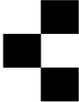Dzieci ulicy.
Perspektywa
międzynarodowa

Street Children:
An International
Perspective

dylematy **resocjalizacji**

Seria pod redakcją Krzysztofa Biela

Dzieci ulicy. Perspektywa międzynarodowa

Street Children: An International Perspective

Edited by
Barbara Adamczyk and Krzysztof Biel

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Introduction

The phenomenon of street children remains a considerable problem in the 21st century, both in Poland and the wider world. Although it is not a product of modern civilization, since there have always been neglected children wandering or living on the street, the changes taking place in the world in recent decades have contributed significantly to its dissemination. The statement about the dynamic development process of this phenomenon seems justified. It can be argued that street children are those experiencing a "taste of the crossroads". They are to be found in yards, on benches, staircases, streets, stations, marketplaces, rubbish dumps, or in vacant spaces or shopping centres. Unwanted and unloved, deprived of family support and socially excluded, they live on the street in an environment that has nothing to do with happy childhood and youth.

The issue of street children, interdisciplinary by nature, is the property of social sciences such as pedagogy, social work, sociology, psychology and philosophy, as well as the subject of religion, economics and law. It is undertaken with great commitment in dimensions combining theory and practice.

In addition, it is difficult to imagine the phenomenon of street children in Poland without presenting a broader context, i.e. without reference to the image of street children and young people from other countries. When one first hears the term of street children,

the imagination turns towards Third World countries or developing countries. Therefore, the essential element in the full description of this phenomenon is also the characteristics of street children from different countries of the world.

This volume focuses on the phenomenon of street children mainly in countries neighbouring Poland, such as Ukraine, the Czech Republic or Slovakia. In addition, the study contains reports on work with street children in Slovenia, North Africa and Asia.

The volume is opened by Bella Antonian-Shevchuk, who analyses the pedagogical and social aspects of family support as a basic task for preventing the phenomenon of street children. Vladimíra Hulínová presents an article about the situation of children on the street in Slovakia. The author first presents the functions of the family, then analyses the etiology of the phenomenon of street children and indicates the legal solutions applicable in Slovakia. Then Mariusz Gajewski analyses the possibilities and limitations of psychological and therapeutic help from the systemic perspective of family therapy. Among the many systemic schools of family therapy, the author presents more broadly the theory of family systems of Murray Bowen and shows its implications for therapeutic practice.

The next two articles introduce work with street children in Slovenia. First, Stanko Gerjolj presents a proposal for counselling as a form of work with a dysfunctional family. The author emphasizes the holistic approach to man which does not stress the acquirement of any new knowledge, but rather changes to lifestyle and the promotion of life-long learning. Andrej Šegula, on the other hand, shows pastoral practice towards street children from a Salesian perspective. The author describes more broadly the SKALA project based on the educational system of Jan Bosco.

Michal Zvírotský presents the tasks and role of children's and youth centres in the Czech Republic, which support the family and focus on raising social competences of young people and help in dealing with exclusion, poverty and learned helplessness. Then Veronika Blažková and Daniela Nováková discuss the changes in institutional care that have taken place in recent years in the Czech Republic. The authors perceive difficulties mainly in the functioning of orphanages and, in

order to improve the current situation of children, they propose the appointment of an Ombudsman for Children.

Galina Biliachenko presents the way in which social workers and pedagogues are prepared for working with street children in Ukraine. The author indicates the basic areas of working with children, as well as discussing the main competences needed to work with street children. Another article concerns the activities of non-governmental organizations in working with street children in North Africa. The author, Ewa Sowa-Behtane, concentrates on the work of volunteers, pointing to the basic difficulties resulting from cultural and religious differences.

The volume closes with an interesting article in the form of an interview. Matthias Barwacz talks with a street worker from Nepal, Suresh B. Chatry, a member of the organization called Shiva Shakti Youth Club, which runs social projects in the most remote corners of the country.

The phenomenon of street children remains the subject of research around the world. The notion of "children on the street" which is more appropriate for Europe does not absolve researchers from carrying on further analyses, not only on the etiology of the phenomenon, but more on the methods of its effective prevention. Despite the many differences observed in different parts of the world, raising the living and developmental conditions of children should become a priority and an object of special concern on the part of adults, and the child's well-being can not only be a slogan but a task and an obligation.

Barbara Adamczyk
Krzysztof Biel

Wstęp

Fenomen dzieci ulicy pozostaje problemem ciągle aktualnym w XXI wieku, w Polsce i na świecie. Choć nie jest wytworem współczesnej cywilizacji, gdyż zawsze istniały zaniedbane dzieci wałęsające się czy mieszkające na ulicy, to przemiany dokonujące się w świecie na przestrzeni ostatnich dekad znacznie przyczyniają się do jego rozpowszechniania. Uprawnione wydaje się twierdzenie o dynamicznym procesie rozwoju tego zjawiska. Można postawić tezę, że dzieci ulicy to osoby doświadczające „smaku rozdroży". Przebywają na podwórkach, ławkach osiedlowych, klatkach schodowych, ulicach, dworcach, placach targowych, wysypiskach śmieci czy w pustostanach lub centrach handlowych. Niechciane i niekochane, pozbawione wsparcia rodziny i wykluczone społecznie, żyją na ulicy, czyli w środowisku, które nie ma nic wspólnego ze szczęśliwym dzieciństwem i młodością.

Problematyka dzieci ulicy, z natury swej interdyscyplinarna, jest domeną nauk społecznych, takich jak pedagogika, praca socjalna, socjologia, psychologia i filozofia, a także przedmiotem zainteresowania religii, ekonomii czy prawa. Podejmowana jest z dużym zaangażowaniem w wymiarach łączących teorię i praktykę.

Ponadto trudno wyobrazić sobie przedstawienie fenomenu dzieci ulicy w Polsce bez ukazania szerszego kontekstu, to znaczy bez odniesienia się do obrazu dzieci i młodzieży ulicy z innych krajów. Gdy słyszy się o dzieciach ulicy, pierwsza myśl biegnie w stronę krajów

Trzeciego Świata czy krajów rozwijających się. Dlatego elementem niezbędnym w pełnym opisie tego zjawiska jest także charakterystyka dzieci ulicy z różnych krajów świata.

Niniejszy tom koncentruje się na ukazaniu fenomenu dzieci ulicy głównie w krajach sąsiadujących z Polską, jak Ukraina, Czechy czy Słowacja. Poza tym w opracowaniu można znaleźć doniesienia z pracy z dziećmi ulicy w Słowenii, w krajach północnej Afryki oraz Azji.

Tom otwiera tekst autorstwa Belli Antonian-Shevchuk, która analizuje pedagogiczne i społeczne aspekty wsparcia rodziny jako podstawowe zadanie dla prewencji zjawiska dzieci ulicy. Vladimíra Hulínová prezentuje artykuł o sytuacji dzieci na ulicy na Słowacji. Autorka przedstawia najpierw funkcje rodziny, następnie analizuje etiologię zjawiska dzieci ulicy i wskazuje rozwiązania prawne obowiązujące na Słowacji. Następnie Mariusz Gajewski analizuje możliwości i ograniczenia pomocy psychologicznej i terapeutycznej z perspektywy systemowej terapii rodzin. Spośród wielu szkół systemowej terapii rodzin autor przedstawia obszerniej teorię systemów rodzinnych Murraya Bowena i wskazuje jej implikacje dla praktyki terapeutycznej.

Kolejne dwa artykuły wprowadzają w problematykę pracy z dziećmi ulicy w Słowenii. Najpierw Stanko Gerjolj przedstawia propozycję poradnictwa jako formy pracy z rodziną dysfunkcyjną. Autor kładzie akcent na holistyczne podejście do człowieka, w którym chodzi głównie nie o zdobycie nowej wiedzy, ale raczej o styl życia i uczenie się przez całe życie. Andrej Šegula pokazuje natomiast praktykę pastoralną wobec dzieci ulicy z perspektywy salezjańskiej. Autor opisuje szerzej projekt SKALA oparty na systemie edukacyjnym Jana Bosko.

Michal Zvírotský prezentuje zadania i rolę centrów dla dzieci i młodzieży w Czechach, które wspierają rodzinę i koncentrują się na podnoszeniu kompetencji społecznych młodzieży oraz pomagają w radzeniu sobie z wykluczeniem, ubóstwem i wyuczoną bezradnością. Następnie Veronika Blažková i Daniela Nováková omawiają zmiany w opiece instytucjonalnej, jakie miały miejsce w ostatnich latach w Republice Czeskiej. Autorki dostrzegają trudności głównie w funkcjonowania sierocińców i w celu poprawienia obecnej sytuacji dzieci proponują powołanie urzędu Rzecznika Praw Dziecka.

Galina Biliachenko prezentuje sposób przygotowania pracowników socjalnych i pedagogów do pracy z dziećmi ulicy na Ukrainie.

Autorka wskazuje podstawowe obszary pracy z dziećmi, jak również omawia główne kompetencje potrzebne do pracy z dziećmi ulicy. Kolejny artykuł dotyczy działalności organizacji pozarządowych w pracy z dziećmi ulicy w krajach Północnej Afryki. Jego autorka, Ewa Sowa-Behtane, koncentruje się na pracy wolontariuszy, wskazując na podstawowe trudności wynikające z różnic kulturowych i religijnych.

Tom zamyka interesujący artykuł skonstruowany w formie wywiadu. Matthias Barwacz rozmawia ze streetworkerem z Nepalu Sureshem B. Chatry, członkiem organizacji pod nazwą Shiva Shakti Youth Club, która prowadzi projekty socjalne w najdalszych zakątkach kraju.

Fenomen dzieci ulicy pozostaje przedmiotem badań na całym świecie. Bliższe Europie zjawisko „dzieci na ulicy" nie zwalnia badaczy z prowadzenia dalszych analiz nie tylko jego etiologii, ale wręcz obliguje do wypracowywania bardziej skutecznej profilaktyki. Mimo wielu różnic obserwowanych w różnych częściach świata, podnoszenie warunków życiowych i rozwojowych dzieci powinno się stać priorytetem i przedmiotem szczególnej troski ze strony dorosłych, a dobro dziecka nie może być jedynie sloganem, lecz zadaniem i obowiązkiem.

Barbara Adamczyk
Krzysztof Biel

Bella Antonian-Shevchuk
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The Socio-Pedagogical Support of the Family as a Means of Preventing Child Neglect

Introduction. The growing number of "street children" promotes a growth in the number of offenses and crimes in society. Therefore, a lot of scientists, politicians, law enforcement personnel, community members and charities are interested in the solution to this problem. There is a contradiction between the declared policy of the state legislation on the prevention of homelessness for children and the lack of effective and practical mechanisms for its implementation.

A brief review of publications on the subject. Ukrainian scientists L.I. Gabora, I.V. Gorobets, L.F. Kryvachuk, V.M. Orzhehovska, J.B. Petrochko, I.V. Piesha, T.E. Fedorchenko, L.A. Yakubov emphasize the importance of the problem of homelessness and neglect. However, despite the wide range of research aspects of the phenomenon of child homelessness and neglect, today the problem is still acute and requires an urgent solution, determining the relevance of our research.

The goal of the article is to clarify the characteristics of socio--pedagogical support of dysfunctional families as a means of preventing child neglect.

The phenomenon of homeless children in the Ukrainian society has already been studied. T.E. Fedorchenko notes that exact numbers of homeless children in Ukraine were recorded in 1960-1980 and since 1980s there have been about 8,000 so-called "street children"

in Ukraine. The number of street children began to grow rapidly due to the instability of the political system, and there were more than 130,000 street children and adolescents in Ukraine for the last time.[1] At present, there is no precise information on the total number of homeless and neglected children, and the phenomenon of "street children" has become a state scale crisis.

Analysis of the basic concepts. The Law of Ukraine "On Protection of Childhood" from 26.04.2001, № 2402-III, identifies street children as those who have been abandoned by parents or left on their own families or institutions, where they were educated, and have no permanent residence.[2]

However, there is no definition of "neglected children" in Ukrainian legislation. The term is often used synonymously with the term "street children". These two terms should not be regarded as interchangeable because homelessness involves physical, material characteristics and neglect – social.

A researcher L.L. Tykhonenko defines "neglected children" as children who are not provided with favorable conditions for physical, spiritual and intellectual development. Child neglect is a weakening or absence of parental control over behaviour, development and well--being of the child.[3]

Professor V.M. Orzhehovska notes that "street children" are individuals, who are 10-14 years old, mainly boys from dysfunctional asocial families with an authoritarian style of education, adult cruelty, indifference to the needs of children, alcoholism, drug addiction, etc.[4]

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[1] T. Fedorchenko, "Profilaktyka dytiachoyi bezdohliadnosti ta deviantnoii povedinky nepovnolitnikh v umovakh preventyvnoho vykhovnoho seredovyshcha shkoly sotsialnoii reabilitatsii." *Teoretyko-metodychni problemy vykhovannia ditei ta uchnivskoii molodi* 2012, vol. 16(3), p. 280.

[2] Pro okhoronu dytynstva, Zakon Ukrayiny, http://zakon4.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/2402-14 (access: 18.06.2015).

[3] L.L. Tykhonenko, "Problemy dytiachoyi bezdohliadnosti ta bezprytulnosti v Ukraiini," *Naukovyi visnyk Dnipropetrovskoho derzhavnoho universytetu vnutrishnikh sprav* 2012, no. 1, p. 150.

[4] V.M. Orzhekhovska, "Suchasni problemy dytiachoyi bezdohliadnosti v Ukraiini: analiz, shliakhy podolannia," *Teoretyko-metodolohichni problemy vykhovannia ditey ta uchnivskoyi molodi* 2009, vol. 13(2), p. 4.

The UN Children Fund (UNICEF) distinguishes between "street children", who always live away from home, outside the family or boarding schools, "children on the streets", who keep in touch with family and spend only some time on the streets, and "street family children", who live on the street with their parents.[5]

Due to the difficult financial situation of a large number of Ukrainian families, parents are forced to work abroad and thus in recent years the children of migrant workers joined the burgeoning number of "street children". The street environment is becoming a major place of residence for these children and thus as a result the term "street children" combines the homeless and neglected children.

Among the main causes of the phenomenon of homelessness and neglect of children and their further spread we can identify the following: economic and social upheavals that occur in modern society, political instability, inability of some families to perform their functions, the alienation of children from the school environment, educational neglect, lack of free time organization for children, problems with socializing children in the boarding institutions, the negative impact of the media on the formation of child individuality.[6]

One of the factors in the deviant behavior of children and youth and the spread of the phenomenon of homelessness is connected with the organization of free time. A leisure culture forms independently, but it is formed by means of a positive impact. If there is no such impact, children and young people often do not know and or make any considerable effort to make their entertainment creative, informative and developmental. The street, in its turn, demonstrates behavior which is not socially acceptable and can form habits of aimless pastimes.[7]

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[5] Posibnyk z metodyky mizhdystsyplinarnoho vedennia vypadku pry roboti z bezprytulnymy, bezdohliadnymy nepovnolitnimy ditmy, orhanizatsiia „HealthRight International", Kyiv 2010, p. 8.

[6] T. Fedorchenko, "Profilaktyka dytiachoyi bezdohliadnosti ta deviantnoii povedinky nepovnolitnikh v umovakh preventyvnoho vykhovnoho seredovyshcha shkoly sotsialnoii reabilitatsii," p. 280.

[7] L.I. Habora, "Dozvillia yak chynnyk profilaktyky bezdohliadnosti nepovnolitnikh," *Teoretyko-metodolohichni problemy vykhovannya ditey ta uchnivskoyi molodi* 2009, vol. 13(2), p. 50.

Growing numbers of Ukrainian families are in a situation with difficult circumstances which is caused by the aggravation of pressing social problems. This, in turn, leads to the fact that most families have partially or completely lost their educational opportunities.

There is a pattern and it is significant to find the causes of the problem and then solve them. L.L. Tykhonenko indicates that the understanding of the word "cause" may have three meanings: (1) as a phenomenon that generates another phenomenon; (2) as a ground, a reason for further action; (3) as an emergency or circumstances.[8]

Unstable socio-economic sectors in the country serve as these events, reasons and circumstances and the result is a pedagogical culture of parents which is characterized by a low level, a negative atmosphere in the family environment and the failure of constructive communication between parents and children. Nowadays, moral norms and principles are changing in society, and the educational capacity and authority of the family is being reduced. Children who are deprived of parental attention are especially affected by an asocial environment in the formation process of their personality. These children spend most of their time outside, although they can have their own home and family, which does not satisfy even the basic needs of the child in terms of food and safety. The estrangement of the parents in the process of child upbringing contributes to the formation and development of pathological behavior, bad habits and aggression.[9]

We believe that it is impossible to create a single list of the causes of child homelessness and neglect, because these causes are not stable, changing dynamically with the development of the society, but still some reasons can prevent or mitigate their impact.

The Law of Ukraine "On the basis of social protection of homeless people and street children" from 02.06.2005, № 2623-IV states that prevention of homelessness and neglect is a system of measures aimed at the elimination of the legal, social and other causes of homelessness and neglect, their prevention, including measures to reduce the risk of

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[8] L.L. Tykhonenko, "Problemy dytiachoyi bezdohliadnosti ta bezprytulnosti v Ukraiini," p. 150.

[9] V.M. Orzhekhovska, "Suchasni problemy dytiachoyi bezdohliadnosti v Ukraiini: analiz, shliakhy podolannia," *Teoretyko-metodolohichni problemy vykhovannia ditey ta uchnivskoyi molodi* 2009, vol. 13(2), p. 7.

loss of individual rights to residential premises and prevent the loss of these rights, and to prevent the negative social consequences associated with lack of accommodation.[10]

The term "prevention" has a multifunctional meaning. There is no definition of child neglect prevention in Ukrainian legislation. However, it does not demonstrate the absence of this problem and its dangerous consequences, as children neglect has a latent character.

I.V. Gorobets emphasizes that the prevention of child neglect and homelessness is a special form of social control that is intended to ensure that children will not become homeless and neglected. It is aimed at developing and implementing specific measures to detect and eliminate the determinants contributing to this phenomenon.[11]

The use of the three-level prevention model, which includes prevention, intervention and postvention or primary, secondary and tertiary prevention, is widespread in Ukraine.

Primary prevention is the most widespread and effective. It aims at preventing certain events, behaviors or events that occur for the first time. The primary prevention of the phenomenon of homeless children is aimed at families with children, and its goal is to create a favorable environment for its functioning, and is realized with the help of the implementation of complex social, economic, informational, legal and other measures for child protection, family support and forming of responsible parenthood.

Secondary prevention is aimed at helping families in difficult circumstances in order to eliminate or mitigate existing factors that contribute to or result in the violation of their functioning. Tertiary prevention is aimed directly at the homeless and neglected children. Its purpose is their early detection and subsequent rehabilitation.

L.L. Tykhonenko points out currently existing factors that do not contribute to the efficiency of social and educational activities to prevent and overcome the problem of "street children". They are the following: the lack of funding for social services and institutions that

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[10] Pro osnovy sotsialnoho zakhystu bezdomnykh osib i bezprytulnykh ditei, Zakon Ukrayiny, http://zakon1.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/2623-15 (access: 18.06.2015).

[11] I.V. Horobets, "Profilaktyka dytiachoyi bezprytulnosti ta bezdohliadnosti yak napriam diya'nosti orhaniv derzhavnoyi vlady," *Derzhavne budivnytstvo: elektronne naukove fakhove vydannya* 2011, #2, http://nbuv.gov.ua/j-pdf/DeBu_2011_2_50.pdf (access: 18.06.2015).

prevent homelessness or provide social protection of "street children", lack of equipped premises, where street children can stay, inadequate legislation, the long process of the establishment of institutions for the rehabilitation of children who have spent long time in street environment and subjected to ill-treatment, lack of a unified and effective response mechanism for public identification of children engaged in begging, vagrancy, lack of consistency in the actions of subjects solving the problem of children homelessness and neglect.[12]

Taking into consideration the above-mentioned aspects, it is evident that the problem of "street children" requires a comprehensive solution that must include educational, psychological, medical, legal and social components. Here arises the expediency of the educational environment for street children that promotes intellectual, physical, mental and spiritual development. Also, there is need for a coordinated system of measures to solve the problem of "street children".

The objects of prevention of child homelessness and neglect are defined in accordance with the terms of its implementation. For example, during primary prevention, families with children and young families who plan to have a baby in the future are objects. At the second level (secondary prevention) families who are in difficult situations, single mothers, mothers intending to abandon a newborn child, and so on are objects. During the implementation of tertiary prevention measures, neglected and homeless children and their parents or people substituting them are objects.

The subjects of the prevention of child homelessness and neglect are public authorities and institutions, local governments, public organizations and associations, charities and individuals (employees), which perform tasks and responsibilities.

Article 3 of the Law of Ukraine "On the basis of social protection homeless people and street children" from 02.06.2005, № 2623-IV states that the subjects of the prevention of child neglect and homelessness will be guided by the principles of legality, democracy, equality,

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[12] L.L. Tykhonenko, "Problemy dytiachoyi bezdohliadnosti ta bezprytulnosti v Ukraiini," *Naukovyi visnyk Dnipropetrovskoho derzhavnoho universytetu vnutrishnikh sprav* 2012, no. 1, pp. 148-155.

respect for the individual recognition of the dignity, human rights and fundamental freedoms, while performing their duties.[13]

The main functions of prevention activities connected with "street children" include diagnostic, prognostic, educational, advisory and regulatory. The implementation of all these functions in prevention activities directly or indirectly is associated with the family.

The goals and objectives of the prevention of child neglect and homelessness are based on the functions and principles of each level.

Currently in Ukraine there are two options for the assistance of "street children" through the activities of public institutions of social protection: (1) shelters for children; (2) socio-psychological rehabilitation. However, there still exists a certain number of children who do not form part of the public institutions of social protection for various reasons. It is necessary to use other social and educational activities in order to help these children and young people.

One of the possible ways of homelessness prevention is the motivation of children and youth towards cognitive and artistic forms of entertainment, as they encourage social connections, stimulate to social activities and contribute to comprehensive personality development. L.I. Gabor states that it is worth to focus efforts of their parents, teachers and society on the organization of a meaningful leisure time, which partly solves the problem of children being busy outside the classroom and is a step towards solving the problem of child neglect.[14]

Preventive activities will be successful on condition of their permanence, comprehensiveness and dedication.

It is a frequent situation when a child, who is removed from the street environment or the antisocial family, requires a long period of rehabilitation. Moreover, the effectiveness of so-called preventive raids conducted by the police and social services is in question. Such raids cannot be called prevention as one of their results is identifying and removing children from the streets who are in difficult circumstances. Also there is no regulatory provision for these raids, which determine members of the group and raid instructions for each member.

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[13] Pro osnovy sotsialnoho zakhystu bezdomnykh osib i bezprytulnykh ditei, Zakon Ukrayiny, http://zakon1.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/2623-15 (access: 18.06.2015).

[14] L.I. Habora, "Dozvillia yak chynnyk profilaktyky bezdohliadnosti nepovnolitnikh," p. 52.

While analyzing the experience of European countries in the sphere of preventive activities for the homeless, I.V. Gorobets notes that success of public policy depends on the effectiveness of preventive social work with families and children who are among the vulnerable groups. [15]

It is doubtless that the poor condition of the family negatively affects the development of the child and a happy family is the best social environment for harmonious, full and complete child development. That is why the socio-pedagogical support of dysfunctional families is an important task, the successful implementation of which has long--term implications for several generations of one family.

The best option for social and pedagogical activities with the family is the interaction of government authorities, society and families, providing the improvement of life conditions, assistance in establishing a positive family microclimate, conditions for child development and implementation of social and pedagogical support.

The social support of the individual client or family in crisis happens in accordance with the legislation of Ukraine. Thus, the Order of the Ministry of Social Policy of Ukraine "On approval of accounting social services to families (individuals) who are in difficult situations" from 09.07.2014 № 450 in terms of social support outlines the main objectives, including the following: to promote paper work, government benefits, pensions, subsidies, etc., to encourage budgeting and housekeeping, to employ able-bodied family members, to form the skills of responsible parenthood, to assist in establishing emotional contact between parents and children, to help parents promote training on child independent life, to promote the integration of the child and the family (person) in the community.

