cases referred students did not receive the full program. This is partly due to Rebound specific processing of students; students may start whenever the need in referring schools is insupportable and may leave when better needs adapted support is required and available from other institutions. Indeed, fidelity and program implementation are likely candidates to explain the findings, however, the study conducted by Helmond, Overbeek, and Brugman (2012), found no moderating role of program fidelity in the reduction of cognitive distortions and recidivism, not even when a program fidelity booster was used.

Fidelity and implementation of EQUIP might not be the only explanation. Another possible explanation has to do with the fact that studies that report positive findings for EQUIP have been conducted mainly in the USA and studies that we reported being less or non-effective were mainly conducted in the Netherlands. This suggests that an intervention like EQUIP is not as easily

transferable between contexts as developers and institutes that use the program may have hoped for. The program and the participants' susceptibility to it may be culture or country specific. This possibility was analyzed by Hopman, De Winter and Koops (2012) in a study with the provocative title "The hidden curriculum of youth care interventions". They analyzed the EQUIP program and concluded that the American and Dutch way of defining and presenting moral behavior is distinct in the country specific versions of the program. In addition they suggest a difference in value perspective or value preferences between the two countries. Hence, the fit between country specific versions with respect to value representations and the circumstances for implementation, including the value climate, may differ and impact on the effects.

A third explanation leads away from EQUIP, and focusses on the fact that Rebounds bring together adolescents who mostly are characterized by serious externalizing problems. This concentration comes with a risk of contagion, modelling and mimicking as pointed out by Dishion and colleagues (Dishion & Dodge, 2005; Dishion & Tipsord, 2011). This is particularly the case when activities for adolescents are not well structured and unsupervised. We saw that parts of the program are not well-structured, moreover, Rebound students, have breaks and transitions between activities; hence, there is ample opportunity for contagion. Simple dialogue between the students may cause more varied and more intensive problem behavior, and thus for these students being together in Rebounds may produce even negative effects. In addition, being referred to a Rebound, is not just a second chance, it also is, or at least may be experienced as a punishment. This experience may produce frustration and aggression, making it likely that the students' problematic behaviors will intensify (Gershoff, 2002).

Limitations and Implications

Firstly, a randomized control treatment design would have been preferable to the quasi-experiment that we could conduct. We traded better control of possible confounders for larger external validity. Given the nature of referrals, a fully randomized design would have been difficult to implement. An important implication of our finding is that students sent to Rebound, while not benefiting in terms of reducing their problematic behavior, run a high risk of losing learning time and hence are put at educational disadvantage (School Inspectorate, 2007). Further studies should clarify whether Rebounds add to educational disadvantage or that students' lack of academic engagement irrespective the school setting, causes these youths to have a problematic school career.

As indicated in the preceding subsection about possible explanations for our findings, the results we reported could have been worse due to possible contagion between students and possible negative reactions to the experience of being punished. The positive news is that we found no

evidence for such negative effects. It is possible, however, that the really problematic students, or the students who were affected most by contagion or reactions to their experience of Rebound being a punishment, were amongst the “drop-outs”. We lost track of these students. A future study might anticipate this possibility and arrange good contacts with other institutions that possibly cater for the needs of these students (e.g., psychiatric wards, youth prisons, special schools for aggressive adolescents, etc.).

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5. School adjustment and leisure activities inside and outside home: a comparative study between students sent to Rebound facilities and their non-referred peers

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Students in the Netherlands who show poor school adjustment are more likely to be referred to Rebound facilities than their better adjusted peers. The current study compared the time spending on structured, unstructured , and family activities and their school adjustment between students referred to Rebound facilities (*N* = 170) and their non-referred peers (*N* = 348), and analyzed the relations between the time spending variables and school adjustment. Self-reports on school adjustment and time spending were used. Referred students reported lower school adjustment, less structured leisure participation and less engagement in family activities than their non-referred peers. For both referred and non-referred students, family activities predicted school adjustment whereas time spending on structured leisure did not predict school adjustment. Partaking in unstructured leisure activities only predicted school adjustment in the non-referred group. Results suggest that students with poor school adjustment would benefit from more frequent engagement in family activities.

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Students in secondary schools in the Netherlands who show poor school adjustment, disturb lessons and put teacher and peer security at risk through their behavior can be referred to a so-called Rebound facility (Van Veen, Van der Steenhoven, & Kuijvenhoven, 2007). Rebound facilities are educational centers for secondary school students who are not diagnosed with a psychiatric disorder, but do show poor school adjustment (predominantly behaviorally) in such a manner that the school order and safety is at stake.

The term 'Rebound' stands for a 'second chance'. Profiles of referred students often include externalizing behaviors, with disruptive behaviors in classrooms and verbal violence against school staff. Moreover, more than half of the Rebound students show poor school motivation and low interest in academic performance (Van der Steenhoven, Van Veen, & Kuijvenhoven, 2012). In Rebounds students can work in groups of maximally 12 students on assignments selected by their own teachers, and they follow an intervention program meant to make them more aware of the consequences of their behavior and to have them acquire competences that allow them to better regulate their behavior themselves. A stay in the Rebound should decrease problem behaviors and increase school adjustment, and thus prepare the students for a return to their old school.

