



Dutch Institute for Public Health and the Environment

Dutch Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sports

Experiences of the Corona Behavior Unit in the Netherlands

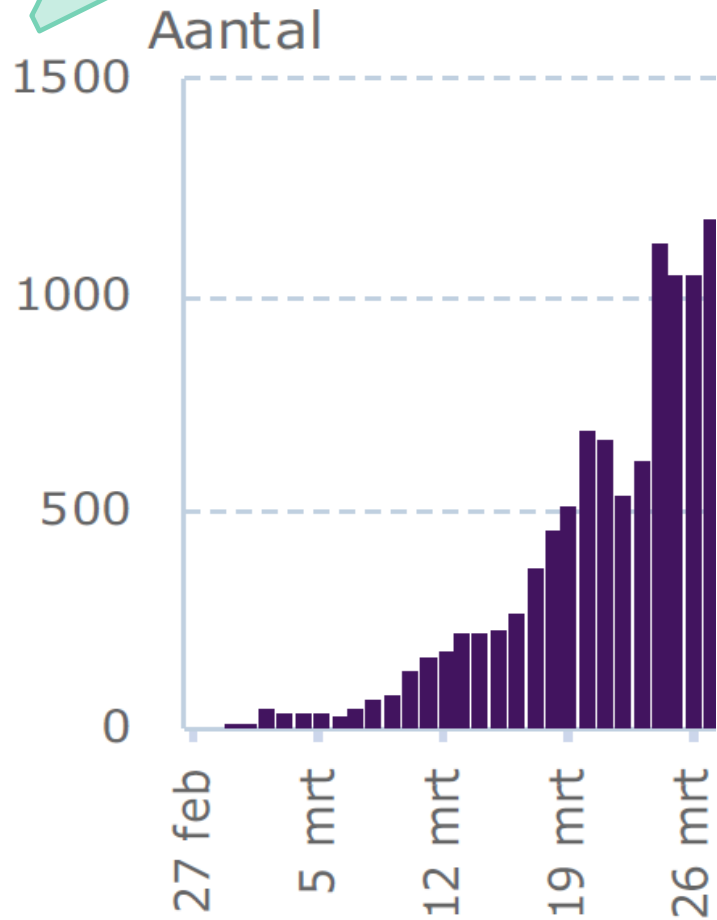
Mariken Leurs PhD

Head Corona Behavior Unit

Director Health & Society

With credits to Marijn de Bruin, Margriet Melis, Floor Kroese, Jet Sanders, Bianca Snijders, Ellen Uiters, Djoeke van Dale, Mattijs Lambooy and many more

2020



NKC

**National
Core team
Crisis communication**



National Institute for Public Health
and the Environment
Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport



