

# Supervision of probation during the crisis

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BEWÄHRUNGS- UND GERICHTSHILFE

# The Situation at the beginning

- Due to the Corona Pandemic, Probation and Judicial Assistance stopped personal client contacts with only a few exceptions in march 2020 (e.g. High risk offenders)
- Our mandate and services were continued to be offered
- At this point of time, we did not have any video tools
- → Contacts to clients took place by telephone



# Supervision of probation during the crisis

How is  
subordination to a  
probation officer  
designed in times  
of crisis???



## The study consists of...

### Evaluation of electronic client documentation (51 file notes)

- **randomly** with two files per month within the 9 BGBW facilities
- additional evaluation of memos provided by employees who participated in the survey **voluntarily**

### A questionnaire (52)

- in which probation officers were asked about their assessment under these circumstances



# The inspection of files

Who made the contact  
(Probation  
officer/client)?

Had agreements been  
made with the clients?

Which topics were  
discussed ?

Was the telephone  
contact corresponded  
to the defined  
intensity of care?

Was the case ongoing  
or in the initial survey  
phase?



## Results of the inspection of files

Who made the  
contact (probation  
officer/client)?

- April: 67% (probation officers)
- Mai: 62% (probation officers)



# Results of the inspection of files

Which topics  
were discussed?

- wide range of topics also in the context of the telephone consultation
- accumulation in both months in the field of employment/activity
- Conditions and instructions were also frequently discussed
- The need to talk about the financial situation, the social environment and health issues is also reflected
- Decrease of the topic of risk management between April and May.



## Results of the inspection of files

Had agreements  
been made with  
clients?

- April: 88.57% of the cases
- May: 77.42% of the cases





## Results of the inspection of files

Was the telephone  
contact  
corresponded to  
the defined  
intensity of care?

- April: 72,73% of the cases
- May: 77.42% of the cases



## Results of the inspection of files

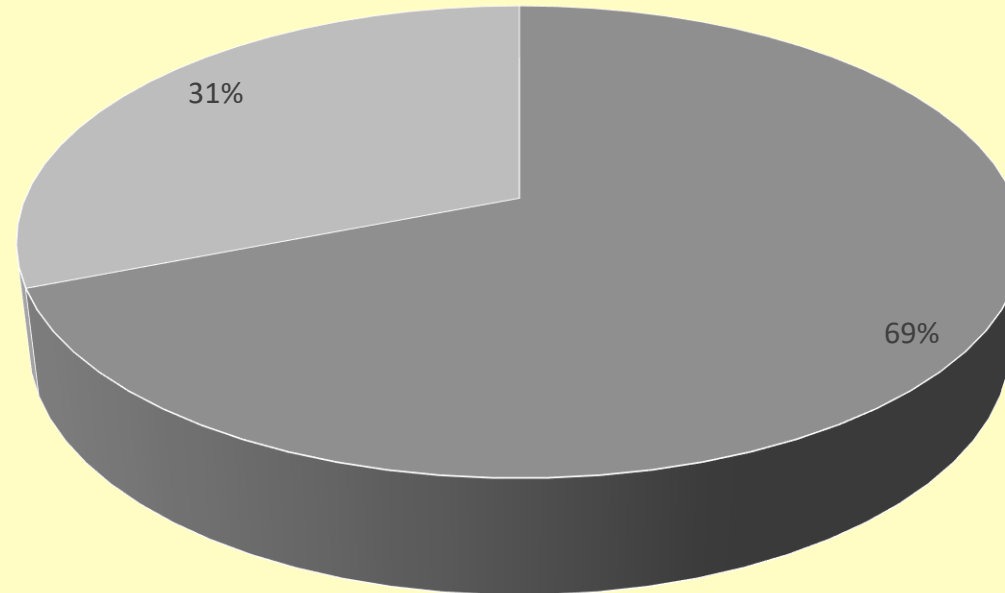
Was the case in  
the initial survey  
phase?

- April: 22.1% of the cases
- May: 16.13% of the cases



# Results of the probation officers survey

“Despite the current situation, I´m in telephone contact with my clients”



■ "applies" ■ "partly applies"



# Do I notice changes in my clients needs? (52% „Yes“)

current  
worries

more open  
towards  
their  
probation  
officers

how to deal  
with sudden  
isolation and  
increased  
stress

talk about the  
pandemic and  
how to deal with  
the restrictions  
and prohibitions

existential  
fears/fears  
for the  
future

tips on how  
to structure  
their day

practical  
questions  
about  
everyday life



# During the telephone contacts, topics are raised which have not been addressed in previous personal contacts.

future opportunities on the labor market

fears in connection with the Corona Virus

questions about further developments

how to deal with the regulations and administrative offences that have already been committed