A report is filled accordingly to the results of social support of the family. Criteria such as the efficiency of effectiveness maintenance, targeted and personalized approach, timeliness, accessibility and openness, respect for social service recipients are used in the report. [16]

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[15] I.V. Horobets, "Profilaktyka dytiachoyi bezprytulnosti ta bezdohliadnosti yak napriam diya'nosti orhaniv derzhavnoyi vlady," *Derzhavne budivnytstvo: elektronne naukove fakhove vydannya* 2011, #2, http://nbuv.gov.ua/j-pdf/DeBu_2011_2_50.pdf (access: 18.06.2015).

[16] Pro zatverdzhennya form obliku sotsialnykh posluh simiam (osobam), yaki perebuvaiut u skladnykh zhyttievykh obstavynakh, Nakaz Ministerstva sotsialnoi polityky Ukraiiny, http://zakon4.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/z1076-14 (access: 19.06.2015).

The technology of "case management" forms the basis of social and pedagogical support. This technology involves organizing conditions for customer satisfaction through the best use of existing opportunities and setting up partnerships between clients, social workers and teachers. One of the peculiarities of the technology of "case management" is the organization of providing assistance at client's home, which has a significant advantage compared with the use of other methods, because there occurs the conditions when the customer is in their usual social environment and feels comfortable when submitting services in stationary facilities. [17]

The implementation of technology "case management" while helping families takes place in three stages. At the first phase (study of the situation) the overall assessment of the problem and needs that require satisfaction is carried out. A family needing assessment involves obtaining data on the state of the family at the time of evaluation (health, emotional state, the presence of bad habits, displays of signs of deviant behavior, social history, employment, ability to lead an independent life) and a record of family environmental factors (availability of social support networks, social relationships of family members in the community, a list of basic income and the debt, the state of the dwelling).

The second phase is the provision of services. At this stage, experts and organizations that provide services are chosen, the nature of the services, their scope and duration, and the date are determined and, finally, specific objectives are formulated.

During the implementation of the third phase of support (analysis and evaluation of the work and services) there is the assessment of changes that took place; new requirements are examined and, if necessary, an additional assistance plan developed.

In the situation of "case management", a specialist of the social sphere acts as a manager because the services can be provided by different agencies, but the social worker organizes and coordinates the entire process. Associate Professor N.V. Sabat notes that "case management" can be performed on one of the following levels: (1) direct, if specialist interacts directly with the family; (2) indirect, if the

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[17] N.V. Sabat, "Modeli sotsialno-pedahohichnoyi dopomohy neblahopoluchnii simii," *Visnyk Lvivskoho universytetu* 2010, no. 26, p. 160.

interaction take place accordingly to the scheme "social worker – social institutions – dysfunctional families." [18]

In the process of social and pedagogical support of dysfunctional families, specialists also can successfully use crisis-intervened, problem-oriented model, patronage and psychosocial approach.

Conclusions of the study and perspectives of further development. The family has priority in the process of individual formation, the family is the first institution of child socialization. It is the most favorable environment for the transmission of cultural traditions, the formation of values, social skills, so it is important to find the reasons for the existence of the phenomenon of "street children" in the family environment.

The efficiency of the prevention of child homelessness and neglect depends on the improvement of the microclimate in the dysfunctional family. Prevention of negative effects of family problems can be achieved by their early detection and the support of those families where the atmosphere contributes neglect, parents cannot create appropriate conditions for the education and training of the child, and behavior of parents is a threat to a child's health and life. The timely detection of a dysfunctional family and improvement of the microclimate in family environment are interrelated components that contribute to the efficiency of the removal of the reasons which cause child neglect and homelessness.

The personal approach to all of the features of a dysfunctional family is necessary in the process of choosing the forms and methods of work with the family to prevent child neglect and homelessness. The efficiency and effectiveness of such activities depend on the proper selection of the type of problem to be solved, together with the appropriate tools and a friendly attitude on the part of professional social services towards family members.

Perspective areas for further research are the detailed analysis of the structure of the socio-pedagogical support of families.

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[18] Ibidem, p. 161.

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Summary

The article deals with the problem of child neglect in Ukraine. It presents statistical data on the current state of the phenomenon of homeless "street children" in Ukraine and describes its main causes. The author singles out and clarifies the concepts of "homeless children", "neglected children" and "street children". The article outlines the main reasons for family dysfunctions which lead to basic child needs not being met and the emergence of child neglect. In particular, child behavior demonstrates the decrease of the educational function of the family. Children who are deprived of the attention of parents (guardians), are easily exposed to the pernicious influence of the asocial environment. The lack of parental care or family problems creates real difficulties in the formation of child personality. Unfortunately, in recent times, the family cannot provide appropriate performance of its functions, such as creating safe living conditions for children and protecting them from violence.

The article analyzes the social and pedagogical aspects of child homelessness and neglect prevention. It has been found that the problem of "street children" requires a comprehensive solution. It is significant to implement socio-pedagogical support of dysfunctional families, including the technology of "case management". It is obvious that the root cause of homelessness in children should be sought in the specifics of their family environment as the family takes priority in the formation and development of personality. As a result, the objects and subjects of homelessness and neglect prevention are defined. The main functions and tasks of subjects to implement preventive activities are distinguished. The possible forms and methods of homelessness prevention are presented in the article. The author offers practical recommendations for improving the family environment.

Keywords:

     street children, neglected children, homeless children, prevention, social and pedagogical support, dysfunctional family

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Children at Risk in Slovakia
or When the Family Needs Help

Introduction

The issue of street children is alarming, especially in developing countries. Increasingly, they are visible minors who are abandoned without proper care either as a result of their own decision or forced, even in industrialized countries. In situations when a child is abandoned or his/her family is unable to take care of him/her the problems are solved by the legislation of Slovakia.

The article points out the most common reasons that jeopardize the proper development of children and the measures implemented by social workers in order to ensure the proper care of the child.

Functions of the family

Every child has the right to grow up in a healthy functioning family where the needs of the family members are adequately satisfied and the child grows up in a secure place. Families can be classified according to various criteria. In terms of family composition, stability, personality equipment of parents, economic maintenance, child development Dunovský[1]

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[1] J. Dunovský, *Dítě a poruchy rodiny*, Praha 1986.

divided the levels of families into four categories: the functional family – where optimal child development takes place; the family in difficulty – with evident faults in the family functions at the basic level. The child in this family is not threatened and the family tries to solve problems on their own. It can also use help from outside. The dysfunctional family – with a disturbance to the family system which seriously threatens the whole family and particularly child development. This type of family requires constant professional help. Finally, there is the a non-functional family – characterized by defects in terms of all family functions.

When social workers work with families in the context of the social and legal protection of the child, they are often faced with dysfunctional families. The most frequent problem that occurs in these families is the neglect of a child, where there are frequent effects: lack of interest of the child, the child's low control, and insufficient fulfillment of basic needs. There can also occur other socio-pathological phenomena such as the unemployment of parents, poverty, alcoholism or other forms of addiction or crime. Dysfunctional families are often on a low socio-cultural level[2], suffering from social exclusion and related problems. For such a family, it is difficult to break out of the circle of exclusion and professional assistance is necessary from the outside.

A marginalized social environment causes social deprivation, deforming and threatening the healthy mental development of an individual. The basic characteristics of this environment include:

- families in which the child lives have failed to fulfill the primary functions (economic, educational, socialization, emotional, etc.);
- the child's family suffers from poverty and material deprivation (defined in the Act NR SR no. 599/2003 Coll. On assistance in material need, as amended);
- the basic education of the parents and poor living and sanitary conditions in which the child grows up;
- the language taught in the school is different from the language spoken by the child at home;
- segregated Roma communities in the majority society.

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[2] L. Novosad, *Základy teorie a metod sociální práce*, Liberec 2004, pp. 42-43.

Assessment of family functioning

During work with the family it is important that the social worker capitalizes on the indicators of family functionality, such as those listed by and which include [3]:

- cultural and value orientation of the family;
- the saturation of the basic needs of the family members (security, privacy, hygiene, clothing, food, heat, etc.);
- status of households in terms of family needs;
- the functionality of the parental system (quality of relationship with children);
- assessment of child development;
- functioning of the marital system;
- the relationships of family members to wider kin;
- relations with institutions that are important for families (schools, employers, agencies);
- the social ties of other family members (friends, neighbors);
- job parents' perspective, job satisfaction;
- the material resources available to the family, handling;
- style of communication.

Working with the vulnerable child and family must be at the professional level of the social worker. Assessment of families should be ideally based on a multidisciplinary approach, where each expert participating in the evaluation of the vulnerable child gives his opinion and insight, thereby creating an overall view of the child and his family. The wrong assessment of the situation of children and their families can lead to the fact that another child will remain unhappy in the family or be depressed and in very extreme cases, even be in a life--threatening. The other side of wrong assessment may be directed to the fact that while a child may get the appropriate support in their own family, it instead spends years in residential care or in the care of foster parents. Appropriately chosen form of assistance to the child's own family can offer the child a life without major problems. [4]

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[3] O. Matoušek, *Slovník sociální práce*, Praha 2003, p. 193.
[4] O. Matoušek, H. Pazlarová, *Hodnocení ohroženého dítěte a rodiny*, Praha 2010, p. 9.

Street children in SR and the reasons why a child is on the street

Research shows that the low economic (but also cultural) standard of the family, family malfunctions, adverse emotional family situation and negative parenting patterns have a great influence on the moral education of the child and its relations to the environment.[5] It is natural that a child who does not receive family love, understanding and support is readily available to develop pathological phenomena. All requirements of the child that would be satisfied by his/her family are instead satisfied on the street, in a circle of friends. Children who are from dysfunctional families often exhibit higher levels of truancy, behavioral disorders, drug abuse, illegal activities and so on.

Street children are defined as children who do not have a fixed home background. They have nowhere to go back to or have been thrown out of their parents' home. In most cases, minors or teenagers decide to leave home and continue on the street and live the life of a non-binding homeless person. As defined by Antolová and Rusnak[6] street children are perceived as people who essentially can have their own parents, but for some reason they themselves have chosen to live on the street. There can be several reasons, mainly abuse by the parents, when children run away from the home environment and prefer to live on the street to confront domestic cruelty, another reason is the loss of parents due to death, and in this case we are talking about an orphan. In some cases, children are left with no relatives who could take care of them and thus become homeless on the street. Similarly, children flee for various personal reasons and therefore do not want to return home. They live without satisfying basic needs such as food, clothing, and shelter. Sometimes children decide to live on the street because their parents do not understand their problems, reject their sexual orientation or have psychological problems.

Other important reasons that might cause the child to leave their natural home environment are primarily dependent on various drugs. The most widespread addiction in Slovak Republic is to alcohol.

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[5] P. Mühlpachr, *Sociopatologie pro sociální pracovníky*, Brno 2008, p. 24.

[6] V. Antolová, J. Rusnák, *Sociálna patológia rodiny*, Bratislava 2011.

Children who grow up in such an environment do not want to bear the obscene behavior on the part of parents who often return home under the influence of alcohol. The solution for children is to escape into the streets. Similarly, a very serious reason for fleeing child on the street is the lack of interest by parents, the message being that they are only a burden. Minors suffering mentally prefer to seek refuge in the street rather than to live under one roof with parents who are not interested.

Unemployment is a serious problem in Slovakia.[7] This unfavorable situation brings with it poor financial security that affects education and childcare. Children suffer under the poor economic conditions and it may transpire that they run away from such home environment and become homeless.[8] Their only form of livelihood in the street is mostly by begging for money, food and other necessary things for survival. It will not pass even without theft, in most cases children stealing food to survive on the street. Further clarification points to another definition which says that "They are the children or young people under 18 who live shorter or longer time in the street. These are children who live by roaming from place to place, have their peer groups and contacts on the street. Officially these children can have a home address with their parents or in institutional care". The view of Sümeg is shared by Levická[9], who highlights the major reasons for children ending up on the street and thus becoming so-called street children. She states that not only the children themselves who may dwell on the streets, with their parents doing so as well as children. We can assume that it is a form of neglect when parents failed the care of minors, and their incompetence means that they found themselves on the street homeless. Just as it is mentioned by Sümeg, Levická complements the argument that the reason a child leaves home is any form of abuse. Among the reasons that cause this condition is a reversible loss of parents and thus becoming an orphan.

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[7] More about the social problem of an unemployment, risk groups and family, in: *Služby zamestnanosti a vybrané aspekty sociálnej práce s nezamestnanými*, ed. L.Vaska, Bratislava 2014.

[8] V. Antolová, J. Rusnák, *Sociálna patológia rodiny*, op. cit.

[9] J. Levická, *Na ceste za klientom*, Trnava 2006.

The causes of the life of street children

Street children are most often between 10 and 18 years of age, the largest group are children aged 14 to 18 years. Street children can be mostly encountered in large cities, where there is a higher degree of anonymity, minimal social control and a greater possibility of the existence on the street, often sleeping on railway stations, subway, shunting yards, in abandoned houses designated for demolition, in basements and abandoned shafts. They often set up makeshift shelters with an improvised bed, cardboard boxes and boxes of fruit and, in the summer, stay in less frequented underpasses, parks and buildings in niches. Children are hidden from the public and from the police. Rarely can they be seen in the company of homeless people. Used shelters are for them the huts which they broke into, for a time it is for them a source of food and shelter. Often they are looking for "friends" who, in exchange for sex, are allowed to sleep in their apartment.

Children who live on the street have reasons for which they are there. Some had no choice, others opt for the street by themselves. The most frequent reasons for which a child leaves their home and becomes a street child are: famine, poverty, epidemics, war, abuse and recruitment of children into army.

Among the reasons for which the children are on the street include:

- child abuse;
- reason for leaving the family can be an appetite for adventure, fear of punishment;
- child, who travels from town to town;
- the loss of parent (death);
- abandonment;
- child escaped an institutional facility. [10]

Street children have problems in two areas and are mainly related to the availability of health and education. "A child who has no education has no prospect of finding a better paid job. A sick child cannot

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[10] Ibidem, p. 283.

work and therefore is at risk of not finding necessary means for obtaining food."[11]

The view of the Law – social and legal protection of children and social guardianship

In Slovak conditions, the problem of street children is not so evident. It is not impossible that the child will not spend some time on the streets together with their parents. Usually it's just the time until the competent authority of the Office of Labour, Social Affairs and Family finds out about it.

According to the law on the social and legal protection of children and social guardianship, "If the child finds himself without any care or where its life, health or psychological development, physical development and social development is seriously threatened or disturbed, the office of child protection and social guardianship, in which the circumference of the child is required to immediately file a court application for interim measures under a special regulation, to ensure the satisfaction of basic needs of the child and his admission to an orphanage. The office of child protection and social guardianship is required to ensure the adoption of a child in an orphanage."

When the Office of Labour, Social Affairs and Family gets any information about these children, the next step is to apply a request of some form of foster care to the court.

"Slovakia lacks official statistics, focusing on the number of street children. We believe, on the basis of information from workers of social protection and social guardianship of selected offices of labor, social affairs and family (hereinafter Office LSAF), and also from street workers working with children and young people that the problem is not so visible in our country."[12]

We can only assume that thanks to the legislation, there is a minimal possibility that children will live on the street for longer time in the Slovak Republic. It mentions selected statistical indicators of the

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[11] Ibidem, p. 284.

[12] V. Antolová, J. Rusnák, *Sociálna patológia rodiny*, op. cit.

Office LSAF, in which processed data concerning the social protection of children.

Table 1. Selected acts of the Department of social and legal protection of children (hereinafter Department) in Slovakia in 2014

	Number
Sum of proposals	4,706
Precaution	1,276
Prescription of institutional care	402
Cancelation of institutional care	98
Cases of education and nutrition	2,930

We can see from the table above that the Department delivered to the court 4,706 proposals relating to measures in matters of custody of minors.

Table 2. Social assistance to children according kind of social pathology in 2014

		Physical abuse	Psychological abuse	Neglect	Bullying	Pornography industry	Sum
Number of children in evidence:	boys	185	61	36	20	5	307
	girls	136	67	163	10	7	383
	together	321	128	199	30	12	690
	under 6 years old	98	21	15	7	2	143
	over 6 years old	223	107	184	23	10	547
Number of proposals to initiate criminal proceedings		48	19	25	0	0	92
Kind of social support:	ambulant care	23	9	26	2	0	60
	residential care	25	5	16	0	0	46
	foster care	×	×	×	×	×	×

The number of children who have been registered due to CAN syndrome and related problems from Department is 690. The majority are girls, whose number is greater in cases of emotional abuse, neglect and the pornographic industry. The number of proposals to

initiate criminal proceedings was 92. The social help to minors was frequently provided in the form of ambulant care and institutional care followed.

Table 3. Reasons of the social guardianship activity in 2014

Reasons	Sum	Children at the age 0-14	Children at the age 15-18
criminal activity	2,932	345	2,587
criminal activity before crimininal responsibility	1,653	1,653	×
experimentation with drugs	252	39	213
other addictions	129	36	93
truancy	9,269	5,021	4,248
bad relations	1,344	799	545
escape from home environment	74	24	50
behavioral disorders	1,425	630	795
other	266	190	76
victim of crime	348	181	167
witness of crime	523	241	282

Most cases in the evidence of social guardianship were related to truancy, followed by criminal activity, criminal activity before the criminal responsibility of the child and educational problems. More cases were registered in the age group 15-18 years with the exception of truancy, bad relationships and a victim of crime.

Table 4. Children placed by the court in 2014

			Reasons of the court decision								
		Numbers of children	Neclect	Drug abuse of parents	Drug abuse of child	Criminal activity of parents	Criminal activity of child	Misdoubt of CAN	Truancy	Abandonment child	Other
Court's judgment	precaution	1,198	471	13	33	39	37	65	69	135	336
	educational arrangement	89	3	0	18	0	8	1	34	0	25
	institutional care	320	125	0	1	15	33	3	34	16	93
	protective education	9	×	×	×	×	×	×	×	×	×
Number of children in evidence until 31.12.2014	precaution	986	418	6	17	35	28	68	45	109	260
	educational arrangement	81	2	3	35	0	7	0	20	0	14
	institutional care	4,378	2,598	43	6	90	139	98	183	289	932
	protective education	46	×	×	×	×	×	×	×	×	×

In the cases of minors, the court adjudicated upon 1,616 cases in the year 2014. Most precaution measures were imposed by reason of neglecting proper care for children as well as in cases of child abandonment.

Poverty as one of the reasons why children live on the street

Child poverty is one of the most serious social problems in the world, while we presume to claim that children belong among the most vulnerable group and the threat in this case has more severe implications, because it can significantly negatively affect many areas of their future life.

Many factors influence the income poverty of children. It is the structure of the family, the age of the parents, their level of education and also their work activity. Households with several children have a higher expenditure on food, clothing, household running costs, the school activities of children and other necessary needs.

According to a thematic study[13], the risk of poverty for children whose parents are less than 30 years old, is significantly higher than in children living with older parents, which is mainly explained by the more frequent unemployment of younger parents and the lower earnings compared with older employed parents.

The family environment, to a significant degree, affects the lives of children in many areas.[14] The lives of children in poverty has a negative impact on the chances and opportunities in adulthood, it may also influence their level of aspiration and achievement in society. Similarly, it is observed also by Žilová, who states that a poor family background represents a reason for being trapped in poverty, but at the same time also a person who grew up in good conditions, under the influence of the situation may find themselves in the category of "lost".[15]

Children who face a life of poverty are often dependent on themselves. As a way out of the situation of poverty, sometimes a vision of rapid earnings in the street (prostitution, drug distribution, theft, etc.) is seen. The street life is associated with many dangerous situations that threaten children.

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[13] *Tematická štúdia o politických opatreniach v oblasti detskej chudoby*, European Communities, 2008, p. 3.

[14] B. Bodnárová et al., *Medzigeneračný prieskum podmienok života rodín*, Bratislava 2006, p. 12.

[15] A. Žilová, *Chudoba a jej premeny na Slovensku*, Badín 2005, p. 34.

We conducted research to find out how children subjectively perceive the living conditions in which they live, and subsequently how these living conditions are linked with the other socio-economic areas of their lives.

The research was conducted in 2013 in 5 regions of the Žilina district. The research sample consisted of 1,036 pupils (from that 518 were boys and 518 were girls).

Adequate housing conditions corresponding to the norm and hygienic conditions are one of the fundamental necessities of life. With the increasing number of household members, also the need for a greater housing area and the expenditure on electricity, water and heating are growing. Michálek[16] in his research study, indicates that the districts of Námestovo, Kysucké Nové Mesto, Bytča and Čadca belong among the districts with the worst situation, in terms of the overcrowding of dwellings (inadequate housing areas, according to the number of people in the apartment). We found only a small negative connection between the measure of well-being and the number of children in the dwelling, $\rho= -.18$, p<.001. An increasing number of children in the dwelling thus, only to a small extent, reflect the decline in the well-being among our respondents.

From the survey sample, for a deeper analysis, we assigned the top 20%, i.e. children who have reached the highest value in the level of well-being (labelled the wealthiest 20%) and the bottom 20%, i.e. children who have reached the lowest level of well-being (labelled the poorest 20%). Subsequently, we were interested in whether there is a statistically significant difference between the two "extreme" groups of respondents (the wealthiest 20% vs. the poorest 20%) in the number of children in the family.

Between the groups "the poorest 20%" (*Mdn*=3, *IQR*=2) and "the wealthiest 20%" (*Mdn*=2, *IQR*=1) we found out a statistically significant difference in the number of children U=13335.0, z=−5.20, p<.001, r=−.26, while this difference is of moderate practical significance. In the group of the respondents from relatively poorer households there thus live a significantly higher number of children than in the group of the respondents from the relatively wealthy families.

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[16] A. Michálek, "Meranie chudoby v regiónoch," *Sociológia* 2004, vol. 36(1), p. 8.

Families with a low standard of living and parents with a low income, according to the authors, P. Evans and M. Deluca, are considered to be one of the risk factors, which create a predisposition for the social exclusion of the children in their adulthood.[17] In the same context, also stated the low education of parents, or little support from the side of the parents, which is associated with the low aspirations of the children and also their parents. The OECD reports bring us the following research findings: "parents from higher social classes are more active, not only in care, but also in the help with the home preparation of the child for school and in underlining the development of knowledge and the knowledge of the children, than the parents of the lower classes. Better socially positioned parents, with children more prepared for school, more mindful for the development of verbal skills and the knowledge of the children, more often enroll the children into libraries and a variety of interest groups." In the report, it further states "the worse socially positioned parents, although they also do all this with their children, are not doing it to the same extent, nor with such intensity and with such consistency."[18] During the reduction (or creation) of the risk of social exclusion, they highlight the particular role played by education policy.