Reint Jan Renes & Marijn de Bruin

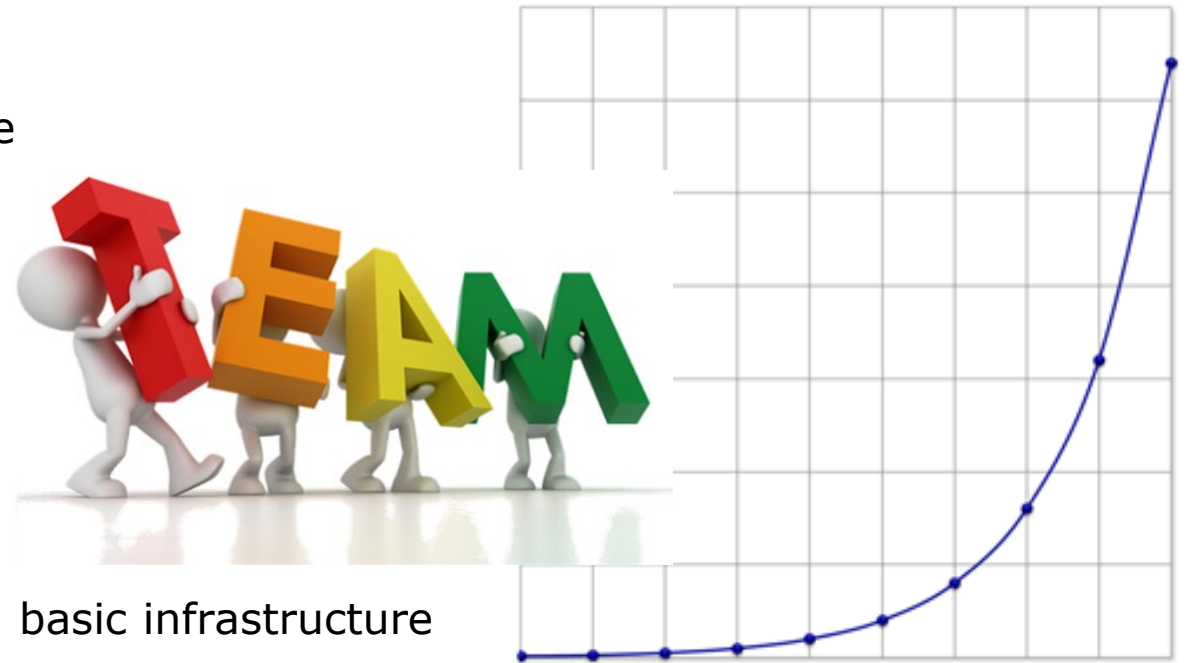
Director General Hans Brug



Corona Behavior Unit @ RIVM

- No formal position in crisis structure, no name, no money, no staff
- 1 week later:
 - scientific advisory board kick off
 - 30 behavioral scientists RIVM part-time available
 - 3 seniors 4 days/week
- 10 days later:
 - Intensive meetings @ the Hague, NKC
 - Theoretical framework COVID-19 prevention behaviors taxonomy behavioral advice
- 14 days later: 1 million research grant & 1,6 million basic infrastructure
- 1 year later: 70 people & annual budget of 5M

Growth curve unit





Corona Behavior Unit

With scientific behavior data,
knowledge and reflections

Contributing to effective corona
behavior measures

**Corona
Behavior Unit**

Since 20 March 2020

Aim
A healthy population
Fysically, socially and mentally



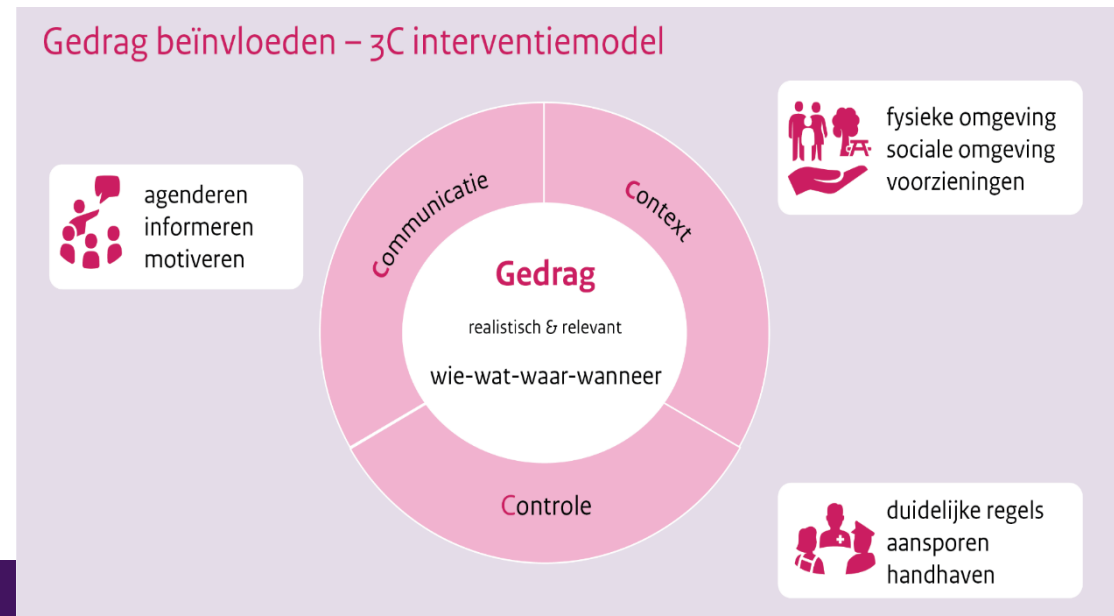
“**Sound insights** can enhance **effective behavior support**”





