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Dear readers,

in your hands, you are holding the new issue of Social Pathology and Prevention. It includes four expert contributions following the experience in solving some forms of risk behaviour. You can read about a project focused precisely on Professional Preparedness of Teachers in the Area of Risk Behaviour and Its Prevention in the Moravian-Silesian Region. The issue ends with a review of a book intended for pedagogical workers of all schooling stages and in all stages of professional life, as it provides both a theoretical framework of assessment and its role in pupils' progress and teachers' growth, as well as a methodical material for the formulation of criteria and the use of the portfolio as a self-assessment tool.

The paper "The Prevention of Socio-Pathological Phenomena as the Subject of Interest of Social Pedagogy and the Profession of Social Pedagogues – Present Needs" focuses on a description of the current dire need of social pedagogues' activities in Slovak schools. Professor Hroncová describes the establishment and development of the course of study social pedagogue from the viewpoint of the pressing social need and ways it is addressed. Already in Act no. 245/2008, Section 130 defines the role and position of a social pedagogue in educational counselling. The author introduces the School of Social Pedagogy of Banská Bystrica which has been considered as one of the strongest, most advanced workplaces in Slovakia, as it not only helps develop social pedagogy in terms of theory, but also through research, experimentation, pedagogy and methodology.

The introductory study is followed by a paper by professor Emmerová entitled "Preventive and Socio-Educational Work of Social Pedagogues in Primary and Secondary Schools in the Slovakia". The paper pays attention to the social need of increasing prevention efficiency and professionalization in schools which have been more and more often employing social pedagogues to this end. It pays great attention to the role of the school social pedagogue. Based on original research, she has proven that the activity of a social pedagogue does have impact on reducing absenteeism and aggressive behaviour of pupils, easier communication with professional organizations, institutions and school management, and improved cooperation with parents.

Aggressive behaviour, whose incidence continues without diminishing in schools is the subject of another paper entitled "Aggressive Behaviour and Bullying as Most Frequent Educational Problems at Schools and Possibilities of Prevention". The author deals with the description of various kinds and forms of aggressive behaviour, not only among the pupils but also among the pupils and the teachers, friends and even the children and their parents. It is precisely prevention which is paid great attention, as it is better to prevent such phenomena than to solve critical situations which can have life-long consequences. The author of the last paper is by Mgr. Janišová who works at an elementary school and who as part of her university study focused in her qualification papers on prevention of socially pathological phenomena. The paper she offers in this issue lays aims at finding the relation between the EMO subculture and deliberate self-injury, as the codependency has been observed by the general public and widely put into connection in the media.

The author offers a paper based on content analysis of discussion forums in various media platforms used by the EMO subculture. She has found out that the most common reason for self-injury is school bullying, relationship problems, boredom, self-hatred, but also alcohol in the family or problems at work. Only 3 out of 40 testimonies related self-injury to being a part of the EMO trend. The text also offers more information precisely on the most used methods and means of self-injury.

I am convinced that the issue at hand has been successfully compiled into a thematic whole focused on the solution of socially pathological phenomena in schools. The papers offered here may form a point of departure for the comparison with similar types of studies in other countries.

Marta Kolaříková



	<b>ARTICLES</b>	
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# THE PREVENTION OF SOCIO-PATHOLOGICAL PHENOMENA AS THE SUBJECT OF INTEREST OF SOCIAL PEDAGOGY AND THE PROFESSION OF SOCIAL PEDAGOGUES – PRESENT NEEDS

**Jolana Hroncová**

## **Abstract**

Social pedagogy in Europe, from its foundation to the present, has devoted its key attention to the prevention of socio-pathological phenomena in children and youth. The preventive dimension also belongs to the key competencies of school social pedagogues in Slovakia.

## **Keywords**

prevention, socio-pathological phenomena, social pedagogy, social pedagogue, competence

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## **Preventive view of foreign social pedagogy and social work**

In Europe – mostly in Germany and Poland, the prevention of socio-pathological issues belonged to the core elements of teaching social pedagogy in its historical evolution. Social pedagogy in Germany was supposed to help in the fight against “social danger”. In this context, Marburger (1979, p. 40) mentioned an idea of A. Diesterweg, who wrote in 1850: “City dregs are growing in numbers and represent a huge danger. They expand in an environment without general education, in which they do not care about the spiritual and moral backwardness of youth. Preventing this is a fundamental requirement”. By turning attention to these marginalized groups of children, youth and adults as well as the removal of classroom learning approaches to education supported by its leading advocates (e.g. P. Natorp, A. Diesterweg and others), social pedagogy should have contributed to decrease social conflicts and unification of society. Representative of

empiric movement of social pedagogy, P. Bergemann, turned his focus to social pedagogy in relation to the education, upbringing and the local social environment. He highlighted the prophylactic dimension to social pedagogy in two ways: on the one hand, in order to prevent deviant development of children in dysfunctional families, he emphasized the social control of public educational activities through the so-called family by means of the educational series. On the other hand, he asked for creation of diverse conditions and opportunities in education outside of the school classroom, so that positive spending of children's and youth' leisure time would have been provided.

Schilling (1999, p. 97) thought of social pedagogy as of an answer to the problems of modern society and as a help for eliminate the emerging risks. Social pedagogy, as means of caring for youth and a systematic upbringing, was understood as a replacement of family services needed for the prevention of youth' moral damage. J. Schilling also states that in the past social pedagogy was known for its "negative" model, which resulted in its focus on the secondary and tertiary prevention. It was fulfilling the tasks of a "social fire-fighter", "nation's repairman", "deficit repair shop", or it was identified as "pedagogy of emergency states". According to J. Schilling, social pedagogy should be "positive". He also thinks of it as a tertiary training and educational institution centred on social help for children and youth. The focus of its subject, Schilling (1999, p. 99) speaks of its primary prevention as follows: "Social pedagogy is a public (state or private) care for children and youth, meaning to protect poor children and young people from neglect by means of preventive and curative measures". Another representative of the German social pedagogy, H. Schwalb, also declares that students of social pedagogy are studying to provide education, counselling and re-socialization works, further training, planning and organization works with children, youth and families in socio-pedagogical facilities, which are translated into "activities connected with socialization, prevention, and removal of de-socialization" (Kraus et al., 2001, p. 44).

The preventive aspect of social pedagogy is strongly depicted in the Polish social pedagogy too. Terms "prophylaxis" and "compensation" introduced to Polish social pedagogy by its founder H. Radlinska, belong to the "unshakeable" concept of terminology and the Polish social pedagogy focus. Prophylaxis (i.e. prevention) is activity connected with neutralization of influences of factors causing potential danger. Prophylactic activity can be developed in two ways: by the reduction of the activity leading to potential danger, or by stimulation of the positive activities of educating outside of the schools classroom (Wroczyński, 1968, p. 65).

The Czech representative of social pedagogy, Kraus et al. (2001, p. 44), defines social pedagogue as an expert on educational work in two areas:

- a) direct social education with use of prophylaxis or compensation,
  - b) managerial social education in institutions, i.e. organizational, compensatory, methodical, educational (design of programmes, projects management and so on).
- Kraus considers the main functions of social pedagogue to be *integrational* activities (concerning people in crisis life situations with the need of help) and *developing* activities, assuring desirable development of personality in terms of correct lifestyle and effective

spending of leisure time, which also involves prevention and concerns all population, primarily children and youth (Kraus et al., 2001, p. 44–45). B. Kraus also stresses the issue of prevention in his publication *Základy sociální pedagogiky* (2008).

### **Preventive socio-educational work in Slovak schools – participation of social pedagogues and social workers in it**

The growth of socio-pathological phenomena in Slovakia and other post-communist countries after 1989 sparked the need for social development of helping professions like “social pedagogy” and “social work”, and their participation in prevention and solving of those serious problems. Due to the fact that they constantly reduced the minimum age limit for the incidents of deviant behaviour of children and adolescents, it became necessary to intensify the prevention of socio-pathological phenomena, particularly primary prevention in the school environment, rather than the behavioural disorders manifest. It is because of this, and also because of the family's failure to frequently create the base for the children's “immunization” against creation of socio-pathological phenomena, that the professionalization of prevention in school environment is necessary. Despite family being a primary educational and socialization factor, it represents a non-professional educational institution, although parents often symbolize negative educational and human patterns. Many empirical researches support this fact (in Hroncová & Kraus et al., 2006; in Matoušek & Kroftová, 1998, 2003) by highlighting significant impact of dysfunctionality of family on the creation of socio-pathological phenomena of children and youth. Particularly for criminality, drug addiction, bullying, suicide rate and so on, the dominant criminogenic factor is the dysfunctional family. Therefore, it is necessary that school would compensate for the lack of family environment and pay greater attention to pupils from endangered and socially disadvantaged environment. Compensatory and preventive function in school should be conducted on a professional level, which has been emphasized by many European and national documents focused on the prevention of socio-pathological phenomena. For example, the Slovak “*Stratégia prevencie kriminality na obdobie 2007–2010*” (Crime prevention strategy 2007–2010), as well as the current school law “*Act No. 245/2008 Coll. On Training and Education and Act No. 317/2009 Coll. On Pedagogical Staff and Specialists*”, which are not only emphasizing the professionalization of prevention, but also defines the function of social pedagogue as a professional employee of schools and educational institutions in the field of prevention and other related activities.

On 9 September 2008, the law *Act No. 245/2008 Coll. On Training and Education* came into law and in its § 130 it specifies the system of educational counselling and prevention in schools and school facilities. This law assigns social pedagogue to other sectors of educational consultancy and a prevention system cooperating with family, school, school facilities, employer, public authorities and civil society associations. However, according to this law, the main function of a social pedagogue remains in school system from nursery

schools to secondary schools – § 27, Article 2 lett. a) to f), in specialized educational facilities and school facilities (boarding schools § 117 Article 5).

Another legislative norm specifying the profession of social pedagogue is law Act No. 317/2009 Coll. *On Pedagogical Staff and Specialists*. According to this law, a social pedagogue is categorized as a professional employee (§ 19) and § 24 defines his profession as follows: "Social pedagogue performs professional activities in terms of prevention, intervention and providing consultancy mostly for children and pupils endangered by socio-pathological phenomena, coming from socially disadvantaged environment, drug addicts or children and pupils disadvantaged in other ways, their legal representatives and pedagogic employees of schools and schooling facilities. The social pedagogue fulfils the role of social education, the promotion of social, ethical behaviour, social-pedagogic diagnostics of environment and relationships, social-pedagogic counselling, prevention of socio-pathological phenomena and behavioural re-education. He performs expert and educational activities". Profession of social pedagogue in school can be carried out under given legislature by a graduate with master's degree from "social pedagogy" or "social work".

At present, two legal norms allow social pedagogues to work as specialized employees in schools, from nursery to secondary schools. School practice, however, makes only small use of these possibilities, mostly because of lacking of financial resources. The report called *"Správa o stave školstva na Slovensku a o systémových krokoch na podporu jej ďalšieho rozvoja"* (A report on the state of education in Slovakia and systemic steps to be taken for its future development) published by Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of Slovak Republic in 2013 states that "I consider jeopardizing the safety of children and pupils and the teaching of pedagogical and non-pedagogical school staff (pupil bullying, assaulting of teachers by pupils or their legal representatives) to be a serious problem of education". It also points out "increase in the consumption of alcohol and other drugs by pupils of lower age groups" (p. 50–51). To solve these and other problems it is necessary "to increase the amount of employees specialized in prevention". School legislature marks this employee as a social pedagogue. This report shows the possible expectancy of future improvement in finding employment of social pedagogues in schools, since pupils' deviant behaviour is increasing.