The whole procedure leading to a Rebound referral and the educational approach followed in a Rebound institution are inspired by the notion that children are primarily the responsibility of the school and that a referral to a Rebound should be primarily inspired by school experiences. However, schools can help students to improve their chances of a prosperous and healthy future, but they "cannot compensate for society" as depicted so eloquently by Bernstein (1970). Students carry their characteristics, their worries and particular competences with them when they enter school, and schools have not found a way to mold the resulting diversity of their students in a way that eventually makes students more equal in terms of health, competence, and wellbeing. In an earlier study we found that those students' that are referred to Rebound facilities demonstrate more externalizing problem behavior than their peers (Coşkun, Van Geel, & Vedder, 2015), and it are mostly these school problems that are the reason and justification for a referral to a Rebound facility. Though these problems are experienced and signaled in school, it is unlikely that their origin lies in school only. By focusing on behavioral problems in schools we might miss other important factors that underlie student referrals (Coşkun et al., 2015). In the current study we focus on some of these supposedly important other factors. We examine differences in leisure time spending, and school adjustment between students referred to a Rebound facility and non-referred students and the relationship between these two variables.

Structured, Unstructured, and Family Leisure Activities

Previous studies have focused predominantly on two forms of leisure activities: structured versus unstructured (Abbott & Barber, 2007; Bartko & Eccles, 2003; Mahoney & Stattin, 2000). Structured leisure activities are organized and supervised by one or more adults, have a rule-guided structure with standard participation schedules, and emphasize skill development. They require attentive engagement, which is frequently followed by clear performance feedback of supervising adults or experts (Mahoney & Stattin, 2000). Examples are training for sports and music clubs. Ample research documents that participation in well-structured leisure activities is related to higher academic engagement and performance (Cooper, Valentine, Nye, & Lindsay, 1999; Eccles & Barber, 1999; Jordan & Nettles, 1999), lower prevalence of school dropout (Davalos, Chavez, & Guardiola, 1999; Mahoney, 2000), less antisocial behavior (Eccles & Barber, 1999; Mahoney & Stattin, 2000), and less substance abuse (Barnes, Hoffman, Welte, Farell, & Dintcheff, 2007; Darling, 2005). Participation in extra-curricular and well-organized out of school activities may benefit academic performance, diminish drop-out, raise intrinsic motivation, improve school adjustment (Fredricks & Eccles, 2006; Marsh & Kleitman, 2002; Vandell, Shernoff, Pierce, Bolt, Dadisman, & Brown, 2005), and contribute to higher self-esteem and lower depression (Barber, Eccles, & Stone, 1999; Mahoney, Schweder, & Stattin, 2002). In a longitudinal study on school-based extracurricular activities Darling (2005) found that adolescents who ran a high risk of life-stress events felt protected and supported by their involvement in extra-curricular activities.

Unstructured leisure activities, are more spontaneous, less planned, pre-structured and less binding, than structured leisure activities, and often lack adult supervision (Abbott & Barber, 2007). Examples are hanging out with friends, watching television, or just listening to music on your own. These activities are not started to enhance particular competencies (Mahoney & Stattin, 2000). Spending time with friends increases adolescents' pleasure in activities (Patrick, Ryan, Alfeld-Liro, Fredricks, Hruda, & Eccles, 1999). It is a rewarding experience making peers to join activities and to continue their engagement (Borden, Perkins, Villarruel, & Stone, 2005; Persson, Kerr, & Statin, 2007). However, the risk of developing antisocial behaviors increases when the activities involve no agenda, are unsupervised, and when deviant peers join in (c.f., Dodge, Dishion, & Lansford, 2006; Osgood & Anderson, 2004). Compared to well-structured leisure activities, unstructured leisure pursuit provide more opportunities for engaging in antisocial behaviors (Darling, 2005; Fredricks & Eccles, 2006; Gottfredson, Gerstenblith, Soulé, Worner, & Lu, 2004; Mahoney, 2000). After accounting for demographic and behavioral differences between participants pursuing unstructured leisure,

studies have shown increases in substance abuse and delinquency in adolescence (Bartko & Eccles, 2003; Mahoney & Stattin, 2000).

Next to structured and unstructured leisure activities we included activities for and with family as a separate variable in this study. Though such family activities may in some cases be a form of structured or unstructured leisure, we wished to treat it as a separate variable on account of the strong relations it has with adolescent outcomes. Studies suggest that time spent with family is related to fewer problem behaviors and delinquent acts (Barnes, Hoffman, Welte, Farrell, & Dintcheff, 2007), less substance abuse (Barnes et al., 2007; Flannery, Williams, & Vazsonyi, 1999), and lower susceptibility to peer pressure (Flannery et al., 1999). A recent study among 1,147 low-income urban youth and mothers found that family routines (for instance, family regularly talking, playing, and reading) were associated with higher educational expectations and their realization through better academic performance. In particular, young adolescents between 11-16 years benefitted from family routines. Destabilizing family life events, on the other hand, predicted lower academic achievement and lower educational expectations (Roche & Ghazarian, 2012). The evidence of a relationship between family activities and school adjustment, made us decide to use this variable as a third predictor of school adjustment.

Current Study

For the current study we aimed to compare the school adjustment, structured as well as unstructured leisure activities, and family activities between students who were sent to Rebound facilities and their non-referred peers. By comparing these variables between referred and non-referred students we hope to better understand the risk and protective factors of student referrals. Because problematic school adjustment weighs heavy in decisions about Rebound referrals (Van der Steenhoven et al., 2012), we expect referred students to score lower on school adjustment than non-referred students. Because previous studies suggested a negative correlation between unstructured leisure activities and school adjustment (Dodge, Dishion, & Lansford, 2006; Osgood & Anderson, 2004) we expect that referred students will score higher on unstructured leisure than non-referred. Structured leisure activities (Cooper et al., 1999; Eccles & Barber, 1999; Jordan & Nettles, 1999) and shared family activities (Roche & Ghazarian, 2012) have previously been found positively related to school adjustment. Hence, we expect that referred students will score lower on these variables than non-referred students. In addition to our expectations with respect to referred and non-referred students' average scores for time spending, we expect to confirm that students time spending predicts

their school adjustment: structured and family activities contribute positively to the prediction and unstructured activities negatively.