Scientific foundations: theoretical framework

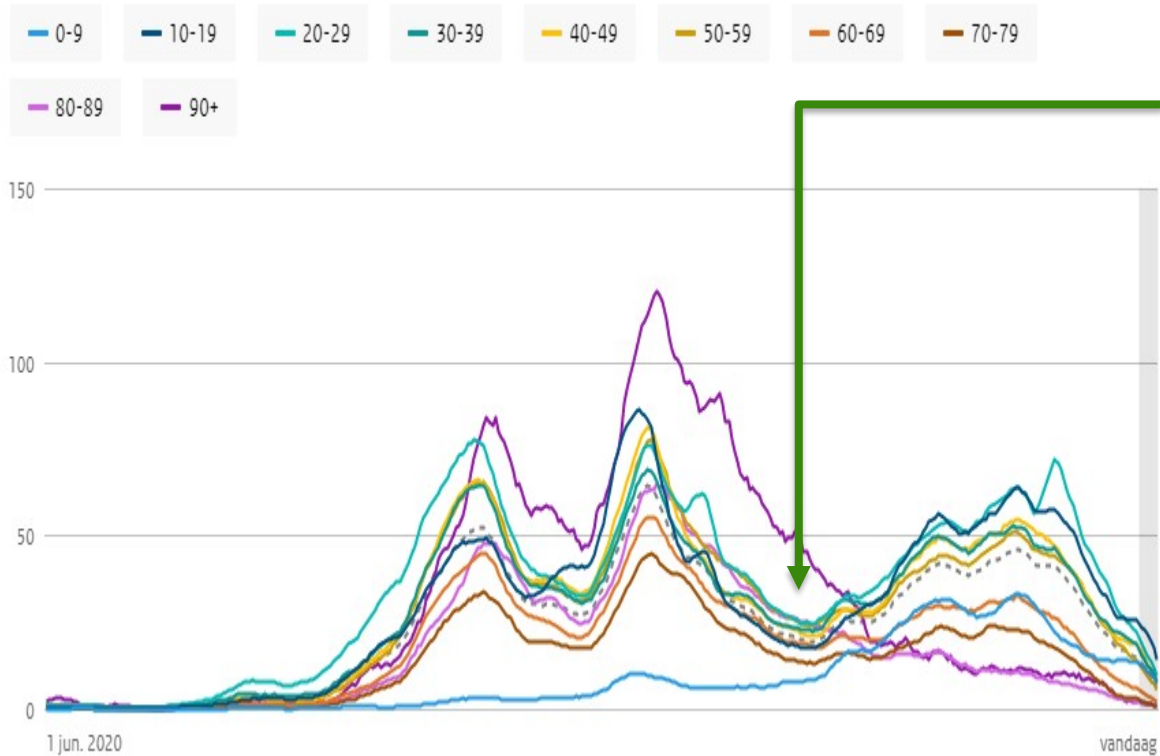
- Preventive behavior COVID-19
 - Acute behavior change
 - Maintenance of new behavior
- Behavior Taxonomy
- Communication mapping – systematic design
- **3C** intervention model
 - **C**ommunication
 - **C**ontext
 - **C**ontrol





Situation in the Netherlands

Selecteer één of meerdere leeftijdsgroepen om deze te bekijken

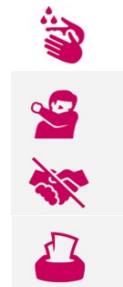


-- Alle leeftijden De laatste dagen zijn niet compleet, omdat meldingen vertraagd binnenkomen