Despite the low rate of social pedagogues in Slovak schools, it is positive that social pedagogues in Slovak schools are already legally established as specialist employees. This is not true for Czech Republic and Poland, although Poland's social pedagogy has a much longer tradition than the Slovak one.

### **Prevention of socio-pathological phenomena in the "Banská Bystrica School of Social Pedagogy"**

The *"Banská Bystrica School of Social Pedagogy"* is considered to be one of the strongest and mostly advanced workplaces in Slovakia, because it helps to develop

social pedagogy not only in theory, but also in scientific research, experimental, pedagogical and methodological level. Many teachers from the Department of Pedagogy on UMB's Faculty of Education, are cooperating with foreign universities on development of theory and practice of social pedagogy, as well as on solving research tasks, have been studying social pedagogy for a long time. They are teachers and include J. Hroncová, I. Emmerová, M. Niklová, K. Cimprichová-Gežová and others. At the same time, J. Hroncová is a head guarantor of the Master's degree study programme "*Social Pedagogy*", which is currently a unique study programme, since there is no other like that in Slovakia. It has been developing in UMB's Faculty of Education since the academic year 1994/95.

Despite the fact that it hasn't got a long history, the "*Banská Bystrica School of Social Pedagogy*", developing in UMB's Faculty of Education's Department of Pedagogy, is known for its rich publication activities and conference entries not only at home, but also abroad. Most of these publications are focused on social pedagogy problems and prevention of socio-pathological phenomena. This is also one of the crucial issues in the subject of social pedagogy, as an educational discipline. It also belongs to the dominant fields of social pedagogy study programme, implemented by UMB's Faculty of Education's Department of Pedagogy. Those of the most important publications concerning social pedagogy and prevention of social pathology are: Hroncová, J. – Hudecová, A. – Matulayová, T.: "*Sociálna pedagogika a sociálna práca*" (Social pedagogy and social work; 2000, 2001), Hroncová, J. – Emmerová, I.: "*Sociálna pedagogika*" (Social pedagogy, 2004).

J. Hroncová is the leading author of numerous monographs. Many of them are focused on social pedagogy and prevention of social pathology: Hroncová, J. – Kraus, B. et al.: "*Sociálna patológia pre sociálnych pracovníkov a pedagógov*" (Social Pathology for Social Workers and Social Pedagogues, 2006), Hroncová, J. – Walancik, M. et al.: "*Vybrané problémy slovenskej a poľskej sociálnej pedagogiky*" (Selected Problems of Slovak and Polish Social Pedagogy, 2009), Hroncová, J. – Emmerová, I. et al.: "*Sociálna pedagogika – vývoj a súčasný stav*" (Social Pedagogy – Development and Current State, 2009), Hroncová, J. – Emmerová, I. – Walancik, M. et al.: "*Pedagogika sociálnej starostlivosti*" (Pedagogy of Social Treatment, 2011), Hroncová, J. – Emmerová, I. et al.: "*Sociálny pedagóg v škole*" (Social Pedagogue in School, 2012), Hroncová, J. et al.: "*Sociálna pedagogika na Slovensku*" (Social Pedagogy in Slovakia, 2012), Hroncová, J. – Emmerová, I. – Hronec, M.: "*Sociálna patológia pre sociálnych pedagógov*" (Social Pathology for Social Pedagogues, 2014), Hroncová, J. – Emmerová, I. et al.: "*Sociálny pedagóg v škole v teoretickej reflexii a praxi*" (Social Pedagogue in School in Theoretical Reflection and Practice, 2015), and others.

I. Emmerová is also writing about and is dedicated to the prevention of socio-pathological phenomena in the following works: "*Prevencia sociálnopatologických javov v školskom prostredí*" (Prevention of Socio-Pathological Phenomena in School Environment, 2007), "*Poruchy správania u žiakov základných a stredných škôl – ich prevencia a riešenie*" (Elementary and Secondary School Students' Behaviour Disorders – Their Prevention And Solutions, 2008), where she discusses the work of social pedagogues too, "*Aktuálne*

otázky prevencie problémového správania u žiakov v školskom prostredí” (Current Questions on Prevention of Problem Behaviour of Students in School Environment, 2011). One of her most recent works is the book *“Preventívna a sociálno-výchovná práca s problémovými deťmi a mládežou”* (Preventive And Socio-Educational Work With Problem Children And Youth, 2012).

*“Banská Bystrica School of Social Pedagogy”* also intensively develops social pedagogy in terms of science and research thanks to projects of international cooperation, and mainly in the context of national projects VEGA and KEGA. Science and research activities of *“Banská Bystrica School of Social Pedagogy”* is mostly focused on the prevention of children’s and youth’ socio-pathological phenomena and problems with use of social pedagogues in practice. In 2004 and 2005 we were working on completing the international research task *“Sociálno-patologické javy vo vysokoškolskej príprave sociálnych pracovníkov a sociálnych pedagógov”* (Socio-Pathological Phenomena in University Preparation of Social Workers and Social Pedagogues) under the terms of the deal between the governments of Czech Republic and Slovakia for 2004–2005 No. 119, responsible researcher of which was J. Hroncová for the Slovak Republic and B. Kraus for the Czech Republic. Teachers at UMB’s Department of Social Work also took part.

In 2007 and 2009, the department was completing the research project VEGA No. 1/4527/07 called *“Profesijné kompetencie sociálnych pedagógov v oblasti prevencie sociálnej patológie u detí a mládeže”* (Professional Competences of Social Pedagogues in Prevention of Social Pathology of Children and Youth, prof. PhDr. J. Hroncová, PhD. as the responsible researcher), in which researchers like I. Emmerová, M. Niklová, L. Kamarášová, M. Hronec and others took part.

Other projects like VEGA, especially VEGA No. 1/0303/11, called *“Spolupráca inštitúcií verejnej správy so školami v oblasti prevencie sociálno-patologických javov s osobitným zreteľom na uplatnenie sociálnych pedagógov v Banskobystrickom kraji”* (Cooperation of Public Administration Institutions and Schools in Prevention of Socio-Pathological Phenomena with Regard to Social Pedagogues’ Employment in Banská Bystrica Region, prof. PhDr. J. Hroncová, PhD. as the responsible researcher), and project VEGA No. 1/0168/12, called *“Profesionalizácia prevencie sociálnopatologických javov v školskom prostredí v SR z aspektu profesie sociálneho pedagóga – súčasný stav, problémy a komparácia so zahraničím”* (Professionalization of Prevention of Socio-Pathological Phenomena in School Environment in Slovak Republic from the Point of View of Social Pedagogue – Current State, Problems and Comparison to Foreign Countries, prof. PhDr. I. Emmerová, PhD. as the responsible solver), were focusing on the profession of social pedagogue.

Apart from publications in journals and monographs, the research results on social pedagogy and prevention of socio-pathological phenomena have also been presented at international conferences like SOCIALIA conferences taking place at UMB’s Faculty of Education under guarantee of J. Hroncová and A. Hudecová. This includes SOCIALIA 2007 called *“Prevencia sociálno-patologických javov u detí, mládeže a dospelých”* (Prevention of Socio-Pathological Phenomena of Children, Youth and Adults), SOCIALIA 2009,



focused on *“Profesijné kompetencie sociálnych pedagógov a sociálnych pracovníkov v teórii a v praxi v SR a v iných krajinách Európskej únie”* (Professional competences of social pedagogues and social workers in theory and practice in Slovakia and other countries of the European Union), and SOCIALIA 2011, called *“Participácia inštitúcií verejnej správy a pomáhajúcich profesií na prevencii sociálno-patologických javov u detí, mládeže a dospelých v Slovenskej republike a v iných krajinách Európskej únie”* (Participation of Public Administration Institutions and Helping Professions in Prevention of Socio-Pathological Phenomena of Children, Youth and Adults in Slovak Republic and Other Countries of the European Union). Most of all, these conferences presented results of research projects of *“Banská Bystrica School of Social Pedagogy”* representatives.

Except VEGA projects, we are also working on many other projects of KEGA, e.g. KEGA No. 028UMB-4/2012: *“Preventívna sociálno-výchovná práca na základných a stredných školách z aspektu funkcie sociálneho pedagóga”* (Preventive Socio-Educational Work in Elementary and Secondary Schools from the Point of View of Function of Social Pedagogue). In addition to the contributions referred to in the professional journals, one of the more extensive publications about this task is also monograph by Hroncová, J. et al.: *“Sociálna pedagogika na Slovensku (História a súčasnosť)”* (Social Pedagogy in Slovakia (History and Present), 2012) and anthology *“Sociálny pedagóg v škole”* (Social Pedagogue in School, 2012), presenting performances of famous Slovak, Czech and Polish social pedagogues and their experience from Slovak schools and school facilities. The first event in Slovakia, focused on schooling, social and educational work of social pedagogue, was at the international professional seminar *“Sociálny pedagóg v škole”* (Social Pedagogue in School). It has laid the foundations of exchange of theoretical, methodical and practical knowledge and skills in school work of social pedagogues. It has also started a mutual cooperation of UMB's Faculty of Education, the only Slovak school workplace with Master study programme *“Social Pedagogy”*, with foreign university institutions and social pedagogues in practice.

On that account, *“Banská Bystrica School of Social Pedagogy”* is and will be focusing its theory, research and methodology on school socio-pedagogical work and social pedagogue's place in school. One of its dominant features is also primary and secondary prevention of socio-pathological phenomena. Even though this employment has already been legally well-established in Slovakia since 2008, there is still no professional standard: *social pedagogue* available, although even *“Banská Bystrica School of Social Pedagogy”* joined its preparation. We are also taking part in the creation of still lacking methodical materials. The first methodical handbook we offered to social pedagogues was *“Metodická príručka pre sociálnych pedagógov a koordinátorov prevencie pod názvom Preventívna sociálno-výchovná činnosť v škole”* (Methodical Handbook for Social Pedagogues and Coordinators of Prevention Called Preventive Socio-Upbringing Activity in School, 2013), processed under the guidance of author Hroncová, J. – Emmerová, I. et al. These authors also created and developed the project for the updating the training and education for school social pedagogues' career progression or advancement, accredited by Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of Slovak Republic at the beginning of 2016.

Every year we present the results of “*Banská Bystrica School of Social Pedagogy*” at the international conferences *Socialia*. We also present them at the “*Sociálna pedagogika v strednej Európe*” (Social Pedagogy in Central Europe) conferences, organized by Interdisciplinary Studies Institute (IMS) in Brno. UMB’s Department of Pedagogy is a traditional cosponsor of the aforementioned conferences and annually publishes “*Zborník vedeckovýskumných prác Katedry pedagogiky*” (Anthology on Scientific Works of Pedagogy Department, J. Hroncová and I. Emmerová as editors), presenting results of the researched projects. This anthology was for the first time published in 2005.

The results of socio-pedagogical research and theory are published in the following journals, too: *The New Educational Review*, *Pedagogická orientace* (Pedagogic Orientation), *Sociálna prevencia* (Social Prevention), *Prevencia* (Prevention), *Mládež a spoločnosť* (Youth and Society), *Vychovávateľ* (Educator), and in other specialized professional journals.

“*Banská Bystrica School of Social Pedagogy*” is a co-worker of the university institutions in Slovakia and abroad, e.g. in Czech Republic and Poland, where the universities are preparing social pedagogues and work with theoretical and methodological problems of social pedagogy.

## Conclusion

“*Banská Bystrica School of Social Pedagogy*” is a successor of “*Balážova School of Social Pedagogy*”. Its founder, leading representative and author of this paper, was among the first internal scientific aspirants of prof. O. Baláž, the creator of Slovak social pedagogy established in 1970s at the Experimental Pedagogy Institute SAV in Bratislava.