From our research in this connection, it showed that there is a relatively small connection between the work achievement of the parents and school achievement. Children of parents who have better job opportunities thus also achieve better results in school, albeit only slightly. Similarly, we found that also with increasing levels of wealth, the results of children in school improve slightly, while more significant differences were found between the "poorest" and "the wealthiest" respondents. Children who live in relatively "wealthy" families, achieved significantly better results in school, compared to children from relatively "poor" families. We can interpret these results already by the aforementioned research, and the fact that parents who have greater job opportunities and provide a higher level of well-being, probably also have higher aspirations for their child. In general, they are much more aware of the necessity for good jobs, with which the

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[17] Bodnárová B. et al., *Medzigeneračná reprodukcia chudoby*, Bratislava 2005, p. 43.
[18] Project PISA OECD, In Bodnárová et al., *Medzigeneračná reprodukcia chudoby*, p. 56.

degree of educational attainment is also connected. For this reason, in general, they are more mindful of preparing their children for school, who ultimately achieve better academic results. This is also shown in several studies, where parents with a higher income spend more time with their children in preparing for school and have an increased interest in the success of their children in school and in extracurricular activities.[19]

For success in school, or in achieving good educational results, the level of the learning environment is often emphasized (one's own room, writing desk, a quiet place for learning, a PC). Within the research, the authors Sobolewski and Amato found that access to learning equipment and conditions (a quiet place for learning, textbooks and school equipment, a computer) is one of the explanatory factors of the close link between family income and the educational achievements of children.[20] From our results, it showed that almost all children have a secure space for learning, books or a writing desk in 90% of cases, and the computer itself, concerning the preparation for school, we can find in 81% of cases. Although we have found a great positive connection among the levels of the learning environment and well--being, which was even stronger when comparing "the poorest" and "the wealthiest" of the respondents, we did not find, contrary to our expectations, a more significant connection between the level of the learning environment and school achievement. It may also be caused by the fact that a large proportion of the respondents reported a relatively high level of learning environment, which subsequently does not allow for sufficient discrimination with regard to differences in school achievement (the so called ceiling effect). Also, the evaluation of school achievement was made by the children themselves, which could also bring a certain distortion into the obtained data (a tendency to show themselves in a better light, etc.). The importance of the environment for learning with regard to school results is thus not seriously called into question by our findings.[21]

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[19] Ibidem.

[20] D. Gerbery et al. (ed.), *Kniha o chudobe. Spoločenské súvislosti a verejné politiky*, 2007, p. 23.

[21] More about the research is published in: V. Hulínová, R. Bartoš, M. Hulín, *Sociálne súvislosti chudoby detí*, Kraków 2014. V. Hulínová, M. Hulín, R. Bartoš, "The Social Context

Our findings show that the level of material household equipment is linked to the well-being of children as well as the interest of parents in their children and is related to the children's aspirations in life. The lack of interest on the part of parents can be compensated for by children in a group that threatens them negatively.[22]

Conclusion

In this paper, we examined the issue of "street children" in the Slovak Republic. This social problem is not apparent in Slovakia, thanks to the revised legislation that prevents minors from being left without any adult care. Rather more prevalent in our conditions are "children on the street", which are those who spend most of their time in an open environment but they have their family environment where they return. We also presented statistics of the social measures applied to prevent or to solve social problems of children and families.

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Summary

The paper is focused on the group of children who are most at risk in their family or in the social environment. It is mainly the unhealthy family situation which becomes the reason for the separation of a child from the family. There is a moment when the street becomes the place where the child spends most of the time, saturates his/her needs in ways offered by the street. The environment of the street becomes a space of further pathology in the child´s behavior. This paper presents statistical indicators in the field of children's rights protection in Slovakia, as well as research findings on the issue of child poverty.

Keywords:
    children at risk, street children, assessment of the family, poverty

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Street Children: Possibilities and Limitations of Psychological and Therapeutic Assistance from the Perspective of Systemic Family Therapy

They live and work in the streets of large and small towns. They gather into bigger or smaller groups, through which they try to satisfy the basic human needs, such as the sense of belonging, support, safety, trust, self--fulfilment, and many others. They belong to strongly hierarchised peer groups and they look for their place on the outskirts of the mainstream social life. The concept of a home is strange for them; they mainly associate it with poverty and violence. A lot of them do not know their father or both parents. They are often raised by siblings, aunts, uncles or neighbours. They are the children of the street and they have become a subject of many discussions and support projects. Broken families, as well as their complicated social and economical status, are a serious challenge for therapeutic and support actions organised for them.

As Barbara Adamczyk notes, street children "are present not only in the Third World countries associated with poverty, hunger or the lack of hope for a better future. Such unloved and rejected children, whose centre of life and self-fulfilment includes streets, parks, basements, railway stations, and town squares, are also a part of huge and rich cities of the whole world, including Poland. The escalation of this problem becomes an unusual phenomenon in the times of welfare."[1]

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[1] B. Adamczyk, "Dzieci ulicy – wybór czy konieczność?" in *Z zagadnień profilaktyki zagrożeń społecznych*, eds. M. Banach, T.W. Gierat, Levoča 2009, p. 51.

It seems that social and financial support is not always quickly reflected in the improvement in the lives of those children and their families. Numerous social and support programmes carried out in particular countries bring better or worse results. Apart from certain achievements in our work with street children, we also experience many situations in which our actions do not seem to result in what we expect. What we invest in those children – money, work, programmes, strategies, etc. – does not always result in success. Sometimes, those who carry out particular programmes feel that they wasted energy, money and time.

Due to the activity of numerous international, government and non-government organisations, a large part of homeless children quickly gets financial, spiritual and psychological support. However, sometimes it takes a long time before a systematic, planned help can bring the expected effects.[2] Unfortunately, many street children never get any support.

Psychological and therapeutic help given to such children requires taking into account a broad and often very complicated family system in which they function.[3] Also, economic and cultural factors, as well as logistic and structural limitations of the family, play an important role in the process of psychological, therapeutic and educational support of street children.

A peer group, which often plays the role of a foster home and performs important protective functions (unfortunately, it often demoralizes the child, too), should be an important point of reference for diagnostic and therapeutic actions offered to such children.

Irrespective of the degree of complicatedness of the street children's family situation, it is worth considering the quality of educational and psychological-therapeutic programmes offered by particular support institutions.

A systemic therapy, which takes into account the necessity to analyse an individual against a broad family context, seems to be a good

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[2] M.P. Senayake, A. Ranasinghe, C. Balasuriya, "Street Children Preliminary Study," *Ceylon Medical Journal* 1998, no. 43, p. 192ff.

[3] V. Duyan, "Relationships Between the Sociodemographic and Family Characteristics, Street Life Experiences, and the Hopelessness of Street Children," *Childhood* 2005, no. 12, pp. 445-458.

help as it makes it possible to understand the child in a family context, irrespective of the degree to which the child's family is integrated or broken. We shall not understand street children if we fail to analyse their families, their structural, economic and social situation, the level of integration of their family members, and the dynamics of relations between children, parents, as well as siblings.

As numerous authors emphasize, due to the street children's social status, they are "invisible" for various social support systems, including health care, legal support or broadly understood education. Social rejection and the way such children function makes it difficult or even impossible to reach them with proper support programmes.

Support projects carried out by governments of particular countries or various non-government organisations can only partially satisfy the needs and expectations of street children. However, irrespective of the intensity and nature of difficulties, every year governments and non-government organisations take up many preventive and support actions, adjusting their offer to current needs and situations. Analysing the related statistics, one may notice that despite various – more or less organised – undertakings, the number of street children does not decrease. For example, according to the Report published by the National Center of Family Homelessness at the American Institutes for Research – last year, one in 30 children in the USA experienced the lack of home. As a result, in 2013 2.5 million children (according to the Report – exactly 2,483,539 children) lived or stayed in various shelters, old factories, cars, etc. As the authors of the Report note, the increase in homelessness between 2012 and 2013 is 8% in the whole population, so its level is now the highest in history.[4]

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[4] *America's Youngest Outcasts: A Report Card on Child Homelessness*, Waltham (MA) 2014, p. 6; cf. the situation of other countries in the South America, Asia or even Europe: P. Altanis, J. Goddard, "Street Children in Contemporary Greece," *Children and Society* 2004, vol. 18(4), pp. 299-311.

Who are street children? A few words on terms and concepts

Support and psychological help offered to street children meets various difficulties determined by the specific situation of such children. Who is the one whom psychological and therapeutic support if offered? Is giving a shelter to a homeless child a final objective we can achieve?

The very term "street child" is questionable. A popular image of a street child is a neglected child with criminal past, often an orphan, who has no chance for personal and social development. Children of the street are associated with dirty children wearing ragged clothes who are helpless and wander in the streets of bigger or smaller towns. Also, some of them are well-dressed and gathered in dangerous gangs which rob people in the streets, attack cars stopping in front of traffic lights, commit group burglaries, thefts, and acts of vandalism. The title of one of the reports on street children issued in Georgia, USA, in 2009, is surprising and, at the same time, it inspires the reader to think the problem over: *Don't Call Me a Street Child*.[5] There is no doubt that using the term "street child" may result in social stigmatisation, which may further intensify and strengthen the problem of those children, making it difficult for them to integrate with the rest of the society.

However, while searching for the best models of psychological and therapeutic support, one cannot avoid using terms or concepts that stigmatise those children, at least to some degree. Using such vocabulary is not aimed at segregation, stigmatisation or rejection of street children, but at describing the problem properly so that such children may receive appropriate assistance.

In the *Lexicon* of the contemporary Polish language we may read that a child of the street is a child who was deprived of proper parental care and left alone, as a result of which he/she is raised by the street.[6]

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[5] Cf. K. Wargan, L. Dershem, *Don't Call Me a Street Child: Estimation and Characteristics, of Urban Street Children in Georgia*, 2009, http://unicef.ge/uploads/Street_children_survey.eng1.pdf (access: 31.10.2017).

[6] B. Dunaj, *Słownik współczesnego języka polskiego*, vol. 1, Kraków 2000, p. 356.

A similar definition, with a more specific comment on the necessity of satisfying human needs, is given by Wiesław Kołak – representative of the National Committee of Readjustment Education, who says that one is a street child to the extent to which one's parents are replaced by the street because family home does not guarantee the satisfaction of the person's basic needs.[7]

According to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), street children are those who "live in the street, left to rely on themselves. They abandoned their homes and were found with no other alternative."[8]

The Council of Europe assumes that "street children are children under 18 who have been living in the street environment for a shorter or longer period of time."[9]

While working with street children, one has to take into account that there is not one, common profile of a street child which could be used in psychological and therapeutic work. For example, analysing various types of a "street child", Tomasz Kołodziejczyk lists and describes the following groups: (a) children of gypsies from Romania; (b) young prostitutes; (c) children who run away from their family homes; (d) children who do not attend school; (e) children who escape from educational institutions; (f) children who work in the streets.[10] Irena Pospiszyl lists the following categories: (a) runaways; (b) adventure seekers; (c) vagabonds, "street princes", urchins; (d) mall girls; (e) children from blocks of flats who spend most of their time on playgrounds and in the streets.[11]

Naturally, the above mentioned types of Polish street children do not include all groups, categories or sub-categories of such children.

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[7] Cf. W. Kołak, "Prawa Dzieci Ulicy w działalności KKWR," *Opieka – Wychowanie – Terapia* 2002, no. 1, p. 4.

[8] UNESCO, *Enfants de la rue, drogues, VIH/SIDA*: *les réponses de l'éducation préventive*, p. 11, http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0013/001301/130151f.pdf (access: 31.10.2017).

[9] Council of Europe, Study Group on Street Children, *Project: Street Children*, Strasbourg 1994, p. 14.

[10] T. Kołodziejczyk, "Program Street Children – Children on the Streets w Polsce," in *Dzieci ulicy. Problematyka, profilaktyka, resocjalizacja*, ed. G. Olszewska-Baka, Białystok 2000, pp. 42-44.

[11] Cf. I. Pospiszyl, *Patologie społeczne*, Warszawa 2008, pp. 306-308.

All authors dealing with the topic have their own definitions and scientific categorisations. Is it good or bad? It is good provided that such divisions help the authors better describe the children's situations and draw conclusions for specific preventive, therapeutic and educational actions which aim at helping the children. However, one has to be careful not to pay too much attention to definitions and classifications.

Systemic family therapy.
Implications for working with a street child

Irrespective of the definition of children living or spending most of their time in the street, one should always take their problems seriously and professionally, trying to satisfy their deepest needs and desires. In order to offer a proper therapy to a street child, we should first diagnose the child's situation. We should think each case over, listen and watch what is visible and try to discover what is hidden. In order to hear a street child, we need a dialogue and involvement in his/her affairs, as well as in the life of the child's whole family. As Kazimierz Popielski rightly notes, the man "stands in a dialogue: he questions himself, the other person and the world. At the same time, the man is 'questioned' by what constitutes his environment. Thus, the man is a question for himself and for other people. He is a question which is unanswerable, incomplete and open in its depth."[12] In this context, one may say that interest, stopping and dialogue should be the basis of any support activities offered to street children.

The systemic perspective, which is strongly present in the therapy of families and pairs (developed since 1950's of the last century in the USA), seems to be an interesting approach for describing the phenomenon of street children, and, as a result, an interesting perspective for designing preventive and therapeutic action.

During the therapy and other support activities (including educational ones), one should – with the highest care and professional

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[12] K. Popielski, "Wymiar ludzki – znaczące odkrycie współczesnej psychologii," in *Człowiek – pytanie otwarte. Studia z logoteorii i logoterapii*, ed. K. Popielski, Lublin 1987, p. 14.

therapeutic skills – take into account cultural and economical factors affecting the children, especially if the child lives in the street due to the fact that he/she or their parents experienced refuge or migration. Numerous comparative studies concerning families, especially those which refer to migration and immigration, confirm that such factors are extremely important.[13]

Systemic family therapy is in particular focused on working on problems against a broad background of family and society. As the name of the therapy suggests, family is understood as a particular system of its members.[14] Thus, at the very beginning, one may see an important aspect of the therapy: one can never treat street children as individuals separated from their family home, peer group, relatives and friends, irrespective of how long the children have lived away from their home and nearest environment. A lot of scientists who analyse the phenomenon of street children, as well as many people who work with them (psychologists, therapists), pay so much attention to the child's "here and now", to the street itself, that they neglect the care for the child's real family. Such situation is often strengthened by the fact that the families of street children are full of pathologies such as violence, sexual abuse, etc., as a result of which many therapists believe they should keep separating the child from the family. Of course, we do not promote forced, artificial reconstruction of families (which is often impossible). However, what the systemic family therapy offers from the very beginning is making the therapist sensitive to each child's family system which should always be a starting point for diagnosing the child's present state and future prospects.

Prevention and healing in the systemic family therapy means, first of all, accepting its basic assumptions suggested and developed by authors such as M. BM. Bowen, S. Minuchin, J. Haley, C. Madanes, V. Satir, Ackerman and others.[15] Today, thinking about systemic therapy, we mean a variety of different schools rather than one specific

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[13] H. Jurjewicz, "Religious-acculturational and Cultural-integrating Dimension of the Polish Pastoral Care in the United States of America," *Społeczeństwo. Kultura. Wartości* 2013, no. 5, p. 199ff.

[14] N.W. Ackerman, "Child Participation in Family Therapy," *Family Process* 1970, vol. 9(4), p. 403ff.

[15] S. Minuchin, *Families and Family Therapy*, Cambridge (MA) 1974.

approach. The most known, developed and popular of those schools include trends such as structural, strategic or communicative therapies.

For example, let us consider the theory of family systems by Murray Bowen and his concept of a family system. The author treats a family as a multigenerational phenomenon, describing it from the historical perspective. In this theory, a family is seen as a living organism. A family is a group of people among whom there are emotional links; common thoughts, feelings, fantasies. Bowen distinguished two families: the smaller one is a *nuclear family* and the bigger one is an *extended family*. An individual problem of a spouse or a child, or a problem in the relationship between spouses results from their relation with parents. And the relation between parents is the effect of the relation between the parents' parents.

In Bowen's theory, all the assumptions describing family processes refer to the existence of a "chronic anxiety" in the family (which is first a biological phenomenon). The anxiety is inherited by the family from their ancestors. The anxiety, in a significant manner, stimulates the "family's emotional system" and influences the varied "I" of particular family members.[16]

Analysing a family from the systemic perspective, the authors of the theory focus on the analysis of relations existing among family members. From that perspective, a healthy family is a family whose members are characterised by a high level of autonomy. In other words, while being related to one another, at the same time they are, in a healthy way, independent. Breaking up with psychoanalysis, systemic therapists stop thinking about an illness as something that touches an individual. Focusing on the whole family, they consider the quality of a family system. In other words, they believe that the whole family is ill.

Developing the concept of a family as a more or less functional system, Murray Bowen concentrates on multigenerational transmission of family patterns (*multigenerational transmission process*). In such approach an individual is viewed as an element of a larger system. The individual undergoes various processes of *differentiation of self* – not only through the family, but also through school, friends, colleagues, and other members of the society that surrounds the individual. According

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[16] M. Bowen, *Family Therapy in Clinical Practice*, New York 1978.

to the author, the concept of the *family emotional system* orders and constitutes a systemic approach to family, while *undifferential family ego mass (fusion-differentiation)* indicates the family as an organism with a more or less intensive "family homeostasis" (e.g., closeness and remoteness of family members, etc.).[17]

Apart from Bowen's thorough analysis of systemic assumptions, in order to present the variety of interpretation opportunities related to systemic assumption, I would like to refer to the works of the Argentinian psychologist Salvadore Minuchin[18] who has been developing the structural approach in the therapy for many years. The structural approach is characterised by the following three concepts: family structure, family subsystems and borders. According to Minuchin, disease symptoms of particular family members are best understood from the point of view of interaction patterns in the family. In this view, before we reduce or eliminate symptoms of a particular family members, structural changes have to take place in the family.

Let us get back to the three important concepts:

a. *Family structure* is an invisible system of functional requirements and rules which organise the way family members relate to one another (an important element of the theory is a family hierarchy).

b. *Family subsystems* are divided into: marital subsystem, parental subsystem, siblings and distant relatives. Each family member plays a different role in particular subsystems.

c. *Borders* are the third important constituent of the structural theory. Borders – from the fixed one to the blurred one, constitute a certain continuum (from disengagement to enmeshment). They are emotional borders which protect and strengthen the integrity of particular people and subsystems.[19]

Adaptation possibilities are a symbol of a healthy family. A healthy family functions on the basis of a functional structure that secures the rights and obligations of particular subsystems and people who create them (each person separately). Health is described through concepts

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[17] Ibidem.

[18] S. Minuchin, *Families of the Slums*, New York 1967.

[19] S. Minuchin, *Families and Family Therapy*, op. cit.

such as wholeness of the family system, hierarchisation of people and subsystems, as well as interdependent, harmonious functioning of subsystems. Current family transactions are based on legible transactional rules among the subsystems and people who create the subsystems.[20]

The author believes that a family pathology results from disturbance of the family stage of development. A disease, which is revealed (mainly by an individual or by more people in the family), confirms the disturbance of a system structure and homeostasis. For example, symptoms of anorexia are a reaction to a family's dysfunction, i. e. a result of non-functional pattern of family interactions. A specific example of pathologic families are so-called psychosomatic families. The concept of stress and its influence on the family is also important in the theory. Nevertheless, Menuchin often said that we should not "pathologise" the family's reaction to stress.

Systemic thinking seems to include a variety of concepts and theoretical assumptions which can be applied to our work with street children. There is no doubt that the fact that a child or a spouse leaves home usually results from a family dysfunction.

In the context of the above considerations, I believe that taking into account the family system of the children and youth whom support actions are offered is very important in designing prevention and therapeutic work.[21] The children's individual abilities are influenced by the way their families are structured, the way particular family subsystems function, the rules on which the dialogue in the family is based, the borders between particular subsystems, and the system of functions, tasks and responsibilities in the family.

Recapitulation

Indubitably, the problem of street children exceeds the simple linear relation between the child and the street. Joining a youth group which

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[20] S. Minuchin, "Where Is the Family in Narrative Family Therapy?" *The Journal of Marital and Family Therapy* 1998, vol. 24(4), p. 397ff.

[21] J.M. Gottman, *The Marriage Clinic: A Scientifically Based Marital Therapy*, New York 1999.

lives in the street has its own unique social and environmental context. It means that its consequences also affect the child's nearest environment, i.e. family, friends and acquaintances. Therefore, all preventive and therapeutic actions should not only include the street child, but also wider circles of people who – theoretically – are in the group of low risk as for the possibility of living in the street.

Thus, modern prevention and therapy should include improving social competences, strengthening family bonds, as well as improving the competences in managing emotions, stress, etc.

There is no doubt that well-planned psychoeducation, as well as therapy – e.g. individual, psychodynamic, cognitive-behavioral, or systemic therapy – may constitute one of the most important elements of modern prevention and therapy in helping street children and their families, although the scope of such therapy is often limited. Reaching those children and keeping contact with them is often a serious challenge for the actions taken by therapists.

As Barbara Adamczyk rightly notes, "functioning in the place which is not controlled by adults (family and school) makes the child invent various strategies that make it possible for them to adjust to the street conditions."[22] Unfortunately, a lot of street children are children "whose development is not supervised by anyone", as a result of which they are emotionally neglected. Also, before they became homeless, many of them "had only obligations, without real upbringing."[23] In this situation, therapeutic and preventive support should in particular take into account psychological and social dimension of their needs and expectations.

Temporality and instability of relations, impermanence of place, distrust, fear, and hurts which constitute the street children's burden, make it difficult for them to accept psychological and therapeutic support. Legal conflicts, low economic status, and the lack of money for developing and continuing existing projects are other factors that reduce the quality and effectiveness of the assistance offered to street children.

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[22] B. Adamczyk, "Adaptacyjne strategie dzieci ulicy," *Zeszyty Pracy Socjalnej* 2011, no. 16, p. 67.

[23] Ibidem, p. 68.

Although the systemic family therapy is probably strongly limited in its actual possibilities, it is certainly a valuable source of reflection for theory and practice. Work for the children of the street means constant struggling of many people with what they would like to do and what is real and possible. It is a never-ending "remorse" and, at the same, call, for both individual people and whole societies.

Irrespective of the amount of undertakings aiming at reducing homelessness among children and youth, as well as their families, there is always something we can do; there is always time and place for improving direct and indirect initiatives of preventive and corrective nature.

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Summary

This article discusses the therapeutic help we can provide to street children and their families from the perspective of the family therapy. The author of the article emphasizes that the youngest inhabitants of smaller streets and bigger cities should be treated in the most sensitive and professional manner, listening to their deepest needs and desires. In addition, any therapeutic help requires proper diagnosis. Recalling such figures as M. Bowen, S. Minuchin, J. Haley, C. Madanes, V. Satir, Ackerman, the author of the paper presents specific important perspectives on describing a family as a system, and children as a very important element of their functioning.

The basic thesis of the article is the assertion that effective diagnosis, prophylaxis and therapeutic support are only possible in the context of the recognition of street children in close family and social contexts. The author also points to the need to consider complex processes within the family.

KEYWORDS:
street children, systemic therapy, family therapy, prevention, diagnosis

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Street Children and the Possibility of Counselling with Their Families

Street Children and a New Philosophy of Education

Street children in terms of a special group are by no means a new phenomenon.[1] In contrast to the past, however, different scientific disciplines and political ideologies, especially in the second half of the past century, claim that these questions have their answers, only the right "techniques" needed to be found. In search of technical solutions, moral responsibility was neglected, and the associated religion was often despised. This did not lead to the expected solutions but to an increasing number of these kinds of problem which were exacerbated. This holds true also for many other areas of life.

Despite the great number of scientific discoveries, the modern and developed world is increasingly realizing that the 20th century was not just a time of progress, but also a time of moral decay.[2] Psychological profiles of various abusers dramatically show the fact that in most cases it is about a typical moral deficit, a shortage of moral judgment or rather moral sense and responsibility. In this way the future

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[1] Don Bosco in fact built his entire educational model on street children of the time. Vincent de Paul found his motivation for love towards the poor in the foundlings, children without parents.

[2] M. Borba, *Building Moral Intelligence*, San Francisco (CA) 2001, p. 46.

will be, despite progressive scientific discoveries, not only unable to avoid moral challenges, but these challenges will also gain more and more importance.[3] Humans are already too intelligent in cognitive and secular terms to be able to survive without emotion or moral intelligence. Consequently, youths utilize their behaviour in a call for the redefinition of education, in fact for a new philosophy of education, in which the very moral and ethical virtues would occupy a more important place. Youth do not wish to get instructions for life from adults, but they crave good examples in our adult lives.[4] When they feel that adults are capable of solving their own problems responsibly, and are able to cope with their own challenges, youth will find ways to solve their problems by themselves.[5] In their efforts they undoubtedly, and justifiably, expect to be unconditionally accepted and loved.[6]

The new philosophy of education presumes communication that is sensitive and thorough as well as positive, creative and optimistic. Neurobiology states that every communication is converted into signals by the human brain.[7] These signals affect human behaviour, which determines our communication.[8] In other words, positive communication on one hand prepares us for better relationships, negative and aggressive communication on the other hand robs us of those few existing sensitive communication skills.[9] Jesus' words affirm this strongly:

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[3] R. Coles, *The Secular Mind*, Princeton (NJ) 1999, pp. 188-189.

