> [In my research] I faced some problems, since this group of mildly handicapped people has difficulties in verbal expression, and social interaction. They are often illiterate, so you cannot send them a questionnaire or have a conversation in the way you are used to. Even communication by telephone led to strange misunderstandings.

In a thoughtful essay that was written especially for a publication about the project, Miriam Slob remarked that her experience in dealing with handicapped people was rooted in her own experience of growing up in a small village. The kids in her year at the village school were very diverse, and they naturally included some mildly handicapped children, and so she learned to deal with them as a matter of course. Since moving to the big city, ostensibly a much more diverse population, she had retreated into her own limited circle of people and did not meet handicapped people anymore.

Other designers explored the roles of the institutions and caregivers. They experienced firsthand how hard it is for a willing and committed person to even get access to the mentally handicapped. In the course of the investigation, it became clear that the overprotective attitude of the care institutions and the caregivers constituted a major contribution to the isolation of the handicapped. Inadvertently, the responsibility of providing care had been extended to protecting the handicapped from their new environment, including issuing warning signs not to open the door to strangers. The caregivers hadn't come to grips with the fact that in this new living situation, they can't completely protect or control the lives of their patients anymore. And of course, dealing with the risks of normal city life is difficult, perhaps especially so for people working in a medical institution (where risk is dealt with in very specific ways). This insight alone uncovers many new possibilities for improving the integration of the handicapped (figure 2.2). Often, the issues gained depth and humanity (away from mechanistic or technocratic lingo) by being rephrased as personal questions:

> [An employee of a partner organization:] Are you, as a non-handicapped person, integrated into your neighborhood?

> [A designer:] The real questions relating to this project are: why do people want to meet each other? When do they become friends?

As often at the end of a YD/ project, there are promising perspectives that can be developed further—not as "the big solution" to "the big problem," but as departure points that together provide a fascinating map of possibilities. There are many issues and avenues that need further thought and discussion—the role of "care" and the way care is institutionalized in our modern society has