Theoretical, scientific, research, publishing and pedagogical activities of “*Banská Bystrica School of Social Pedagogy*” representatives have made a great contribution to the overall development of Slovak social pedagogy. “*Banská Bystrica School of Social Pedagogy*” is a workplace looking at social pedagogy from pedagogical, scientific and publishing point of view. Its work was also awarded during the complex accreditation by The Accreditation Commission of Slovak Republic, which said that “the workplace has demonstrated international excellence in their given field”. Although social pedagogy hasn’t had a long history in Slovakia, we can say that at the present it is a rather developed branch. Unfortunately, institutionally and personally it has a weak university representation. However, since its creation, it’s been intensively developing mostly thanks to national and international cooperation.

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## PREVENTIVE AND SOCIO-EDUCATIONAL WORK OF SOCIAL PEDAGOGUES IN PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN THE SLOVAKIA

**Ingrid Emmerová**

### **Abstract**

The study deals with the issue of preventive and socio-educational work of social pedagogues in schools in the Slovak republic. The current situation raises the social need for increased effectiveness of prevention and its professionalization in schools. It is therefore necessary to carry out socio-educational preventive activities in contemporary schools, where the school's social educator's plays an important role. The aim of the study was analyses legislative possibilities and actual activities of social pedagogues in schools in Slovakia.

### **Keywords**

prevention, socio-educational work, social pedagogue, school social pedagogue

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In recent decades, a number of major social changes occurred in the Slovak Republic, which has been reflected in human behaviour. We have opened up, not only to the world, but also to the world of socio-pathological phenomena. As a result of socio-economic development, there is an increase in negative social phenomena, from minor behavioural problems to severe socio-pathological phenomena. The spectrum of socio-pathological phenomena is extensive and endangers pupils from primary and secondary schools. The increase in behavioural problems and risks among children and youth is also reflected in the daily work of teachers in primary and secondary schools. The first problems are beginning to emerge and manifest in pupils of earlier age. Typical features of their behaviour are a lack of empathy, increased aggression, a lack of self-control, selfishness, the rise of consumerism and demands for immediate compliance with their wishes. School, primarily primary school, has an important role as it is attended by the entire population at the age of 6 and over, with a few rare exceptions. The school fulfils a number

of functions and it is dominant educational and socialization agent. It is therefore necessary to carry out socio-educational preventive activities in contemporary schools (Janiš, Jr. & Skopalová, 2017), where the school's social educator's plays an important role.

Work of social pedagogues in schools in the Slovak Republic is already legislatively approved. According to law Act No. 245/2008 Coll., on Upbringing and Education, in article 130 included **social pedagogue** to other components of the system of educational consultancy and prevention and Act No. 317/2009 Coll., on Pedagogical Staff and Specialists incorporated it into the category of professional staff. As stated in article 24: "Social pedagogue carries out professional activities within the framework of prevention, intervention and the provision of consultancy particularly for children and pupils endangered by socio-pathological phenomena, coming from socially disadvantaged background, drug addicts or otherwise disadvantaged children and pupils, their legal representatives and teaching staff of schools and school facilities. The Social pedagogue fulfils the role of social education, the promotion of pro-social, ethical behaviour, socio-pedagogic diagnostics of background and relationships, socio-pedagogic consulting, prevention of socio-pathological phenomena and behavioural re-education. He/she performs expert and educational activities." Thus, the social pedagogue is an expert, who should implement prevention, intervention and consulting and should intensively work with pupils from socially disadvantaged background or otherwise disadvantaged or endangered pupils. "Numerous tasks consequently emerge for social work and social pedagogy in the school context." (Heimgartner & Sting, 2013)

Based on my own research as well as analyses of activities of social pedagogues working in primary and secondary schools (social pedagogues no longer work in schools in Banská Bystrica, Lučenec, Trenčín et al.), the basic activities of social pedagogue in the school environment in compliance with valid legislation should be based on:

- implementing primary prevention of the socio-pathological phenomena in schools, where behavioural problems occur, and in implementing the secondary prevention,
- in active participation in the solution of behavioural problems among pupils,
- he/she should pay a special attention to pupils coming from socially disadvantaged background and actively work with them,
- cooperation with parents,
- social consulting,
- cooperation with experts,
- the field of mediation at conflicts.

**Implementation of socio-pathological phenomena prevention** may be considered to be the dominant field of socio-educational activity of social pedagogue in school. Professional experts (teachers, psychologists, helping professionals) report a rapid increase in behavioural problems. Such behaviour of children and youth is increasingly more daring and unfortunately more brutal. For that reason, there is a growing need for effective prevention, especially primary, and as such behaviour is widespread, as well as a need for solutions of the secondary prevention, in which school plays one of the most

important roles. Prevention of socio-pathological phenomena must be systematically implemented on a professional level. Also Blašítková, Skopalová and Zelinka (2015, p. 18) stress the necessity of school primary prevention. Within this context, it is necessary to specially emphasize the social pedagogue in schools as he/she has professional knowledge for the implementation of not only primary, but also secondary prevention as well as other socio-educational work. At present, the core responsibility for the implementation of prevention in Slovak schools is in hands of prevention coordinators. It refers to teachers, mostly full-time, who are not paid for performance of these duties and often do not have the required education. However, the increase of socio-pathological phenomena in children and youth requires the professionalization of prevention already in the school environment, where the social pedagogues, are professionally skilled for this activity from the time of university studies.

Another field of work of social pedagogue is **to deal with the behavioural problems of pupils** in primary and secondary schools. The thing is, that a versatile spectrum of unsuitable, problematic behaviour does not have to be classified into a group of behavioural disorders or socio-pathological phenomena. This includes: thefts, property damage and vandalism, delinquency (when a pupil comes into conflict with the law), aggression and bullying, truancy, running away and vagrancy, lies and cheating, the use of legal or illegal drugs, inadequate use of computers, internet or cell phone and other potential sources of non-substance addictions, sexual high-risk behaviour and others.

The current situation of the problem of the behavioural problems and risks among children and adolescents may be presented based on the results of objective researches, for example aggressive behaviour (Kušević & Melša, 2017; Valois, Zullig, & Revels, 2017; von Grundherr, Geisler, Stoiber, & Schäfer, 2017), new negative phenomena – cyber bullying, sexting (Dulovics & Kamenská, 2017; Kerstens & Veenstra, 2015; Tomczyk & Kopecký, 2016). In the current school practice, rare is not even aggressive behaviour of pupils towards teachers, which fact has been pointed out by several authors (Csémy, Hrachovinová, Starostová, & Čáp, 2014; Espelage et al., 2013; Garrett, 2014; Kopecký & Szotkowski, 2017 and others).

There are effective methods and approaches sought after to adequately address the behavioural problems. Some methods of intervention are only suitable for certain problems or behaviour disorders, for certain school environments or certain kinds of teachers and pupils (e.g. regarding the age of the pupils). Professional competence and practical experience of the teachers, the social pedagogue or school psychologist are decisive when selecting strategies. The Social pedagogue as a helping professional is qualified to work with pupils and their behavioural problems by means of re-education and re-socialization activities.

In the field of socio-educational care in school, it is necessary to pay adequate attention to **pupils coming from socially disadvantaged background** and to actively work with them. According to the legislation in force, social pedagogue often performs field socio-educational work too. The Social pedagogue should pay special attention to Roma pupils coming from the families which do not accept commonly established social

norms and do not provide adequate conditions for the development of their children. At present, despite the school institutions' efforts to actively involve parents in school life as often as possible, there still persists a number of barriers and prejudices in relation to family and school, especially in the Roma families. Also collaboration with the family from the segregate Roma settlements is especially problematic. Janiš, Jr. and Kolaříková (2015, p. 89) emphasize this fact too. Collaboration between schools and families is one of the crucial area's of socialization of a child. As Kopčanová (2014, p. 29) states, from the attributes of the failures of Roma children in school, it is evident, that parents' attitude to education is essential. If the genuine cooperation between parents and school is established, the positive results are being developed in that, there is greater trust between school and family. Parents and family work together as a team to create a positive experience for students learning and the pupils enjoy the work as a result of the adults' cooperative teams.

At present, the improvement of **collaboration and interconnection of school and the family** in general, and particularly in the field of prevention of socio-pathological phenomena, is becoming an important requirement. This requirement is necessary when solving behavioural problems of a pupil. Also, collaboration with the family of the pupils coming from socially disadvantaged background is especially urgent. Good collaboration with parents supports the effectiveness of the teacher's work and the work of other experts with pupil. Collaboration should be based on cooperation and effective communication. Mutual acceptance, respect and tolerance should be a part of relationship. School and the family should work together in various forms. Individual forms of collaboration include invitation of parents to schools, visits to the families, individual conversation, pupil's record book and other forms of written correspondence. Collective forms of collaboration include parent teacher association (the most widespread collective form of collaboration of school and family), open days, discussions and other activities organized by the school.

There are various ideas of teachers and parents, often considerably different, teachers and parents in division of powers and responsibilities for pupils' upbringing. Obstacles relevant cooperation exists not only on the parents' side, but also on the teachers' side. The problem of cooperation between school and family has unrealistic expectations of parents from the school perspective and vice versa. There are some examples of unrealistic expectations in terms of prevention which may be given. For example, the school sees prevention in this field of care alone and parents do not have to deal with it (on the parents' side), or parents can themselves even without expert assistance in time identify and handle problems with substance abuse with their child and prevent self-sufficiently. (unrealistic expectations on the part of the parents).

Cooperation between the school and family always depends on the cooperation of a particular teacher with a particular parent. School willingness for creating suitable conditions for cooperation also has an important position. School social pedagogue could contribute to the improvement of this situation, too. As Blašíková (2016, p. 8) states, most of the primary schools with social pedagogue in Czech Republic, have higher



percentage of Roma pupils. Cooperation with family coming from socially disadvantaged background is challenging, which has been confirmed also by findings of the State School Inspection. Parents concentrate their duties only to care about material provision for their children and are less concerned with their upbringing and education results, compulsory school attendance or assistance in home preparation classes for school.

A good relationship between family and school may be accomplished by:

- Sending literature to the families, which includes curriculum plan and the contact person from the school staff.
- Providing more extensive guides describing school traditions, opportunities for parental participation in the school and so on.
- Performance of open days.
- Communication of parent-teacher meetings and home visits.
- Engaging parents in teaching and counselling – as voluntary school co-workers.
- Establishment of consulting centres for parents.
- Informal social meetings.
- Active work of social pedagogue with the family of pupil.

Social pedagogue working at primary or secondary schools can provide **social consulting** for pupils, parents, teachers and educators. In addition to assistance, he/she is authorized to provide contacts of other experts from the helping professions field. Social pedagogue provides socio-pedagogical consulting for pupils, teachers and parents. Also, consulting for pupil with a problem is especially helpful. School social pedagogues with experience point out the fact that they are the people, who listen to pupils and to whom those pupils can confide.

Another field of his work is **the cooperation with experts**, mainly in the prevention and solution of behavioural problems of pupils. Solving behavioural problems of pupils is difficult and lengthy. It requires considerable patience and expertise. Various facilities and institutions provide help to school and family when solving behavioural problems. Schools, when preventing and solving behavioural problems, collaborate with several specialists, experts, institutions and suchlike. Schools often collaborate with facilities of educational consulting and prevention. Also, collaboration between schools and the Slovak Police Force is beneficial. Such a collaboration is chiefly organised by the work of policemen who are in the field of prevention. Prevention but particularly in the resolution of behavioural problems, schools collaborate with the Office of Labour, Social Affairs and Family, especially with the Department of Socio-legal Protection and Guardianship. The Social pedagogues in schools should be the one who are capable of giving advice to teachers or parents of pupil, with whatever problem and when needs to turn to these experts.