Method

Subjects

Rebound students. A total of 170 Rebound students recruited from three Rebound facilities participated in the study. Prior to their referral to a Rebound facility 148 Rebound students visited junior vocational high schools (87.1%) and 22 students were from academic streams. The ages of students in the Rebound group ranged from 12 to 16 years (*M-age* = 14.22 years; *SD* = 1.19). The sample consisted of 123 (72.4 %) boys and 47 girls (27.6 %) and included 123 (72%) students with an immigrant background.

Non-referred students. A total of 348 8th grade students from four junior vocational high schools participated in the study. The mean age was 13.67 years (*SD* = .66) and ranged from 12 to 16 years. The sample consisted of 146 boys (42.0%) and 171 girls (49.1%) (31 students did not report their gender) and included 286 (77%) students with an immigrant background.

Instruments

School adjustment. School adjustment was measured with a selection of items used by Wentzel (1994; 2002) to measure the attainment of goals that define school adjustment. The scale consisted of seven items. Sample items are 'How often do you try to do what the teacher asks you to do?' or 'How often do you try to help your classmates solve a problem once you've figured it out?'. A 5-point Likert scale ranged from '*never*' to '*always*'. Cronbach's alpha for the present study was .66 for Rebound students and .69 for non-referred students.

Structured leisure activities. The seven item scale was adapted from a measure presented by Barber, Stone, and Eccles (2005). Students rated seven activities (e.g., How often do you take part in a sports activity organized by a club, association, or school?) Some other activities were "going to theater or museum" and "learning how to play or make music". A 5-point Likert scale ranged from '*never or less than one hour per week*' to '*very often or more than 16 hours per week*'. Cronbach's alpha for the structured leisure scale was .69 for Rebound students, and .70 for non-referred students.

Unstructured leisure activities. This questionnaire was an adapted version of a self-report presented by Bartko and Eccles (2003) and consisted of seven items. Sample items were

'How often do you spend time on MSN?' and 'How often do you hang out with friends?'. The same 5-point Likert scale was used again ranging from '*never/less than one hour per week*' to '*very often/more than 16 hours per week*'. Cronbach's alpha for the unstructured leisure scale was .79 for Rebound students and .82 for non-referred students.

Family activities. Participants were asked to rate the following three items: 'How often do you cook or do housework?', 'How often do you take care of a family member?', and 'How often do you do things together with family members? Again the same 5-point Likert scale was used. Cronbach's alpha for the present scale was .55 for Rebound students and .61 for non-referred students.

Procedure

Questionnaires were administered in students' first week in the Rebound, before starting any behavioral interventions. Rebound teachers were asked to inform and ask parents for their sons' and daughters' participation at students' first intake session at Rebound facilities. Knowing that most Rebound students were from junior vocational high schools, the schools invited to serve as controls were also junior vocational high schools. Four schools received a letter inviting them to participate in the current study. This was followed up by a phone call to arrange a visit to explain the school director the purpose of the investigation. Parents received information prior to the study, and were asked to allow their children to participate. A trained researcher administered questionnaires during a regular school hour, with teachers present. Participants were assured anonymity and confidentiality, and were told that their participation was voluntary. Both the Rebound facilities and the four mainstream schools were located in highly urbanized areas.

Results

Preliminary Analyses

Age, gender, and ethnicity were compared between the Rebound and non-referred students. An ANOVA showed that the Rebound group (M = 14.22, SD = 1.19) was older than the non-referred group (M = 13.67, SD = .66), F (1, 490) = 45.01, $p < .01$, Cohen's d = .57). Chi-square tests showed an overrepresentation of males in Rebound institutions (χ^2 (1, 487) = 30.95, $p < .01$). Finally, a chi-square test demonstrated equal distribution of ethnicity between Rebound and control students (χ^2 (1, 487) = 1.39, p = .25). Based on these findings it was decided to correct further analyses for age and gender.

Prevalence and Correlations of School Adjustment and Leisure Activities

Table 1 presents means, standard deviations and one-way ANOVA's for the main variables by Rebound and non-referred students. With a medium to large effect size, non-referred students scored significantly higher on their school adjustment ($F(1, 465) = 22.497$, $p < .01$, Cohen's $d = .45$) than Rebound students. Furthermore, non-referred students partook more (with a medium effect size) in structured leisure activities ($F(1, 429) = 8.526$, $p < .01$, Cohen's $d = .30$) and family activities ($F(1, 449) = 10.458$, $p < .01$, Cohen's $d = .33$). No group differences between Rebound and non-referred students were found for unstructured leisure activities. Furthermore, school adjustment in general was not related to structured and unstructured leisure activities. Family activities on the other hand were positively but weakly related to school adjustment and both structured and unstructured activities.

Table 1
Means, standard deviations, and ANOVA's of the main study variables.

		M	*SD*	*F(p)*
1. School adjustment	Rebound	2.47	.59	22.49**
	Non-referred	2.73	.55	
2. Structured activities	Rebound	1.26	.44	8.53**
	Non-referred	1.41	.53	
3. Unstructured activities	Rebound	3.31	.84	2.53
	Non-referred	3.17	.89	
4. Family activities	Rebound	2.18	.81	10.46**
	Non-referred	2.46	.91	

** $p < .01$.

Leisure Participation and School Adjustment

Multiple regression analyses were performed with school adjustment as dependent variable and structured, unstructured and family activities as independent variables (see Table 3). Gender and age were entered as control variables. The overall regression was significant for the non-referred group $R2 = .13$, $F(5,237) = 6.84$, $p < .01$, but not for the Rebound group $R2 = .04$, $F(5,121) = .99$, $p = .95$. For the Rebound group school adjustment was only significantly predicted by family activities ($b^* = .234$, $p < .05$, $pr = .20$). For the Rebound students more spent time on family activities was related to better school adjustment; however, because the overall regression for the Rebound group was not significant, this effect should be interpreted with caution. For the non-referred students, school adjustment was also predicted by family activities ($b^* = .383$, $p < .01$, $pr = .34$). In addition, however, these students' school adjustment was predicted by unstructured leisure activities. The more students were active in unstructured

leisure activities, the lower their school adjustment (b^* = -.204, p < .01, pr =-.19). Structured leisure activity participation did not predict school adjustment in either group.