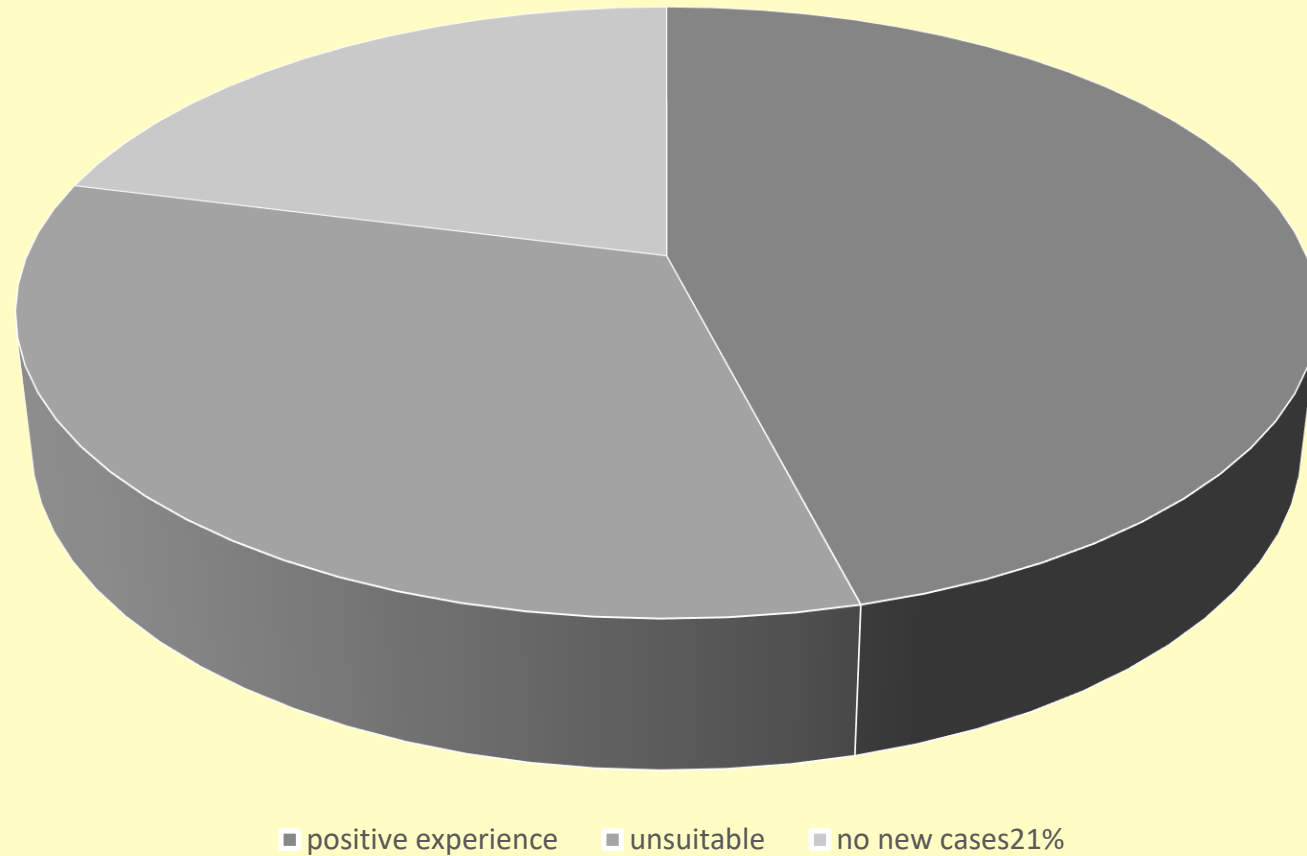
Questions about dealing with loneliness and boredom

Emergency care and schooling for children

by conflicts and spatial narrowness



# Could I also conduct initial survey interviews through telephone contacts?



# Positive experience with initial survey interviews through telephone contacts?

- due to the open-minded behavior of a client, an initial survey could be completed. This came as a great surprise to me. The attitude of the client was very positive
- I myself asked more direct questions and received detailed answers
- Clients are more relaxed and not as tense as in a personal conversation
- the initial assessment on the phone took less time than during personal contact, a working relationship could be established more quickly and topics marked with shame could be discussed more easily



# Difficulties with initial survey interviews through telephone contacts?

- Some of the interviewees are decisively lacking the facial expressions and gestures of their counterpart. This makes the course of the conversation more difficult and one has to listen much more closely or pay attention to one's own wording in order to prevent misunderstandings
- difficult to build up trust, and clients react very suspiciously to answer questions in person or even tell their life story to someone they do not know
- *"It is difficult to judge whether what is being said has been received. On the other hand, clients also tell more because they don't see my reaction."*