Social pedagogues are mediators at school, that is, they are a neutral person, who can help conflicting parties to negotiate a settlement of the dispute in the school environment.

According to empirical findings of Hroncová (2017, p. 24), social pedagogues working in schools, appreciate the fact that they can pay special attention mainly to problematic pupils and to pupils coming from socially disadvantaged background. In this regard,

they help not only these pupils, but also their parents and the school itself and especially teachers who can implement the undisturbed pedagogic-educational process.

## Conclusion

Social pedagogue as a helping professional – not a teacher, is helpful in many areas in the school, he/she helps pupils, teachers and parents as well. The work of a social pedagogue in school is especially beneficial for pupils with behavioural problems and for pupils coming from socially disadvantaged background because socio-educational work makes the process of socialisation easier.

School practice confirms the rationale function of school social pedagogue, which among other things enables the teachers to perform better upbringing and an educational process of higher quality. Among the positives of the work of school social pedagogues are: reduction in truancy, decreased number of aggressive behaviour by pupils, ease of communication with professional organizations, institutions and offices for director, improvement of cooperation with parents and other.

It would be desirable to create a place of a social pedagogue in each fully-organized primary and secondary schools as he/she has professional qualifications for the implementation of primary and secondary prevention as well as other socio-educational work. The social pedagogue knows the risk and protective factors of the optimal development of children and youth and he/she should influence personal development of pupils and develop their social skills.

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# AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOUR AND BULLYING AS MOST FREQUENT EDUCATIONAL PROBLEMS AT SCHOOLS AND POSSIBILITIES OF PREVENTION

**Katarína Cimprichová Gežová**

## **Abstract**

At primary and also secondary schools we are facing more and more often psychological and physical attacks on pupils and teachers. It includes various insults, fights among pupils, ridicule, destruction of school property or personal objects of pupils and teachers. The behaviour of such individuals is influenced by several factors: negative family environment, inadequate spending of leisure time, influence of peer groups and influence of media – television, Internet. Children often witness aggressive behaviour in their families and consider it a natural part of life and they often adopt the incorrect behavioural patterns of their parents. The behaviour of individuals is also influenced by changes that have taken place in our society over the last decades (unemployment, rising divorce rate, criminality, drug addiction and other socio-pathological phenomena). The rising brutality and lower age of attackers and aggressors is an alarming fact for our society. That is the reason why various disciplines such as pedagogy, psychology, sociology, criminology and others, deal with these issues. Our goal is to point out the aggressive behaviour, bullying and prevention of these socio-pathological phenomena by pupils at schools.

## **Keywords**

aggressive behaviour, bullying, educational problems, school, prevention

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## **Introduction**

The problems of aggressive behaviour and bullying are nowadays very topical and we can say that they belong to the most frequent educational problems at schools. The causes of emergence of these educational difficulties can be found, on the one hand, in

the economic and material family situation, because the living standards are constantly rising which causes the inability of a family to secure the basic needs of its members, lack of interest towards the upbringing of children, lack of free time spent with children that are often consequently raised "by the street". Such problematic behaviour and consequent educational problems endanger mainly children from socially disadvantaged backgrounds. We can definitely claim that children's behaviour depends in the first place on the education in the family and subsequently in schools. Family is the basis and the school should build on it. If children do not have this necessary basis, it often comes to problems. The fact that there is no society-wide system of prevention in Slovakia, also contributes to the emergence of these problems. Prevention in a school environment should work against the increase in problematic behaviour of pupils, educational problems, emergence of aggressive behaviour and bullying. Aggressiveness and bullying give rise to tension, conflicts and a negative atmosphere in a social group or classroom. The term aggressive behaviour has become relatively often used in our society, be it the aggressive behaviour of individuals or of the whole group. According to Erkert (2004, p. 7) "aggressiveness is a spontaneous characteristic of a person that serve as means of survival in unfavourable and life-threatening situations. When uncontrolled, it can show up in the form of instinctive aggressive behaviour. Long-term repetition develops into a form of a stabilized behavioural pattern. In this case, it loses the necessary positive function in social context. In the area of pedagogy, outbursts of anger that are aimed at other people or at one's own person or things are classified as "aggressiveness". Yelling, threats, beating, biting, spitting, scratching, kicking are examples of children's reactions to common impulses. This uncontrolled behaviour raises a certain fear especially by younger, weaker and unassertive individuals that are directly or indirectly exposed to it." This kind of behaviour has several forms. It occurs mostly as physical and psychological abuse, violent acts, blackmailing, destroying someone's own or somebody else's property. Aggressiveness of children and young people in a school environment towards themselves or even teachers is increasing. Through such behaviour it comes to restriction and violation of human rights that influence the whole society and so the overall personality development of individuals. According to Emmerová (2011) it is a real or symbolic restriction and violation of rights of other people, destruction and damage. Aggressive behaviour is complex, multicausal and can definitely be classified as a socio-pathological phenomenon. Nowadays, the term aggressiveness is understood as aggressiveness, hostility or belligerence in acting towards a certain object. It is also understood as an attack on hindrance – person or object, on the way to satisfy one's needs (Janderková, 2010). Lovaš (2010) distinguishes between aggressiveness and aggression, in that aggressiveness does not necessarily manifest itself in the behaviour and aggression is an act that is carried out or behaviour that leads to hurting.

Bullying is an inseparable part of aggressiveness. It is a non-traditional asymmetric type of aggression and we can consider it specific manifestation of aggression that can have various causes, forms and psychological backgrounds. Bullying is a serious problem

that attracts the attention of experts and of a non-professional public. It occurs in different places, in families, at schools, in school and after-school facilities, at work etc. Its occurrence at schools is serious because it results in many negative phenomena, such as bad school results, truancy, aggressiveness, thefts, suicide and many others. The French term for bullying is "chicane" which means malicious intentionally repeated humiliation, victimization, bothering, abuse and attack of another person. It is a form of pathological behaviour with elements of aggression and manipulation in that it comes to disproportion of powers between the aggressor and the victim. Bullying is not a relation between individuals but a consequence of disturbance of relationships in a group (Tinka, 2010). Emmerová (2013) classifies bullying at schools as pathological behaviour which is an extreme form of aggressive behaviour. It occurs mostly during the breaks, in places without the supervision of a pedagogue, on toilets and in changing rooms. It can also occur on the way to school or home. Legally, bullying is considered a violent crime committed by a child, an adolescent or an adult. In the case of an underage person, the bullying can be classified as juvenile delinquency (Šimegová, 2007).

### **Aggressiveness and bullying as behavioural disorders in a school environment**

People living in society must follow certain rules that have their defined sphere of activity. They complement, mingle, determine one another and have their hierarchy. In case one of them is disturbed, it comes to a chain reaction and launching of many disorders (Kunák, 2007, p. 9–10). Behavioural disorders and the cause of emergence thereof are ambiguous. Some experts speak about different influences that participate in the emergence of behavioural disorders. In the international classification (Kariková, 2001, p. 86) the behavioural disorders are described as repeated and permanent patterns of dissocial, aggressive and defiant behaviour in that the individual breaks age-appropriate social norms and expectations (e.g. lies, fights, thefts, running away from home, cruelty to animals and people, truancy and others). We understand the term behavioural disorder as "such individual's manifestations that are deviating from ordinary behaviour of given age and socio-cultural group". Kariková (2001, p. 87) distinguishes two basic forms of psychosocial problems:

1. *Passive form* – various escape reactions such as truancy, absences, avoiding of company, up to the extreme form – suicide. We speak of negative breaking of social norms (lies, escapes, thefts, truancy) and these are usually described as less serious, although they can lead to committing crimes.
2. *Aggressive form* – it manifests itself in committing crimes and delinquency (bullying, vandalism, attacks etc.). Aggressive behaviour breaks and restricts the rights of other people; therefore we describe these as serious behavioural disorders that can be connected with committing crimes.

According to Miňhová and Mrázová (1989, p. 59–60) we distinguish three basic forms of problematic behaviour:

1. dissocial behaviour,
2. asocial behaviour,
3. antisocial behaviour.

They consider *dissocial behaviour* the least socially serious (defective) and it is often connected with age peculiarities (pubescent negativism). They are short-term excesses in behaviour of individuals. The authors consider *asocial behaviour* socially more serious but by this form of behaviour it does not come to disturbance of social values. The individual harms mainly himself (truancy, alcoholism, drug addiction, self-harm etc.). Antisocial behaviour means that the individual harms the society intentionally with the purpose to hurt. Legally, it includes offences, misdemeanours and crimes characterized by various degrees of aggressiveness and are aimed against property, people and social values in general (assault and battery, theft, vandalism, rape, murder). According to Emmerová (2011, p. 26) there are various causes of emergence of problematic behaviour and these can generally be divided into internal and external causes. Internal causes include inherited predispositions, psychological factors etc. The external factors include family environment, peers, mass media, school and social relationships in a classroom. Nowadays, there are three basic theories that explain the arising and development of aggression and aggressive behaviour by people:

1. *Theory of inherited inclination* – it includes two subtheories – psychoanalytic and ethological theory. Both of them claim that there is an instinctive basis and instinctive energy in aggression that is natural for all living beings. Ethologists assume that there are specific triggers of aggression that are inherited.
2. *Reactive theory* – describes aggression as a response to frustration, anxiety, hindrances to achieve a goal, as response to a state of danger or emergency. It emphasizes external factors.
3. *Theory of social learning* – points out the aggression as a certain learned form of social behaviour (influence of education, social learning and culture) (Hroncová, Emmerová, & Hronec, 2014, p. 120).

Határ (2007, p. 32–33) describes five perspectives of children's and adolescent aggression as defined by German pedagogue M. Winkel:

1. *aggression as a form of a game* – child's aim is to test the range of his strength,
2. *aggression as a defence mechanism* – the victims defend themselves against the attacker,
3. *aggression as a reaction of a frustrated individual* – child looks for a substitution for his loss/defeat via weaker individuals, it is a certain inferiority complex of the aggressor,
4. *aggression as a form of curiosity* – child wants to find out where his limits are,
5. *aggression as an inappropriate form of desire for love* – child tries to catch the attention through negative behaviour.



There are different reasons why children and young people try to solve their conflicts via aggressive behaviour. Aggressive behaviour is, apart from watching media violence, also influenced by physical and mental neglect that can show in all social strata. But it would be too simple to attach the undesirable ways of children's behaviour only to family background. First of all, we should turn our attention to the society that, on the one hand, complains about rising aggressiveness but on the other hand, is less active in building playgrounds and supporting of leisure activities. Mainly children growing up in towns and cities can find fewer green areas that would enable undisturbed and safe outside games and therefore they spend a lot of time closed inside their flats. It is only a matter of time when the child's inner emptiness would grow so big that first signs of noticeable inappropriate behaviour will occur (Erkert, 2004, p. 8–9).

Martínek (2015) defines following types of aggression typical for a school environment:

- *physical, active direct* – beating and humiliation of a victim, physical strength, dominance of the attacker over the victim,
- *physical, active indirect* – hiring another person to hurt the victim. The original aggressor does not participate in the aggression, he thinks of ways of hurting and then watches it,
- *physical, passive direct* – the aggressor keeps the victim physically from achieving the goal (intentional destruction of assigned tasks and teaching aids),
- *physical, passive, indirect* – the aggressor refuses to help or favour the victim (assistance to the disabled),
- *verbal, active direct* – insults, verbal humiliation, vulgarisms. The individuals find their behaviour normal,
- *verbal, active indirect* – intentional incorrect prompting in the class, mocking and slandering that harms others,
- *verbal, passive direct* – refusal to respond to victim's questions, greetings, the victim seems not to exist,
- *verbal, passive indirect* – not to protect and defend unfairly criticized and punished individuals.

