

Justine van Lawick & Margreet Visser. Divorced parents in high conflict, their children and their network. The *No kids in the middle* project.

When parents fight and demonise each other after divorce, children are caught in the middle. These parents live in a truth, a monologue: I am doing everything I can to rescue my child from this bad other parent. Judges, Lawyers, Child protection, Mediators, therapists and others can be involved. In the Netherlands we started a project for these families to open up dialogical space. We work with a group of six families. A parentsgroup and a childrensgroup. We work in a dialogical way with verbal and non-verbal interventions and with reconciliation rituals. Working with the social network around the families, also new partners and grandparents, is an important part of the program. Parents are invited to help each other to leave the destructive monologues, to enter a dialogical space, to let go en to forgive themselves and the other. The children are strengthened in their resilience. They are invited to share their experiences and in creating all kinds of artistic expressions around being the child of fighting divorced parents. They present their creations to the parents in a ritual session. Parents are also are invited to present their wishes for the future to their children. In this workshop we will address our perspective on high conflict divorces and family life and tell about our project. Video clips will be part of the presentation. We will do some exercises and facilitate dialogue. We will also share some of the results of the research and clarify the circular process between clinical practice and research and how the two influence each other.