[4] M.K. Adams, *Po tihem zapeljani: Ko si starši otroke naredijo za partnerje*, Ljubljana 2013, p. 120.

[5] A fifteen year old boy, asked what kind of gift he expects from his parents for confirmation, said, "If they are able to solve their problems and stop pestering me all the time about how hard life is on them, that will be good enough for me."

[6] Interestingly, these realizations are the result of the progress of science itself, especially neurobiology and neuropsychology. Aside from the submission of the increasingly aggressive scientific view of the world and of life in the second half of the last century, the very progress of empirical scientific discipline confirmed the entrapment in its own limitations, and at the same time opened a door to acknowledge the usefulness of spiritual dimensions and life virtue that the previous century tried to disregard.

[7] W.R. Firestone, J. Catlett, *The Ethics of Interpersonal Relationships*, London 2009, p. 78.

[8] J. Bauer, *Prinzip Menschlichkeit: Warum wir von Natur aus kooperieren*, Hamburg 2007, pp. 15-16.

[9] Stress, fear of making mistakes, and humiliation are "killers of learning" (J. Bauer, *Prinzip Menschlichkeit: Earum wir von Natur aus kooperieren*, p. 37).

"Everyone who has something will be given more. But people who don't have anything will lose even what little they have" (Mt 13:12).

Although street children are known to behave aggressively, we should know that youths are the mirror of adults. Simultaneously, they often have a higher sense of fairness. In the accumulation of both craving a fairer life and feeling powerless, they search for an escape in aggression. When adults complain about youth in search of their place and role in society, they are often in an undesirable position. We should ask ourselves, what kind of message we convey to them and how we communicate. [10] Negative communication is neither optimistic nor inclusive and has in fact "deported" children to the streets where they live in their own world. Here they wait for adults to let go of their frustrations, caused by being unable to solve their own problems, and be able to approach them with positive and respectable communication.

Holistic Pedagogy as "New Psychology of Education"

When life "ejects" children to the street, they certainly need additional pedagogic counselling, if not even psychotherapeutic approaches. It is increasingly evident that their parents need similar processes, since street children are a result of parental actions. Therefore I advocate a holistic pedagogical approach that includes working with both generations, meaning working with street children families.

Although the whole pedagogical science aspires to be holistic, there are important differences noticed in actual approaches, especially in working with specific groups.

One of the fathers of holistic pedagogy is Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi, who strove to develop a mode of education and teaching that

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[10] In a pilot survey, students listened to conversations in public means of transportation. What they discovered was that adults spent 48.17% of their time talking about negative topics, and only 31.39% of the time about positive topics. 20.43% of their time was for "neutral" conversation. Although the survey cannot be completely representative (the total amount of survey time was 1,550 minutes), and although it was students who were judging the type of conversation, the results imply the need for changes in adults.

would suit "all children's needs" in terms of organization and meth-
odological approaches.[11] His teachings are the roots of all later move-
ments, related to the term of holistic pedagogy and it relates to the
formula "3H = good education"[12] especially in German speaking
countries.

The holistic pedagogy that emerged in the mid-seventies, was based
on humanistic pedagogy, particularly on "confluent education".[13] In
the school systems and education of teachers, pedagogues perceived
a lack of regard towards the holistic character of education and teach-
ing. Pedagogues with good experience with some holistic therapeutic
approaches started considering how they could use these concepts and
methods in their profession. They thought it would be unfortunate to
use them only in healing and not also in developing personality and
personal skills in education.[14] The basic finding is that subjects are not
immaculate in terms of negative and painful experiences. They there-
fore require sensitive, curative processes which would both cleanse
the past, and seek the necessary resources for motivated learning and
education in the present, in coordination with established methods
of preventive education. Street children are thrown into this very kind
of situation.

Holistic pedagogy is based on the conviction that human nature
tends to exceed or expand existing boundaries (inside and outside)
in order to grow and achieve its purpose.[15] The starting point of this
pedagogy is therefore the person, and its education is reasonable only
in contact with students, considering their biography and holistic im-
age.[16] The role of a teacher is not primarily in "teaching". The role of
a teacher is to emphatically and sensibly accompany a student so that

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[11] M. Liedtke, "Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi," in *Klassiker der Pädagogik*, ed. H. Scheuberl, München 1991, p. 186.

[12] It refers to three German words: Hand + Herz + Hirn (hand + heart + head) = good education.

[13] G. Fatzer, *Ganzheitliches Lernen: Humanistische Pädagogik und Organisationsentwick-lung*, Paderborn 1993, p. 9.

[14] C. Hofmann, "Gestaltpädagogik," in *Gestaltpädagogik in der Schule*, eds. O.A. Burow, H. Gudjons, Hamburg 1998, p. 37.

[15] V. Ščuka, *Šolar na poti do sebe: Oblikovanje osebnosti*, Radovljica 2007, pp. 111-112.

[16] S. Gerjolj, "Geštalt pedagogika kot celostna pedagogika," in *Vseživljenjsko učenje in stro-kovno izrazje*, ed. P. Javrh, Ljubljana 2008, p. 145.

they may awaken the student's interests and internal motivations.[17] Therefore, holistic pedagogy is not goal-oriented in terms of typical pedagogic methods, but is a process-oriented educational activity that awakens educational impulses and creatively responds to them.[18] It is very important that in a pedagogic process the sources of strength (pedagogical eros) necessary for optimal education should be awakened in us and in subjects. Since it is about sensitive human introspection and discovering life strengths, this line of work within ourselves can be compared to "constant peeling and regeneration of an onion."[19] This kind of education is holistic for another reason: it does not finish when the "practise ends", but it spontaneously and thoroughly continues in everyday life. It is particular actualization of emotional experience that continues its path of processing on the conscious and subconscious levels, also in time of sleep which is in fact not a rare occurrence.[20] Time for rest and dreaming is thus systematically included in holistic pedagogical processes, having the function of consolidating emotional memory.[21]

Neuropsychology and Contemporary Educational Challenges

Motivation, emotion and cognition are the three basic mental operations.[22] Neuropsychology teaches that emotional operations unfold in at least five brain centres. Visual perception first reaches the thalamus

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[17] V. Ščuka, *Šolar na poti do sebe: Oblikovanje osebnosti*, p. 274.

[18] A. Höfer, *Heile unsere Liebe: Ein gestaltpädagogisches Lese- und Arbeitsbuch*, München 1997, p. 90.

[19] A. Höfer, K. Steiner, *Handbuch der Integrativen Gestaltpädagogik und Supervision: 1. Teil*, Werdenfels 2004, pp. 19-20.

[20] J.D. Siegel, *The Developing Mind: How Relationships and the Brain Interact to Shape Who We Are*, New York – London 1999, p. 332.

[21] L.J. McHaugh, *Memory and Emotion: The Making of Lasting Memories*, New York 2003, p. 80; S. Gerjolj, *Živeti, delati, ljubiti*, Celje 2009, pp. 128-129.

[22] Some psychologists state four main forms of mental action and add another one: consciousness (D.J. Mayer, P. Salovey, D. Caruso, "Models of Emotional Intelligence," in *Handbook of Intelligence*, ed. R.J. Sternberg, Cambridge 2000, p. 397).

which "translates" it to brain language and sends it toward the visual cortex that disperses it to every centre in question. A large part of emotional perception information lands in amygdale, the centre and a sort of storage for emotional experiences. If visual perception is emotionally strong and under stress tends to quickly react, a part of perceived information takes a shortcut from thalamus to amygdale[23], meaning that the information circumvents the visual cortex. In this, the amygdale receives unprocessed information and senses "emergency" or great danger. A person here responds before they realize "why and how" to respond best. Information that the amygdale receives through the shortcut, causes some kind of state of siege and the precognitive emotions force a person to respond instantly. Since the information is not processed, reactions are quick, but thoughtless and often inaccurate.[24] Sometimes these kinds of emotions overflow and lead us to a state of quick and thoughtless reactions without "knowing what we are doing."

The amygdale is also the centre of emotional memory. When we learn to act deliberately and emotionally, the amygdale sends emotional signals to the prefrontal cortex, where there are two brain centres or lobes which additionally process emotional experiences. Based on processed emotional signals we make decisions and form emotional experiences. Signals of negative emotions concentrate in the right frontal lobe and the left frontal lobe controls negative emotions and manages or prevents their "outbursts".[25] Cooperation of these two centres therefore plays a role of "coordinator" of emotional sensations and actions.[26]

As a kind of storage of emotional memories, the amygdale often uses the experience from our early childhood years, which were strongly imprinted into the memory because we had them before we

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[23] E. Jensen, *Teaching with the Brain in Mind*, Alexandria 2005, p. 16.

[24] This is why we are afraid of a rolled up rope, similar to why we get scared of a snake, and respond similarly at the look of a rope.

[25] D. Goleman, *Emotionale Intelligenz*, München 1997, p. 47.

[26] According to traditional and modern neuropsychological findings, the right cerebral hemisphere tends to a holistic way of thinking and the left to an analytical way of thinking (E. Jensen, *Teaching with the Brain in Mind*, p. 14). Negative emotions probably overwhelm us more strongly and exaggeratedly from the positive ones, which is why it is understandable that in these cases the left hemisphere needs to cooperate in order to control the negative emotion experience.

could talk. Consequently, they have remained in a "raw state" since we have not verbalized them, and as a "defence mechanism" they operate stronger than processed and expressed emotions.[27] In dangerous situations we may respond extremely aggressively, because they may remind us of unprocessed and unarticulated fear from early childhood. The reason for excessive aggression is therefore not in irrational judgment of a situation at hand, but in the thinking that because of the potential similarity to negative emotions from early childhood we are not able to express present emotions and neither accept nor change the "present" situation. In such situations we therefore respond similarly to how we responded to dangerous circumstances when we were babies and could not talk. The only difference is that older children and teens have exceptionally more power and means at their disposal while the emotional tension stays the same.

If we relate the possibility of uncontrolled emotional outbursts, which are a result of a shortened path of information from thalamus to amygdale, with the role of unprocessed and unexpressed emotional experiences from early childhood, many a disastrous violence of a child, teen or an adult will become clearer. It is simply about a moment when unprocessed negative emotional information overflows the amygdale and intertwines with a child's fear, that inhuman power, together with cognitive and technical capabilities, results in "we do not know what we are doing."

Holistic Pedagogic Approach in Working with Family – an Example of Practise

Even though it cannot be generalized that street children are more aggressive than other children, it is often true that difficult family situations are behind their escapes. This means that in addition to many humanitarian programs, provided by different organizations, they also need a professional and holistic pedagogical support to help them process their problems remedially. In the light of the well-known fact that younger generations are becoming less orally and more visually

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[27] D. Goleman, *Emotionale Intelligenz*, p. 42.

capable, the holistic pedagogical approach is even more important. Practise shows that a modern man has fewer objections to speaking after they have transferred an event to paper, to draw a picture. Holistic pedagogy has therefore created a gradual communication for children, teens, youth and adults to learn how to sensibly reveal, verbalize and solve life burdens. This way of work contains eight grades:

1. In meditation children are taken to their families, where they experience pleasant and less pleasant events.
2. Children draw the events that have impacted on them strongly.
3. After drawing they break up into smaller groups and dedicate time to every drawing. Children simply express what they see on each picture without interpreting it (visual expression). An author of an individual picture does not actively cooperate; they just listen and attend the process.
4. When this "circle" work is finished, the children tell where in the picture they feel well and where they feel poorly (emotional expression).
5. Children name their pictures; they title them (interpretation).
6. An author presents their picture and in this way expresses its content (author's expression). In this stage after an author's expression, other children may ask questions, however the author may decline having to answer.
7. After an author's expression each child tells the author one or more wishes for them to be able to accept their life and change it.
8. After expressing their wishes children take their hands and in silence strengthen their support. If spiritual and religion are a possibility, an author can express a wish to substantiate the support with a common prayer.

In the same way, however separately, we also work with parents. As in the above case we take them into their childhood through meditation and process it. In the majority of cases it is about typical compulsive repetition of difficult family situations. When we process parent childhood, we switch to asking questions about their current families[28], not

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[28] They can draw problems that they have in the present families, because drawing makes it easier for them to talk.

until the second part that includes the content of children's drawings and their expressions. A very important point is to lead communication in a way that does not lead to mutual accusations and moralizing. It is not about placing guilt on someone, but about acknowledging family dynamics that cause pain to children (and parents). Although parents are usually quick to start promising to change things, it is better for them to take enough time to describe situations and painful events; because this is the only way they will feel them as well. It is also important to pay attention to parental relations, since these kinds of problems are the most hurtful to children. Their thought of a future should be particularly devoted to arranging their relationship and consequently the relationship to their children will change. Children will be happy to see minor changes and their emotions will change immensely.

Conclusion

Modern findings encourage the conviction that emotional stability does not all that much depend on early childhood as was considered for so long, although it is true that some consequences of abuse need demanding processing.[29] However, "with a content-based approach and intensive self-work even an adult can repair their relationship toward themselves and rearrange their emotional life."[30]

Holistic pedagogy does not demand parents or children "hide" their flaws and onerous characteristics but presumes those are expressed and "shown" in the pedagogic process, because only then can they be accepted and constructively changed.[31] In this holistic educational process everyone becomes a student and a teacher and it is not

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[29] E. Jensen, *Teaching with the Brain in Mind*, p. 23.

[30] J.C. Showers, "Self-Organisation in Emotional Contexts," in *Feeling and Thinking: The Role of Affect in Social Cognition*, ed. J.P. Forges, Cambridge 2000, p. 284.

[31] I. Boban, A. Hinz, "Schlüsselelemente inklusiver Pädagogik – Orientierungen zur Beantwortung der Fragen des Index für Inklusion," in *Jede/r ist willkommen! Die inklusive Schule – Theoretische Perspektiven und praktische Beispiele*, ed. H. Knauder, Graz 2008, p. 60; V. Ščuka, *Šolar na poti do sebe: Oblikovanje osebnosti*, pp. 334-335.

about learning with a purpose to "learn" and "know", but about a life style, a constant and permanent learning.[32]

With neurobiological and neuropsychological researches taken into consideration we can conclude that modern education stands in front of new challenges and needs a singular "redefining". Quick way of living confronts adults (teachers) as well as their subjects with questions of how to successfully solve conflict situations encountered by all generations, in educational processes. With no reference to age we all share some onerous and painful messages that need to be cleansed and healed. Specialists do this in therapies and psychotherapies; much can also be done in educational processes in terms of sensible and creative pedagogic communication. In addition to cognitive education, emotional and moral dimensions of life are becoming increasingly important, because they address not only the physical and psychological dimensions of human life but also the spiritual one. In this holistic pedagogy a person permanently feels an invitation to reflect on his life when they put it in the context of higher meaning. Reflection relieves them of their burdens and can prevent many meaningless acts on one hand, while motivating them to live a creative, tolerant life in their family, groups and community on the other.

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[32] V. Ščuka, *Šolar na poti do sebe: Oblikovanje osebnosti*, p. 370.

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Summary

Direct work with street children is undoubtedly important and often leads to uncovering the causes and roots which have resulted in children ending up on the street. There are often disrupted family relationships behind this phenomenon, which fail to provide welfare for children in family environments as well as adequate security, which in turn sends them to the streets. In many cases it is not only about occupational burnout of parents and their lack of time, but also signals indicating that children are too big of a burden for the parents and are in fact unwanted. In these cases parents are so busy with themselves that they do not find the time and strength necessary to deal with their children. In most cases parents even pass their own psychological burdens and marital (partner) issues onto the shoulders of their children, and

so it is logical that running to the streets is the only way to escape from "hell". Complaining over their spouse or life partner can particularly burden or depress children to an unbearable extent, therefore they look for an environment in which they will not have to listen to, or tolerate it.

Even the most qualitative therapy or counselling is unable to provide children with the happy and content parents which such children crave so immensely. However, it is often possible to take at least a few steps towards having parents try to make some effort. Amazingly enough children notice such efforts very quickly and appreciate any change, no matter how small. When parents are able to solve their own problems, children no longer escape from their homes. However, working with their parents is usually a difficult task, as it requires overcoming a lot of defence mechanisms. These defence mechanisms demand an integrated approach that leads to slow but profound changes.

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Working with Street Children in the Slovenian Pastoral Area

Introduction

Sometimes we wonder where the expression "street children" or street work originates from. This concept is very well rooted in the Anglo--Saxon world, especially in the time of major migrations since alongside this phenomenon, great social exclusion of marginal groups occurs. The ghettoisation of the second generation of immigrants has occurred in bigger urban centres (Brussels, Paris, London, Hamburg, etc.) and this phenomenon can be detected in all European countries.[1]

The individualisation of the adolescent youth holds its place within these processes. "Most certainly classical factors of social differentiation and inequality today introduce or translate into the increasing demand for 'individual choices' which effects young people the most. I see the key problem of the 'new individualization' of the young in the epistemological deception of the Late Modern Period, within which there is an on-going deconstruction of youth transforming them into a mass of individuals who, every person by himself, deeply withdrawn into his privacy, compete for the best possible living space and cannot see they are crumbling collective and political problems into the

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[1] S. Kos, *Otroci z ulice in iz bogatih vil*, http://www.zurnal24.si/otroci-z-ulice-in-iz-bogatih-vil-clanek-220161 (access: 11.07.2015).

sand of self-disciplined actions. Consequences of this situation are illustrated by two possible scenarios: (a) in the first scenario, the social mobility and the individualization of their life paths increases for one part of the population of the young. Thus one part of the population successfully uses the differentiation of life worlds, uses new options of participation, and successfully identifies itself with culturally homogenous social groups; (b) the second scenario illuminates the situation of the other part of the population of young people. Here the demand for individual choices degenerates into risks, social mobility downwards occurs because simultaneously traditional sources of certainty and security lack."[2] New approaches are necessary due to the new social context.

An additional problem is represented by the fact that "classical" socializers (family, school, neighbourhood, associations, etc.) search for new paths. The role of the nuclear family is decreasing. A teacher and a priest are no longer moral authorities (by themselves). The control and socialization role of the neighbourhood and village is also getting lost. School? This place is assumed by (not necessarily keen on the young) socializers, especially the media and corporations. There is no recipe with regard to how to enter the empty space. It is a distinctly individual story conditioned by a situation.

It is important to remember that children and young are not always the seekers. When they lose the compass they usually become passive. Thus "providers" search for the way towards them. All those people who want to work in this field – this is a great entry point.

We should keep in mind that only 10 to 30% of the young (depending on the country) are formally incorporated into various youth structures (cultural, political, sports, religious, etc.). These are relatively speaking "safe" because they are part of the intentional process of integration. The problem is in the "floating" group of children and young who are excluded, those who cannot find their way to society. "Street work" should answer these challenges.

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[2] M. Ule, *Spremembe vrednot v družbi tveganj*, http://www.prihodnost-slovenije.si/up-rs/ps.nsf/krf/96997D6B515C0960C1256E940046C55B (access: 11.07.2015).

Some good practices offered by the Slovenian society

In the Slovenian space, the issue of "street children" was practically "banned" in the time of communism. Namely, if we spoke about that we would thus show that our society was not "perfect", that it does not function well, that everything is not under control. Despite having difficulties in this field we did not discuss these issues much, talk about them or organise any help.

In Slovenia today we have some best practices which are mostly implemented by youth centres in bigger towns (Youth centre Nova Gorica, Infopeka from Maribor, Institution BOB from Ljubljana). A best practice example is that of the youth centre "Mladi zmaji" which works for the integration of young immigrants very quietly but efficiently. "These are professionally managed and accessible programs for the young, children, and families to spend their free time in the manner of quality. Thus they significantly shape the living experience of a town. In this respect the Institute 'Mladi zmaji' strives to form safe circumstances on the level of a municipal districts, therefore on the locations where the young seek advice, company, or simply a sympathetic shoulder on daily basis. By opening centres for gathering the Institute offers young citizens the possibility to connect more deeply with their wider living environment." [3]

There even exists a network "Mlada ulica" which combines organizations that practice street youth work. They say about themselves: "We are a group of young youth street workers who socialize with the young on the weekends at various public areas in Ljubljana ('Trnovo beach', 'behind the Maxi', and elsewhere). We know that changes can be created but we can only achieve them if we make a step one towards another and start talking. By talking about the current issues we change the view of the society as a mechanism, which young individuals, especially, have no influence over. We create new solutions that

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[3] Mladi zmaji, *Varno zavetje, vzburljivo doživetje*, http://www.mladizmaji.si/ (access: 11.07.2015).

enable higher quality of coexistence together with the young and the local community."[4]

Yet the question remains how far these organizations reach. Do they only solve problems in relation to children and the young in the process of their socialization or do they include a wider circle: family, school, etc.?

Engagement of the Church in Slovenia in the solving of the "street children" problem

The Church in Slovenia does not remain indifferent regarding this issue. Children and youth from the streets are primarily the focus of the work done by the Salesians with their project SKALA – youth street education is a non-governmental, non-profit, and non-political organization.[5] It is part of the Zavod Salesianum, which was founded in 1996 by the Salesian inspectorate in Ljubljana.

The beginnings of Skala's activities go back to 1995, when volunteers were the key initiators of the initiative for street youth work in the town's housing communities Nove Fužine and other districts of Ljubljana. Skala carries out its regular activities in Ljubljana, while it involves children and youth elsewhere in Slovenia through individual programmes.[6]

In 1995 a group of Salesians and students together decided to do something for those young who spend most of their time on the streets, who do not get involved in any organized activities and establishments. The mission and basic forms of work have remained the same all the time of Skala's functioning.

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[4] Mreža Mlada ulica: namen in cilji, ciljni skupini, mladinsko ulično delo, način delovanja, http://www.zavod-bob.si/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/Usp-MUD-info-paket-o-MMU.doc.pdf (access: 11.07.2015).

[5] Basic information about the history, work, goals, and purpose of SKALA are available at: http://www.donbosko.si/skala (access: 11.07.2015).

[6] A. Baligač, *Projekt skala: preventivna vzgojna dejavnost za mlade*, Ljubljana 1998, p. 138.

The problem of children and young

The problem of today's children and youth is evident: high levels of materialism, subjectivism, and individualism (they spend most of their time "alone in front of the screen"), secularism, the crisis of family, occurrence of the new forms of poverty and social exclusions. The period of adolescence has also been prolonged; unemployment, inappropriate education, or training to do a specific work are a huge problem. The young are frequently indifferent to ideologies, they strive for a different quality of life, they have great expectations in relation to Western Europe, and seeking economic success.

Upon last year's International Youth Day, the president of the Youth Council of Slovenia Tea Jarc declared: "The biggest problem of the young today is connected to disappointment, risks, and uncertainty which today's young generations find themselves in. This uncertainty is reflected in the difficult transition from the childhood into adulthood where the young have a hard time entering the labour market, rarely get full-time and safe employment that would help them solve their first question of residency and start their own family. The difficult process of independence remains the key problem of the young. In this respect, this is no longer only the problem of the young generations but of the entire country."[7]

This is a complex issue. The adolescents have a hard time entering the world of "adults" and their "equals". Some are driven by circumstances to the point where they seek solutions in the wrong places and in wrong ways (they end up on the street). Due to the ever spreading issue this is no longer simply a problem of a few people or experts but one addressing the entire country.

The Church does not turn a blind eye to this complex problem. Yet at the same time it realizes that it would be impossible for them to solve all problems on their own. In this article we want to highlight the work and mission of the project SKALA, where they decided for two

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[7] B. Cink, *Mednarodni dan mladih: Problemi mladih so problemi celotne države (12.08.14)*, http://www.mss.si/sl/novice/1204/2014/mednarodni-dan-mladih:-problemi-mladih-so-problemi-celotne-drzave (access: 11.07.2015).

forms of work: individual help to individuals and street work.[8] Here are some characteristic elements which initially raised self-confidence and formed its identity:

The desire to be close to the young who need the presence and help of animators. We have been given a lot – thus we are called upon to give a lot back.

