

# Suspended Parenting in the Case of Child Resocialization in a Youth Educational Centre

## Rodzicielstwo zawieszone w sytuacji resocjalizacji dziecka przebywającego w młodzieżowym ośrodku wychowawczym

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**Abstract:** The article defines the role and goals of suspended parenting in the case of juveniles' stay in a youth educational facility during their social rehabilitation. The publication is based on the author's five-year experience of work as an addiction psychotherapist. Over those years, the author conducted many hours of consultations with more than 125 charges and their parents in the course of therapeutic sessions. The analysis, apart from one-to-one consultations, also embraced personal files of charges. Juveniles may stay in such facilities for several weeks, but more often for months or even for several, e.g., 3-4 years. The present article discusses the tasks facing families of children staying in such facilities as well as introduces and defines such concepts as: suspended parenting, social rehabilitation, readaptation, attachment in children. The article also contains infographics on the reasons for referring minors to Youth Educational Centres (MOW) and the possibilities of supporting both the child and the parents/guardians by such a centre. In addition, it provides suggestions regarding the juvenile rehabilitation system as well as guidelines for practitioners.

**Keywords:** youth educational centre, social rehabilitation, readaptation, minors, suspended parenting

**Abstrakt:** Tekst przybliża znaczenie i zadania rodzicielstwa zawieszonego w warunkach przebywania nieletniego w MOW podczas jego resocjalizacji. Publikacja bazuje na ponad 5-letnim doświadczeniu w pracy na stanowisku psychoterapeuty uzależnienie autorki tekstu. W ciągu tych kilku lat przeprowadzono wielogodzinne rozmowy z ponad 125 wychowankami podczas sesji terapeutycznych oraz ich rodzicami. Analizie poddano także dokumenty podopiecznych. Nieletni przebywają w ośrodku od kilku tygodni, częściej miesięcy do nawet kilku lat, np. 3-4 lata. W tekście znajdują się zadania stojące przed rodziną dziecka przebywającego w ośrodku oraz nawiązanie i rozumienie takich pojęć, jak: rodzicielstwo zawieszone, resocjalizacja, readaptacja, style przywiązymania. Materiał zawiera także infografiki dotyczące przyczyn kierowania nieletnich do MOW oraz możliwości wsparcia dziecka i rodziców/opiekunów z pomocą tego ośrodka. Ponadto zawiera sugestie odnośnie do systemu resocjalizacji nieletnich i wskazówki dla praktyków.



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**Słowa kluczowe:** młodzieżowy ośrodek wychowawczy, resocjalizacja, readaptacja, nieletni, rodzicielstwo zawieszone

## INTRODUCTION

Each individual is born into a family. Such a family may be more or less stable, complete or incomplete, properly functioning or dysfunctional, etc. Models of family life, or general perception of parenting undergo constant changes. According to the research findings of the Centre for Public Opinion Research (CBOS) from 2019, changes related to the socio-cultural factors determining marital and family life have an impact on, among others, the increasing number of divorces, postponing or renouncing the decision to get married or to procreate, an increasing percentage of informal relationships and children born in such relationships, as well as a growing number of single parents raising children. Research findings show that, in their everyday lives, Poles are primarily guided by such values as: 1) family happiness (80%), 2) health (55%), 3) striving for stability (48% of respondents), 4) taking care of friendships (45%). From the perspective of everyday life, less important for the respondents turned out to be the following: living an honest life, professional work, religion, prosperity of the homeland, freedom to express one's own views, prosperity and wealth, participation in democratic socio-political life, leading an adventurous life, collecting experiences, as well as achieving success and fame. Taking into account the category of gender, the value of living in a happy family was more often emphasized by women (Boguszewski 2019, 1-7). This element of family well-being is important for several reasons: 1) people spend most of their time in the family, it is the primary point of reference in building a hierarchy of values as well as a desired sphere of security; 2) people's adulthood and maturity are often measured by how they manage to find themselves in a family structure; 3) attitudes and behaviours, especially those of young people, are often evaluated against family expectations, beliefs and obligations.

