



## **Self-Controlled Offence Prevention**

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### **Abstract:**

Violent or sexual criminal offences may cause severe damages to the victims. The prevention of these offences is thus of high importance. If such offences have been committed, it depends on preventing recidivism by treatment and, if necessary, detention of the offenders. Different treatment programs have been developed and partially been evaluated for this purpose. This is, however, not sufficient for prevention. The efforts should rather also be directed to the prevention of the first offence itself, and up to now there are hardly any programs that help offence-prone persons not to become delinquent. The "Forensische Ambulanz Baden" (Forensic Ambulatory Service Baden), supported by the private organisation "Behandlungsinitiative Opferschutz (BIOS-BW)" (Treatment Initiative Victim Protection), has now initiated the program "No Violent and Sexual Offences". This program is directed to offence-prone persons. These are persons who have not yet been convicted for violent or sexual offences but who either in their fantasy can imagine to commit a violent or sexual offence or who have already acted as an offender in the dark field and for whom, due to their psychological disposition, the commitment of an offence must be expected especially in situations favouring an offence. These persons can either contact a forensic ambulatory service on their

own initiative or can be put in contact with this service by authorities, social or charitable organisations, physicians, lawyers or youth homes. Treatment Centres have been established in Karlsruhe, Mannheim, Freiburg, Offenburg, Heidelberg, Pforzheim, Baden-Baden and Heilbronn since August, 2010. In the ambulatory services offence-prone persons are given help and therapies by psychologists which may enable them to lead a life without offences. First, a stable therapeutic relation must be established, in some cases a crisis intervention may be necessary. Moreover, the motivation to make a therapy must be strengthened and stabilized. The reasons for the tendency to offences and possible risk situations to commit offences are analyzed in a detailed initial examination. Together with the client, a constructive handling of these factors must be worked out and he must be given strategies and techniques enabling him to control his tendency to offences. Numerous persons have already taken advantage of the possibilities of the ambulatory services. The aim of the research project "Self-Controlled Offence Prevention" is to find out which persons with which problems contact the ambulatory services, which treatment processes and interactions exist among the offence-prone persons and the persons treating them, whether differentiated indications and treatment priorities result from the care of the clients, whether modifications in the self-regulation-behavior of the clients as well in other clinically and criminologically relevant variables result from this and if this makes it possible to stabilize clients such that the commitment of violent and sexual offences is effectively prevented. Thus the question shall be answered whether the ability of offence-prone persons to self-regulation can be strengthened by psychological consultation and treatment in a way that a stable resistance towards committing offences can be established. The anonymity of the clients is strictly protected. The project is realized in cooperation of psychologists, criminologists and jurists under the management of Prof. Dr. Dieter Dölling of the Institute of Criminology and Prof. Dr. Peter Fiedler of the Institute of Psychology of the University of Heidelberg.