Specific form of aggressive behaviour often occurring in a school environment is bullying. The document Methodological Guidance of Ministry of Education of Slovak Republic No. 7/2006-R for prevention and solving of pupils' bullying at schools and school facilities defines the nature of bullying as a long-term, repeated and intentional harming with the goal to gain superiority. Its characteristic feature is power disproportion in that the victim is by some reason defenceless. According to Emmerová (2014, p. 121) bullying is any pupils' behaviour with the goal to hurt other pupil or pupils or endangering or intimidation of them. It is a targeted and repeated violence towards pupils that are not able to defend themselves. Bullying occurs in various forms. It occurs mostly during the breaks, on toilets and in changing rooms or in places without the supervision of a pedagogue. It can also occur on the way to school or home. According to the Methodical Guidance of Ministry

of Education of Slovak Republic No. 7/2006-R bullying occurs in a direct way in the form of physical attacks, offensive nicknames, abuse names, ridicule, tough commands to do something against the victim's own will, stealing of things etc.

Tóthová-Šimčáková (2006, p. 14) speaks about following basic characteristics of bullying:

1. clear intention to hurt somebody else (physically, mentally) – beating, pushing, stealing of money and things, hiding and destruction of things, ridicule, scolding, exclusion from the company of others etc.,
2. the attacker can be one child or a group of children (asymmetric aggression),
3. incidents are repeated (one-time action is not considered bullying),
4. power disproportion between the attacker and the victim – dominance or victim's defencelessness can be real or apparent, in the area of physical power or aggressiveness, in the personal individual's power or in the dominance of a group.

There are two kinds of participants in bullying (aggressor, victim). Aggressor is the one who bullies. It is usually a boy but also girl aggressors occur. Aggressors are usually physically strong individuals but it happens that the lack of physical power is compensated by intelligence. An excessive desire for power and strong effort to dominate are typical for aggressors, they are self-confident and not anxious. The victim is a child that is the target of bullying. It can be any child but it is mostly an individual that is lonely, insecure, quiet, with low self-confidence, with problems with self-assertiveness, mostly new in the group. An aggressor often chooses children with a mental or physical handicap, markedly different children suffering e.g. from obesity, clumsiness. Since bullying is one of the most serious negative phenomena at schools it is important to prevent it and to apply effective prevention, in which school plays an important role. Bullying is not only the issue of the aggressor and the victim, it also concerns the witnesses of bullying who can play a positive but also a negative role. Alarming is the fact that the age of an aggressor decreases, the number of bullying increases and the brutality has also a growing tendency (Hroncová, Emmerová, & Hronec, 2014, p. 123–124).

Hroncová (2004, p. 134) defines five development stages of bullying:

1. birth of ostracism,
2. physical aggression and intensification of manipulation,
3. creation of a core,
4. the majority accepts the norms of the aggressors,
5. totalism or perfect bullying.

*Birth of ostracism* – if we do not work purposefully with relationships in a group, it comes to this situation. Educationalists, who do not know the composition of a group and are not interested in the relationships between the members of the group, are not able to find out which members of the group are popular and which ones are at the margins of the group. They are not able to notice the problems in time, intervene and rectify

the situation. Everybody who gets to the margins of a group suffers from milder forms of psychological violence. The group does not accept them. The others make fun of them at their expenses. They are often individuals that are different. We call this stage ostracism. It is an early form of bullying and contains the risk of a negative development. *Physical aggression and intensification of manipulation* – the most vulnerable members of a group serve in hard situations as a vent for the anger of others. In this stage it comes to a change, milder physical aggression appears and it comes to an intensification of manipulation. The further development depends on the extent of positive orientation of the group and on the pupils' attitude to bullying. If there are friendly relationships between the members, positive moral values prevail and the members have negative attitude to violence, it is assumed that the attempts to bully will be thwarted.

*Creation of a core* – if the individuals with a strong character do not stand up for the weaker pupils and so do not stop the aggressors, the aggressors will create an aggressive core within the group. Then the members start to cooperate systematically and to develop different forms of bullying. Here comes the crucial moment when it is decided if the initial stage of bullying will develop into an advanced stage.

*Acceptance of aggressors' norms* – it is characteristic for this stage that the activity of the aggressors' core continues without disturbance because a strong positive subgroup was not created. The norms of aggressors are accepted by the majority of the group and they become unwritten rules. In this stage we can observe that also equable and decent pupils start to behave with cruelty and participate actively in bullying of other pupils.

*Totalism – perfect bullying* – it is the final stage when norms and rules of aggressors are accepted or respected by all the members of the group. It comes to exploitation. The group is divided into two parts: slave masters and slaves. The slave masters have the power. The proof of their power is that they can do what they want with the victims that are not able to defend themselves. In this stage all that is left of humanity is gone. The ideology of violence is adopted where there is no compassion shown in suffering or sense of guilt.

Bullying in a school environment leaves many negative consequences on its participants. According to Križo, Smiková and Turošíková (2014) they are as follows:

1. *Psychological consequences*: fear, mood and sleep disorders, feeling of exhaustion and consequent worsening of school results, sadness.
2. *Physical consequences*: complete exhaustion of organism leading to the rise of psychosomatic diseases (allergy, diabetes, asthma).
3. *Social consequences*: negative relation to school even aversion, truancy, worsened ability of common communication and of making and maintaining of social contacts.

### **Possibilities of prevention of aggressive behaviour and bullying**

With the growth of deviant forms of behaviour by pupils, from small thefts to more serious socio-pathological phenomena, the need for effective prevention is also growing;

it means primary prevention in the first place, but regarding the widespread occurrence of such behaviour, secondary prevention is also needed (Emmerová, 2011, p. 21).

*Primary prevention (universal, general)* concerns the general conditions of preventing the rise of socio-pathological phenomena. It is realised by family, after-school facilities, mass media and other institutions (Emmerová, 2011, p. 87–88). It is focused on the pupils that do not show problems with deviant behaviour, it serves for formation of values, healthy lifestyle and positive interpersonal relationships. The goal of prevention should be creation of such conditions that offer the children healthy physical, psychological and social development. Preventive programmes oriented on constructive conflict solving, dealing with difficult situations, development of social skills, also contribute to the primary prevention. (e.g. "Heart on Sleeve", "Oli's story" etc.) (Hroncová, Emmerová, & Hronec, 2014, p. 128–130).

*Secondary prevention (selective, directed)* is oriented on endangered groups. Its goal is to bring an individual back to the original state and to check him systematically because of the risk of repeated failure. Its realisation belongs to the scope of activity of psychological, medical, social and educational institutions (Emmerová, 2011, p. 87–88). Secondary prevention represents goal-directed work with children and young people and its essence is to prevent establishment of undesirable behaviour manifestations, remove the reasons that caused the inappropriate behaviour and catch the manifestations of this behaviour in its early stage (Hroncová, Emmerová, & Hronec, 2014, p. 128–130).

*Tertiary prevention (indicated)* is focused on preventing the worsening of the state and relapse of undesirable behaviour. It is a part of long-term social rehabilitation process and is carried out on a professional level via specialised staff of social rehabilitation facilities (Emmerová, 2011, p. 87–88). The goal of tertiary prevention is to prevent worsening of the state and relapse of undesirable behaviour. It includes therapeutic and group programmes, helplines etc. (Hroncová, Emmerová, & Hronec, 2014, p. 128–130). According to Ihnacík (2013, p. 8–21) aggression prevention at schools is realized as follows:

- social competences and the practice thereof from the position of psychologists, teachers, peer pupils in different spheres (coping with values and norms, healthy lifestyle in a school environment and in the whole society),
- trainings and courses of social competences with educational and cognitive elements in connection with extensive collective system of preparation for work, life and qualification improvement,
- adequate behaviour teaching techniques within social situations, respecting the development aspects of children, young people and techniques of mutual respect and acceptance in a school environment which represents highly effective means of aggression prevention at schools,
- by individuals and groups with violent and aggressive manifestations of behaviour in centres of pedagogical-psychological consultancy and prevention,
- the most effective forms include consultancy psychological services and with cooperation with parents and teachers also psychotherapeutical interventions,

- very important is the work of pedagogues and psychologists in the centres of pedagogical-psychological consultancy and prevention that work in terms of prevention with peer groups (pupils, students) oriented on healthy lifestyle and elimination of aggression through supervision,
- also the media contributes to a large extent to prevention of aggression which has, from the point of view of access of children and young people to information-communication technologies, often inappropriate influence,
- school is an institution that influences primarily, from the point of view of impact, the aggression and violent behaviour of children and young people. In the first stage of aggressiveness it can effectively influence the elimination of aggressiveness, its directing and change of behaviour.

Aggressive behaviour belongs to serious socio-pathological phenomena. Specialists point out the rapid increase of this problem in a school environment. Therefore it is necessary that the school participates in effective prevention of inappropriate behaviour. For effective prevention it is necessary:

- To analyse the occurrence of socio-pathological phenomena and focus primarily on preventing it (constant work of the class teacher, monitoring in a school environment etc.). Important in a school environment is also prognosis of occurrence and choice of the right forms and methods in the area of (primary, secondary) prevention.
- Effective prevention should clarify, explain and offer alternatives and not intimidate and command.
- Within the primary prevention, the systematic and goal-directed work that cannot be substituted by one-time activities, is also important.
- To use different forms of prevention: preventive programmes and projects, an educational process in subjects where the curriculum allows it (ethical education, social studies), using ICT, education in healthy lifestyle (Emmerová, 2010, p. 57).

Our attitude to aggressive behaviour of children and young people cannot be indifferent. Possibilities of prevention of aggressiveness are as follows:

1. *Information* – if pupils get necessary information (knowledge) about aggressiveness, they are able to understand this phenomenon and to deal with it by learning.
2. *Positive example* – children adopt behavioural patterns in their immediate environment (family, school).
3. *Appropriate education methods* – in family, at school and in a wider social environment.
4. *Affective learning* – methods that put the emphasis on emotions, knowledge, interpersonal relationships as a basis for strengthening and learning of behaviour.
5. *Self-control* – to learn to control aggressiveness and to use it in a right way (Kopčanová, 2004, p. 8).

Kariková (2001) presents these recommendations for pedagogues in case of bullying at schools:

1. The basic principle that must be valid for everybody without exception from the first school day is contained in the statement "We are a school where bullying and blackmailing is not tolerated". The whole educational influence of the school must be based on this statement.
2. Pupils and parents should be informed that bullying is a crime.
3. The school should create such conditions that the bullied pupils would not be afraid to confide in pedagogues.
4. To secure supervision in those places where bullying mostly occurs, e.g. toilets, changing rooms etc.

Ministry of Education of Slovak Republic made a Methodological Guidance No. 7/2006-R that is oriented on prevention and dealing with bullying of pupils at schools and in school facilities. Within effective prevention by the preparation and realization of whole-school-strategy, it recommends:

- to create a positive atmosphere at school,
- to create a close cooperation with pupils, between school staff, parents,
- to determine clearly the rules of behaviour in the school policy, including sanctions for breaking them, to keep written records about solving particular cases of bullying,
- to strengthen the pedagogical supervision during breaks and after school,
- to raise the awareness of pedagogical staff, to organize lectures with specialists in given field,
- to inform pedagogues, pupils and parents about what to do if they hear about a case of bullying,
- to provide the class teachers, prevention coordinators and guidance counselor with the education in the area of prevention of bullying,
- to cooperate with the people from centres of educational and psychological prevention,
- to define the reporting obligation for pedagogical and non-pedagogical staff in the school policy.