Table 2
Correlations between the main study variables

		1	2	3
1. School adjustment	Rebound	-		
	Non-referred	-		
2. Structured activities	Rebound	-.008	-	
	Non-referred	.012	-	
3. Unstructured activities	Rebound	-.035	.065	-
	Non-referred	-.087		-
			.269**	
4. Family activities	Rebound			.495**
		.204*	.285**	
	Non-referred	.264*	.371**	.351**

* p <.05; ** p <.01.

Table 3
Results of multiple regressions on school adjustment

	School adjustment	
	Rebound (β)	Non-referred (β)
Gender	-.04	-.05
Age	.02	.00
Structured activities	-.05	-.05
Unstructured activities	-.08	-.20*
Family activities	.23*	.38*
Total R^2	.04	.13*

Note. Standardized beta weights are shown. Gender was coded as 0 = boys, and 1 = girls.
* p < .05.

Discussion

In the current study we compared the school adjustment, structured as well as unstructured leisure activities, and family activities between students who were sent to Rebound facilities and their non-referred peers. Overall, Rebound students reported lower school adjustment, less structured leisure participation and less engagement in (shared) family activities than their non-referred peers. Furthermore, after controlling for age and gender, results showed family activities to be a predictor for school adjustment in both groups. Structured leisure participation did not contribute to the prediction of school adjustment. In the non-referred sample, next to family leisure participation, participation in unstructured activities negatively contributed to the prediction of school adjustment.

Family routines or shared family activities, particularly with adolescent involvement, so far received little attention in family research (Crosnoe & Trinitapolie, 2008; Roche & Ghazarian, 2012). This may be due to the fact that adolescents usually strive for independence and autonomy which easily conflicts with parents' desire for joint activities (Collins & Steinberg, 2006; Crosnoe & Trinitapolie, 2008). However, research suggests that supportive and positive relationships with parents are related to higher levels of school adjustment (Garcia-Reid, Reid, & Peterson, 2005; Gonzalez-DeHass, Willems, & Holbeain, 2005; Woolley & Bowen, 2007). Furthermore, students who have a higher sense of responsibility towards their caregivers or family, generally demonstrate more positive school adjustments and academic achievements (Fuligini, 2001; King, McInerney, & Watkins, 2013; Van Geel & Vedder, 2011). Also, recent studies showed beneficial effects of family activities on academic achievement (both verbal, quantitative achievement tests and school grades), positive expectations of adolescents' about educational success (Roche & Ghazarian, 2012) and overall social adjustment (Lanza & Taylor, 2010; Taylor & Lopez, 2005). Our study replicates and adds to these results by demonstrating that both for non-referred, 'regular' students and students referred to Rebound facilities family time-spending is related to school adjustment. This suggests that family activities is appreciated by at risk youth and as such may be important for striking a balance between adolescents' positive and negative developmental adaptations. Furthermore, the fact that referred youth scored lower on family activities than non-referred youth suggests that family time-spending may be a protective factor against youth's referrals to facilities for problematic behavior. Of course, longitudinal studies would be needed to get a better understanding of the causality between family activities and referrals.

Rebound youth also scored lower on structured leisure activities and higher on unstructured leisure activities than non-referred youth, though for these variables we did not find significant relations with school engagement amongst the referred youth. However, given the existing literature that ties structured leisure to positive outcomes among adolescents (Eccles & Barber, 1999; Mahoney & Stattin, 2000) and unstructured leisure to negative outcomes (Darling, 2005; Fredricks & Eccles, 2006; Gottfredson et al., 2004; Mahoney, 2000), it may be that the lower participation in structured leisure activities and the higher participation in unstructured leisure activities affected the referral through other types of behavior than those captured in the variable school adjustment. After all, students may be referred for other reasons than just school adjustment problems, such as substance abuse, or aggressive behaviors (Barth, Dunlap, Dane, Lochman, & Wells, 2004).

After controlling for age, gender, and including other leisure forms in the equation, unstructured leisure participation predicted poorer school adjustment for non-referred students, but not for referred students. The two groups of students did not differ with respect to unstructured leisure participation, but Rebound students overall reported significantly poorer school adjustment than their non-referred peers. It may be that the smaller range of scores for school adjustment reported by Rebound students, did not allow to capture a possible relationship with time spent on unstructured leisure activities. Furthermore, we found structured leisure activities not to be associated with school adjustment. The low average and low standard deviations among both the referred and the non-referred groups suggests that the youths in our sample did not engage in structured leisure often, and perhaps the participation in structured leisure activities amongst these youths was just too low to establish any positive relationships with school adjustment. The low averages and standard deviations for both the referred and non-referred samples may be because the participants were predominantly inner city youths from relatively poorer neighborhoods. In Dutch neighborhoods characterized by few sidewalks, high traffic pressure, and relatively high crime rates children participate little in structured leisure activities, particularly sports activities (Hosper, Klazinga, & Stronks, 2007; Van Lenthe, Brug, & Mackenbach, 2004). A lower socio-economic status is a strong predictor for parental decisions that their children do not participate in organized activities (Wimer et al., 2008). The unsafety of the neighborhood may also influence parents' decision to withhold their children (Furstenberg et al., 1999; Shann, 2001).