Restrictions

- 4 nov 2 visitors a day or 1 household
- 14 Dec Closing all schools, childcare & sport facilities
Closing all non-essential shops
- 20 jan 1 visitor a day (this was 2, and 3 during Xmas)
- 23 Jan Curfew at 21h
- 8 Feb **Opening primary schools**
Opening non-essentials shops for Click & Collect
- 1 March Opening secondary schools, at least 1 day a week
- 26 April Opening higher education 1 day a week + testing
- 28 April Opening terraces between 12 – 18h – 2 pers or 1 household
- 5 June Opening all shops with limitation in customers: 1 per 25 m2
Opening all indoor recreation (café's, musea, pools)

Behavior – four groups



Hygiëne



Limiting social contacts & work from home



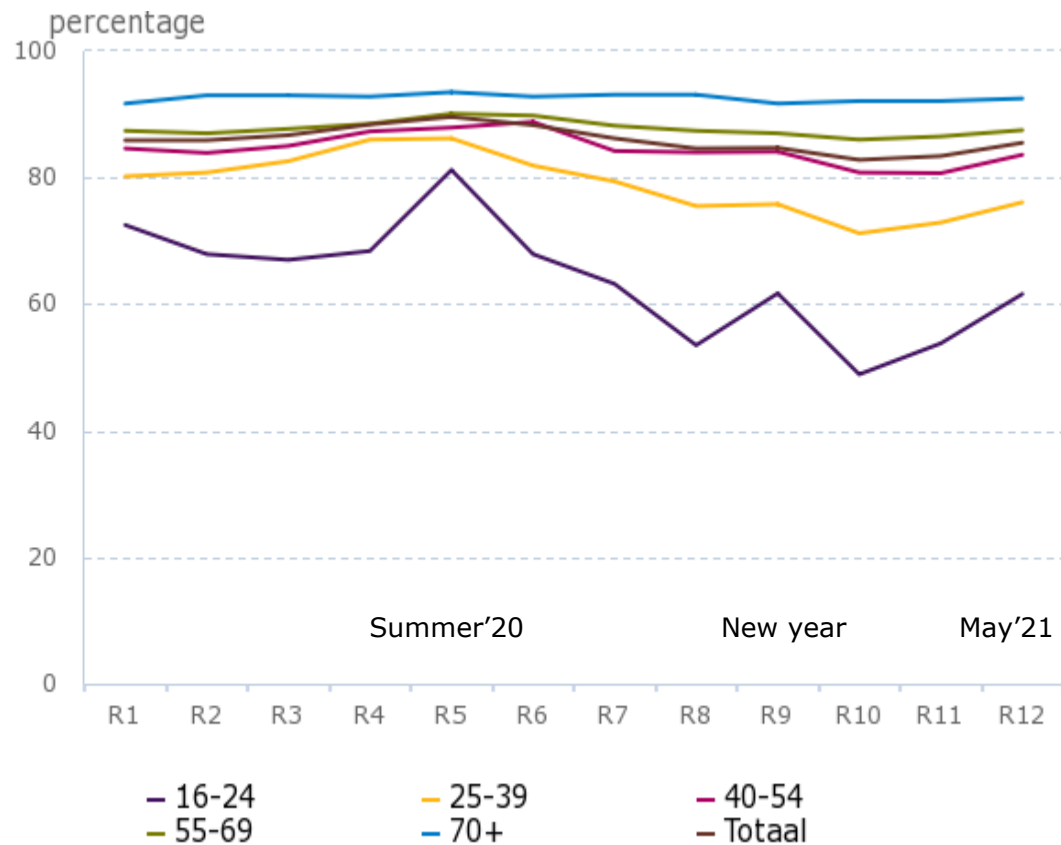
Stay home and test with health issues



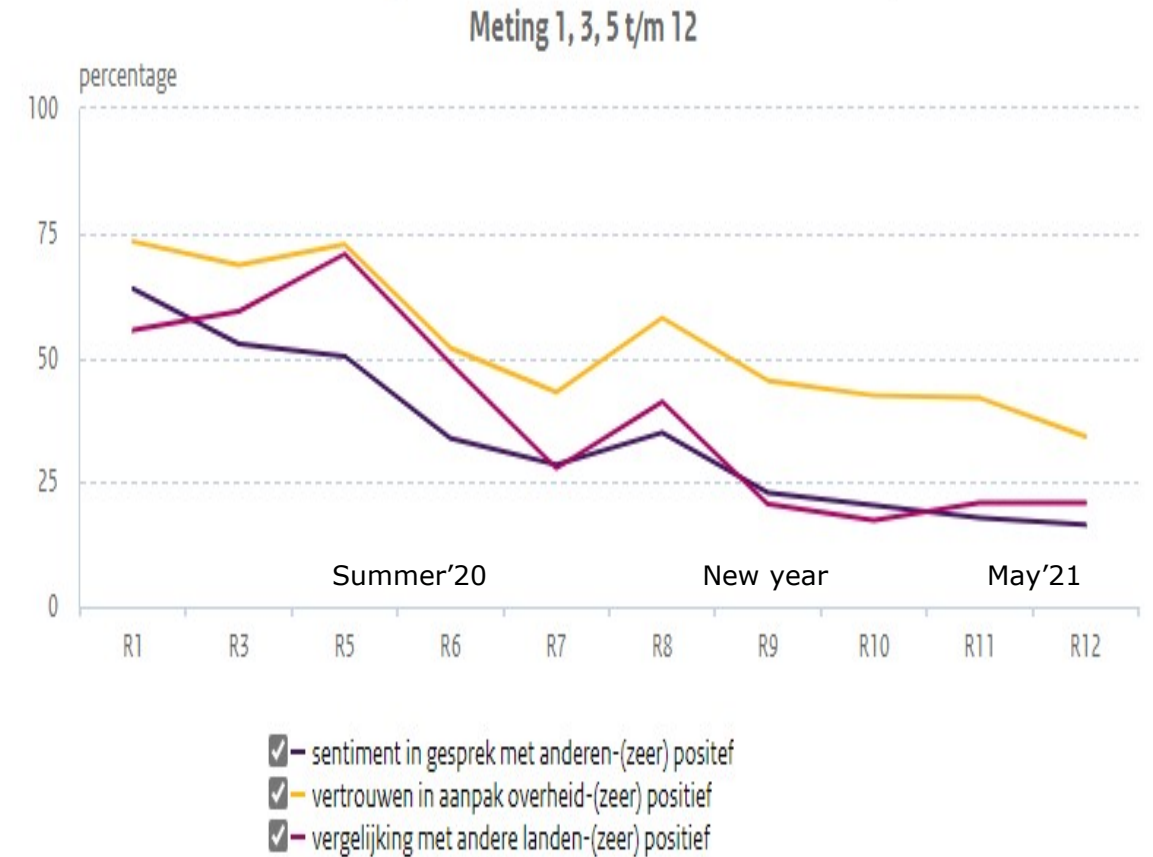
Since Januari vaccinations



Mental wellbeing



Trust in corona policy





Our work



Methods

- Literature review
- Large scale surveys
- Interviews & focusgroups
- Case studies
- Integration of insights
- Policy support & reflections



Challenges

- Mixed & complex messages – Infections were high when society opened
- Confusions – which test to use when
- Resilience – younger groups suffer more
- Medical insights versus behavior insights

Since January 2021 official requests for Behavior Reflections by the government

Email: coronagedragsunit@rivm.nl

Website: www.rivm.nl/gedragsonderzoek



In sum

**the problem is the virus,
the solution lies in human behavior**

- Not part of core disciplines in the Dutch Crisis response but it is now available (however, not yet the table); current challenge – vaccination of all!
- Huge amount of knowledge and expertise that can be activated rapidly and can add value almost immediately to policy & communication
- Momentum: Consolidate and integrate in future structures; also for other crises than COVID-19 (i.e., health, climate, etc)

More to be found on our English Website:

[Applying behavioural science to COVID-19 | RIVM](#)