The primary prevention at schools is realized in different forms such as various preventive work projects. Their realization is focused on preventing the socio-pathological phenomena. The prevention of aggressiveness and bullying is oriented primarily on constructive solving of conflicts and on development of social skills, dealing with mental strain etc. It includes projects such as "Heart on a Sleeve", "Way to Emotional Maturity", "We Know That...", "Behave Normally", Peer Programme of Universal Prevention and other PEER programmes etc.

## Conclusion

Aggressive behaviour and bullying is nowadays a widespread socio-pathological phenomenon pointed to by teachers, parents but also the wide society. It occurs not only at schools between the pupils but also between pupils and teachers, friends, and what is startling also children towards their parents. The experts point out the seriousness and necessity of prevention of these phenomena because it is easier to prevent such problems than to solve often even a critical situation that has, in many cases, lifelong consequences. The best prevention is a positive and functioning family environment with positive emotional relationships between children and their parents in that children are raised by their parents and not "by the street". The school can, with good cooperation with parents, then build on these "good foundations" of right upbringing. According to Emmerová (2011) school belongs to important socialisation and educational factors. It is very important that the school carries out preventive activities focused on the area of awareness and actions of pupils which could help prevent the emergence and occurrence of problematic behaviour. The rising in such behaviour by pupils at primary and secondary schools requires an effective and permanent realization of prevention in schools in that it is mainly the primary prevention.

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# EMO SUBCULTURE IN THE CONTEXT OF DELIBERATE SELF-HARMING

**Eliška Janišová**

## **Abstract**

The article titled EMO subculture in the context of deliberate self-harming deals with serious risk behaviour particularly in pubescence and adolescence of contemporary children. It could be stated that the subject area of the article, or the topic of deliberate self-harming is generally a taboo, surrounded by some myths for the lay public. The relation of the subculture in question and of deliberate self-harming is surrounded by myths too. The article presents the data acquired by content analysis of selected discussion platforms grouping individuals claiming allegiance to the EMO subculture. The results are confronted with earlier implemented studies.

## **Keywords**

EMO, subculture, deliberate self-harming

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## **Introduction**

The connection of the EMO subculture and deliberate self-harming is an area perceived by the lay public, but also by the professional public through empirical studies – Černá and Šmahel (2009a); Černá and Šmahel (2009b); Kuška, Formánková and Kolářová (2010), etc. It can be stated already at the beginning that such connection has not been proved; and it has not been proved even in empirical studies of the above mentioned authors. But this article chose another method of acquisition of the necessary data (see below) than that used by Černá, Šmahel, Kuška, Formánková and Kolářová.

It is true that the EMO subculture can be subjectively perceived as a declining subculture, but the connection of the EMO subculture and deliberate self-harming persists.

## Deliberate self-harming

In the broadest meaning, we can view deliberate self-harming as everything by which the individual harms himself/herself or his/her health, both knowingly and unknowingly. The knowingness or unknowingness<sup>1</sup> of a specific action are determined by the knowledge on the risks resulting from it. In the absolutely broadest meaning, it could include stress, lack of sleep, etc., provided the individual can influence, regulate or manage such things. The definitions of deliberate self-harming describe the given behaviours usually as intentional, physical acts without the intention of dying. The definition by Walsh and Rosen (in Kriegellová, 2008, p. 18) can serve as an example; they define deliberate self-harming as *"an individual's behaviour by which he/she harms voluntarily and intentionally his/her own body tissues or body integrity, regardless of health risk or danger and without the intention of dying"*. This definition includes all attributes of deliberate self-harming. Herpertz (1995) extended the attributes by the repeating act; and in connection with Sutton (2007) who adds that deliberate self-harming is not aimed at sexual satisfaction or aesthetic decoration of the body (tattoo, scarification, piercing, etc.), we can get the concept of deliberate self-harming that constitutes the base for this article. The article draws on the definition by Walsh and Rosen (see above), completed by Sutton and Herpertz.

The literature written in Czech and the Czech authors do not describe the same behaviour by several different terms in this case; the concept of deliberate self-harming is set as *"záměrné sebepoškození"* and there are not many synonymous and equivalent terms, there are no confusions and conflicts of opinions about them.

On the contrary, the literature written in English faces another situation; there are several equivalent terms preferred by individual authors. This fact is partially described also by Herpertz (1995). The synonyms most frequently used for the Czech term *"záměrné sebepoškození"* are: *"Parasuicide"*, *"Self-mutilation"*, *"Self-harming"*, *"Self-injurious behaviour"*, *"Deliberate self-harm"* and other terms.

As the literature written in English has multiple concepts to term deliberate self-harming, the scientific sphere faces a lot of problems related to the results of statistical data on deliberate self-harming. Some authors use even the term *"Attempted suicide"*. The heterogeneous terminology leads to misrepresentation of information and to difficulties in distinguishing deliberate self-harming from suicidal behaviour (Kriegellová, 2008).

The above stated paraphrase can be interpreted as follows. If we focused on making a research entering key words in English, we would get distorted data, according to the preferred name, and such data would not give evidence of the actual number of expert

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<sup>1</sup> It is of course arguable whether we can view the actions of an individual, who harms himself/herself "somehow" but does not know it, as deliberate self-harming. I personally think that we can. But such facts are determined by the age and the environment in which the individual lives, or by the sociocultural environment, respectively. We can use the example of an individual who reads about a specific "diet" in an internet discussion and therefore leaves out some important foodstuffs. Thus he harms himself due to his unknowingness. The therapy under use of MMS and CDS (bleachers) can be another example.

articles, anthologies and monographs. The issue of self-harming is also dealt with by the World Health Organization (WHO) that, however, relates self-harming noticeably to suicide (WHO, 2015).

To conclude the initial part of the article, it can be stated that in the Czech context, the concept of deliberate self-harming is not understood and perceived with substantial differences. It is thus unanimously defined and unitedly termed – *záměrné sebepoškození* (deliberate self-harming). However, in foreign, primarily English speaking countries, the lack of unity of the basic terminology, actually the very designation brings some risks that were described above by the author.

### **Methods of deliberate self-harming**

Unlike the means of deliberate self-harming, the methods, or ways of deliberate self-harming can be grasped and defined more simply and more exactly. The author will not deal with the means as such, or she will not deal with them within a subchapter, respectively, particularly due to the fact that they are really countless. From different tools to own body to living nature.

*“As for the ways of self-harming, they most frequently include cut wounds on the skin, wrist, forearm, back of the hand, scratches, cutting of signs into the skin.”* This is how Fischer and Škoda define the ways of deliberate self-harming (2009, p. 84).

The content of the definition is poor and unidirectional. It refers to only one of the most frequent ways of self-harming, specifically cutting, which does not capture other self-harming methods, e.g. starvation, skin burning, biting, scalding, etc., that could help to identify more individuals suffering from self-harming. On the other hand, it captures exactly a lay idea of self-harming. The authors state that it is the most frequent method. That is confirmed also by the study made by Ross and Heath (2002, p. 73).

Kriegelová (2008) created a table including the most frequent methods of self-harming (see Table 1). She made the table based on studies by different authors (Hawton, Favezza, Sutton, Arnold), taking place in 1989, 1995, 1999, and 2002.

**Table 1 Most frequent methods of deliberate self-harming**

Original English terminology.
<i>Cutting, self-cutting, slashing.</i>
<i>Burning skin by physical means using heat, burning skin by chemical means using caustic liquids.</i>
<i>Scalding.</i>
<i>Scratching the skin.</i>
<i>Scraping/rubbing and cutting the skin, removing the top layer to make a sore.</i>
<i>Biting, gnawing at flesh.</i>
<i>Giting the inside of the mouth, making sores and regularly re-opening them.</i>
<i>Picking the skin.</i>
<i>Picking at wounds, interfering whit healing process.</i>

Original English terminology.
<i>Pulling hair out – including eyelashes and eyebrows (Trichotillomania).</i>
<i>Hitting themselves hard enough to cause bruises, black eyes, or broken bones.</i>
<i>Tying ligatures around the neck, arms or legs to restrict the flow of blood.</i>
<i>Ingesting small amounts of toxic substances or objects to cause discomfort and damage but with no intention to die.</i>
<i>Placement of sharp objects under the skin or in body orifices.</i>

Source: Janišová (2015)

It is evident that the frequency of individual methods of deliberate self-harming is not identical. That is confirmed by the study carried out by Ross and Heath (2002), as well as by other scientific studies.

Although initially, the self-harming individuals use multiple methods of self-harming, they proceed to prefer only one of them after an experimentation period (Favazza & Conterio, 1989).

**Motives of deliberate self-harming**

The subchapter focused on the motives of deliberate self-harming comes significantly closer to the purpose of the article. Unlike the definition of the concept of deliberate self-harming and of the methods of the issue in question, it can observe latent interconnection between the EMO subculture and deliberate self-harming.

There can be dozens, hundreds, even thousands of motives leading to deliberate self-harming; the list below shows that for example stress may be caused by “many” factors, similarly to the fact that discrimination as a motive may have different “motives” of the discriminating ones. All motives cannot be specified in a generalized way. The only, but utopian possibility would consist in making a study with exhaustive selection of all deliberately self-harming individuals.

*“Self-hate, serious stress, ventilation of anger and rage, purification, effort for relaxation and calming down, feelings of euphoria, transformation of mental pain into physical pain, survival strategy, negative feelings of own person, depression, being hospitalized, mental pain, disinterest of surrounding persons, suicidal ideas, rape, problems with strain management, effort for bringing inner feelings to the surface, discrimination, bullying, sexual abuse in childhood, sleeplessness, effort for capturing attention of the caretaker, revolt”* (Bywaters & Rolfe, 2002, p. 9). It is not a list of all motives leading to deliberate self-harming and of all functions of deliberate self-harming, identified by the above stated authors. The fragmentary selection made by the author of this article was not determined by any specific procedure.

Kriegelová (2008, p. 110) completes the list with *“deliberate self-harming as expression of membership in a group”*. As the author states, some groups, so called subcultures, consider deliberate self-harming a characteristic of allegiance to their subgroup. Therefore the individual starts self-harming deliberately, to demonstrate loyalty and to show everybody to which subculture he/she belongs.

The latter quote brings us to the very context of the EMO subculture and deliberate self-harming. In view of the lack of evidence of causality between both variables (see introduction, and more details below), even Kriegelová's statements cannot be interpreted as existence of some connection<sup>2</sup>.

Babáková (2003) states that there is a relation between individuals with behaviour disorders who were living for example in a custody centre and between deliberate self-harming. Thus it is not an impulsive character (see motives and functions by Bywaters & Rolfe, 2002) but group identification. Similarly, there can be so called "cutting epidemic", consisting in a behaviour of individuals who try to imitate somebody in order to "come under" an elite. Particularly girls show such behaviours. Babáková further states that such behaviours can be found in therapeutic or custody facilities.

Babáková (2003) and Kriegelová (2008) agree that an individual's manifestation of allegiance to a specific subculture can lead to deliberate self-harming. But such forms of deliberate self-harming (piercing, tattoo) do not constitute the topic of this article.