Limitations and Implications

Several limitations of the current investigation require mention. First, we did not control for socio-economic circumstances of the participants. Although family time sharing is not always monetary dependent (Crosnoe & Trinitapolie, 2008) it is a consistent finding that adolescents from high socio-economic circumstances are more likely to participate in structured leisure activities (e.g., Crosnoe & Trinitapolie, 2008; Fredricks & Eccles, 2006; Simpkins, Ripke, Huston, & Eccles, 2005). Due to fewer monetary resources parents may not be able to afford organized activities and they may be constrained in the means of transportation and time needed to involve their children in organized activities (Halpern, Baker, & Mollard, 2000; Shann, 2001). Second, students´ activity participation was analyzed by self-reports only. The quality of the study would likely have benefitted from reports of other persons or by using more advanced registration systems, such as actigraphs. Finally, the correlational nature of this study precludes to distinguish directions of relationships as well as causative reasoning.

The present study supported previous findings on the importance of shared family activities (e.g., Chin & Phillips, 2003; Crosnoe & Trinitapoli, 2008). Shared family activities not only facilitate bonding between parents and children, they also indirectly provide the opportunity to transmit values, and support the development of children's social, emotional, cognitive, and physical competences (Wigfield, Eccles, Schiefele, Roeser, & Davis-Kean, 2006). Bonding is beneficial to the psychological well-being as it provides secure foundations that give youth more confidence for exploring and monitoring their social and physical context, facing new challenges, and steering clear of the many psychosocial and emotional challenges typical of puberty and emerging adulthood (Chu, Saucier, & Hafner, 2010).

Our study found support for the benefits of family activities on students' school adjustment and showed that Rebound students reported less shared family activities at home. In general, Rebound facilities in the Netherlands offer training to improve students' moral and social skills and reduce cognitive distortions. However, the current findings suggest that a family-centered approach, in which a guidance for parents in family routines and activities, might also benefit school adjustment among adolescents. Although limited research has been conducted on the effects of family routines on overall school adjustment, family interventions in general show positive effects on adolescents' behavior (e.g., Gutman & Feinstein, 2010; Kirp, 2011; Stack et al., 2010). Positive parent-child interactions are basic to a healthy child development. Family based interventions that promote some level of structured, organized routines at home are likely to decrease school disengagement and antisocial behaviors among youth (Lanza & Taylor, 2010; Taylor, 1996). Future research should continue to study family routines and build and validate new interventions supporting the use of family routines as a basis for promoting healthy school adjustment.

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6.General discussion

The study reported in this thesis was started following a request from the board of a network of collaborating secondary schools in The Hague, the Netherlands that is responsible for the Rebound facilities in this city. Rebounds offer temporary (approximately three months) shelter to students with behavioral and educational problems that are so disruptive and so difficult to handle that available in-school support services do not suffice for these students. By receiving these problematic students Rebounds help to restore or maintain a positive school climate for the students and the teachers of the referring school. A second goal of Rebound facilities is to prepare the referred students for a return to their school, or for placement in another school. Rebounds provide students a second chance rather than removing them from school permanently.

The board wanted to know to what extent Rebounds reach the group of students for which Rebounds were established in the first place, viz. students with externalizing problems who disturb teachers' instruction and students' learning. In addition, they wanted to know whether or not referred students benefit from being send to a Rebound. For addressing the first question we analyzed profiles of referred students. We also analyzed disproportionality in referrals, i.e., whether or not immigrant children have a higher chance of being referred than national students, and leisure activities of referred students and their non-referred peers. The latter was done to not only look at the role of schools for students' school adjustment, but also at students' lives outside school. For analyzing whether or not Rebounds are beneficial to referred students, we compared the behavioral development of referred students to regular students who had behavioral problems comparable to the problems referred students had at the moment of their referral.

Rebound Students

As stated earlier most students referred to Rebounds are characterized by externalizing problem behaviors, particularly disruptive behaviors and verbal violence offences. Our analyses, in addition allowed to distinguish two groups of students: those who, next to externalizing problems showed internalizing behavior, motivation, and learning related problems and those who combined their externalizing problems with persistently truant behaviors. Although students mostly were referred through a regular placement procedure, the second group were students who frequently were referred through crisis procedures. This suggests that schools feel less in control when dealing with this group, which is a likely consequence of students' truancy.

We also found that disciplinary practices directed at students referred to Rebounds are rarely instigated by serious offences, but usually by disruptive offences and attendance issues. This concurs with earlier studies (DeVoe et al., 2004; Frick, 2004; Munn, Johnstone, Sharp, & Brown, 2007; Ofsted, 2005; Raffaele Mendez & Knoff, 2003; Skiba & Rausch, 2006). Furthermore, we found support for disproportionality in school disciplinary measures. Most Rebound students were male with an immigrant background. In our analyses these male immigrant students appeared to have a higher chance to be send to a Rebound than their national peers. The threshold for sending immigrant students to a Rebound may be lower than the threshold for their national peers. In any case, the average reported behavioral problems of immigrant students in Rebounds were less severe than the average reported behavioral problems of national students in Rebounds, even when controlling for respondents' socio-economic status. These findings concur with earlier studies on disciplinary practices in the US (Bryan et al., 2012; Skiba et al., 2011; Wallace, Goodkind, Wallace, & Bachman, 2008) and clarify that race and gender remain significant predictors of referrals. Furthermore, the findings resemble those among incarcerated youth in the Netherlands, where Moroccan Dutch youth are found to be incarcerated for relatively lighter offenses than Native Dutch youth (Veen, Stevens, Doreleijers, Van der Ende, & Vollebergh, 2010). These findings are suggestive of discriminatory practices. Hitherto, however, this cannot be concluded. Alternative explanations may be that the referred immigrant students come from schools were the policy states that students need to be referred to Rebounds quickly, immigrant parents may be less likely to protest, let alone effectively protest, a Rebound placement of their child, or the referral of immigrant students may be due to behaviors not adequately captured by the questionnaires used in the current study (cf. Skiba & Rausch, 2006; Skiba et al., 2011). Future studies should address why immigrant students in the Netherlands are more likely to be referred, even when the referred population of immigrant students reports fewer problems than the referred national students.