- A strong belonging to the group. Members of SKALA together searched for a path how to realize, how to give life to the first daring ideas. They have planned and realized their dreams together.
- A personal experience of faith which inspired members of SKA-LA from the beginning.
- Special spiritual and thinking environment within which members of Skala live: preventive educational system, example system, example and manner of work by the great youth educator John Bosco, the provoking of his approach.

During its development SKALA experienced a few important turning points: a tournament Spring in Jarše, the purchase of a bus which was later named the Bus of Joy[9], employment of expert workers, international seminars (three seminars were organized which were attended by approximately 250 experts from the field of education, teachers, counsellors, priests)[10], programme co-financing (in 1998 SKALA succeeded in getting a five-year financing from the Ministry of Labour, Family, and Social Affairs). After that the activities expanded to encompass project learning for the young (PUM)[11] and many other activities.

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[8] This includes: personal and educational accompaniment, joint meetings of youth and animators, holiday programmes, contacts with educational and professional establishments, contacts with parents.

[9] The Bus of Joy is a bus transformed into a youth centre. It is a place of friendly gatherings, intense and direct relationship between animators and the young, a place for the confrontation with various real problems of the young, help in the form of personal and educational accompaniment, self-help, and self-organization.

[10] Mladi, ulica, prihodnost (international seminar, collection of lectures), edited by Andrej Baligač, Salve, 1998.

[11] The programme, the expert operator of which is Andragoški center Slovenije and is carried out with the support of the Slovenian Ministry of Education, Science and Sport, Employment Service of Slovenia, and local communities, started to be implemented by SKALA for

Project SKALA starting points

The project SKALA is inspired by the preventive educational system of St John Bosco. It is distinguished by four distinctive characteristics.

The project SKALA strives to create conditions where personal relationships and feelings of being accepted come to light. They make the young feel they are loved. All of the work involved is unpaid. The goal is to create a space of "safety". They work on values and qualities the young were supposed to "acquire" at home: respect for one another, division of roles, responsibility, kindness, being well-intended, accepting diversity, tolerance, patience, etc.

The second characteristic is free time. The playground presents the place of friendship and joy. The project SKALA builds on this. They follow the words of St John Bosco: "The teacher you only see behind the desk is a teacher and nothing more; but if he hangs out with the boys during recess he becomes their brother. If we see someone preaching by the pulpit, we say they are doing nothing but their duty. But if he speaks a word during the recess, it is a word of a person who loves." Spending free time with children and the young is an excellent access point for comprehensive educational activity.

The third characteristic of the efforts within the project SKALA is education and training animators for work. Considering that many young participating in the project SKALA have "dropped out" of the school system, volunteers help them realise that not everything is "wasted and missed". Thus they help them acquire appropriate education and the necessary skills to do their vocational tasks.

The project's fourth characteristic is the system of values. We are dealing with the young who do not have clearly defined scales of values and thus animators serve them as support. Talks, debates, games; all of these help shape these scales and they try to start off from their own experience.[12]

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the needs of the Celje region in February 2000. The programme's goal is to motivate the unemployed young to join the regular public educational programmes or progress in their thinking about their own vocational career. This programme is the result of a several-year-long intense street work in Ljubljana. In four years, 129 young people have joined the programme, 96 of whom found a job or continued their education, while 33 have left.

[12] A. Baligač, *Projekt skala: preventivna vzgojna dejavnost za mlade*, Ljubljana 1998, p. 138.

Goals of SKALA

The project SKALA set five basic goals of their work.[13]

The first goal is the friendly socialization with the young in their own environment and counselling them laically. This way they want to help the young be educated for interpersonal relationships. They want to bring them to the point where the young will be able to take their own responsibility for their own lives and actions. It is important that they are aided in the search for access points (integration) into life and work. SKALA also offers alternative forms of meeting and gathering. Very significant is also looking for employment and additional education.

The second goal is personal and learning companionship of the young. The young often end up on the street because they had "failed" at school and because they were not understood at home. Thus colleagues of the project SKALA strive to enable the young to talk about their personal and common distress. They are there for the young and help them study or train for a specific job. Through play and creativity they help the young develop a complete personality. Their companionship helps with the building of social networks.

The third goal is the reintegration into their families. This is a very important area of working with the young. The Society wants to ensure the systematic approach of solving the problems the young and their parents encounter. This process involves healing wounds in the relationship between the young and their parents and the society in general. Thus this is not just working with the young but also with their parents to encourage parents to realize the role they play in "rescuing" their children. SKALA also strives for their interactive communication to be of the highest possible quality.

The fourth goal is the training and education of animators. It cannot all be left to good will. Thus the Society realizes that volunteers need to be trained and educated. This enables animators to attain comprehensive growth through discussion, experience checking, and spiritual companionship. They are also theoretically educated to work

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[13] Ibidem, pp. 139-140.

with children and youth. The project Skala also trains animators in methods of "laic" counselling.

The last, fifth goal is the territory animation. This strives to ensure the comprehensive development of the young through play. Since in our case we are dealing with intergenerational and interethnic relationships, they try to "teach" tolerant dialogue. It is only on the path of dialogue they can get to know each other and mature as animators also try to spend high quality free time with the children and the young.

SKALA's vision

This is all about raising responsible and decent citizens and spiritually mature personalities. The basic starting point is: educational work stems from the actual situations which they encounter while hanging out with the young every day. These were the educational goals for one school year: create the environment where the young will feel well and get positive life experiences, and teach the young to take responsibility for their actions.

One of the more active actors of the project Skala is Rafo Pinoza, who conveyed these significant words in one of his lectures: Street work is, if we speak in military terms, work deep in the enemy territory. A street worker has no institution to lean on when he needs it the most. There are no laws or norms which are valid with social work or in a law order, only the street laws apply and no other. A street worker has to accept these street rules, he has to become an ally and not the enemy of the young on the street. For street work a youth worker needs different strategies than those that are needed in club or organized youth work. Maybe they encounter the same people but never the same rules. The young from the street have this differentiation written in their "street genes".

Conclusion

When speaking about working with street children we have in mind the "classical practice examples". The Slovenian psychologist Silva Matos thought about this subject: Street children or those children who had distanced themselves, who feel alone even though they sit in front of the TV, alone with the computer as if they were lost on the street are hidden even more because nobody is really interested in them. Street children are certainly hungry more frequently or want something other than that which their home provides, even if they have one. Often they suffer from plenty in terms of everything but that which they need, that they want to live in the way they will be able to see themselves in this world, to have a meaning. This world is full of lies, games, and apparent love. Thus the new forms of lonely children and youth are the area that is getting increasingly "disguised". It will be harder and harder to penetrate their world which is no longer only the street but the four walls with little or no communication. This is where I see the challenge of tomorrow's work.

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Ule M., *Spremembe vrednot v družbi tveganj*, http://www.prihodnost-slovenije.si/up-rs/ps.nsf/krf/96997D6B515C0960C1256E940046C55B.

Summary

Within Slovenia, one could hardly speak about the classic work with street children. Nevertheless, such children and youth can still be found. These children could be divided into various groups and subgroups. One is street children who come from wealthy families, while another group is those who originate from poor families. A new group could be formed between these two and that is the one which includes immigrant children who do not feel accepted in the environment they live in. Children from the latter group are usually withdrawn and seek a "safe environment" on the street or in abandoned courtyards.

In the period after Slovenian independence much was done in this area by Slovenian Salesians who founded Skala (The Rock) which deals with youth street upbringing. Skala is a private, non-profit, non-governmental, and non-political organization guided by the motto: "Upbringing is a matter of heart!" In its work the organization is inspired by the preventive upbringing system of St. John Bosco. Skala believes that there is a seed of goodness in every child and youth thus they wish to share the richness of youth with those who were bereft of it. They are aware of their responsibility for this moment of existence and strive to be in contact with real, true life of street children and youth offering them friendly support, encouragement for personal advancement, and professional help. Their basic goal is to enable the young to enjoy a responsible life. This means that during the process of the upbringing the young discover the basic life values, learn a respectful attitude towards other people, nature, and material goods. When setting goals they stem from actual, specific situations which they experience while socialising with the young on daily basis. In its essence this is a process of creating an environment in which the young feel good and gain positive life experience. Their main goal is, therefore, to teach a young person to take responsibility for his or her own actions.

Keywords:
    street children, poverty, Salesian work model, Scala (The Rock),
    life values, positive life experiences, upbringing goals, youth

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Youth Centers as Actors of Social Prevention

Today's world is often described as driven by performance, effectiveness and time saving. The media, and also the ever growing technology of the world we live in, play a big part in this. Some authors talk about the computerization of our world, which in conjunction with the media directly threatens freedom and democracy.[1] The effects of this are among other things the accentuations of economic point of view even within some fields that were spared of this in the past. Many countries saw the rise of tendencies to make cuts in the field of education and upbringing in the past few decades. However, these actions are taken without first addressing this problem in a society-wide discussion which could in turn point out the risks of these efforts. School education is traditionally in the center of attention of the public and because of this under a bigger public control. However, the economic pressure is still more and more endangering the seemingly less important extra-curricular education. This seemingly less important part of the education in the free time is really just apparent, as will be shown in the upcoming text. The efforts of saving up in this field may paradoxically lead to unwanted impacts mainly in the economic and political sphere (higher sickness rate, climbing criminality, etc.).

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[1] P. Sak, "Komputerizace společnosti," in *Člověk a vzdělání v informační společnosti*, eds. P. Sak, J. Mareš, H. Nová, V. Richter, K. Saková, Praha 2007.

Among other institutions, the youth centers in Czech Republic successfully provide the education and upbringing of young generations in their free time. Their goal is not only to entertain the children in their free time but mainly to shape them and guide them in their life and of course to casually educate them. There can be many founders of youth centers. Most often they are founded by the cities, church or non-profit organizations. They are a part of the school system which means there are legislative impacts on their activity and their economic management. The efforts of youth centers can be divided into a few categories: regular and ad-hoc leisure activities, organizing of contests, working with talented individuals, organizing camps for children and occasionally other activities. Regarding the proportions of different areas of interest we can see that the regular leisure activities are the most dominant and they take up to 60% of the youth center's activities.[2] The youth centers employ teaching staff in categories of educators or pedagogues who specialize in free time activities.

Nowadays, nobody doubts that youth centers are natural primary prevention places on the field of preventing risk behavior of youths and children. It seems only natural that the youth centers could very effectively work even on social prevention. If we look at education and upbringing not only as the intentional effect on the brought up person, but also as an effect of unintentional sources, we can see a broad field on which the free time centers can have an effect. "Regarding the influence of the surroundings on upbringing, we often do not realize that the surroundings forms the person much more than intentional education. This can be caused by person's natural negative attitude towards any conscious educational effects or by the fact that the effect of the surroundings are permanent, long term and informal."[3] Here lies the significant and at present untapped potential of youth centers, which have a longstanding tradition in the Czech Republic and their network is actually quite well developed. Naturally we can find them mainly in bigger cities, while in the countryside the availability of free time institutions is often limited.

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[2] J. Pávková, B. Hájek, B. Hofbauer, V. Hrdličková, A. Pavlíková, *Pedagogika volného času*, Praha 2002.

[3] S. Bendl, "Prostředí, které formuje," in *Vychovatelství*, eds. S. Bendl et al., Praha 2015, p. 90.

We visit a number of institutions dedicated to working with the youngest generation during our work with students of education on Faculty of Education of Charles University. We realize during these visits that the social prevention on all of its levels represents important activities which impact the process of the socialization and social integration of an individual. Free time activities organized by schools, school institutions or other different forms of extracurricular institutions such as non-government non-profit organizations are an important part of prevention systems on regional and local level (our experience is not only regarding Prague because our students come from all over the Czech Republic and a number of them were actively involved in the organization of free time activities). Institutions for free time of children and youths, which successfully fulfill both the educational and recreational function come into spotlight. In the recent past these institutions organize activities that do not require regular attendance. This allows them to captivate groups of children and youths whose free time upbringing was neglected in the past – the so-called unorganized children and youths. With this concept, the so-called low-entrance clubs, which are intended for youths, who are not interested in regularly organized free time activities, are irreplaceable. They offer an opportunity to fully spend free time for children who choose to remain anonymous, who have various family or school problems or to the ones who get in trouble with the law. The low-entrance institutions have their rights and responsibilities clearly formulated and their clients must respect them. The staff in these institutions often address the problem of keeping confidential information and their legal duty to report specific problems.[4] This is just one of many problems that stem from the nature of low-entrance institutions. These institutions are unfortunately only slowly expanding to the regions where their services are most needed. We can consider an ideal situation, when there is a low-entrance club standing right next to every youth center so they can offer help to children who refuse or do not want to take part in any other forms of leisure activities.

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[4] J. Pávková, "Psychologické aspekty výchovy ve volném čase," in *Pedagogické ovlivňování volného času*, eds. J. Pávková, B. Hájek, B. Hofbauer, Praha 2008.

Upbringing and educational effect is also focused on improving the social competences of children and youths, on improving the skills which lead to independent responsible decision making, on improving self-confidence, resistance to stress and on rejecting all forms of self-destruction. Positive attitude towards one self, one self's health, the society and the life in general represents a key factor which affects communication, reactions and the life style of an individual. This also applies in situations then a young individual is tempted to breaking the law, when he must resist all kinds of expressions of aggression (e.g. bullying) or when he is surrounded by prejudice (e.g. racism, xenophobia), etc.

The state tries to influence the sphere of prevention of negative social aspects by programs which are applied mainly in schools and social institutions like the youth centers. These prevention programs are generally focused on these areas:

- Focus on a *healthy life style* (helping youths to live healthily and to recognize their own responsibility for their health).
- *Improving social competence* (helping youths improve their social skills, to help them navigate social relationships and to make them take responsibility for their own doing and to be aware of the potential outcomes of their actions).
- *Improving communication skills* (improving the ability of young people to solve and to cope with problems and conflicts, to teach them how to ask for help and adequately react to different stimuli, criticism, etc.).
- *Removing the gaps in psychological regulation of behavior* (improving the ability of children and youths to effectively control their emotions, to teach them how to react to stress and to defend against all forms of self-destruction, to understand their emotions and to cope sudden rush of emotions such as anger).
- *Creating positive social climate* (offer trustworthy and safe environment, which will develop and improve their self-confidence and strengthen their ability to cope with failure).
- *Help youths shape attitudes* towards generally accepted social values (building respect towards law, improving legal awareness and building healthy attitude towards social conventions, etc.).

The youth centers, the institution focused on the field of free time of children and youths serves in its nature as the primary prevention of risk behavior. In this field it also focuses its activity on specific risk groups of youths while it is mainly trying to prevent creation of negative aspects in children and youths. In the long term, we can see that a nonspecific prevention is more effective in the sphere of socially negative aspects then a specific one. The more practiced in the past specific prevention encompasses discussions on a specific topic, lectures and other activities aimed directly at a specific aspect or field. This practice is still present in schools where anti-drug prevention is realized by this method. The principle of nonspecific prevention is in influencing individuals in a way that leads to prevention of different forms of risk behavior. It can have the form of personal social education, training of communication skills or the support of meaningful spending of free time, etc. Especially the care of free time represents a broad field of activity for various school institutions.

The youth centers in Czech Republic operate under the school law, are subject to school inspection and their activities are thoroughly documented. The average attendance of these institutions is between 1,000 and 1,700 visitors weekly. This data is of course dependent on the size of the institution and also the size of the city it is located in. However, the adolescent youths make up only one fifth of the weekly number of visitors, which shows little interest of youths in organized activities. If a young person visits a youth center and takes part in leisure activities – it usually are mainly dance and music groups, sports clubs, partly events of educational character and summer activities. However, the youth centers are aware of the fact that the share of adolescent visitors on the total number is quite low and so they try to offer events and activities that would captivate this audience of youths.

Activities organized mainly for youths consist of sports and dance events, weekend and holiday activities, open clubs and internet cafés, etc. The youth centers also work with youths for some specific social groups such as talented individuals, children and youths from minorities, disabled or socially handicapped and in some institutions also with young unemployed young people. The work with talented individuals is natural activity of the youth centers. In some cases extra care is given to these individuals.

Involving youths and children from minorities, such as the Roma minority, in both regular and irregular leisure activities has become a common practice as a demonstration of integration to the major populace. Some youth centers organize a special interest groups such as Roma clubs, dance or music groups. Another common task is involving handicapped individuals into activities or events organized specially for this group of youths and children (Olympics, working with state and civil institutions for handicapped).

Socially disadvantaged children and youths can obtain discounts on admission fees through the principal of the youth centers. Summer camps for socially handicapped are also organized and a number of youth centers work with orphanages and integrate their children into the youth center's activities or organize special events for them. The youth centers are interested in these specific activities in the field of social prevention and are ready to carry them out. A number of them also feel the social need for this work, mainly in the sphere of working with unemployed adolescents, socially disadvantaged or with minorities.

It is apparent and understandable that work in this field means constant changes which can sometimes be quite radical such as redesigning specialized workplaces to multifunctional premises, cooperation with government institutions or civil associations (labor offices, social unions, streetworkers), which are in direct contact with target groups of youths. Additional changes encompass organizing open clubs (optimal space for direct contact with youths), external cooperation with institutions, which poses such premises and are acceptable for youths. To financially support implementation of new activities the youth centers must make use of grant policy of the government and foundations both the Czech ones and also ones in European networks (the network of youth information centre (NICM) is a valuable but unused source of information, Association for support of ICM in Czech Republic, NIDM Ministry of Education Youth and Sports and its Information center for youths, Eurodesk, agencies for programs youth, Leonardo, Socrates). It is also good to note the potential involvement of the adolescents themselves in acquiring information about financial sources and their direct share on drafting grants.

Partial change in job description (pooling mainly administrative task together, getting rid of administration, changing work hours) of

the staff is also a necessary step in implementing new activities. Some of the activities can be provided by partner organizations and institutions. There also needs to be a balance, so that the new activities are not implemented at the expense of quality of the already established ones.

It is necessary for everyone to think about their own activities, workload and possible changes that will arise from these new activities if the staff of youth centers is prepared to implement them. The work must begin in advance with preparations, research and self-study. This will lead to truthful and calculated assessment of options of the center and its working staff for implementation of these activities. An integral part is conceptual consideration about the rate of involvement, forms of work, cooperation with other organizations and institutions and consultations with specialized workplaces. The requirements which are placed upon teaching staff have a rising trend. "A good pedagogue who specializes in free time is generally a good person and he has features needed to working in teaching field. Apart from that, he is creative, resourceful, adaptable, energetic, playful, witty and efficient."[5] In contrast with a teacher, a free time pedagogue must deal with the fact that the educational content in free time is not set in stone, his authority must be rather informal and the demands placed on variety of teaching methods are very high. All this is applies even more if the pedagogue is involved in educating some of the marginalized groups of youths.

The most organized activities for selected social groups in advanced European countries in institutions similar to our Centers for free time include work with:

    a. Unorganized youths mainly through offering spontaneous, occasional and holiday activities.

    b. Unemployed adolescents through educational and interest events, requalification courses and consulting activity.

    c. Minorities through integration of children and youths into interest groups of respective institutions, consulting function for these children, specific educational events (language courses,

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[5] J. Pávková, "Psychologické aspekty výchovy ve volném čase," p. 134.

communication skills training, tutorage, lectures about cultural, historical and social development of the country, etc.).

d. Socially handicapped adolescents in counseling, helplines and through financially discounted offer of regular and occasional events, holiday activities, cultural and social events.

The possibilities for education and upbringing in the indicated examples and situations are undisputed because the situations have educational character in their nature. "People are without a doubt influenced by the life events and the situation is perceived as an external factor, which causes specific action. However, it is also significant that people simultaneously create this situation."[6] This is important to highlight because the brought up individual is not a passive object of pedagogue's effect but instead is a subject which in different rate shares responsibility for the course of the educational situation. This of course applies also to individuals with specific educational needs.

It is possible to implement all of the aforementioned activities into the work of youth centers if there is demand for them and are not limited by economic aspects. A situation where society is not using the current state of knowledge in a certain field, mainly due to economic reasons, is not so apparent in the school system. However, it is apparent in many countries in healthcare not only developing. For example the medical knowledge allows to cure a certain illness but public funds are so limited that only a part of the patients will receive adequate treatment. The same development in pedagogic diagnostic, didactics and methodology of education in free time allows to provide differentiated educational care to everyone who needs it. However, the obstacles are political, economic and organizational influences, which mean that only a part of the populace will receive adequate care. This is mainly apparent in free time education because in contrast with school education it is still considered a kind of luxury or an extension. It is however forgotten that the free time education has great potential in fighting against socially unwanted behavior. This behavior is not only a matter of the individual or his family because its health, social and economic consequences affect the whole society.

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[6] B. Kraus, V. Poláčková, *Člověk, prostředí, výchova*, Brno 2001, p. 144.

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Summary

The school education is usually in general public's center of attention all the while the extra-curricular upbringing of children and youths is relegated to the side. Even the savings in education system mostly affect the institutions which care for the free time. In the long run, this might paradoxically have unfortunate economic impacts because the free time institutions for children and youths play a key role in prevention and reformation of socially unwanted effects.

This article discusses the role of youth centers in Czech Republic, which are able to have a great impact on social prevention because of their traditional and well developed infrastructure. These institutions can even work with the part of the population that refuses to take part in different interest groups. The educational activity of these institutions is focused on improving social competence, on improving skills which lead to individual responsible decisions, on improving confidence, stress resistance and rejection of all forms of self-destruction of children and youths. The article also summarizes the activities that the youth centers carry out on the field of social prevention or the activities which these institutions can perform. However, the need for care of free time for marginalized groups of population puts new strains on youth centers, which require some investments into both the equipment and also to the professional growth of their teaching staff. These, mainly economic factors, are not only in the Czech Republic limiting the potential of youth centers and other related institutions.

Keywords:

social prevention, social pathologic phenomena, free time, youth center, upbringing

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Integration of Children from Institutional Care into Society

In the Czech Republic, changes in institutional care occurred with the acceptance of the law on the execution of institutional or protective upbringing in 2002. Facilities for institutional and protective care after this year became:

1. *Diagnostic institutions* – children's diagnostic institutions (for children from age of 3 to 15) and diagnostic institutes for youth. Children's diagnostic institutions are coeducational boarding facilities that perform diagnostic tasks, training, education and therapy for children of preschool and school age. An important part of their work is to prepare comprehensive diagnostic reports with personality development programs. After the diagnostic stay, which should not exceed two months, the individuals are returned to their families, or they can be placed in orphanages, children's homes with schools, educational institutions, educational and medical institutions, or psychiatric clinics.

2. *Children's homes* – are forms of foster care for children with an ordered institutional education, who do not have severe behavioral disorders. The basic organizational unit in an orphanage is an educational group, or preferable, family units consisting of a group of children of different ages and sexes, two to three educators, who work in the service turns. A family group consists of a minimum of six and a maximum of eight children, siblings belong to one family group. In the orphanage is possible to establish at least two and a maximum of

six family groups. One of the forms of foster care are SOS villages, designed especially for children, who cannot be adopted. The idea of SOS Villages was established after WWII in Austria as one of the ways how to ensure foster parent's care for abandoned children. During late 1960s this project began to develop in the former Czechoslovakia and currently there are three SOS Children's Villages in Czech Republic.

3. *Children's homes with school* (formerly known as children's educational institutions) – provide care for children with ordered institutional education or imposed protective care. Children are placed here after the diagnostic stay, usually from the age of six until the end of compulsory schooling.

4. *Educational institutions* (formerly known as educational institutes for youth) – provide housing for children over the age of fifteen with ordered institutional or imposed protective care, teenage mothers and their children; exceptional children over the age of twelve years, if a protective upbringing has been imposed.

5. *Educational and medical institutions and departments* – provide care for children with mental disorders, who do not require medical treatment, children with serious behavioral disorders, aggressive expressions, and they are also intended for children with substance abuse issues.