As individual motives and functions of deliberate self-harming are empirically supported, it can be concluded that no direct causality between the EMO subculture and deliberate self-harming was demonstrated. The above stated motives and functions explicitly show that there is probably no interconnection with any other subculture. The question is whether such fact was one of the variables in the given studies, how the respondents were selected, etc.<sup>3</sup>

## EMO as subculture

Subcultures could be defined as organized social groups with common interests or as specific groups related to a broader society or culture. They are, in essence, social groups trying to depart from the standards of the majority group, sharing values and standards that can be perceived by the mainstream society as an element of peculiarity, which is however understandable and natural to the subculture members (Herzog, Mitchell, & Soccio, 1999; Barker, in Smolík, 2010).

The concept of subculture is very closely related to the concept of subculture of youth. It is a *"type of subculture bound to specific behaviours of youth, to their tendency to value preferences, acceptance or rejection of specific standards, life style reflecting the conditions of life"* (Smolík, 2010, p. 35).

They are groups of young people, primarily teenagers, connected by an interest, problem, and thus differing from other social groups (Smolík, 2010).

<sup>2</sup> Kriegelová actually did not have it in mind.

<sup>3</sup> The author is aware that some subcultures are related to deliberate self-harming. As the text states, such behaviours include rather tattooing or some initiation rites, etc.

But the majority group identifies them better by external characteristics like clothing and general visual style that need not lead to instant classification in a specific subculture, as the lay public does not know or cannot denominate it. But it leads to clear classification in the group of "other" or even "strange" people.

As Smolík (2010, p. 232) states, we should not classify EMO among subcultures, as it is only about a life style putting emphasis on *"image and mental experience"*; that is, however, opposed by Šustr (2009, p. 18) who advocates the opinion that EMO belongs among subcultures. *"In the 1960s already, when the subcultures of youth were created, they became a symbol of generation identity of the youth of that time. The young person demonstrates his/her dissimilarity from, or sometimes even resistance against the majority population by his/her allegiance to a subculture."*

It must be stressed that at present, there is some departure from the use of the very concept of subculture. Nevertheless, the concept is still frequently used by expert public (Smolík, 2015).

EMO originated at the turn of the 1980s and 1990s in the punk scene of America. First it was underground, but with the arrival of bands like My Chemical Romance, Panic! At the Disco, 30 second to Mars and others, EMO actually became a worldwide phenomenon of teenagers. The very first mention about EMO was spread by the Rites of Spring band, in 1985, for the Flipside music journal; they stated there that their fans started calling themselves EMO, as they express and show emotions at their concerts. The EMO style originated as a substyle of punk rock that connects the above stated bands. They could be described as playing punk rock, but with EMO style look (Netolická, 2011; Smolík, 2010).

EMO is an abbreviation of "emotive music". "EMO" is based on different music genres, rock, rap, punk, indie, pop and heavy metal (Bailey, 2005).

*"The behaviors, attitudes, and values expressed through the music involve emotionally turbulent themes often associated with adolescence such as despair, nostalgia, heartbreak, hope, and self-loathing. [...] For many youth, Emo subculture facilitates identity formation, social interactions, and emotional involvement. It is a place where many adolescents share their experiences about the world and express their feelings about life through music."* (Bailey, 2005)

The EMO style is also linked with characteristic dressing style, although it need not be typical to all members claiming allegiance to the given subculture.

Typical features of the dressing style include dark straight hair (usually straightened with hair straightener). They dye their hair black, red or a combination of black with other atypical colours (pink, blue). Both genders often use glasses with thick dark rims. Both genders wear typical black nails, "styled" hair with a forelock, strips, dots, hand covers, badges of different bands and other accessories (Netolická, 2011).

Self-harming is often related to the EMO subculture, primarily thanks to "reading" of different blogs, discussion forums, etc. (Martin, 2006, in Černá & Šmahel, 2009b). Černá and Šmahel (2009b, p. 30) add that the subculture in question is perceived in that manner primarily by external observers.



## Research methodology

The data and information were acquired with the help of content analysis, specifically with the help of analysis of documents consisting of websites, discussions and similar platforms focused on the target group. According to Gavora (2006) and others, also photographs or videos presenting "results" or instructions of self-harming behaviour of members of the subculture in question could be used within the content analysis. But such analysis would certainly be more opportune and bring better results of specific persons were observed in specific situations and in broader context. So the results would have a more valid character and could be viewed as a case study, to be adequately completed with other related information.

The content analysis approached as an analysis of documents is based on Hendl's (2008) approach, although the understanding of the actual concept of content analysis can be quite diverse.

Hendl (2008) states that the content analysis should be used as the main research activity only if the necessary data cannot be acquired in another way.

Dvořáková (2010) adds that it is a relatively simple, but primarily objective research method.

It can be added that for some topics, it is *a priori* the only possible activity (for example topics from the area of the history of pedagogy). For deliberate self-harming of the given subculture, other techniques of data acquisition, primarily interview, are available. But the above stated content analysis was chosen considering the motives of self-harming in the EMO subculture, the age and the general intimacy of the topic. The author was aware of the potential risks resulting from the implementation of the interview; she admits self-critically, that in case of potential (but relatively probable) revelation of the respondent's "forbidden ground", she would not be able to respond adequately and to maintain the interview avoiding harming the respondent.

The analysis of the platforms makes use of open coding. To use axial and selective coding, the author has lack of information, or the results based on axial or selective coding could be misleading, respectively (due to their deficiency).

Thus the categories include:

- motives of deliberate self-harming,
- means of deliberate self-harming,
- methods of deliberate self-harming.

The categories of means of self-harming and methods of self-harming could also constitute one category, with implemented subcategories. Yet the author thinks that for better arrangement, they should be taken as independent categories.

The data do not include the participants' age; it often cannot be found out, but only estimated, which could lead to distortion of the data. At the same time, the data are

not sorted by genders. The participants' gender cannot always be determined by their nicknames, that may be unisex, or by the text. In some of them, the participant's gender can be distinguished by the style, written in masculine or feminine. As the distinguishing cannot be made at all contributions, the author decided not to sort the acquired data by the two above stated criteria.

### Research result

Based on the methodological aspect of the research, described above, this part of the article presents the results and data acquired by the author.

The discussion platforms were chosen to minimize potential involvement of disinterested individuals. The EMO subculture, primarily its "visual" style, is relatively frequently exposed to different jokes, mockery, humiliation, etc. Any discussions on articles about the EMO subculture e.g. on the idnes.cz or novinky.cz servers can serve as typical examples. The author would like to mention that the idnes.cz or novinky.cz servers can quite evidently not be understood as platforms for association of persons claiming membership or allegiance to the EMO subculture.

**Table 2 Motives leading to deliberate self-harming in EMO**

Motives leading to deliberate self-harming in EMO	
<b>Family (8)</b>	Alcohol in family 1
	Problems with father 1
	Unsatisfied needs (beating from parents; and when they stopped punishing, she resorted to self-harming, as a compensation for not being beaten by the parents) 1
	Not specified 5
<b>School (5)</b>	Poor marks 2
	Bullying 3
<b>Relations (9)</b>	Breakup with partner 1
	Problems with establishing relations 1
	Problems in relation 2
	Partner's death 2
	Unlucky in love 1
	Problems with friends 1
	Quarrels 1
<b>Mental problems (7)</b>	Aversion to life 1
	Mental pain 1
	Hate against oneself 2
	Depression 1
	Feeling of loneliness 1
	Social phobia 1

Motives leading to deliberate self-harming in EMO	
Other motives (11)	Does not remember the cause 3
	Self-harming as an EMO stylish trend 3
	Chasing away boredom 2
	Problems at work 1
	Cannot find job 1
	Motive not stated 1
TOTAL (40)	

Source: Janišová (2015)

Table 2 shows motives<sup>4</sup> leading to deliberate self-harming in EMO subculture. In the phase of the content analysis, the author of course found several contributions from the same individual. Multiple reasons were not stated in any case. But it can be declared almost certainly that there are individuals who have multiple motives for self-harming and stated only one that was the most significant to them. At the discussion level, the author thinks that the motive of *problems with establishing relations* can hide for example also problems in the area of sexual identity, appearance, etc.<sup>5</sup> The table primarily serves to present the ascertained data with the help of simple listing.

The motives included under the highlighted categories lead to one question. **Is the EMO subculture a “trigger” of deliberate self-harming, or is it only a place to justify deliberate self-harming?** If considering the individual motives (as well as the codes, in our case), all cases actually show relatively common motives, except for one individual who performs self-harming because it is a part of EMO. The motives can be commonly found in problems of children and youth. Individual problems can naturally lead to deliberate self-harming or even to suicide. As the individual categories are relatively balanced, no typical “pattern” (structure) playing the role of a determinative motive, triggering deliberate self-harming of the individual can be captured.

The balanced character of the individual categories is evidenced by statistical calculations. The test value of chi-squared test is 3.27, as compared to the critical value for 4 degrees of freedom, and the level of significance of 0.05 (9.488) is considerably lower. On this base, it can be stated that there are no statistically significant differences between individual motive categories. The balance can be accentuated by another statistical calculation from the area of data variability that can be used for our nominal (categorical) data. The equal distribution of individual motives in the categories is evidenced also by

<sup>4</sup> The author understands the motive as the “factor of activation and control of behaviours” (Nuttin, in Nakonečný, 2009, p. 246).

<sup>5</sup> No specifically case is meant, but the motive as such, at general level.

the calculation of nominal variance that, with the calculated value of 0.784, demonstrates almost equal representation of frequencies in individual categories<sup>6</sup>. Based on this information, potential intervention and prevention from the aspect of focus on specific motives is made more difficult. But the influence of the determinants affecting the individual's development – family, school, friends (relations) – became obvious. That is, ironically, good news for targeted specific and unspecific primary prevention, as these determinants can be “worked with” within preventive activities. The author considers it necessary to point out that the preceding two paragraphs are not in mutual discrepancy and do not contradict each other. We know where the prevention can be aimed and, primarily, that it can be predominantly focused on categories of motives that are influenceable; but we must focus on everything, and such fact leads not only to increasing financial costs (from the perspective of the amount and areas of primary-prevention programs), but also to increasing human costs and to generally lower efficiency. Finally, the author states with respect to the data ascertained and presented in Table 2, that it is possible to identify a relatively low number of categorized motives (but the individual codes are more dispersed), but the numerical balance does not allow to identify one specific or two significant categories of motives of deliberate self-harming in the EMO subculture.

Table 3 Motives of deliberate self-harming in EMO

Methods of deliberate self-harming in EMO
Cutting 31
Burning 2
Scratching 2
Skin perforating 3
Pulling out hairs 1
Self-beating 1
Intoxication 1
Pinching 1
Closing doors on fingers 1
<b>Total 43</b>

Source: Janišová (2015)

<sup>6</sup> The calculation of the necessary data is based on Janiš, K., Jr. (2014). *Úvod do problematiky výzkumu I – základy kvantitativního výzkumu: pro studenty oboru Sociální patologie a prevence [Introduction to the Issue of Research I – Basics of Quantitative Research: for Students of Social Pathology and Prevention]*. Opava: Faculty of Public Policies in Opava, Silesian University in Opava.

The frequencies found, recorded in Table 3 as simple list of methods of deliberate self-harming in EMO subculture give a considerably more stratified picture as the data in Table 2, and although the data are completed with statistical calculations here too, the conclusion can be quite successfully predicted.

The test value of chi-squared test is 8.39613<sup>7</sup>, as compared to the critical value for 1 degrees of freedom, and the level of significance of 0.05 (3.841) is considerably lower. If hypotheses were a part of the study, we would refuse the zero hypothesis related to this issue. So there are statistically significant differences between individual methods, and the method of cutting is most frequently used.

We could make the conclusion that cutting oneself is the typical method of deliberate self-harming in the EMO subculture.