The family is a system of mutual interdependencies, a system of communicating vessels. Problems arise already when even one its member exhibits destructive behaviour. The state care system disposes of various tools and capabilities to prevent, warn, eliminate, monitor, support or punish the family or its individual members. One of the educational measures, is to place a child in a care facility, e.g., a youth sociotherapy centre (MOS), a youth educational centre (MOW) or a district educational centre (OOW). However, this measure creates a complicated situation and based on my many years of therapeutic experience, I can claim that individuals most harmed in such a case are children themselves. Among the risk factors for personality disorders in the population of children, source literature lists the following: social isolation, developmentally inappropriate behaviours and poor health. In the case of adolescents, risk factors include also introversion, high level of emotionality and low social competences. Regardless of the developmental age, the risk factors include sexual, physical and emotional violence as well as inappropriate parental attitudes (Cohen et al. 2005; Lenkiewicz, Srebnicki and Bryńska 2015).

Source literature mentions various types of parenting: attentive, close, unconditional, neglective, difficult, etc. (*Rodzicielstwo i różne jego oblicza* 2020;

Stiffelman 2017; Bragiel, Matyjas and Segiet 2021; *Rodzicielstwo w obliczu niepełnosprawności* 2014; Maciarz 2009; Opozda 2017, 19–28; *Rodzina w sytuacji trudnej* 2019). In general, the family court, depending on the case, may decide on suspending, limiting or depriving parent(s) of their parental authority. In the present article, suspended parenting is understood in two contexts:

1) Parenting suspended as a result of a family court decision on the suspension of the certain scope of parental authority of one or both parents. This occurs when it is temporarily impossible for parents to fulfil their rights and obligations resulting from the exercise of parental authority. The factor of the temporary character of the change of state (temporariness) is very important here. Suspension of parental authority does not deprive parent(s) of their parental authority, although for the time of its duration it has the same effects as deprivation of parental rights. Suspension of parental authority implies the necessity of appointing a legal guardian, e.g., grandparents, for the period of its duration. It may be caused by, among others, a trip abroad, temporary hospital treatment or rehabilitation as well as a short stay in prison of the parent(s).

2) Parents' rights are not suspended by court decision. The child is placed in a centre, thus leading to a physical, and, indirectly, also a psychological separation of a child from his/her parents. It sometimes happens that children's stay in a centre exposes previous physical and/or psychological neglect, i.e., a kind of disruption of family relationships. Suspension of parenting in such cases may either deepen the process of such a disruption of relationships, or even be felt as beneficial by parents who can at least for some time dispose of problems related to their son or daughter. There are also situations where, because of the child's stay at the centre, the relationships begin to change and the type of parenting, sometimes single, begins to evolve, not infrequently for the better, e.g., more attentive one.

This article aims to present the character of suspended parenting in the conditions of minors' stay in MOW centres during their resocialization. The subject of the research is the importance of the family in the social rehabilitation of children staying in such a centre. The research problem was presented in the form of the following question: What are the roles and tasks of parents during children's stay at a youth educational centre as regards their social rehabilitation process? The article is based on over five years' experience in conducting individual and group sessions as an addiction psychotherapist at one of the MOWs in the Masovian Voivodeship. Dozens of documents, i.e., files of individual charges, were analysed including opinions of the psychological and pedagogical team, opinions of experts, opinions and judgments issued by psychological and pedagogical counselling centres at the request of parents/legal guardians, community interviews, family situation, school certificates, medical documentation, certificates, etc. Minors may stay in the centre for several weeks, more often months, up to several, e.g. 3-4, years (Rozporządzenie Ministra Edukacji Narodowej 2017).

