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EFFICIENCY (SUCCESSFULNESS) OF CONVERSATION IN FAMILY SOCIAL WORK

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The authors present their qualitative research project (1999) on the efficiency (successfulness) of conversation in family social work. In the form of a list of key concepts the ground perspectives and strategies of family social work are defined that constitute and maintain a typical context for efficient (successful) social work and its supervision. The components of conversation as cybernetic systemic criteria of conversation efficiency (successfulness) are defined as well. Further, the results of their qualitative analysis of the chosen counselling and supervision conversations in the field of family social work are presented, based on the defined contextual and conversational criteria. Finally, their research project is evaluated and certain changes in the field of the (self)evaluation of family social work efficiency (successfulness), of the organization of supervision, and of the self-organization of experts in social work are proposed.

Keywords: social work, conversation, efficiency (successfulness), cybernetics, qualitative research.

Vesna Leskošek

THE IMPORTANCE OF INTER-INSTITUTIONAL CO-OPERATION IN THE TREATMENT OF SEXUAL ABUSE

Vesna Leskošek, M. A., works at the Moste Polje Centre of social work; she is also a researcher at the Peace institute, Ljubljana.

Research showed a significant progress in the institutional treatment of sexually abused children in Ljubljana. Institutions are obliged to constantly change their modes of work, especially when mutually dependent. The system of treatment consists of the centres of social work, the police, the prosecutor, the court, as well as the Counselling centre for children, adolescents and parents. These institutions are by their character obliged to intervene in the disclosed cases of sexual abuse, whereas the last one, an important therapeutic institution, is often asked for expertise. According to the research, mutual co-operation of the intervening institutions has been improving in particular because of the increase of the disclosed cases, which demands faster and more efficient action. Non-intervening institutions are somewhat lagging behind, even though some cases are disclosed and consequent dilemmas and difficulties regarding intervention occur already there. Despite better co-operation, however, in most cases the victim does not receive adequate support, since there is little possibility of counselling and therapy. The procedures may be carried out adequately, yet the victim subsequently denies the act, continues to live with the perpetrator and finds herself or himself in the same or worse situation of abuse. To deal with this state of affairs, it is necessary to institutionalise co-operation, change the system of operating within individual institution, and set up an efficient system of education and training, such that would make possible a wider range of skills and knowledge in the field of sexual abuse.

Keywords: sexual abuse, the centres of social work, the court, the prosecutor, the police, medical institutions, counselling, co-operation, victim, perpetrator.

Bojana Mesec

VOLUNTEERS HAVE A HEART AND A WILL

Bojana Mesec, M. A., is a junior researcher at the University of Ljubljana School of social work.

The actions and existence of associations relies to a great extent on volunteer work and on the respective contributions of individuals, groups and communities. The decision to join is based on the person's inner motivation and the need to help a fellow human. Volunteer work encompasses the values of solidarity, humanity, unselfish readiness to help the others. The research-based paper presents the problems and difficulties of volunteers who already work in the 'social' field. The research has shown that many of them meet disappointment, stress and discontent, especially where they and their work are not responded to or where the work of professionals is valued more highly than their unpaid-for contribution.

Keywords: associations, voluntary work, non-profit organisations.

Katja Fras

INTER-CULTURAL COMPETENCE: A CHALLENGE FOR SOCIAL WORK

Economist and social worker Katja Fras has collaborated in many projects involving refugees. In the framework of her graduation work at the Vienna Social Academy she investigated the social and political position of immigrants in Vienna and defined the specific tasks this group of clients imposes on social work. She has also worked with clients from ex-Yugoslavia in the central Viennese counselling office for foreigners.

The paper describes the beginnings and development of social work with immigrants in Vienna. The formation of a new profile of social work is discussed – the worker with the so-called inter-cultural competence. The author finds that even though the immigrants have a right to adequate social care, they are often denied it. A superficial knowledge about their specific living conditions is no longer sufficient for professional social work. What is needed is a conscious and systematic education and employment of social workers who wish to obtain or have obtained the competence to work with immigrants.

Ključne besede: immigrants, competent social work, social work education.