But the ascertained methods allow us making one more conclusion. In general, invasive methods that usually cause disruption of integrity of human skin, thus leaving indelible traces (for some time), prevail. Such information is significant from the aspect of timely intervention and targeted prevention, for potential identification of individuals who cause deliberate self-harm to themselves. We can suppose within discussion again, that individuals with the above stated significant method of deliberate self-harming will hide and mask such activity. Therefore for example the teacher at the elementary or secondary school or the parent should notice that by the end of the school year when the temperatures sometimes exceed 30 °C, some individuals wear long trousers, sweaters, long-sleeved T-shirts, etc. Besides, a visible amount of scars is difficult to explain, unlike bruises that can be blamed on general clumsiness. Cutting wounds for example on the forearm obviously have no relevant justification. But the author must objectively state that the individuals from the EMO subculture can deliberately self-harm themselves on places of their body that can be hidden completely naturally (genitals, thighs, etc.).

It can be assumed that the potential visual identification of individuals of the EMO subculture who chose cutting themselves for deliberate self-harming may be the most essential information for practical use.

**Table 4 Means of deliberate self-harming in EMO**

Means of deliberate self-harming in EMO
Razor blade 17
Kitchen knife / knife 6
Scissors 8
Pins 2
Needle 3
Lighter 2

<sup>7</sup> The value was ascertained by using the characteristics of nominal (categorical) data, with respect to the arranged frequencies, and the method of cutting was compared to all other methods.

Means of deliberate self-harming in EMO
Matches 2
Glass fragment 3
Nail 1
Kitchen peeler 1
Medicines 1
Compass 1
Not specified 1
<b>Total 48</b>

Source: Janišová (2015)

The individual means listed in the table above copy almost completely the methods of deliberate self-harming described earlier in this subchapter. But it is evident that some methods do not have their typical means through which the individual, in our case the member of the EMO subculture, self-harms himself/herself. Such methods include self-beating, pulling out hairs, etc.

In context with the preceding table, the means of *medicines* seems relatively interesting. It would certainly be very important to identify the specific medicine, not so much with respect to its potential influence on the individual but rather with respect to its availability. That means, whether the medicine is or is not freely available. But as the dominant methods include methods not requiring special “self-harming” means, this information is virtually irrelevant, insignificant or marginal for prevention<sup>8</sup>.

From the perspective of evaluation of the data listed in Table 4 showing the frequencies of individual means, the author states that they correspond to the methods of deliberate self-harming that were ascertained at selected platforms associating discussing individuals claiming allegiance to the EMO subculture. The dominant means of deliberate self-harming of individuals from the EMO subculture include means disrupting the integrity of human body, or skin, respectively.

## Conclusion

It is evident that the ascertained results are limited in some aspects by the selected methodology. It cannot be determined whether the discussing individuals told the truth in their contributions; not all motives of the discussing individuals were identified. In spite of all limits, the ascertained data are in compliance with other studies (see introduction)

<sup>8</sup> Potential preventive measures in form of “repressive” regulations restricting free availability of some medicines and introducing increased monitoring of distribution and prescription of “on-prescription” medicines.

and offer a base for preparation, planning and implementation of primary prevention. The minimal preventive programs of elementary schools of the Czech Republic contain the topic of subcultures and deliberate self-harming rather exceptionally<sup>9</sup>. That does not mean that elementary schools do not deal with the issue, or they deal with it rather indirectly. We can see indirect prevention of deliberate self-harming in primary prevention aimed at offering information about help (Safety Hot Line, etc.). Similarly, the minimal preventive programs contain an area that can be called *paying attention to changes in pupils' behaviour*. The author believes that we do not need to name explicitly the risk behaviour in question within the implemented primary prevention. She takes as base the data and comments related to Tables 2, 3 and 4. She believes that, unfortunately, the primary prevention in relation to deliberate self-harming is insufficient. Finally, the author will mention one more relation between primary prevention and deliberate self-harming in the environment of elementary schools. She believes that the teachers can be significantly involved in reducing its incidence by building the relation between them and the pupils.

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<sup>9</sup> They contain virtually no connection of subcultures and deliberate self-harming.

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	<b>REPORT</b>	
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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE PROJECT, PROFESSIONAL PREPAREDNESS OF TEACHERS IN THE AREA OF RISK BEHAVIOUR AND ITS PREVENTION IN THE MORAVIAN-SILESIA REGION

**Jitka Skopalová**

The national strategy of primary prevention of risk behaviour for the period 2013–2018 within the competence of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports of the Czech Republic has set the major objective of the prevention system to minimize the genesis and reduce the level of risk behaviour in children and young people. The solution to the negative consequences of risk behaviours in children and the youth has to be supported by much effort not only on the part of the parents, but especially of the teachers. The effort of teachers and educators at schools and educational facilities is to stop the occurrence of risk behaviour in students, or try to minimize it. Conditions for success here are mainly formed by educated and qualified teachers who are equipped with the appropriate knowledge, skills, abilities and competences in general to address risk behaviour.

Thus motivated, the team of academic staff of the Institute of Pedagogical and Psychological Sciences or the Faculty of Public Policies of Silesian University in Opava prepared the project *Professional Preparedness of Teachers in the Area of Risk Behaviour and Its Prevention in the Moravian-Silesian Region*, which was supported by the grant subsidy Support of Science and Research in the Moravian-Silesian Region 2016 the findings of which is presented in two monographs: *Professional Preparedness of Teachers in the Area of Risk Behaviour and Its Prevention in the Moravian-Silesian Region I Pedagogical Aspects* and *Professional Preparedness of Teachers in the Area of Risk Behaviour and Its Prevention in the Moravian-Silesian Region II Psychological Aspects*. The listed publications are one of the outputs of the project.

The main objective of the research investigation was to determine the possible room for improvement in the professional readiness of teachers to address specific problematic situations in relation to instruction and education outside time of teaching at primary schools. The target group of the empirical research consisted of both 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> stage primary school teachers of selected schools and also the directors and school prevention methodologists of these schools. The survey sample consisted of 302 respondents: teachers from 12 different elementary schools in the Moravian-Silesian region, 12 directors and 11 school prevention methodologists of their primary schools.

In the publications which we presented to the professional public, educators and students in teacher training, we dealt with the theoretical basis which connects to the subject area.

In the text of the monograph Pedagogical Aspects I, we deal with the theoretical starting points of the issue of risk behaviour, prevention factors at primary school and also processes to solve educational problems. The following is an interpretation of statistical data obtained from the database of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports of the Czech Republic which are connected to the issues under examination, and also a description of the publicly available university materials for the facilitation of current training of teachers in the area of risk behaviour and its prevention at selected faculties. The below referred relates to the research presumption that future teachers are not trained comprehensively within the framework of pedagogic competence (not only at pedagogical faculties, but also at other faculties training teachers) in the area of prevention of risk behaviour in schools and educational facilities. We consider chapter four of the submitted text as the key chapter in which we present the results of semi-structured interviews with 12 of the school directors and with 11 school prevention methodologists. The text of this chapter introduces the procedures and forms of cooperation with other bodies in addressing specific undesirable phenomena in the classroom.

The monograph Psychological Aspects of II consists of three parts. The first one is devoted to the pupil, their characteristics in the period of childhood and adolescence and to possible problem behaviour. The second part is generally focused on the teachers, their competences, social skills, authority, but also on the climate of the school and the risk of the burnout syndrome. The third part of the theoretical part is specifically focused on the class teacher, classroom relations, classroom climate, teacher-student relationships, relationships among the pupils, and teacher-parent relationships. The last part includes the results of a questionnaire survey that was performed in the year 2017 with primary school teachers.

Despite the possible "regional context", we believe that the findings may be considered as relevant or at least as inspirational for the professional, and above all the educating public. We also believe that the findings can be used for the creation of an effective Minimum Preventive Programmes at individual schools, as they will be based on the same specific knowledge and need of pupils at these schools.

The publications mentioned may be inspiration to all who will want to deal with the topic in more detail.

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	<b>BOOK REVIEW</b>	
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## EVALUATION: TRUST, DIALOGUE, PROGRESSION

**Marcela Otavová**

Košťálová, H., & Straková, J. et al. (2008). *Hodnocení: důvěra, dialog, růst* [Evaluation: Trust, Dialogue, Progression]. Prague: SKAV.

Assessment helps pupils to achieve the best possible learning outcomes in their zone of proximal development. It is also a motivation factor for the development of lifelong learning skills. Evaluation in its formative function is not used to control and classify pupils but is a tool of learning. Using the principles of formative assessment in pedagogical practice leads to more effective learning of pupils and teachers. Based on an analysis of the learning process, through the evidence of learning, teachers plan their professional development and purposefully set goals for both pupils and themselves.

The book is intended for teachers and educators at all stages of their professional development, students, school managements, school policy makers and lecturers in further education. It provides both a theoretical framework of assessment and its role in pupils' progress and teachers' growth, as well as a methodical material for the formulation of criteria and the use of the portfolio as a self-assessment tool.

The topicality of the theme of formative assessment as a component of learning is evidenced by the fact that more and more primary school teachers evaluate their teaching process via analysis of evidence of pupils' learning. These teachers attach great importance to descriptive feedback during teaching and the effectiveness of involving self-evaluation and peer review in the evaluation process. Teachers who follow the principles of formative assessment plan and define their goals on the basis of ongoing evaluation and share their professional experience.

The author of the book, Hana Košťálová, has long been focused not only on the issue of school assessment in its formative function, but is also a long-term exponent of constructivist approaches in educational process and a RWCT program lecturer. In recent years, she has also been working as a program director of the Helping Schools Succeed project, initiated and funded by the Kellner Family Foundation. Project schools share a common vision and culture, and their educational activity is directed to the fulfillment of the credo, so that each pupil can learn fully and with joy. The topic discussed in the project is also the forms of professional support of teachers-practitioners.

This support takes a sophisticated shape in the project elementary schools. Its efficiency is confirmed by school evaluation documents, as well as the feedback of collaborating teachers. The aim of this book is to define the principles of formative assessment and the role of evaluation criteria that lead to the development of pupils' competences, subject and cross-curricular knowledge and skills when focusing on specific examples.

The first part of the study theoretically defines the content of the concept of feedback and provides practical examples. The authors of the book here also define the guides for good assessment.

The second most comprehensive part of the study focuses on the development and evaluation of competencies and presents examples of specific learning activities and the possibility of evaluating pupils' work. It points to the importance of active listening training and its use in assessment, self-assessment and peer review of pupils' work, such as presentations, projects, posters, etc. The emphasis is also on improving cooperative skills for RWCT (Reading and Writing for Critical Thinking) methods application.

The third part of the book aims to develop and evaluate cross-curricular knowledge and skills. The authors provide useful guidance on how to formulate evaluation criteria or their sets.

The fourth chapter contains a variety of material that can be an inspiration for teachers when creating their own assessment criteria sets in their subject or in the context of cross-curricular assessment.

The last part of the book defines the portfolio as a useful evaluation tool and points to the specifics of each of its types.

The issue of formative assessment in the Czech Republic is also dealt with, for example, by the members of the Expert Panel of Helping Schools Succeed project, psychologists J. Stang and Š. Miková, who are the authors of several studies on the topic of evaluation, J. Straková, J. Kargerová and foreign authors such as R. Stiggins, R. Tierney, H. Timperley and J. Hattie.

Formative assessments take place in a secure environment of trust and mutual respect. An example of using the principles of formative assessment is the dialogue between the teacher and the pupil when discussing the pupil's progress with the support of the evidence of learning collection.

"Evaluation and feedback are moments when the pupil and the teacher cooperate most closely. Together they explore what the student has done for his further learning. They reflect and analyze their experience." (Košťálová, 2010, p. 10)

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