As expected, referred students reported lower school adjustment. In addition they were involved less in structured leisure participation and were less engaged in family activities than their non-referred peers. Family activities were found significantly related to school engagement. In line with this are several studies that demonstrate the developmental benefits of shared family meals among adolescents (Eisenberg, Olson, Neumark-Sztainer, Story, & Bearinger, 2004; Fulkerson, Story, Mellin, Leffert, Neumark-Sztainer, & French, 2006). These findings seem to underline that schools may be capable of helping students to improve their chances of a prosperous and healthy future, but that they "cannot compensate for society" as depicted so eloquently by Bernstein (1970).

What Works?

Our evaluation study suggested that Rebounds are not more effective for Rebound students than the regular school program is for non-referred at risk students. Specifically, Rebounds did not reduce students' cognitive distortions, externalizing behavior and antisocial behaviors. Precisely to achieve such behavioral changes Rebounds use the EQUIP program; a cognitive behavioral intervention. EQUIP aims to teach antisocial youth to think and act responsibly through peer-helping and skill-streaming methods (Gibbs, Potter, & Goldstein, 1995). The peer-helping method is based on the Positive Peer Culture (PPC) model (Vorrath & Brendtro, 1985) aiming to change negative peer pressure into a positive peer culture through targeting mutual responsibility by helping and learning from each other (Gibbs et al., 1995). The skill-streaming method is based on the Aggression Replacement Training (ART; Goldstein & Glick, 1987), with a strong component of restructuring behavior accompanying cognitions of antisocial youth. We expected that EQUIP, as an important building block of Rebound programs, would have had a stronger impact. A variety of reasons may explain these disappointing results. First, EQUIP is an intensive program and the fidelity of implementation is a real challenge. We could not systematically study the implementation of EQUIP in the participating Rebounds, but received signals suggesting that many students did not participate in the complete program. This is partly due to Rebound specific processing of students; students may start whenever the referring schools no longer can and know how to cope with a student (i.e., emergency or crisis placements) and may leave when better needs adapted support is required and available from other institutions. It is also important to note that the study conducted by Helmond, Overbeek, and Brugman (2012), found no moderating role of program fidelity in the reduction of cognitive distortions and recidivism, not even when a program fidelity booster was used. Second, Rebounds realize a concentration of students characterized by behavioral problems. This concentration may be conducive to an intensification of behavioral problems, through mimicking, mutual support or the creation of a social climate sympathetic to boasting about as well as conducting problematic behaviors (see for example, Dishion & Tipsord, 2011). The negative impact of the concentration of problematic youths is possibly stronger than the positive consequences of participating in EQUIP. Third, although most students referred to Rebounds are characterized by externalizing problems, a considerable proportion is characterized by other problems like, internalizing problems, learning problems and motivation problems. EQUIP is not adapted to the specific needs of these students. Finally, as indicated in the preceding section, students sent to Rebound lead challenging lives that go beyond the school. They lack well-structured lives and support from parents and other family members to participate in common, constructive activities. It could well be that neither schools, nor Rebounds and EQUIP can compensate for these suboptimal

resources for emergent adults' development and social participation. Comparable disappointing findings were recently reported in a study on the effects of the EQUIP program with incarcerated, antisocial youth in the Netherlands (cf. Brugman & Bink, 2011; Helmond, Overbeek, & Brugman, 2012).

We did, however, find family time-spending to be positively related to school adjustment. This was the case for Rebound students as well as for students in regular schools. Family routines or shared family activities, particularly with adolescent involvement, so far received little attention in family research (Crosnoe & Trinitapolie, 2008; Roche & Ghazarian, 2012), but showed clearly positive relationships with adolescents' academic achievement (both test results and school grades), positive expectations of adolescents' about educational success (Roche & Ghazarian, 2012) and adolescents' overall social adjustment (Lanza & Taylor, 2010; Taylor & Lopez, 2005). Perhaps, these findings hints at a necessary shift of focus in a needs adapted educational approach for youth with behavioral problems.

Limitations and Future Directions

This thesis was based on cross-sectional designs which only offered correlational data. Though we used valid instruments, for some of the reported differences we can only speculate about the explanations. This dissertation would have benefitted from more in-depth qualitative observations that might have given us a better grasp on the potential explanations of the findings reported. Furthermore, this study, would have benefitted from direct observations of referral procedures and EQUIP sessions to get a more differentiated picture of selection and decision making processes in action and what these entail for interactions between students and school staff and possible cultural bias in inclusion and exclusion practices. Overall, this would have allowed for being more precise on whether or not the Rebounds included in the study properly and fairly serve the population for which they were established. Due to limited time to conduct the study and to the Rebound staffs' refusal to allow us to observe during EQUIP sessions, we had to limit ourselves to self-report questionnaires instead. Knowing that self-reports have limited validity (Achenbach, Dumenci, & Rescorla, 2002), we corrected as much as possible for potential biases by using well validated instruments, used and investigated frequently in Dutch and ethnically diverse youth samples.

