





Kinderen uit de Knel

No kids in the middle

[www.kinderenuitdeknel.nl](http://www.kinderenuitdeknel.nl)

Justine van Lawick, Lorentzhuis

Margreet Visser, KJTC

# NUMBERS ?

- In the Netherlands: each year 70.000 children experience a divorce of their parents
- 30% of the divorces are complicated, of this group 15% work out very problematic

**This means that in the Netherlands yearly more than 3000 children are caught in the divorce fights of their parents**

# Consequences

- Spruijt (2007) Amato (2000) most children do well after divorce. 30% of the children develop symptoms, mainly when parents fight

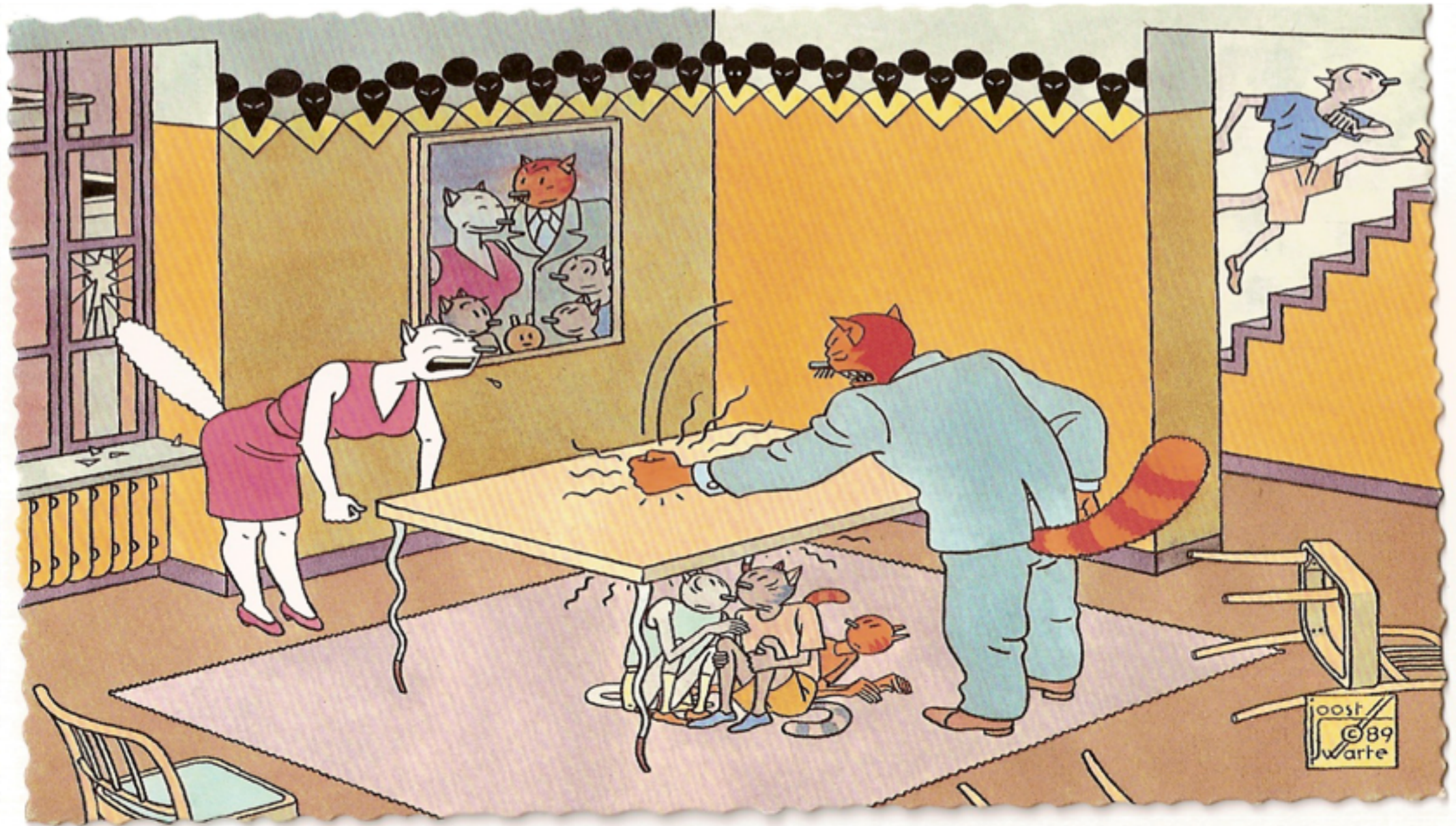
# SOCIAL POLITICAL CONTEXT

- Lobby of the 'silly fathers'
- 1998 : both parents have legal authority after divorce
- 2009: obligatory parental plan

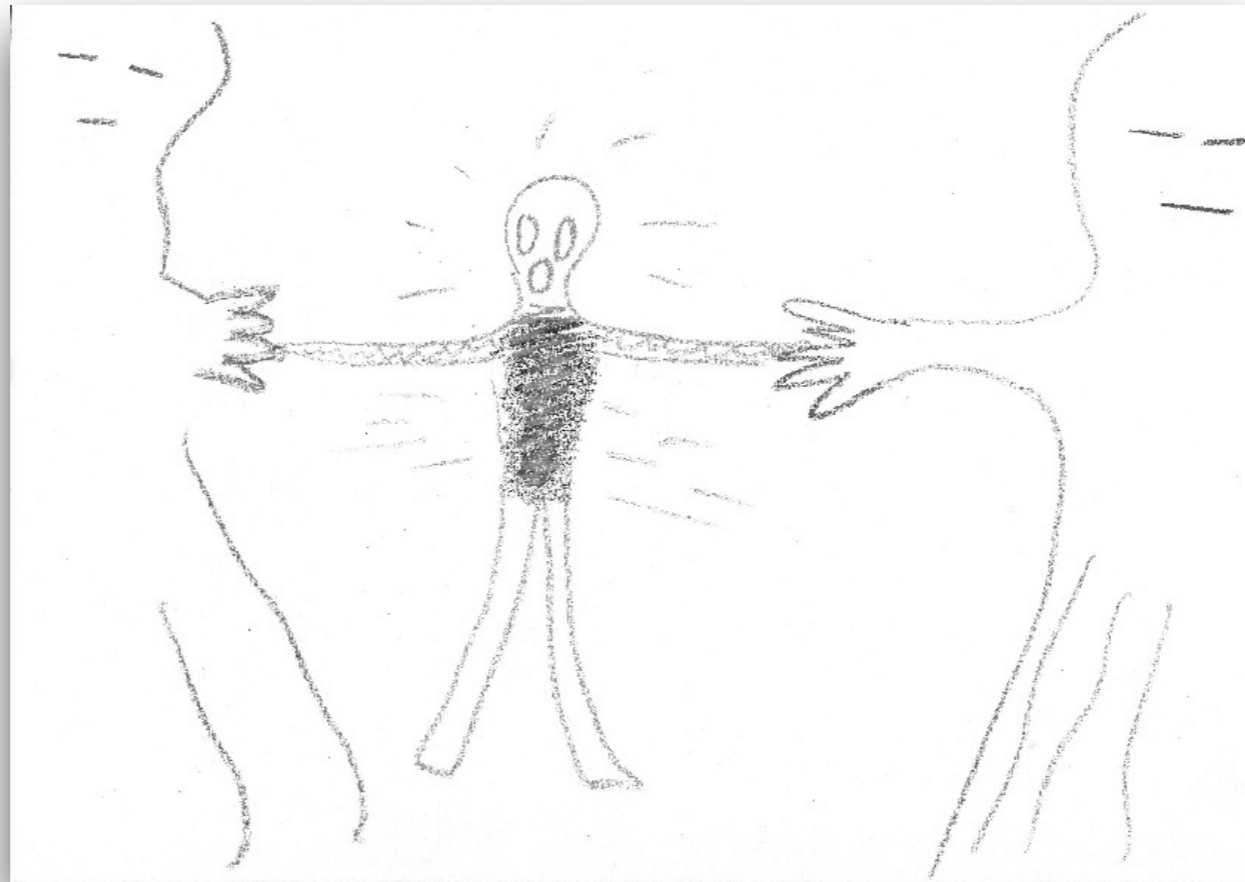
# We all get crazy

- Youth care; child protection, lawyers, mediators, therapists, social workers, family guardians
- The social network, family, friends, school
- Our secretary











