

Summary of Presentation
Social competence of children placed
in a Home for children under 3 years

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Key words: Social competence, social skills, Home for children under 3 years, way of upbringing, social interaction, vulnerable child

The theme of my thesis is called "Social competence of children placed in Home for children under 3 years"

Introduction

Children who can not live, be educated and brought up in their own harmonious family are considered as a group that requires a special attention. This issue affects the quality of society as a whole.

Proper development of social competence is a necessary condition for the future life of every individual from an early age.

I chose the dissertation topic, because I work in an institution which provides care for vulnerable children. From the position of a head nurse (manager) I can see, and change the condition, needs, and even every weakness of upbringing children placed in this institution.

Aim of the dissertation

The main goal of the thesis is to thoroughly describe and examine the social competence of children placed in children's home.

Other goal is to understand the circumstances and conditions in which the development of children takes place and uncover the "weak points" of this development. A comparison with a group of children from functional family is made to highlight the differences of particular competences between the two groups.

Research questions

The main research questions are:

- I. What is the level of social competence of preschool age children (three-years old) living in the institutional care?

This basic question is elaborated into specific questions focused on particular social skills and the circumstances under which they are developed:

- 1) How does the anamnestic background affect the social skill development (e.g. the length of stay in the institution, prenatal and postnatal factors - medical, psychological, social, etc.)?
- 2) Which environmental factors influence the social skill development of the child?
- 3) Which educational techniques develop these skills?

- 4) Are there other factors (originally unintended but significant) affecting the social skills? The same issues will be subject to research on social skills of children of the same age but from functional families.

The second fundamental question arising from the comparison of two groups of respondents (institutional care children and children from functional families):

- II. Are there differences in the social competence of children's home children and the children from functional families?

Methodology

The research intended to be primarily qualitative.

An explanatory multiple case-study appears to be a proper design.

The specific technique used to describe the social competence of preschool children is mainly direct observation in natural conditions.

Research sample

Research will be conducted on a group of circa 15 children placed in children's home. There is a condition of the length of stay in the facility for at least half a year (to eliminate the current adaptation problems), the children age is between 3 and 3, 5 years.

The second group will be the similar amount of children of the same age from functional (complete) families.

Benefits of research

Results of this work can contribute to the improvement of the educational approach in the institutional facilities. The ideal benefit is to improve the social competence of children (not only of pre-school age) from children's homes. Above all is the successful application of these social skills after abandonment of the collective institution.

Furthermore the feedback will be provided to the persons involved in the upbringing of the institutional children and to everyone dealing with vulnerable children (teachers, medics, psychologists, social workers, and among others The Social Pediatrics). Feedback will be implemented through lectures, publications in periodical, and also through a personal transmission.

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