## What other experiences have you made with regard to telephone counseling?

*"Some telephone calls were surprisingly long. Clients were more relaxed in their familiar surroundings" or "clients who I did not expect to hear from me, clients who I thought would have problems with the situation coped well with it. Mood is more relaxed on the phone, the struggle for appointments is eliminated, calls from the home office have a familiar atmosphere, and clients touch on private issues of their own accord."*

*"It is uncomplicated and very practical, clients can sometimes be reached more reliably than if they have to come to appointments. It works much better than expected. All topics can be discussed very well; especially for purely organizational matters, personal meetings are not necessary. There is no need to travel, which is a great advantage. It would be desirable that in future more emphasis is placed on telephone consultation."*

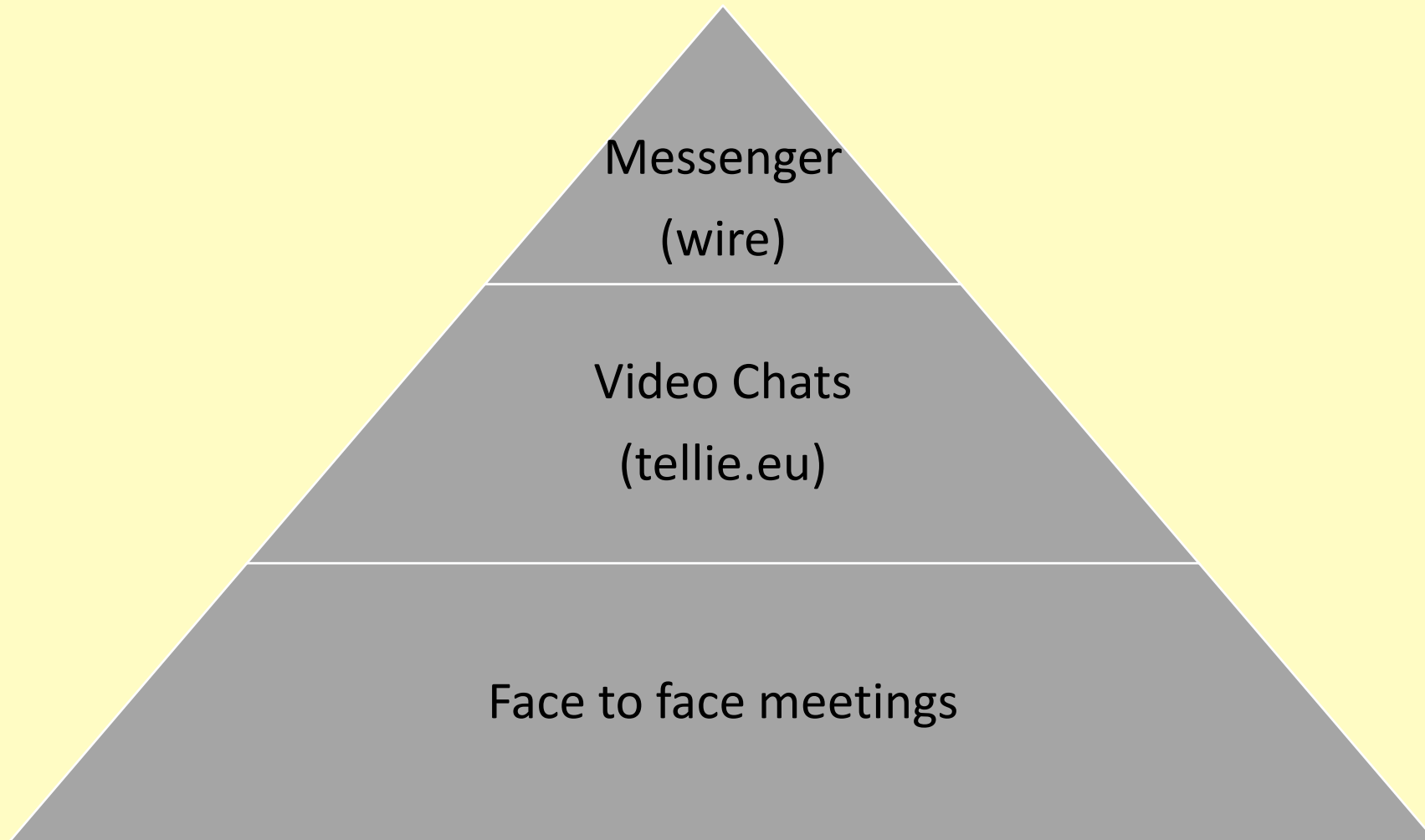


## Summary and outlook

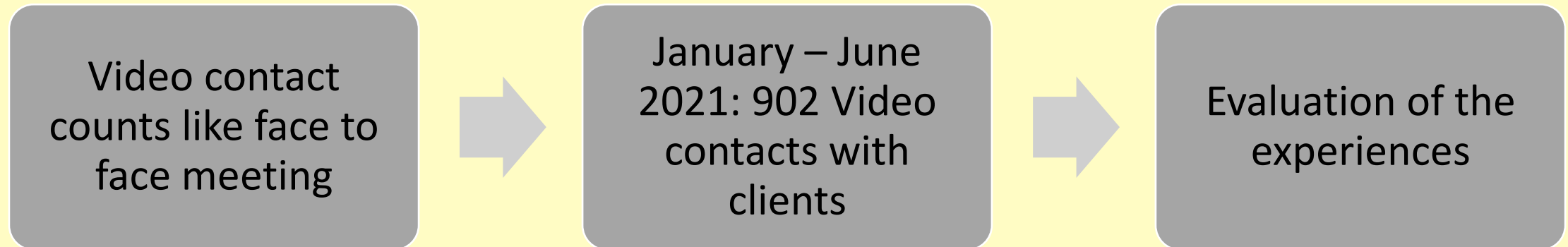
The assessments of the asked practitioners allow the conclusion for the BGBW that telephone consultation and/or consultation by video chat could be a serious option for suitable cases in future.



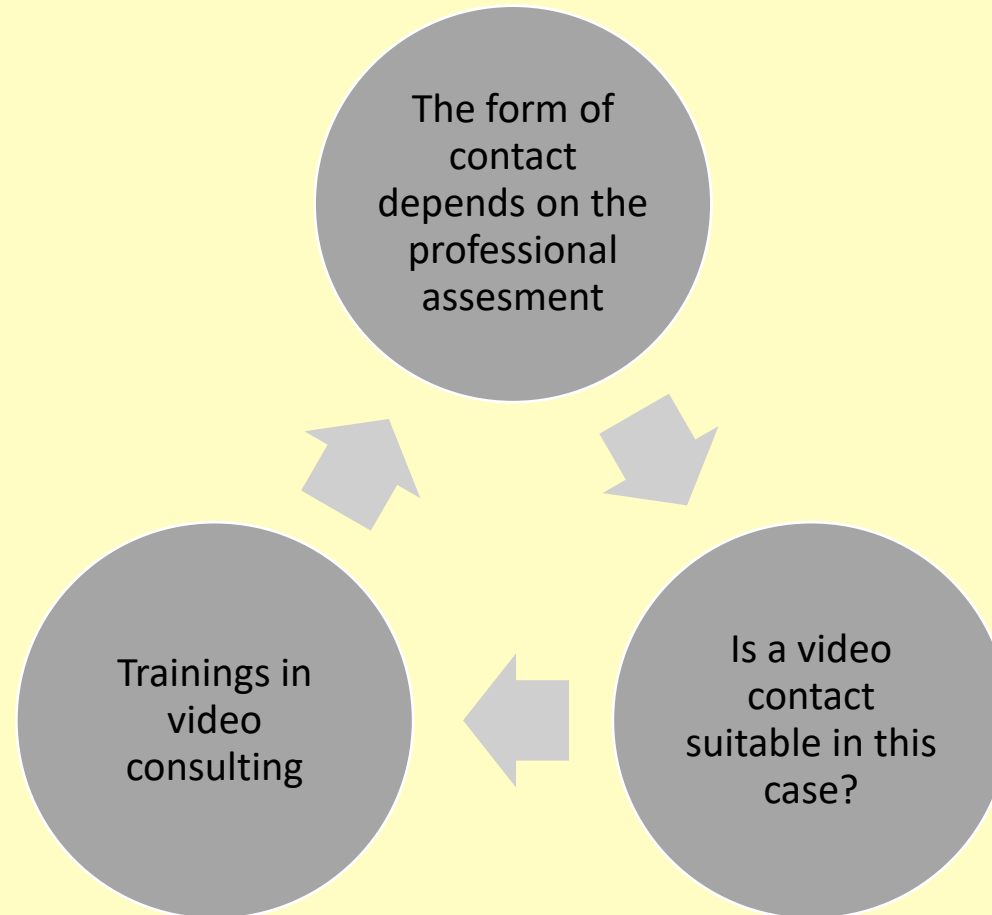
# How have things developed?



# Will we return to the old situation of face to face meetings?




# Will there be hybrid forms of contacting service-users?




# Will technology take over?

Digitization will open up new opportunities in the field of social work



These must be evaluated in the light of the interests of all those involved (Clients, professionals, law enforcement agencies)



Other important Topics are data protection, technical equipment or professional framework conditions

# Vielen Dank für Ihr Interesse!