# Demonisation

- the opposite of accepting the tragedy of life (Haim Omer)
- a destructive process that divides the world in perpetrators and victims
- is a trigger for more conflict and violence
- it's not my responsibility, the cause is outside me
- keeps people from taking responsibility

# Parents in high conflict divorces

- Don't want to come together
- Both have ONE truth: the other one is lying
- Therapist is torn apart: THERE is the perpetrator!!!
- couple sessions can trigger more demonization

# Children from high conflict divorced parents

- Children develop symptoms and are referred for therapy
- In child therapy: symptoms can become worse
- Children start to feel more but cannot express their feelings at home
- Children cannot live in two different truths

What usually works in therapy seems not to work with high conflict divorces

## **New Roads?**

**The Lorentzhuis en the Child and Juvenile Trauma Centre find each other**

**The voice and  
development of the  
child in the center**

**parents** have to do  
the work



# 6 Families

**Parallel:**

**Parentsgroup and  
childrensgroup**

# Intake

Contact with professional context: lawyers, child protection, youth care, therapists, psychiatrists and others

## 1. Parents together: commitment?

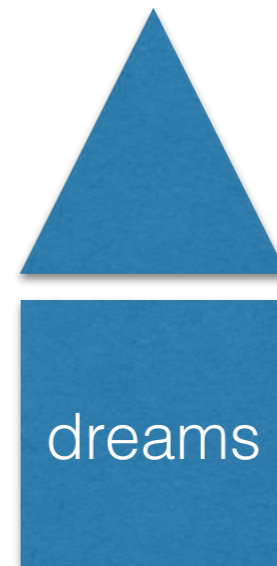
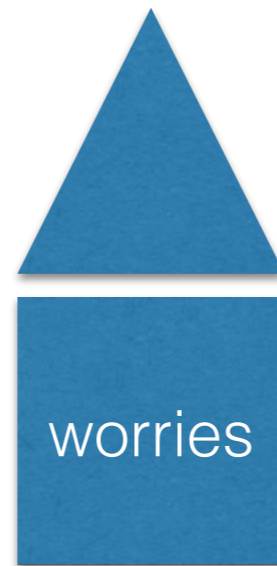
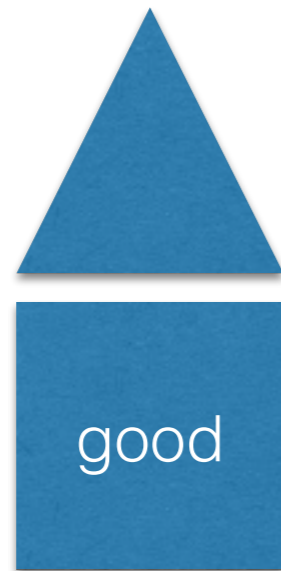
- inform about the project
- have to come together and attend all sessions
- allow the children to be in the children's group
- stopping legal processes or set them on hold
- addiction? actual violence?
- questions

## 2. Parents and children

- together and separate
- parents: trauma?
- setting goals: better team / parallel solo-parenthood