This study could not investigate longitudinal behavioral changes. This is a rather common methodological challenge that scholars face when studying the effects of alternative education programs, like Rebound. Not only is the collection of extensive follow-up data time consuming and expensive, but, particularly in alternative education programs like Rebound students' untimely entries into the program and early exits, make longitudinal data collection a daunting effort (cf., Cox,

1999; Flower, McDaniel, & Jolivette, 2011). As a case in point, in the current study we lost track of more than half of the Rebound students due to truancy, early transfers to (new or the same) mainstream schools, and referrals to external youth care services or juvenile youth centers. Future studies should attempt to achieve long-term follow-up records, for instance, by arranging good contacts with regular schools, youth care institutions, youth correctional facilities and potential employers of behaviorally challenging youth.

Implications

Alternative education programs like Rebound run a high risk to function as 'dumping grounds' for challenging, disruptive students (e.g., Lehr, Tan, & Ysseldyke, 2009; Tobin & Sprague, 2000). Moreover, as shown before, they are prone to disproportionality in referrals (e.g., Skiba & Rausch, 2006). This is likely to be a transactional process in that it increases the chances to be evaluated as ineffective and unfair (Van Acker, 2007). Nevertheless, most students in alternative education programs, like Rebounds, are referred due to disruptive externalizing behaviors (Lehr, Tan, & Ysseldyke, 2009).This means that schools are challenged by very real problems and in need of a program that serves as a 'relief valve'. Rebounds have this function. If policymakers, administrators, and school staff decide to continue Rebound facilities, it is important to rigorously and continuously evaluate students' progress and staff satisfaction (Tobin & Sprague, 2000), both as conditions for improvement of the programs and to make sure that students and staff feel safe and get from the program what the program is promising. Furthermore, through monitoring and continuous evaluation the chances decrease for 'unfair' treatment of referred students.

A second implication is linked to the finding that a minority position plays a role in disciplinary practices in that immigrant students had a higher chance of being referred while reporting less externalizing behavior than their national peers. Perhaps teachers are more likely to refer immigrant students, because they tend to evaluate their behavior in a more negative manner. To reduce this risk, schools are well advised to use school-wide positive behavioral support intervention programs (SWPBS-programs; cf. Fallon, O'Keeffe, & Sugai, 2012; Sugai & Horner, 2002; Vincent et al., 2011). This type of program aims to prevent maladaptive student behavior by ensuring all students that they are part of the best evidence-based academic and behavioral practices. This means that students as well as staff is continuously monitored for well-defined behavioral standards, and that discipline referrals are collected in a common and easily accessible, but well protected web-based registration system, and are evaluated carefully (Sugai & Horner, 2002). The fact that both in the US and in the Netherlands we found cultural minority students to be disproportionately affected by disciplinary referrals, suggests that next to improving the validity of

referrals, training teachers to be more culturally responsive to students' learning and developmental needs, may further improve the quality of alternative education programs (Cartledge & Kourea, 2008; Monroe, 2005; Singleton & Linton, 2006, Vincent et al., 2011).

Thirdly, as stated before, this study has led to doubts about the validity of referrals to Rebounds. Rebound did not change students' cognitive distortions, externalizing behavior and overt and covert problem behaviors. It is questionable whether Rebound facilities are adequate for all referred students. First, we found in our profile analyses of characteristics of students in Rebounds a group of students having difficulties with learning and their motivation for learning. Although, these characteristics were related to externalizing behaviors, the results suggest that underlying problems differ between these and other referred students. Rebounds may be less effective for these students. Rebounds have a strong focus on behavioral interventions, but are weak in their educational curricula and resources for adequate instruction and learning support (School Inspectorate, 2007). Students who have problems in coping with learning and the achievement challenges that school confronts them with, would likely benefit more from special educational tracks within or outside schools, than from Rebound. These students lose effective learning time in Rebounds.

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7.Samenvatting

Deze dissertatie gaat over de kwaliteit en effectiviteit van Reboundvoorzieningen, toegespitst op één specifieke casus, namelijk de Rebounds van het samenwerkingsverband Zuid-Holland West. Reboundvoorzieningen bieden een opvang-/leervoorziening aan voor jongeren die tijdelijk niet zijn te handhaven op school, maar niet zodanig psychosociale problematiek vertonen, dat ze eigenlijk in aanmerking zouden moeten komen voor het cluster 4 onderwijs. De Reboundregeling kent een dubbele doelstelling: (a) zorg voor de individuele, verwijderde leerling en (b) het bereiken van een goede onderwijsleersituatie voor de niet verwijderde leerlingen en hun leerkrachten. Er is nog maar weinig evidence-based onderzoek gedaan naar Reboundvoorzieningen. Maar ook internationaal, blijken soortgelijke time-out projecten vanwege methodologische beperkingen lastig empirisch te onderzoeken. In dit proefschrift willen we een bijdrage leveren door een gedetailleerde blik te werpen op het type jongere dat wordt verwezen, en na te gaan of er correct wordt verwezen, of de Rebounds effectief zijn en in hoeverre de vrijetijdsbesteding van deze jongeren van invloed is op hun algehele schoolhouding.