Institutional education is an educational measure, ordered by a court in civil legal proceedings under the Act on the family usually for children between the age of 3-18, in a situation where other upbringing measures have not remedied the problem if the parents of the child do not take care of them sufficiently or cannot ensure the basic living conditions. Institutional Education also is ordered to children who have no parents or other guardians.

Protective education is unlike constitutional education imposed by a court in criminal proceedings for offenses, which treat adults as criminals and applies to juveniles between the age of 15 to 18 years. The importance of education lies mainly in its preventive purpose, whose imposition is not recorded in the juvenile criminal records. Institutional and protective upbringing can only be cancel by a court (Act no. 109/2002 Coll.).

In the Czech Republic by the end of 2014 there were a total of 148 foster homes, of which 136 were established by regions and 10 by

non-governmental organizations (in the statistics of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports – Ministry are run as private or denominational children's homes) and two were part of legal entities established by the Ministry of Education.

Children come quite often to children's homes (hereinafter ChH) from poor socio-cultural environments in which they did not have the opportunity to acquire a sufficient degree of socially accepted norms and rules. Due to the low level of education of their parents, it is difficult to motivate these children in terms of the acceptation or adoption of standards, so they could integrate into society in the future without major problems. For children placed in institutional care it is also problematic that the parents, who are in contact with the child, still continue to influence them and broadcast their own behavior patterns on them. Trying to teach client the usual social norms that his own parents do not accept or reject them, becomes more complicated or misfires.[7]

Besides causes such as low social level of the family, inadequate housing conditions, financial problems including debt and failure to meet some of the basic functions of the family, the execution of a sentence, alcohol addiction, parental neglect and child abuse, and gambling also appear; a less frequent case is child abandonment by its parents.

The lives of children in orphanages after 1989 changed greatly. In most of them children live in the so-called *family groups* with a maximum of six children, who are alternatively taken care of by two or three "aunts". The ChH organizational structure emphasizes the child as a person with individual needs. Efforts to integrate the child into society has increased so that in adult life he/she can live independently and happily. The orphanages provide countless forms of activities, hence the child learns to experience, develop their personality, knowledge or skills; including e.g., sports activities, clubs, work activities, preparation for school, family education, tourism, arts, recreation and holiday stays, excursions, self-service activities, cultural events, music, aesthetic education, games and competitions, religious education, relaxation activities, work on the land, autonomy, language training, breeding of small animals and more. Children are encouraged to be independent, also

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[7] V. Blažková, *Kapitoly ze speciální pedagogiky*, Praha 2014, p. 60.

receiving pocket money – appropriate to their age, which they learn to manage; likewise they celebrate birthdays, holidays, Christmas.

Despite all these efforts, emotional disorders are observed in establishing social relationships or psychological deprivation in children, who leave institutional care. The problem also remains in the integration of children from ChH to society. These facts lead the experts to reflect on the question of whether it is better to keep the child in a dysfunctional family or to be placed in institutional care. It would be best to indirectly help parents and their children. However, parents do not always want or accept the help.

The European Union's attitude is well-defined. Our country and other member countries are under pressure to ensure that their children's homes and similar establishments (including nurseries) are reduced, children especially at an early age are replaced to professional foster parents and foster families. The institute does not have a long tradition in our country, even there was an opinion that it is only for financial gains for both organizations, which is supposed to train and test these foster parent, as well as for foster parents themselves, who would be financially rewarded for their actions. Method of State control would be very complicated.

In all institutional facilities (including children in social care institutes) in the Czech Republic there are currently approximately 18,000 children; about 8,000 out of them are children in orphanages, children's homes with schools and educational institutions and approximately 2,000 children live in infant homes.

The Czech Republic is struggling with problems that young adults have to address after their stay in ChH. Experts are trying their best to help the children with adaptation to the independent life, with integration into society and prepare them for the smooth functioning of our system, after leaving the home. Children, who are leaving the functional family or home of their parents, in most cases continue having their support, they can always contact them with a problem or they at least know they have their full support if something serious happens. However, children from orphanage experience a much different situation. Parting from institutional care is perhaps one of the most challenging steps in an independent life, they lack confidence and support. Young people from institutional care must become independent and integrate

without the help of relatives, must handle it themselves. Parents of the children from ordinary families help them with dealing with the authorities, with the lease, with the solution of the crisis, but the children of ChH are not so lucky. Upon leaving the orphanage they receive, as a support in the beginning, the amount of money corresponding to the length of stay in ChH and the "kids" still have the possibility to contact the facility, they can come for advice and communicate with ChH.

Institutional care strives to protect the children against risky behavior, if necessary to stop socially pathological child development. The children in an orphanage are adapted to the regime, rules and penalties, after leaving it they often return to an environment that had not worked. Among homeless people, there is a large group of individuals who grew up in an orphanage. People who lived in institutional care are not very successful in life, have lower mental stability and low social skills. There are certainly many reasons why some children fail after leaving the orphanage.

A release from institutional care is decided by the court upon request from the authority of social and legal protection of children (SLPCH), facilities for institutional care, parent or other individual, which is used mainly for older children from orphanages. However, the approval must always be given by SLPCH. The Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs (MLSA) have created a form of notice of the impending release of the child from institutional care (IC) or protective care (PC). Approximately three to six months before the release of the child from IC or PC facilities, the responsible person needs to complete the form and send it to SLPCH probation officer, who conducts an investigation of environment, where the child supposes to return. The aim of this information system is to ensure cooperation between all the participating institutions and ensure the underpinning of young people, who have spent part of their lives in institutional or educational facility and after the release they integrate into society independently for the first time. The child may be offered assistance (outpatient or residential) in some social services, e.g. the possibility of a short stay in halfway houses or in shelters.[8]

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[8] J. Hanušová, "Vybrané kapitoly ze sociální pediatrie," in *Základní ošetřovatelská péče v pediatrii*, ed. P. Sedlářová, Praha 2008, pp. 190-208.

Several civic associations attempt to develop a form of care that are abroad called Halfway Houses. It is basically a youth hostel which has undergone some form of institutional care (children's homes, diagnostic institute, educational institution) or SOS village, and after leaving does not have the necessary family background. Halfway Houses may be based independently or near some of the existing facilities for long stays.

Outpatient forms of care for young people burdened with long-term stay in institution are inadequate. Sharp transition to a normal environment is comparable to the emigration to another country, where they speak a different language and identify other values. Outpatient programs also do not answer one of the major existential problems – housing. If this group of young people were left without help, few of them would end up homeless providing a livelihood in every conceivable way, including prostitution and crime, not a few of them became victims of addiction to drugs, alcohol or machines.

The Halfway House has a certain, limited period of time to provide housing and food, to which clients partially contribute. In addition, the staff helps clients with the handling of documents in finding permanent housing, suitable work. The facility also offers the possibility of non-hazardous leisure.[9]

Halfway houses are new types of assistance that help not only the children who have just left the children's home but also young people who find themselves in trouble. Statistics show that the most frequent clients are teenagers who have left the children's home, drugs addicted people, but also those individuals, who have been driven on the street by a desperate situation in the family. The Halfway House offers the clients not only physical, but also social and legal support. Clients have a bed, washing machine, refrigerator, kitchen, etc. The professional staff of the facility helps clients to look for work adequate to capacities of individuals, supports them in life without social assistance and tries to contribute to the empowerment of the client. Currently, there are three forms of residence: (1) Acute stay, during which the stabilization of the situation and the client is provided with immediate assistance; (2) Community scheme, designed to support client and

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[9] O. Matoušek, A. Matoušková, *Mládež a delikvence*, Praha 2011.

individual work with him, and (3) Stay in the facility, which already emphasizes the independent life of the client.

Young people, after leaving the institutional care, often do not have the possibility of returning to their original families or fail to find work associated with housing and then confront the problem of accommodation. The solution, at least temporarily, is brought by other organizations. *Asylum house* is probably the most famous first aid for those who have nowhere else to go. It is a daily accommodation facility usually for one year. It provides 24-hour care and temporary accommodation for homeless people. The client must have the documents and permanent income before they are located in the shelter. In this type of accommodation, it is necessary to follow a series of rules, for example clients live with more people in the room. An asylum house provides a minimum but decent level of accommodation and assistance. If the client finds himself in a difficult situation, the social worker begins to work with the client on an individual plan, they are offered social assistance, without being marked as homeless, and the probability of their reintegration into society is increasing. Asylum houses may be variously oriented (e.g., for the elderly, mothers with children, the mentally ill, etc.). In Prague they are operated by various organizations such as Hope, Salvation Army, Caritas, City Centre of Social Services and others.

The dormitory is another option that can be used by an individual after leaving the ChH. So-called *corporate dormitories* are overwhelmingly associated with a relationship of employment provided by the employer, which stabilizes the employment base. Commercial dormitories are provided for some financial compensation, it is a small amount, usually around eight dollars per night. Living in dormitories have different levels, there are usually double rooms, a communal kitchen, a cell with a shared bathroom. Rooms are equipped with furniture and linens. Housing is part of the fulfillment of operating rules, compliance with which is strictly monitored. Quite often the dormitories are sought after by foreign workers and foreigners.

One variant of the above forms of housing is the *squat*, which becomes a destination, especially for young people without financial means or with alternative approaches to co-existence, possibly for young homeless people. Propose of a squat is usually serves deserted,

more or less devastated building, which is illegally occupied. It may be a temporary solution, but they can often be of a long-term nature. A person gets into a squat by either finding it himself, or they receive an offer to become a roommate of somebody else. Living there may not always be comfortable, the abandoned building might be cold, may lack running water, often there is no electricity, no one there has a lot of privacy because more people live on one room. Generally, the larger the group living in a squat, the greater the risk of problems. Living in a squat is sometimes associated with pressure on community farming, the pooling of resources and sharing of maintenance, which is unacceptable for a number of people.

Own housing is the least common, but the best solution at all. If we are talking about buying an apartment, we need to have sufficient funds, which is in the context of children from an orphanage rather utopian. The chances of your own home or renting an apartment at least increases with job opportunities for young adults. Unfortunately, a relative misconception is the idea that every young person goes through the educational system to the end, i.e. obtains a certificate of apprenticeship or reaches maturity and is appropriately applied in the labor market. For various reasons, thanks to the influence of the family or improper influence of other social groups, a certain percentage of youngsters fails. In the Czech Republic about 10% of young people, who after finishing primary school do not currently continue any further education, or alternatively they started it but have not completed. In addition, the agenda of our labor offices is to gradually increase the number of school graduates, who are set aside applications and people after training. It is clear that neither the completion of a learning stage guarantees young people on the labor market a job. The lack of job opportunities for recent graduates without experience combines with the lower willingness of employers to provide jobs for people without experience. The unrealistic expectations of young people about career opportunities and their wage demands also play a role.

Labor offices are trying to deal with increasing youth unemployment by providing career counseling, both individually and in the form of group discussions at some schools. Labor offices also organize retraining courses according to the needs of their region.

A low-threshold counseling also provide jobs – *Job clubs* that are not employment mediators, do not serve as an employment agency, but within the Job-club clients learn how to properly look for a job, how to behave during the interview and it is possible to arrange re-training course.

In the past few years, numerous projects have been created in the Czech Republic that try to contribute to the better integration of young people into everyday life and encourage them to other activities. One of them is the Endowment Fund of Livia and Václav Klaus, whose aim is to facilitate the launch of an independent life. The project is called *Starting Fee for Life*, which includes children between age of 14-18 years and should help them after leaving the ChH. It motivates the children to good study results and leisure activities. Besides a stable amount of children gaining account bonuses for good behavior and school success, the fund provides scholarships to children, contributions to school activities, language courses or obtaining a driving license.

Another example is a project called *Muses for Children or Life in a Rough Draft*, which is more oriented to the practical side of life. The project aims to prepare young adults growing up in foster care facilities for transition from institutional care to independent living. The first stage are interventions in clients' facilities, during which the prospective clients and their educators become acquainted with the principles of project Life through demonstrations and discussions in a rough draft. In the second phase, the youngsters (age of 15-25) of the facilities complete interactive three-modular series of weekend courses outside of the orphanage (topics include Home, Work and leaving the children's home), during which the experienced and qualified teachers, psychologists and educators practically inform them with various risk situations, with which they may encounter after leaving the home facility. Courses focus on integration in all spheres of social life – finding a job, housing, skills development, employment and other contracts, risk of unemployment effective forms of investment funds, etc. Great emphasis is placed on feedback, the children talk about their experiences, discuss what course has been offered to them, what their problem was, what they fear, what they found out. Psychotherapists can intervene when specific problems work in groups and help in solving individual problems.

Young people leaving orphanages must deal with another absurdity: of the fees for municipal waste. According to the law on municipal waste no. 174/2012 Coll. every citizen residing in the township is obliged to pay the fees for municipal waste disposal. Children growing up in orphanages are registered for permanent residence at the same address, which their legal representatives report, in another words, in the place, where the child is primarily absent, sometimes never even been to. The obligation to pay fees for the minor child is a matter for the parents, who sometimes do not respect or fulfill it. The child grows a debt which it often has no idea exists. Enforcing the local fee for municipal waste directly from children is not only unethical and contrary to common sense, but it is probably in conflict with the Constitution of Czech Republic, the Charter of Fundamental Rights and Freedoms and the international Convention on the Rights of the Child.

It's a paradox which leads to the fact that the child in the ChH at the moment of adulthood becomes a debtor, and executor goes after his humble savings. What is then the motivation for a child to integrate into the normal working process? Society deliberately damages these children with its laws and sends the children on the street. As a result of the situation, the project *Children without Debts*, which thrives to provide legal services to these children and leads the lawsuits for them. It provides free legal assistance not only in dealing with debt of fees for municipal waste, but also for "black" rides, e.g. from that time, when children were still living with their biological parents. The parent of a minor who has not paid the proper fare and transport company consequently the debt is directly enforced from the child. The child, however, may not even know that it is a participant in the proceeding and enforcement proceedings will be conducted against him for some time. Project Children without debt represents young clients in litigation and during seizures. If the debt of the child will not be eliminated, the amount will be pay from sponsorship. Effort for legislative change resulted in the submission of the draft amendment to the law on local fees group of deputies from almost all parliamentary parties. This amendment should establish clear rules for the payment of fees for municipal waste in the case of minors.

Partner of the project Children without debt is a public benefit corporation *Give the Kids a Chance*. It organizes a series of projects to

facilitate the entry of children into homes where they can independently live among others. It also contributes to paying the debts from the acquired sponsorship of orphanages and children themselves offers consultations regarding debt problems for municipal waste, or from transport companies and help their solutions.

The already mentioned issue is complicated by the fact that it falls within the competence of several ministries. The current status leads us to ponder whether our country should arise post of Children's Ombudsman. He would be a man, who would have in addition to diploma law school also a lot of experience in family law. The specialist would also oversee the creation of laws related to children. Children need special protection and care, they have limited opportunities to go to court, they are dependent on adults. The Office of the Ombudsman for Children could be a mediator between the children and the government. This post has been set up e.g. in Sweden, Greece, Great Britain, Belgium, Germany, Spain, Austria, Poland, Slovakia. The United Nations rightly criticizes us for lacking the post in our country. Also, the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child recommended Czech Republic the establishment of this post. However, Czech political parties still do not pay enough attention to the issue and for any of them is not a priority for establishment of Office of Children's Ombudsman.

The government report on human rights says we are one of the last four European Union countries which do not have a children's ombudsman. According to the Minister for Human Rights of autumn 2014, the Czech Children's Ombudsman should be in place by 2017, but it is still not clear in what form, and whether it will be a separate office or simply a post for the representatives of the current Ombudsman.

Before encountering this office, it is necessary to consistently promote and create new principles of child protection and respect the Convention on the Rights of the Child at all levels in society. The Czech Republic should create as soon as possible a system of mutual notification, register of vulnerable children and information system of social and legal protection of children.[10]

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[10] J. Hanušová, "Vybrané kapitoly ze sociální pediatrie," pp. 190-208.

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Zákon č. 109/2002 Sb., o výkonu ústavní výchovy nebo ochranné výchovy ve školských zařízeních a o preventivně výchovné péči ve školských zařízeních a o změně dalších zákonů.

Zákon č. 333/2012 Sb., kterým se mění zákon č. 109/2002 Sb., kterým se mění zákon č. 109/2002 Sb., o výkonu ústavní výchovy nebo ochranné výchovy ve školských zařízeních a o preventivně výchovné péči ve školských zařízeních a o změně dalších zákonů, ve znění pozdějších předpisů, a další související zákony.

Summary

The article discusses the changes in institutional care, especially in one of its forms – orphanages after the acceptance of the law in 2002. It describes the issues of children and young adults, leaving these facilities and the risks they face in their independent lives. To address practical aspects of life connected with housing, finding employment or the creation of leisure activities, there are several civic associations, endowment funds and projects involved; that aim to simplify start in life for children from facilities for institutional care. It can be assumed that a significant contribution to improving the current situation would be to establish the position of Children's Ombudsman.

Keywords:

sheltered home, children's home, children with no debt, a halfway house, job-club, preventive education, ombudsman, foster parents, family group, dormitory, constitutional education

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The Preparation of Future Social Pedagogues to Work with Street Children: Ukrainian Experience

Relevance. The profession of social pedagogue in Ukraine is still in a state of formation and improvement, despite the fact that the institution of social pedagogues came to our country in the early 1990's.

The change of requirements to this profession is related to the unstable political and economic situation in the country, the increase of a great amount of different forms of social deviancy, and lately to the combat events in the east of Ukraine. All these have caused an existing range of social problems to intensify, in particular those such as street children. Therefore, the social pedagogue must be ready for the challenges of today and for work with a wide range of customer categories.

Analysis of studies and publications. The problems of the formation and development of socio-pedagogical science, preparation of future social pedagogues to professional work are reflected in scientific studies of such Ukrainian scientists as O. Bespalko, R. Vaynola, I. Zvereva, A. Ivanchenko, A. Kapska, L. Mischik, L. Romanovska, V. Sorochinska, S. Kharchenko and others. The different aspects of social work with street children were detailed by T. Alekseenko, L. Zavatska, E. Slutskiy, J. Petrochko, T. Bessonova, M. Bevz, I. Pesha and others.

The aim of the article is to study the features of the preparation of future social pedagogues in Ukraine to work with street children.

The results of theoretical analysis. Today, the graduates of the "Social Pedagogics" specialization are ready to work mainly in the following areas:

- the field of education: higher education institutions, secondary schools, child's houses, children's art centers;
- health care: socio-rehabilitation centers, orphanages, youth-friendly clinics;
- social protection of population: social service centers, shelters, women crisis centers;
- socio-economic area: enterprises, organizations, companies;
- Centers for Youth: clubs, associations, NGOs, etc.[11]

In addition, recently specialists in social pedagogics have begun to work in combat hospitals, centers of rehabilitation for servicemen, help centers for migrants, other establishments which activity is to grant a social-psychological help to vulnerable categories of population.

The efficiency of the work of a social pedagogue depends on the level of professional knowledge and skills received at higher educational establishment. So, a student gets knowledge about human, its psychological features, its place in modern society, and of relations between people at study of such subjects as "General Psychology", "Age Psychology" and "Pedagogical Psychology", "A Human-being in the Modern Society", "Gender Pedagogics" "Psycho-Pedagogical Foundations of Interpersonal Communication" and others.

The history of the formation and development of social and socio-pedagogical work, the content and the main directions of socio-pedagogical activities in Ukraine and abroad are reflected in such subjects like "Social Pedagogics", "Social Work", "Theory and History of Social Education", "Introduction to the Profession", "The Technologies of Socio-pedagogical Activity", "Fundamentals of Professional Skills of the Social Pedagogue". The preparation to work with different categories of clients, students receive through the studying of "Rehabilitation Pedagogics", "Correctional Pedagogics", "Preventive Pedagogics", "Volunteer Work with Social Orphans", "Methods of Work with Difficult Children", "Social Support of a Family", "Technologies of Volunteer Work".

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[11] A. Kapska, „Deiaki aspekty pidhotovky sotsialnykh pedahohiv i sotsialnykh pratsivnykiv," *Visnyk Hlukhivskoho derzhavnoho pedahohichnoho universytetu* 2010, no. 15, p. 12.

Such a program allows the course to give as much necessary knowledge as possible to the student and to prepare him to work with different categories of clients. Social pedagogue's clients are of the following population categories:

- people with limited abilities;
- HIV-infected individuals;
- persons who are prone to suicide;
- street children;
- kids deprived of paternal guardianship (biological and social orphans);
- children and young people, which are prone to delinquency;
- dysfunctional families;
- unemployed people;
- persons who are engaged in prostitution;
- drug addicts;
- victims of physical and other types of violence;
- people returning from prisons and others.

The specific category of the population which a social pedagogue faces is street children. This term is often used along with such ones as "social orphans", "homeless children", "neglected children".

O. Ternovets, while studying the category of "social orphans", gives the results of studies of the State Institute for Family and Youth, commissioned by the National Centre for Social Services for Youth in 2002, which showed that the following groups of juveniles should be included in the category of "street children" in Ukraine:

- homeless children are children who do not have a permanent address due to a loss of parents, asocial forms of adult behavior in the family, and children who were driven out from home by parents;
- neglected children are children who have a certain place of inhabitation, but forced to be in the street as a result of the financial insolvency of guardians (relatives, grandparents); mental disorders of parents; indifferent relation of the last to children's education;
- children that were eloping from educate establishments are children who faced psychological, physical and sexual violence in orphanages and shelters;

- children eloping from outwardly happy families but are children with a high level of conflict, pathological features in character, deviation in psychical and personality development;
- children who on their psychological features are disposed to the permanent stay in the street. These are the children, deprived systematically of paternal attention; outsiders of school collectives; children, who often spend their time aimlessly. [12]

The UNICEF materials "Children and young people who live or work on the streets: the hidden face of the HIV epidemic in Ukraine" in 2006, notes that "the street children are the most physically visible children who live or work on the streets and in public places of cities around the world. However, and paradoxically, they are also among the most invisible groups of children, and therefore it is very difficult for them to get the essential services on education and health care, etc., and these are the children who are harder to be protected." [13]

The UNICEF also provides the following definition of "street children":

1. Children who do not keep in touch with their families, live in temporary premises (such as abandoned houses) or do not have permanent residence and every night sleep in different places.
2. Children who keep in touch with their families, but due to poverty, violent treatment or other reasons, spend most of their days and sometimes nights on the street.
3. Children who live in formal state orphanages or shelters, but for one reason or another have escaped from there and now live on the street.

As you can see, the main attribute of children who we call the street children is that they stay on the street for most of the day. But everybody has different causes and other aspects of such life. Accordingly, the approaches of work with such children would be different.

In general, the analysis of the literature allowed us to suggest three basic steps in work with street children:

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[12] O. Ternovets, „Sotsialne syritstvo yak sotsialno-pedahohichna katehoriia," *Visnyk LNU imeni Tarasa Shevchenka* 2012, vol. 254(19), p. 171.

[13] A. Telchyk, *Dity y molod, yaki zhyvut abo pratsiuiut na vulytsi: prykhovane oblychchia epidemii VIL v Ukraini*, Kyiv 2006, p. 7.

1. Prevention of a possible escape to the street.
2. Creation of social, psychological and pedagogical conditions for the return of the child from the street.
3. Help the child to gain a foothold in the social institution (family, foster care, residential educational institution, etc.).[14]

The main tasks of social pedagogue are: to find such a child and establish contact with him, to gain their attention, providing information about healthcare, to promote awareness and acceptance of their peers from the street positive stereotypes of social behavior, to perform mediation assistance in establishing contacts with adults and other social institutions in a position to help, to help with protection against any violence, primary health care, the provision of minimum social services.

The main legal document in dealing with street children today is the Law of Ukraine "About Basics of social protection of homeless citizens and homeless children", which came into force on the 1st January 2006.[15] This law defines the general principles of the social protection of homeless people and street children, provides legal regulation of relations in the society, aimed to realize the rights and freedoms of homeless citizens and street children provided by the Constitution of Ukraine and current legislation, creates conditions for the activities of public and charity organizations working on the social protection of the population.