# Intake Children

## 3 Huizen (Turnell)



# Social network

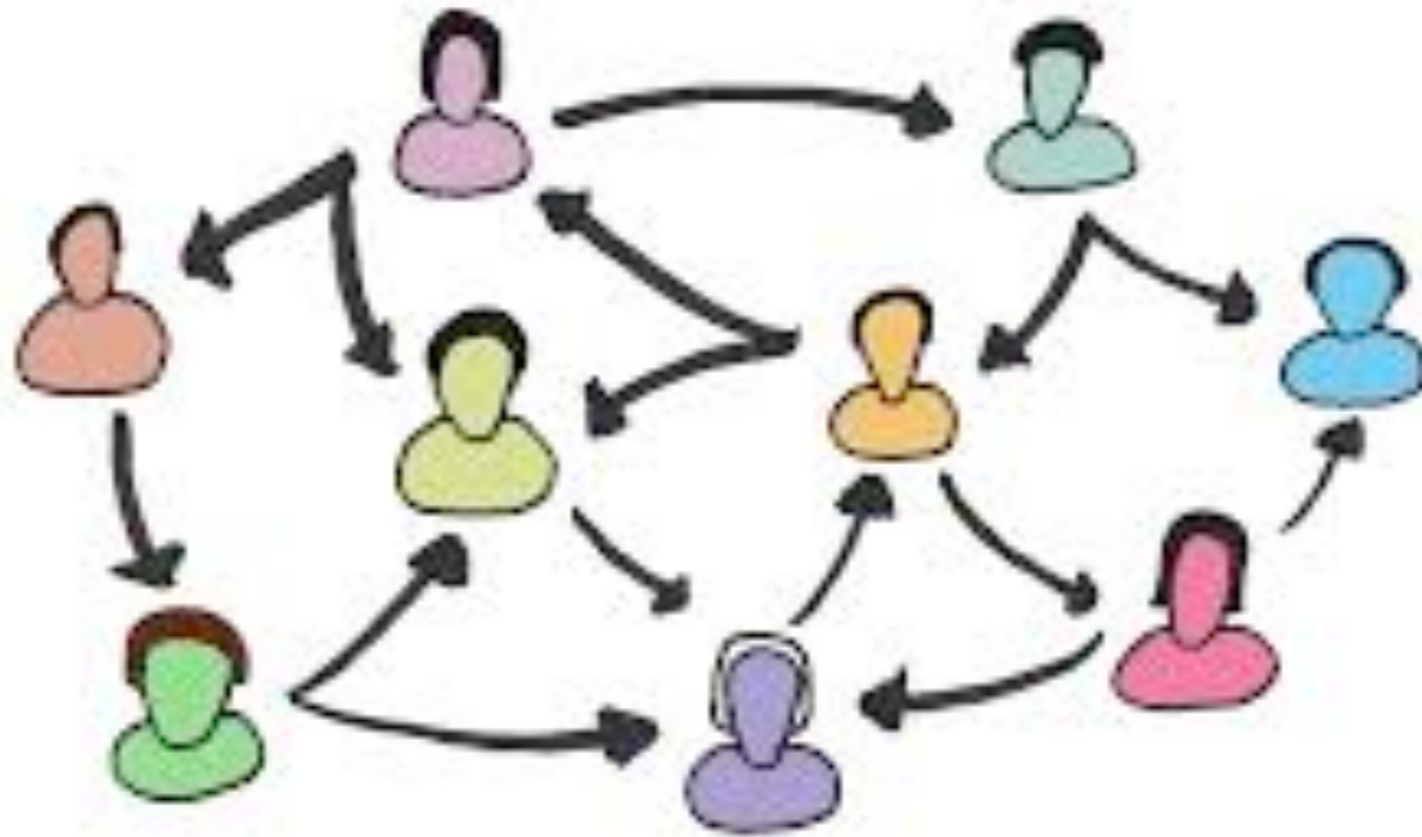
**Session 0:**

Network information evening

new partners, grandparents, family, friends, professionals helpers,  
lawyers.

**Please: HELP US!**

# professional network a clan



# PROGRAM

8 sessions, 2 hours.

1. Meeting as parents, Destructive patterns
2. Children in the middle,  
what happens to them



3. escalations and de-escalations, window of tolerance
4. narratives around not living together, write a letter to your child
5. new solutions for old problems
6. presentations of children and parents
7. issues
8. evaluation and plans

# childrensgroup

Parallel

Warming up

Artistic expressions

Reflections

Wishes

Resilience

# Zitting 6

6. Presentation of the children for the parents: film, pictures, music, dance, graffiti .....

Presentation of the parents to the children: text, poetry, pictures, symbols, power point...