In het *eerste hoofdstuk* hebben we getracht een profiel te schetsen van de verwezen leerlingen. De focus van dit deelonderzoek lag vooral op de fit tussen de doelstelling van de Reboundvoorziening en de uiteindelijk verwezen leerling. Wat voor de ene school lastig is the handhaven, kan voor een andere school makkelijker op te lossen zijn door de beschikbaarheid van betere leerlingenzorg. Uit de resultaten blijkt het merendeel van de Reboundleerlingen vanwege externaliserend probleemgedrag verwezen te zijn. Vooral aanhoudend storend gedrag in de les en verbaal geweld tegen het schoolpersoneel zijn veel voorkomende vormen. Er blijken in ieder geval twee typen Reboundjongeren te kunnen worden onderscheiden. De eerste groep Reboundjongeren toont naast externaliserend gedrag ook internaliserende gedragsproblemen, is vaak ongemotiveerd voor school en toont een problematische werkhouding tijdens de lessen. Opvallend is voor deze groep dat geen van de jongeren in het afgelopen jaar op school heeft gespijbeld. Deze jongeren worden vaak via een reguliere aanmeldprocedure geplaatst. In de tweede groep zitten jongeren die vooral externaliserend- en spijbelgedrag laten zien en die overwegend met een crisisprocedure in de Rebound zijn geplaatst. Deze laatste groep lijkt dan ook beter te passen bij de doelstelling van de Reboundvoorziening dan de eerste.

Om meer zicht te krijgen op verschillen tussen de verwezen Reboundleerlingen en niet-verwezen leerlingen hebben we in *hoofdstuk 2* beide groepen vergeleken op hun externaliserend

probleemgedrag en antisociaal gedrag. Het onderzoek laat zien dat naar Rebound inderdaad die leerlingen worden doorverwezen die meer problematiek rapporteren dan hun niet-verwezen leeftijdsgenoten op het VMBO. Dit effect is het sterkst merkbaar voor externaliserend probleemgedrag, waaronder zowel gedragsproblemen als hyperactiviteit vallen. Daarnaast lijken migrantenjongeren sneller verwezen te worden dan Nederlandse jongeren. Voorgaande studies, voornamelijk uitgevoerd in de Verenigde Staten, laten zien dat soortgelijke time-out projecten bewust of onbewust gevoelig kunnen zijn voor discriminatoire praktijken. Het is derhalve van groot belang deze projecten regelmatig te evalueren en te monitoren om signalen van dergelijke praktijken te onderkennen en te voorkomen.

Om de problematiek bij de Reboundleerlingen te verminderen en hen weer gereed te maken voor deelname aan het regulier onderwijs, maken de Reboundvoorzieningen gebruik van het EQUIP programma. Het doel van deze gedragsinterventie is om de denkbeelden van antisociale jeugd te veranderen die hun problematische gedrag begeleiden, en er zo voor te zorgen dat deze jeugd zich meer verantwoordelijk zal gaan gedragen. In *hoofdstuk 3* hebben we onderzocht of het EQUIP programma effect heeft op het externaliserend, en antisociaal gedrag en de denkbeelden van Reboundjongeren. Hiervoor hebben we voor- en een nameting uitgevoerd bij zowel de Reboundleerlingen als leerlingen die niet waren verwezen, maar wel bij de voormeting vergelijkbare scores hadden voor externaliserend en antisociaal gedrag. Uit de resultaten bleek dat EQUIP geen effect had op het verminderen van het externaliserend en antisociaal gedrag en op de denkbeelden van Reboundjongeren die gepaard gaan met het problematische gedrag. Positief is dat Reboundleerlingen geen verhoogde mate van externaliserend en antisociaal gedrag lieten zien. We hielden hiermee wel rekening, omdat eerder onderzoek liet zien dat problemen van jongeren kunnen verergeren als ze bij elkaar worden gebracht voor een niet goed verlopende interventie. Daarbij worden de doelen van de interventie doorgaans niet bereikt, maar beïnvloeden de jongeren elkaar wel wat betreft negatief gedrag.

In het *vierde hoofdstuk* hebben we de vrijetijdsbesteding bij Reboundjongeren onderzocht. Jongeren die aan gestructureerde activiteiten deelnemen, vaak onder begeleiding van volwassenen (bijvoorbeeld sport), lijken minder vatbaar te zijn voor antisociaal gedrag en een positievere schoolhouding te ontwikkelen dan jongeren die met elkaar ongestructureerde activiteiten ondernemen, bijvoorbeeld met vrienden rondhangen. Ook jongeren die met de familie activiteiten ondernemen of in het huishouden ondersteunen, blijken een groter verantwoordelijkheidsgevoel te hebben. Niet alleen ten opzichte van de familie, maar ook in schoolse taken blijken deze jongeren zich meer verantwoordelijk te voelen en daarmee hun kans te vergroten een diploma te halen. Bij een vergelijking van de Reboundleerlingen met niet verwezen VMBO leerlingen hebben we geen

steun kunnen vinden voor het effect van gestructureerde en ongestructureerde activiteiten. In geen van de groepen bleken gestructureerde en ongestructureerde activiteiten voorspellers voor schoolse aanpassing. Samen activiteiten ondernemen met de familie, daarentegen, bleek wel positief samen te hangen met positief gedrag en een positieve houding op school. Wellicht moet met deze bevinding uitdrukkelijker rekening worden gehouden in toekomstige pogingen om de schoolloopbaan van jongeren te verbeteren.

8.Biography

Begüm Coşkun was born on the 15th October 1982 in ‘s-Hertogenbosch, the Netherlands. After completing her secondary school at the Sint-Janslyceum in her birthplace, she started to study Child and Education Studies at Leiden University in 2002 and received her Research Master’s degree in educational sciences in 2009. During her studies she worked as a research-assistant at the Rommert Casimir Institute of Developmental Psychopathology and the Centre of Intercultural Education. In her PhD research at the Institute of Educational Studies at Leiden University she evaluated the working and effects of rebound facilities in The Hague. She is currently working as a teacher for the School of Social Work at the Rotterdam University of Applied Sciences.