In accordance with the law, street children are children who have been forced to leave or left their families or children's institutions where they were brought up and don't have any fixed place of living.

It is worth noting that the article 15 of this Law determines the establishments of social defense for homeless citizens – house of nightly stay, center of reintegration, social hotel. Institutions of social protection for the homeless people are created by local executive authorities and local governments, associations of citizens, enterprises, institutions, organizations regardless of ownership in accordance with the needs of the region.

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[14] A. Kapska (ed.), *Sotsialna robota: tekhnologichnyi aspekt: (Navchaljnyj posibnyk)*, Kyiv 2004, pp. 278-279.

[15] Zakon Ukrainy, *Pro osnovy sotsialnoho zakhystu bezdomnykh hromadian ta bezprytulnykh ditei*, Kyiv 2005, http://zakon3.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/2623-15 (access: 18.06.2016).

The 21th Article refers to the financing of measures aimed at social protection of homeless people and street children, which is carried out at the expense of state and local budgets. Additional funding is provided by attracting funds of citizens' associations, enterprises, institutions, organizations, charities and individuals.

Local authorities and local executive authorities may grant on a competitive basis for the budget of the associations of citizens, enterprises, institutions and organizations of non-state measures for social protection of homeless citizens and children.

To avoid returning juveniles to shelters and with the aim of establishing a system of aid to street children, there were established centers of social and psychological rehabilitation of children in 2004. According to the "Model provisions about the center of socio-psychological rehabilitation of children", these are institutions of social protection, which were created for long-term (stationary) or day stay of children aged from 3 up to 18 who are in difficult situations, providing them with comprehensive social, psychological, pedagogical, medical, legal and other types of aid (p. 1).[16]

The time and length of a child's stay at the center is determined by the psychological, medical and pedagogical committee, but children can stay there no more than 9 months in the case of residential children and 12 months in the case of day staying. The adoption of a child in an institution is carried out at the conclusion of psychological, medical and pedagogical commission under the direction of services for children and at the request of custody and guardianship, education management for Family, Youth and Sports, social service centers for families, children and youth crime police responsible for juveniles, shelters, and parents. In the case of the child's personal appeal to the center, he is sent to an orphanage.

The Centre carries out its activities in the following areas:
- socio-psychological diagnosis;
- social, psychological, pedagogical rehabilitation;
- adapting to the family environment;

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[16] *Pro vnesennia zmin do Typovoho polozhennia pro tsentr sotsialno-psykholohichnoi reabilitatsii ditei*, Kyiv 2012, http://zakon4.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/1128-2012-%D0%BF (access: 18.06.2016).

- social and medical rehabilitation and recovery;
- legal support (p. 6).

Activity of socio-psychological rehabilitation centers does not exclude the operation of shelters, but suggests their interaction. However, experience shows that shelters for juveniles are reorganizing on the centers of socio-psychological rehabilitation of children.

Substantial assistance in the work of government agencies with street children gives non-governmental organizations, and also the support from the international organizations that are engaged in this issue in Ukraine.

The international organizations UNICEF, "Caritas", "European Movement", "Hope and Home for Children", "Father's House", "Doctors of the World – SILA", the International Society for Human Rights, and also such foreign charitable organizations as "SOS Kinderdorf International" (Austria), the German-Polish-Ukrainian Union of Eastern Europe, "Children's Hope" (Sweden) implement and contribute to the implementation of assistance projects for homeless and neglected children in Ukraine.

The primary purpose of the activity of public organizations which carry out support for street children is the comprehensive support of children in crisis situations, providing of socio-psychological help in non-state shelters and centers of psychological rehabilitation; grants of accommodation, food, clothes; recreation in summer camps.

Among these organizations, we can pick out a group of organizations which are studying the problem of homelessness on the information-analytical level, performing sociological studies and polls in order to find effective practical forms and methods of work with this category of children and their families. However, the absence of cooperation with the corresponding state structures on the local and national levels does not give the possibility of organization the effective support of street children.[17]

In Ukraine the International Charitable Foundation "Caritas" operates actively. In particular, one of the directions of their activity "Crisis children, youth, families" includes the work of 12 social centers for

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[17] L. Zavatska, *Tekhnolohii profesiinoi diialnosti sotsialnoho pedahoha [Navchalnyi posibnyk dlia VNZ]*, Kyiv 2008, p. 86.

children and youth (Kiev, Donetsk*, Lviv, Khmelnytsky, Ternopil, Ivano-Frankivsk, Colomyya, Drohobych, Stryi, Boryslav, Brody, Novovolynsk), an institution of education and care for preschool children (Lviv), 2 social housing projects (Ternopil and Donetsk*), and also a targeted assistance to needs of children, youth and families.

The "Crisis Center Street Children" "provides an effective work on this direction. There is information on their website that during 2013-2014, more than 1,000 people have been under the care of social daily centers for work with children and youth, and were assisted in overcoming their own difficulties in life. Hundreds received consulting or financial assistance. In addition, more than 250 pre-school children and 100 low-income families benefited from facilities for pre-school children 'Crisis Center Street children.'" [18]

The social crisis centers for children and young people, families provide basic needs, information assistance, psychological and legal consultation; create the conditions for spiritual and creative development of charges. In social work they use group and individual approaches.

The purpose of such work is to open up positive resources to young people in need, overcome psychological difficulties, receipts of knowledge and skills, to cooperate the social needs, healthy way of life, rational time management, by resources and possibilities for professional realization.

Such children are attached to educational, recreational, sporting, cultural and tourist activities in the social centers of Caritas and beyond. The workers of the organization pay great attention to work with parents, guardians and family charges. In particular, giving them primary social and material assistance, psychological support, training activities, self-help clubs operate.

The organization also conducts street social work, in particular for the establishment and support of continuous contact with the young people in places of their temporary residence, where they create a safe environment and have the opportunity to obtain the necessary services. Also Caritas Ukraine has initiated the service of social housing for young people.

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[18] *Karitas Ukrainy. Kryzovi dity, molod, simji*, http: //caritas-ua.org/index.php/uk/activity/dopomoha-dityam/kruzovi-ditu (access: 18.06.2016).

This work demonstrates in practice the effectiveness of socialization of young people in crisis situations – they receive an opportunity to get the experience of housekeeping on their own, the solving of life problems, employment and at the same time, young people are under qualified accompaniment of Caritas workers (social pedagogues, social workers, psychologists).

As for the work with the street children of local organizations, for example, in Zhytomyr, one of the leading non-governmental organizations is Zhytomyr Regional Public Organization "Perspective". In general, the organization first of all, is to unite the efforts of government, NGOs, society as a whole to fight the spread of drug addiction, hepatitis, tuberculosis and HIV/AIDS in the Zhytomyr region. The organization also is aimed to support the volunteer movement and promoting a healthy lifestyle in Zhytomyr region, protection of the rights of vulnerable groups to HIV.[19]

The organization works in 5 cities of the Zhytomyr region (Zhytomyr, Korosten, Berdichev, Novograd-Volynskiy, Korostyshiv). Within the framework of the implementation of HIV/AIDS prevention projects, hepatitis and sexually transmitted infections, members of the organization and volunteers provide psychosocial, medical and legal services to the following target groups (customers):

- injecting drug users;
- female commercial sex;
- patients of substitution maintenance therapy;
- street children;
- convicted.

A feature of the organization is that it is working closely with state authorities. Representatives of the NGO "Perspective" take part in the activeness of such public entities as:

- Public Council of the Regional State Administration;
- regional soviet on questions of counteraction tuberculosis, HIV/AIDS;

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[19] *Zhytomyrska oblasna hromadska orhanizatsiia "Perspektyva,"* http://ngo.at.ua/publ/gromadjanske_suspilstvo/zhitomirska_oblasna_gromadska_organizacija_perspektiva (access: 18.06.2016).

- the city council of questions of counteraction tuberculosis of HIV/AIDS;
- Public Council under the Department of the Ministry of Interior in the Zhytomyr region;
- Regional Monitoring Commission.

Also, it is worth noting the experience of Zhytomyr Ivan Franko State University in work on the problem of street children. In 2011, together with the representatives of Italy and Moldova, the project "Fighting the trafficking of juveniles in Ukraine and Moldova" was implemented. Within the project the scientific seminar and a round table talk "Competencies of the social worker in the street work", with the participation of Ukraine, Moldova and Italy were held. Later, the center of social and psychological research of the Zhytomyr State University was presented, as well as a training course "Prevention of Children Trafficking in Ukraine" together with the presentation of the project site.[20]

The training course covered such topics as "Psychological features of 'risk groups' in the context of the problem of human trafficking", "Social and pedagogical work with at-risk children", "Street Social Work: implementation technologies", "Organization and technologies of street social work for the prevention of trafficking of juveniles" and others, related to the study, in particular, street children, as a group at risk of child trafficking.

Thus we see that the solution to the problem associated with street children can be effective not only in the implementation of government programs and the availability of the relevant legislation, but also with the participation of representatives of science, education and the public.

Analysis of the participation of the public sector in solving the problems of street children in Ukraine leads us to draw the conclusion that most of the work carried out is done by foreign and international non-governmental organizations and foundations, independently or financing Ukrainian organizations. In this regard, we may say that future social pedagogues must be ready to work in public organizations, in particular specializing in helping street children.

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[20] *Protydiia torhivli nepovnolitnimy v Ukraini ta Moldovi*, http://cspd.zu.edu.ua/index.html (access: 18.06.2016).

Conclusions. The unique nature of the preparation of future social pedagogues in Ukraine to work with street children is first and foremost in their theoretical training. Future specialists study not only the basics of the profession, but also the socio-pedagogical specific peculiarities of working with different categories of clients. The main feature of work with street children is that it is necessary to determine the whereabouts of the child, to establish contact with him, to attract attention, provide information on how to preserve health, help make positive social behavior patterns, to contact with the agencies where you can get help, contribute to the protection of rights and so on. Thus, the list of the functions of social workers when assisting street children is quite broad. Working in the state structure and social organization, the social pedagogue should be prepared for different situations, both theoretically and practically.

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    at.ua/publ/gromadjanske_suspilstvo/zhitomirska_oblasna_gromadska_
    organizacija_perspektiva.

Summary

The main questions of training future social pedagogues in work with street chil-
dren in Ukraine were described in the article, including a list of specialties, key areas
of work of social pedagogues and categories of clients. Separately identified was the
role of state and non-governmental organizations in work with street children and
the experience of some organizations in this field and the social pedagogues' place
in it was examined.

Keywords:

social pedagogue, street children, non-governmental
organizations, professional training, Ukraine

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Non-governmental Organizations Supporting Street Children in North Africa

Introduction

The concept "street children" comes from literature, but in recent years it has acquired pedagogical meaning and it has become a global phenomenon. Street children exist in all towns of the world, in developing countries (even in big cities such as Rio de Janeiro, Moscow, Warsaw), in rich, western countries (in cities like New York or Amsterdam), and – first of all – in poor countries, such as countries of Africa or Asia.[1] The Council of Europe located in Strasburg says that "children of the street are children under 18 who have been living in the street for a shorter or longer period of time. They move from one place to another, and they have their own peer groups, as well as other contacts. Their registered place of residence is their parent's address or the address of a social institution. Their characteristic feature is poor contact with their parents, representatives of schools, support institutions and other social service institutions which should be responsible for such children."[2]

In Poland and other European countries street children were a frequent and mass phenomenon in various periods in history. At the

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[1] "Council of Europe, Study Group on Street Children," in *Elementarne pojęcia pedagogiki społecznej i pracy socjalnej*, ed. T. Pilch, I. Lepalczyk, Warszawa 1999, p. 69.

[2] A. Kurzeja, *Dzieci ulicy: profilaktyka zagrożeń*, Kraków, p. 13.

moment, in the countries which are poor or developing, the issue of such children is still a serious problem. In developed countries, the nature of the phenomenon is different: its size is not significant or it is temporary, seasonal and contrary to the valid system of norms and values (the value of childhood, children's rights).[3]

Countries of North Africa

The countries of North Africa include the Maghreb, i.e. Morocco, Tunisia, Algeria, Western Sahara, Mauritania and Libya, as well as Sudan and Egypt. In Arabic language the word *maghreb* means "west", and, traditionally, it was used to describe Muslim countries located the furthest to the west. In 1989 the Arab Maghreb Union was created (Ittihad al-Maghrib al-Araby). The main objective of the Union is economic and political integration of member countries. However, due to the conflict between Algeria and Morocco related to the status of Western Sahara, the organization's functioning is very difficult. Egypt and Sudan do not belong to the Union, but – due to numerous connections with the Maghreb countries – in international papers they are usually treated as one sub-region.[4]

Islam, as the main religion, as well as Arabic language, are the key factors that influence the common identity of the region countries.[5] Other common features of North African countries include:
- location and geographical conditions;
- large political and economic influences of Europe;
- similar political system (authoritarian).[6]

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[3] L. Miś, "'Dzieci ulicy' – na skrzyżowaniu socjologii dzieciństwa i socjologii ulicy. Analiza holistyczna," in *Dzieci ulicy. Procesy marginalizacji i automarginalizacji nieletnich*, ed. K. Frysztacki, M. Nóżka, M. Smagacz-Poziemska, Kraków 2011, p. 45.

[4] M. Brol, "Współczesne problemy krajów Afryki Północnej a jakość sektora publicznego," *Ekonomia i Prawo* 2011, vol. 7, p. 80.

[5] A. Diawoł-Sitko, "Rynek pracy i edukacji w krajach Afryki Północnej," *e-Politikon* 2012, no. 4, p. 111.

[6] M. Brol, "Współczesne problemy krajów Afryki Północnej a jakość sektora publicznego," p. 80.

The above mentioned countries ale closely connected with Europe in terms of politics and economy. It results both from the geographical location and from the colonial past. French is still used there, and a lot of cultural patterns promoted by the colonisers were adopted by the local people (from clothes and eating habits to sport interests). The most important branches of North African economy include mining and tourism.[7] North Africa includes a narrow zone of the Mediterranean Sea, the Atlas Mountains and a huge area of Sahara, the biggest desert in the world (9 million square kilometres). The Mediterranean Sea coast offers perfect conditions for holiday tourism due to the Mediterranean climate and sand beaches. Also, the area in question offers a variety of ancient Egypt monuments in the valley and delta of the Nile river, as well as ancient Rome monuments scattered through the North African region (Egypt, Tunisia, Algeria, Libya, Morocco). Also, the region has numerous monuments of Arabic art and architecture, as in the 8th century the whole North Africa was conquered by Arabs and now those countries are a part of the Arab world.[8] Apart from the tourist attractions, the countries of North Africa are characterised by high birth-rate, poverty, unemployment, the lack of education among a part of the society. Against this social background the problem of street children also occurs.

Methodology of the author's own research

The main problem of the research described in this article was formulated in the following manner: What does the phenomenon of street children look like in North African countries, and how non-government organisations help the children of the street?

In the research the author used the technique of the interview and the tool of the interview questionnaire. The research was carried out through the internet (Skype, Messenger) from 15 to 28 April 2015 with 8 employees of non-government organisations working with

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[7] Ibidem, pp. 80-81.

[8] W. Kurek, "Turystyka w Afryce – szanse i zagrożenia," in *Człowiek i rolnictwo*, ed. Z. Górka, A. Zborowski, Kraków 2009, p. 322.

street children in Algeria, Egypt, Morocco and Tunisia. The employees of the following organisations took part in the research:

- SOS Children's Villages in Draria (Algeria);
- SOS children's Villages in Cairo (Egypt);
- Groupe Maroc Horizonts (GMH) in Marrakesh (Morocco);
- SOS Children's Villages in Gammarth (Tunisia).

The group of people taking part in the research constituted of 2 men (M) and 6 women (W) aged 26-47. They are the citizens of Algeria, Egypt, Morocco and Tunisia who work in non-government organisations offering help to street children.

Size and conditions of the phenomenon of street children in North African countries

At the beginning of the research, we tried to determine the size of the phenomenon of street children in the countries in which the research was carried out.

More than half a million of children in Algeria live without one or both parents. Those orphans are especially threatened with abuse and living in the street. Growing up in poverty, those kids have no access to education and they often fall victims to violence and drugs (W, 26, Algeria).

There are about million orphaned children (in Algeria – author's note)*, and a lot of them become street children who experience violence, drug addiction, and death* (W, 34, Algeria).

In Egypt the situation is similar.

1 million of children live in the street. They beg and steal, fighting for survival. They experience many sad things, like sexual abuse by adults. Those children fall victims to poverty, violence and abuse. Their number is constantly increasing (W, 40, Egypt).

In the big cities of Morocco the number of children in the streets is increasing. According to UNICEF, in 2008 more than 6,000 children were abandoned at the moment of birth, and about 650 thousand children were orphaned, as a result of which they are developing without their parents' care (W, 33, Morocco).

As the above utterances show, the size of the phenomenon in the countries in question is huge.

Another important scientific problem were the main factors that determine the phenomenon of street children. In Algeria those factors include

[...] *common poverty; the lack of political stability in the country; poor education; unequal rights of women and men, as well as employment of minors* (W, 34, Algeria).

The political revolution, which took place during the Arab Spring of 2011, increased people's optimism as for the future of Egypt. However, many problems still remain unsolved, including the problem of unemployment, social rejection and poverty.

The phenomenon of illiteracy is still common and a lot of new-born babies die. Also, the poverty rate is increasing along with the increase in population. Since the revolution, the situation has improved a bit, but many families still occupy the lowest ranks of social and economic ladder (M, 38, Egypt).

All the participants agreed that the most popular reason why children start to live in the streets is their poverty.

Social rejection, poverty and the lack of support from the family makes many children exposed to abuse and neglect (W, 26, Algeria).

More than one-third of the Egyptian population includes children under 14. Despite the recent progress, almost a half of them lives for less than 2 dollars a day. About 13% are underweight at birth, and poor children often have no access to education and health care (M, 38, Egypt).

Thousands of families in Tunisia live in poverty, and a lot of small children are forced to give up school (M, 34, Tunisia).

The research participants mentioned that poverty in villages is worse than poverty in towns.

Like in many developing countries, village poverty is a visible problem in Algeria. Poverty means the lack of access to decent living and hygienic conditions, and it makes it impossible for children to receive proper education and health care (W, 34, Algeria).

In Morocco almost a half of the population lives for less than 2 dollars a day. The difference between villages and towns is still significant. It is hard for children living in villages to access the basic things such as clear water, sanitary equipment and health care. Human rights are still a problem in Morocco, although recent constitutional reforms are trying to improve the situation (W, 26, Morocco).

High rates of poverty and illiteracy in Morocco are, first of all, recorded in the rural areas (W, 33, Morocco).

After the revolution of 2010, Tunisia was in the process of political changes. Despite the fact that the average lifespan and GDP is increasing, a lot of people living in villages still face poverty and unemployment (W, 47, Tunisia).

Another factor which influences the phenomenon of street children is the lack of social acceptance for women's single-parenting.
The family code, which limits the rights of women, influences their situation in a negative manner. Also, the lack of social approval as for having children outside marriage results in the fact that illegitimate children are abandoned by their mothers (W, 26, Algeria).

Another thing mentioned by the research participants is the lack of education.
Although education is free for people under 16, a lot of children give up school and some of them do not even receive elementary education (W, 26, Algeria).

To sum it up, the people who took part in the research mentioned the following reasons why there are so many street children in North African countries:
- poverty;
- the lack of political stability;
- unequal rights of men and women;
- employment of minors;
- illiteracy;
- social rejection;
- unemployment;
- no family support;

- no access to education, poor education;
- the lack of healthcare;
- social disapproval of having children outside marriage
- no access to decent living and sanitary conditions.

Living in the street

Street children have to survive and they can only survive if they have enough money. In order to get them, children take up different jobs. B. Adamczyk carried out extensive research on the employment of street children.[9] The author writes about two important issues: forcing street children to work and the kinds of work performed by street children.

The phenomenon of employment of street children is very popular in the countries of North Africa.

Egypt is a home to 1.7 million orphaned children. Many of them are used as employees. They often work long hours in dangerous conditions. Children who pick up cotton sometimes work 11 hours a day in the temperature of 40 degrees Celsius (W, 40, Egypt).

Children's work is a huge problem in Morocco. Thousands of Moroccan children are involved in work. Some of those activities are dangerous and may harm their mental and physical development. Children's slavery is also popular – it often refers to doing servant's job in rich people's houses. There are many children selling things in the street, e.g. tissues, or flowers. Sometimes children walk around open-air markets selling garlic, salt, or vinaigrette. Those who beg are often addicted to glue sniffing (W, 26, Morocco).

In some regions children are sexually harassed or work as prostitutes. Children who take up different jobs usually do not attend school, which means that their perspectives for the future are poor (W, 33, Morocco).

A popular phenomenon is also migration, as a result of which some children get on overcrowded boats, trying to find a better life in, e.g.

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[9] B. Adamczyk, *Dzieci ulicy w Polsce i na świecie. Funkcjonowanie w przestrzeni miejskiej i strategie przystosowawcze*, Kraków 2016, pp. 249-303.

Italy. During such trips many people risk their lives. Tunisian children are sometimes forced to work, e.g. to manage someone's house (M, 34, Tunisia).

In Tunisia, education is available to everyone and almost all children are enrolled to school. However, the need for employees results in the fact that every day thousands of children give up school. As a result, as many as 20% people in Tunisia are illiterate. About 30% girls finish studying before they are 14, after which they start working. Some girls are forced to work earlier, even at the age of 7 (W, 47, Tunisia).

Children who grow up without parents are often forced to take the role of a family head and cope with extreme economic difficulties (M, 34, Tunisia).

Life in the street means not only the necessity to work, but also danger and social pathology described by the research participants.

Non-government organisations

Non-government organisations, who aim at helping street children, are trying to solve the above mentioned problems. The research has been carried out among the employees of 3 SOS Children's Villages in Draria (Algeria), Cairo (Egypt) and Gammarth (Tunisia).

The above mentioned Villages are a part of the organisation named SOS Children's Villages, which has been present in 135 countries for more than 65 years. The first SOS Children's Village was opened in 1949 in Austria. It was established by Hermann Gmeiner for children orphaned during the Second World War. According to the founder's concept, care offered to children in the SOS Villages should be similar to that received in a family.[10]

SOS Children's Villages have been working in Algeria since 1981 (in Algiers, in the district named Draria). The Village offers home to many orphaned children in the city, as well as significant support to many families in the region (W, 26, Algeria).

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[10] More about the organisation: https://wioskisos.org/o-nas/o-stowarzyszeniu/ (access: 13.04.2015).

Children in Draria live far from the luxury which some inhabitants of the capital city may enjoy (W, 34, Algeria).

Work aiming at providing support for the family reaches a lot of local families. Social support centres also work outside the Draria village, helping in the suburbs (Corso, Naciria, Tizi Ouzou, Tipaza). In those centres children can find proper health care – e.g. access to vaccines (W, 26, Algeria).

SOS Children's Villages in Egypt provide loving family houses for unwanted Egyptian children in key cities: Cairo, Alexandria and Tanta. Since 1980 SOS Children's Villages have been helping street children from Morocco live better. Day by day, despite difficulties, many children function properly due to such support (W, 33, Morocco).

The organisation SOS Children's Villages opened the first two villages in Tunisia in 1983, in the northern cities of Siliana and Gammarth. The villages mainly focus on helping children born outside marriages who are not accepted by the Tunisian society and often fall victim to poverty. In the recent years the villages have also been offering support to families, educating parents how they can provide the best care for their children (W, 47, Tunisia).

In children's villages street children are under the supervision of a SOS mother. Each child is offered good education, health care and opportunities for future development.

Another organisation, The Moroccan Children's Trust (MCT) is a charity foundation registered in Great Britain which aims at sustainable development of the society in the south of Morocco. It has been registered as a charity organisation since 2008.

Moroccan Children Trust continues the work started by Africatrust Networks in Morocco in 1994. In 2003, MCT started working with Group Maroc Horizons (GMH), a registered non-government organisation with its head office in Morocco, which carries out Taroudannt projects in the south of Morocco. GMH fulfils educational and social projects, including additional lessons for students and workshops for adults in order to fight illiteracy, as well as activities for disadvantaged young people, and provides support to the disabled (W, 33, Morocco).

GMH organises meetings for street children once a week. The program of activities for 400 children includes arts and crafts, theatre, sports,

music and trips across the country. Moreover, GMH organises pre-school classes, as well as reading and writing lessons for elder members. Three of the GMH commissions are still in touch with the MCT management committee in order to carry out a new project for street children (W, 26, Morocco).

Working with street children

While working with street children, people often use psychotechniques, i.e. techniques of the direct influence of the streetworker on the child. It is very important for the streetworker to have features and skills that may be useful in working with street children. The participants of our research also emphasized such qualities and skills.

Through making friendly contacts with children, a streetworker may offer them alternative forms of spending free time, so that they do not get bored. A streetworker has to be patient, empathic, courageous and optimistic (W, 34, Algeria).

The person who works with street children has to learn about the customs of the street environment, and about friendships and other relations among the children of the street. A streetworker must become an element of the street environment before he/she can gain the children's trust. And then, through close, direct contacts the streetworker may be an example for the children – he/she can become their role model (W, 47, Tunisia).

A streetworker must be a charismatic person – a person with specific personality traits through which he/she can influence the behaviour of other people. Also, the person has to encourage others to various activities – he/she has to be emphatic, creative, original, diplomatic and talented (W, 26, Algeria).

Also, authenticity, commitment and proper pedagogic preparation is very important (M, 36, Egypt).

A streetworker must have interesting hobbies because it is necessary for him to offer the children something that can attract their attention – e.g. the ability to rap, do some sports, etc. (M, 34, Tunisia).

As the research results show, the activity of the non-government organisations whose employees were interviewed includes:

- organising home for street children through placing them in SOS street villages;
- making direct, friendly contact with children who spend time in the streets;
- providing street children with the information on various negative phenomena (taking drugs, stealing, prostitution, risky sexual behaviour);
- encouraging children to spend time in active and creative ways;
- support in solving difficult situations;
- making contacts and cooperating with the children's family and teachers;
- distributing leaflets about the work of streetworkers and alternative ways of spending free time;
- carrying out sociotherapy;
- talking with street children on all topics;
- regular visiting of places in which children of the street spend time (in order to become a part of their environment).

Conclusion

Barbara Adamczyk, a scientist who analyses the phenomenon of street children, has come to a serious conclusion that pedagogical work with the children is extremely difficult due to the fact that there are only few people actually worried about the life of street children. That is why, in particular countries and organisations, we should research groups of streetworkers in order to gain broad knowledge about their activity.[11] Such need for research is satisfied by the analysis presented in this article, which, at least to a small degree, makes it possible for us to know the size and conditions of the street children phenomenon in the countries of North Africa. Also, due to the interviews we carried out, we got to know something about the lives of street children. Moreover, we managed to obtain some information concerning the

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[11] B. Adamczyk, "Dilemas de los educadores en el trabajo resocializador con niños de la calle: resultados de las investigaciones en América del Sur y África," *Yachay* 2016, no. 63, pp. 149-173.

methods of working with street children applied by the employees of non-government organisation.

The data obtained during the research makes it possible for us to draw several conclusions. Street children are a popular phenomenon in the countries of North America. It is a region which, apart from cultural, geographical and tourist attractions, is also full of disadvantages such as poverty, unemployment and lack of education, which contributes to the fact that there are so many street children in the region. In North African countries we can find many non-government organisations which use methods also applied by European counterparts of those organisations. Street children receive various kinds of support, so one may conclude that such organisations fulfil their objectives properly.

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Summary

The aim of this article is to present the activities of NGOs helping street children in North Africa. The problem of street children is widespread and occurs in many countries around the world. It is important to learn about this phenomenon – its size, characteristics, reasons, and even more important is to know the methods and techniques of working with the street children. Knowing how others work can allow reflections and pedagogical conclusions to our work. In many countries, non-governmental organizations (as the only ones) are helping street children. This situation also concerns to the countries of North Africa. This article presents the results of research conducted among non-governmental organizations from Algeria, Morocco, Egypt and Tunisia.

Keywords:

  street children, non-governmental organization, North Africa, Algeria, Tunisia, Morocco, Egypt, SOS children's villages

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In Search of Universal Paradigm for Streetworking: Based on the Homelessness Issue of Nepali Children

In order to present a paradigm to work in the harsh environment of street reality, I decided to contact personally an active streetworker from the Kathmandu valley. Suresh Chatry is a leader of a non-profit organisation called Shiva Shakti Youth Club[1], whose activities are focused on "social projects in one of the remotest areas of Nepal, including child education, women's education, environmental awareness and youth empowerment."[2]

This text will be presented in the form of an interview. All materials have been gathered in last five months and refer to ten years of experience in the field of social work. Additionally, the whole material will contain numerous references to theoretical sources which are indispensable in our mission.

Question: How does the issue of homelessness in Nepal look like nowadays?

Answer: Here, I would like you to convey some information before I talk about the detail. Nepal is one of the poorest countries in the world, in terms of capital and the infrastructures.[3] Additionally, its economy stays under strong influence of two neighbouring countries, India and

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[1] http://www.shivashakti.org.np/ (access: 12.08.2015).

[2] http://www.shivashakti.org.np/ (access: 12.08.2015).

[3] Gini Index (2010): 32.8, HDI (2014): 0.540 145th place in the world, http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SI.POV.GINI/ (access: 11.08.2015); http://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/hdr14-summary-en.pdf (access: 11.08.2015).

China.[4] It is not surprising to hear that there are street children but as you well know, there are street children even in the most developed countries like the USA. According to research[5] the number of street children is three times bigger today in North America than in 1987. The issue of street children is not only related to poverty but also to freedom seeking (some children want to be free from their parents and relatives), to traumas as well as other mental and physical condition.

Question: Who are street children in Nepal?

Answer: According to Williams's term used by UNICEF, "A street child is any boy or girl who has not reached adulthood for whom the street (in the widest sense of the word, including unoccupied dwellings, wasteland, etc.) has become her or his habitual abode and/or sources of livelihood and who is inadequately (if at all) protected, supervised or directed by responsible adults."[6] Well, it is complicated to tell who exactly street children are when we have all sorts of children living in the streets. So, the above definition probably presents almost all types of street children. In Nepal we can encounter all possible types of homeless children:

- Children who escaped because of torture, domestic violence, abandoned by parents;
- Children who escape from houses to go to big cities (a model similar to the protagonist of Twain's *Huckleberry Finn*);
- children of street adults (who are street adults and had been street children or even have been living in the streets too);
- children who lost their body parts and are made to beg by parents;
- children who come to the street to earn for the survival of their family;
- children who lost their parents and property (*Coolie*[7]).

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[4] More specifically about contemporary relation and aids from neighbouring countries in: http://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2015-04-27/nepal-has-powerful-friends-in-high-places-india-and-china (access: 11.08.2015).

[5] http://www.washingtonpost.com/local/600-homeless-children-in-dc-and-no-one-seems-to-care/2013/02/08/a728a0ea-722b-11e2-8b8d-e0b59a1b8e2a_story.html (access: 10.08.2015).

[6] Ch. Williams, "Who are 'Street Children'? A Hierarchy of Street Use and Appropriate Responses," *Child Abuse & Neglect* 1993, no. 17, pp. 831-841.

[7] Highly influential book explores plight due to poverty and exploitation amongst minorities, first published in 1936 by Mulk Raj Anand.

Of course, each individual case is but a crucial question is what causes them to end up in the street. There are around ten thousand street children in Nepal only and this number may go up because of the devastating earthquakes[8], which has been described by World Central Bank specialist as "a combined 9,000 lives were lost, making this the worst disaster in Nepal's history in terms of human casualties. An assessment of the impact shows that Nepal's recovery needs amount to the equivalent of a third of its economy."[9]

Question: Is everyone ready to take the mission and become a streetworker in Nepal?

Answer: Working with street children is not everyone's cup of tea and I realised that we still suffer from an insufficient number of professional workers in this field.[10] It takes endless patience and knowledge about trauma and child psychology and of course empathy, imagination to transform oneself[11] into another being to know the person. People are opening shelters if they are interested in taking care about street children. Most of them come to realize later they really do not want to do it. As a result they lose patience and abandon the work. More than this, helping people has become a fashion and some people do it as a means of flaunting their prosperity. Most are helping themselves rather than street children in most of the situations, for example because they feel guilty and want to help them with food or money.

Question: So what kind of help you are providing for homeless children at this stage of work?

Answer: Well, when they are brought into the shelters, some unskilled workers teach these children behave the way we want them to behave or at least like our "civilised children". These children are

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[8] Latest update on the calamity that struck Nepal recently provided by United Nation Office for the coordination of humanitarian affairs, http://www.unocha.org/nepal (access: 10.08.2015).

[9] http://www.worldbank.org/en/country/nepal/overview#4 (access: 11.08.2015).

[10] More about shortages in pedagogical studies and the absence of proper dialog between cultures in Ghanashyam Sharma, "Criticalizing the Pedagogy of English Studies," *Bodhi: An Interdisciplinary Journal*, 2010, vol. 4(1), pp. 111-120.

[11] This expression is used in context with theory of mind proposed in 1978 by D. Premack and G. Woodruff. Self is displayed as an intuitive understanding for our own states of mind and others. See D.G. Premack, G. Woodruff, "Does the Chimpanzee Have a Theory of Mind?" *Behavioral and Brain Sciences* 1978, vol. 1(4), pp. 515-526.

special children. To treat them in the normal way is an initial goal but while understanding him or her we have to use our skills, heart and body's effort, collectively.[12] So, one should have mindfulness and intelligence at the same time to deal with these kids. That means we have to make ourselves ready; emotionally, physically and psychologically to face the problems. So, we need to help ourselves first before stepping in to the big world of streetworking.

Question: Could you share with us some stories from your workplace? Scenarios, actual events which can give a hint of what streetworking is really about.

Answer: It is worth pondering where begging begins. If someone loses his or her property[13], house, relatives, starts to live in solitude, then one starts to beg. I am not concerned about professional beggars here. Street children, some of which are not born in the street, quickly learn that in order to survive they have to beg or steal. They ask people for money and if they get some they rush into a shop and buy something. Begging begins when they don't have clothes to cover their body, when their mom becomes sick and they have no place to go. In the worst scenario, their parents die on the street and there is no one to carry her or his corpse. One of the guards named Navaraj Khadka[14] who works in Pashupati[15] here in Kathmandu, where you can see many street children, when we asked him about them says: "Chasing street children has become their daily routine. You may think it is stupid and cruel to chase them away but I have seen many terrible things in here" – he turned to us. He showed us a child and said that the child was born in the street. "I feel like yesterday his mother gave birth to him in the street." "She was carrying the baby and umbilical cord with her in her hands" – he added. As we were listening curiously, he

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[12] Good communication is the basis for the further development of educational process. A.S. Reber, *Słownik psychologii*, Warszawa 2000, p. 200.

[13] This problem is gaining momentum due to the last earthquake, where more than 500,000 households were wrecked, http://www.un.org/apps/news/story (access: 11.08.2015).

[14] A guard who has been working in Pashupati since 2005. The conversation took place in 2010.

[15] Pashupati is one of the biggest Hindu Temples in Kathmandu, Nepal. Pashupatinath is located on the bank of the Bagmati River 5 kilometers north-east of the Kathmandu Valley in the eastern part of Kathmandu.

said, "Even couple of day's back I saw one, they grow up here and die here, they eat food which is given by one of the organizations here." We asked him, why they don't go to shelters. "They go sometimes but come back again", he replied. Likewise, one of the street children who is now a film director, Shushil Babu Chhetri[16], shared his experiences in a meeting. "I came to Kathmandu when I was six years old, I had a small dream to buy my mother a shirt but later I got lost in this city." He shared his bad experiences during his stay at Angle's home.[17] "The kids used to be abused sexually, bitterly beaten, and had to go to look after his (the owner's) kids at his home." He said. "And had to act in front of foreigners like nothing has happened and I even had to say I studied in the second grade, which never happened." Later on he was rescued by the Umbrella Foundation.[18] He has never been to a school but as he was passionate about making movies so he become a movie maker. Ravi Khadka, one of the children spent his day collecting coins with his friends. Well, Sandeep, Umesh and Raju Lama[19] carry wood to burn the corpses in the Arya Ghat. These are the few examples. So, when you don't have anything to dream of except how to fill a hungry stomach, the begging begins. I asked Umesh; "Who do you want to be in the future?" He said, "I want to set fire to the dead bodies of people." I asked further "You don't want to be a person who does a good job, wears tie and drives a car?". He replied in the affirmative but had no idea how to become that type of a person. One day, I went to meet them again and that day Umesh was a bit ill and had trouble sleeping because he had no space to sleep and older children pushed him down from a veranda, where they usually stayed every night. There, begins the begging when you don't have a place to sleep. Hence, there are people who beg in the street to earn money too. I have met quite a few of them.

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[16] A former street child who escaped from his house at the age of six and now turned out to be a film director and a photographer. He is now 25 years old. Conversation took place in 2011.

[17] An orphanage located in Kathmandu.

[18] Non-profit organisation from Nepal, established in 2005, http://umbrellanepal.org/ (access: 10.08.2015).

[19] Name of street children that Suresh met in Ary Ghat, on the banks of the Bagmati river. They are around 10 and 13 years old. The event took place in 2014.

Question: So please, let's sum up and say who, in your opinion, is a professional street worker?

Answer: To some extent he or she is the one who has experiences and understands the circumstances.[20] To be a street worker with street children is not an easy job. Dealing with children without deficiencies is a hard task but with street children it becomes even more complicated. These children are self-governing and have various backgrounds. The street worker is a person who has endless patience, vast knowledge, a plan and the determination to secure its implementation.[21] Street workers cannot be street workers in the true sense unless they change themselves, so it is essential to help oneself, before one helps others.[22] It means, you help with certain ideas, and develop empathy. Be more than a human being, cultivate love and habits. You nurture yourself with human qualities. You cannot become a street worker unless you understand these children and their feelings. These children, if asked the same question twice, can sometimes give two mutually exclusive answers. You need consistency to win their hearts. Once they trust you, they will come after you, searching for you. You need to have strong vision (sustainable vision) have to cooperate with government and welfare organisations. And of course, a strong sense of righteousness. Only with these virtues can you be a street worker. But the first question you need to ask yourself is why do you want to help these street children? Do you see world smiling when you look at these children, do you have the same experience as they do, did you received great pleasure being with them or do you simply love them? You must have a strong reason and passion to encourage new workers to join you and to convince them that your methods are effective.

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[20] In more precise words, streetworking in Western culture is an additional form of help in a social rehabilitation system, a type of outreach method. In non-developed countries like Nepal it is a standalone method which has not yet been fully developed. Term used from: http://www.ab.org.pl/e-przewodnik/tekst/4.pdf (access: 10.08.2015).

[21] The five stages of picture-book streetworking included in: http://www.praktycy.org/osos/osos_przewodnik_metodologiczny.pdf (access: 09.08.2015).

[22] This sentence is derived from a theory of human development consisting of seven stages. We believe that one of the last three stages should be achieved before one decides to become an active social worker. See C. Sullivan, M.Q. Grant, D.J. Grant, "The Development of Interpersonal Maturity," *Psychiatry*, 1957, vol. 20(4), pp. 373-385.

Well, even for the occasional help, we need to be mindful. I have to think what will be the effect of my action, who I'm helping, why I'm helping and how I'm helping. Sometimes, our help can cause durable negative impact too. Some of us play Mother Teresa: giving food and clothes and even money, which is not exactly help for a long time but for the short term, such actions brings undesirable effects. These kinds of acts not only keep children waiting for the golden days but also invite more children to live in the street.

The problem of streetworkers in many Asian countries, including Nepal and India, is that these people are not treated the way they ought to be on an everyday basis. So, it becomes hard to heal the traumas that they have. At the same time, people look for an immediate positive response from the traumatized street children. These children need to feel safe first to share things. Then they will embrace, accept, you and only then are they healed. No one is going to share things when they don't trust you. So, when they feel safe only they shall embrace you with feelings and emotion.

Question: What kind of inner changes are you referring to?

Answer: You may ask, how can I change myself? A street worker is one who is passionate about the work (loves children), has some knowledge of child psychology and dealing with the symptoms of trauma, all strengthened with a strong vision. Everyone wants to change but, how to do it? We have to start with a little change. We have to adopt change as a habit then the habit becomes culture. I will tell you a little story that happened to me as I was hunting for the key to start this book. One day, as I was in my sister's house I saw my little nephew speaking Nepalese fluently. I was amazed with his language and his tactfulness. Suddenly, an idea occurred to me. I asked a question myself, how was he able to speak so fluently. It seemed to me that the language was natural blessing of his. But the language is the product of his habit. Now, if he dreams, he dreams in the same language. So, the habit becomes so attached to his everyday life that he thinks the language was natural to him. I will give my example. As I work in the environmental sector, I love nature. So, I developed the habit of keeping the environment around me clean three years ago. Now, I teach in an orphanage but I cannot help myself from picking up the plastic on my way. So a change in habit and its continuity becomes your behaviour

after continuous effort. [23] As soon as it becomes your culture, you don't need to force yourself into a change. This is how you create your own self as you desire. So, it is for you to determine what kind of a person you want to be. Well, it is not an easy job to change your old self. Most of the time, you will find it difficult to move from your old self because you are used to it. When you start with a new thought, later on in the process of following it you will face the problem of identity crisis and you may not like what you are doing and you may bounce back to the old self. But if you continue with it then you will create a new self. [24] Creating a new self is like having a new life or making new pathways from the choices you make. So, it is up to you to determine what kind of a person you want to be. So, first of all, help yourself and become a modern Buddha.

Question: Who is a modern Buddha (New Buddha)?

Answer: In this part, I would like to display a certain Buddhist teaching in the manners of a pragmatic philosophy referring to everyday use. On his deathbed, Buddha said: "Live as a lamp unto yourselves, being your own refuge, with no one else as your refuge!" [25]

Here, I would like to start with my personal story that I have been through. One morning as usual, I was doing my morning exercise; I looked at the statue of the Buddha because I do exercise in front of a statue. I found the statue of Buddha so terrible. It seemed to me it was happy and closing its eyes. As I was sweating all over I got angry with the statue along with the people who think that Buddha was a great man. I felt he merely was as escapist who abandoned all his family and his loved ones for his selfish mottos. I even loathed Buddha. I tried to avoid him but as I didn't have enough places to go, I continued my daily routine under the statue. After a while I looked at him it was still smiling. I tried to avoid him at first but later I thought if everyone

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[23] The research shows that a new habit can be formed after circa 66 days of continuous training. P. Lally, C.H.M. van Jaarsveld, H.W.W. Potts, J. Wardle, "How Are Habits Formed: Modelling Habit Formation in the Real World," *European Journal of Social Psychology* 2010, vol. 40(6), pp. 998-1009.

[24] Idea suggested by J. Dispenza, *You Are the Placebo: Making Your Mind Matter*, New York 2014, pp. 23-30.

[25] G. Wallis, *The Dhammapada: Verses on the Way. A New Translation of the Teachings of the Buddha, with a Guide to Reading the Text*, New York 2007, p. 168.

could be happy as he is then the world would have been full of compassion and peace. Then I thought about people; there are many kinds of people. Some people always criticize government authorities, some of them actually want to do something but never do it, few of them do it but without changing themselves, therefore they do not achieve their goals. And few people who are passionate and can change themselves and motivate themselves, can push the limits. I call everyone who really want to work in the field of streetworking or elsewhere, to be a modern Buddha through self-vigilance and mindfulness. We are not encouraging anybody to go for a religious ritual in order to become a Buddha rather we are calling for self-observation[26] which shall enable you to help yourself. Self-observation and self-evaluation help us to be a better person. Have you read about Buddha?[27] If you have, you might have known that he did not try to influence anyone but himself. Some people might think him as an escapist and a selfish man but the important thing is that he found peace in himself, and then he fulfilled his responsibilities. No one can change someone else, before they change themselves. In the world there is a vast amount of people who always search for faults and attack them. Well, there are a few people who are determined to do something and make it happen. So, I want people to be true to themselves and try to encourage others with their actions not only with words. The world is ours; we can start using a common motto. We are born in different situations but still there is no difference between street children and us. Remember! You could have been the one on the street, begging and waiting for a passerby. These tools don't claim to guide you or to tell something philosophical. But to have knowledge and mindfulness before doing anything might be a perfect start. Using Buddha's words "[...] carpenters shape wood. The skilled tame themselves."[28]

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[26] An act understood as a part of everyday diligence, scrutiny of moments. Training is highly regarded in most of Buddhist schools. G. Wallis, *The Dhammapada: Verses on the Way*, pp. 7-9.

[27] There are few version in regards to Siddhartha Gautama origins. Most scholars can agree upon fact that he was born in Lumbini, a contemporary Nepal in a family with prosperity. More about the discrepancy in theories in B. Scherer, *Buddyzm*, Kęty 2009, pp. 13-25.

[28] G. Wallis, *The Dhammapada: Verses on the Way*, p. 19.

The mindfulness of changing oneself into a new self may not be practiced with children and of course street children. They ought to be healed with games, music and stories. Most of the people think that the kids have to go to school and learn letters but bookish knowledge should not be regarded as the only way to be educated. Especially street children who are self-governed have no realization about the importance of education so why would they care about education? We purposefully tell them to learn or provide them with the space that interests them. Maybe painting, doing drama, telling them a story, group music therapy, etc.[29] So, street children learn the words when they become adult and they need to learn, most importantly when they realize.

Our mission is to provide education for those who need it most, education understood in term of the beginning of a better life. As we can conclude, Nepal still suffers from a lack of professional social workers, and the above text exposes some of the major weaknesses in the educational and infrastructure system of this country. Reading the latest schedules of Nepali Planning Commission[30] and analyzing the reaction of the world economies to the last Kathmandu valley earthquake[31] we can hope for far reaching changes in this region. What we would also like to highlight is the fact that the humanities currently offer a vast number of paradigms (theories and methodologies from history of ideas to a practical therapeutic approach, also mentioned in our text) but without a strong infrastructure (active interaction between organisation, specialist – government – individual entrepreneurs[32]) none of them will achieve its final stage in which a return of a street child from the street to a regular home can be achieved.

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[29] There are a various methods of creative rehabilitation revealed in the social interaction process. Some more specific ones are: Rehabilitational Theater, Rehabilitation through sport MTR or Drama as a supportive method. All of the above mentioned were created by the Polish scholar Marek Konopczyński. Suresh mentioned briefly only a few. M. Konopczyński, *Metody twórczej resocjalizacji*, Warszawa 2007, pp. 201-270.

[30] *An Approach to the Graduation from the Least Developed Country by 2022*, http://www.npc.gov.np/ (access: 09.08.2015).

[31] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Humanitarian_response_to_the_2015_Nepal_earthquake (access: 09.08.2015).

[32] A suitable example in this case is John Wood's idea called *room to read*. With minimal financial resources Wood has created a worldwide network of sponsors, building libraries in the poorest parts of Asia. J. Wood, *Leaving Microsoft to Change the World*, London 2006.

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Summary

The purpose of this article is to present the problem of street children in Nepal and the aid addressed to this group. The second, more extensive part of the article deals with the problems encountered by volunteers working in Nepal and good practices for volunteers who plan to be engaged in such activity. The problems which volunteers are confronted with are presented in the following areas: culture, religion, daily routines, foreign language, friendships, standard of living, appreciation of voluntary work, life outside volunteering, value system, intercultural relations, longing. Although the article describes volunteers working in Nepal, the vast majority of the defined problems and conclusions refer generally to volunteer work carried out all over the world.

Keywords:
volunteering, street children, Nepal, Kathmandu, streetworking, interview

Index of Names