## 1. SPECIFICITY AND RULES OF OPERATION OF THE YOUTH EDUCATIONAL CENTRE

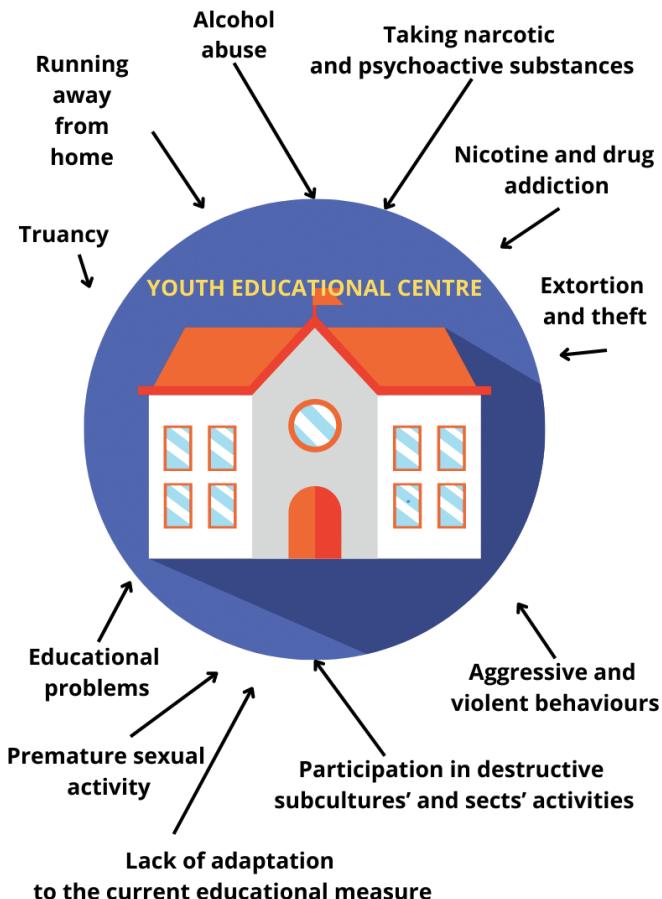
The Act of June 9, 2022 on the support and social rehabilitation of minors provides that minors can be subject to corrective measure in the form of placing them in a Youth Educational Centre (MOW) in order to strengthen their responsibility for their own actions prevent demoralization of juveniles or prevent juveniles from committing criminal acts and to create conditions allowing minors who have fallen into conflict with the law or violated principles of social coexistence to return to normal life (Dz. U. 2022). Youth educational centres fall into the scope of the education system (Ustawa z dnia 14 grudnia 2016 r.). They operate seven days a week, every month throughout the year. Within such a centre, there is usually a school attended by the charges. “The role of youth educational centres is to gradually eliminate children’s cognitive and emotional deficits, teaching them proper interpersonal relationships and rules of functioning in society. These goals are achieved through providing children with integrated, corrective and compensatory teaching, care and therapeutic activities, preparing them for professional work, helping them to find their place on the labour market, cooperation with parents and with organizations and social associations working for children, youth and families. (*Działalność resocjalizacyjna* 2017).

Children may only be referred to the MOW centre by a family court based on a court decision on placing them in the centre, in cooperation with the district head (starosta) and the Education Development Centre in Warsaw. Juveniles referred to the centre include those who escape from home, are addicted to psychoactive substances, have committed crimes such as thefts or fights, failed to pass to the next grade, have learning difficulties, or are truant. It can be assumed that the centre receives demoralized children and youth who do not comply with the law or the generally accepted norms of behaviour in society or display risky behaviour. Risky behaviour refers to most of the undesirable activities of young people, such as use of psychoactive substances, violence, gambling, the Internet abuse, and cyberbullying. The pandemic additionally contributed to a rise in mental health disorders and increased suicidal thoughts and suicide attempts (*Dzieci się liczą* 2022, 181, 194). Numerous studies, among others by Łukasz Wirkus, confirm that the risk factors contributing to the occurrence of juvenile crime include poor parenting skills; dysfunctional family structure; family conflicts; parental criminality; single parenthood and upbringing based on punishment (Wirkus 2020, 267-281).

The main task of MOW centres is to eliminate symptoms of social maladjustment and prepare pupils to lead an independent and responsible life once they leave the centre, in accordance with applicable social and legal norms. The centre employs psychologists and educators, as well as, depending on the needs, other specialists and staff conducting classes, e.g., occupational therapists, psychotherapists building a therapeutic alliance, i.e., a therapeutic relationship, in addiction treatment, (Wampold and Flückiger 2023, 25-41). In order to provide control over the implementation of the

educational measure in the form of placing a minor in a youth educational centre, the judge of the family court or the probation officer supervising the implementation of this measure may apply to the school attended by the minor to provide information on fulfilling by the minor's parents or guardian(s) the obligations imposed on them. In fact, this regulation is a dead letter that is not effective in practice (Rozporządzenie Ministra Edukacji Narodowej 2017 r.).

#### Main reasons for the referral to the MOW centre



Infographic 1. Reasons for referring minors to a youth educational centre (MOW); source: *Działalność resocjalizacyjna*.

The above infographic presents the reasons for sending minors to a youth educational centre. It is possible to determine in percentage which of them predominate, however it does not prove anything, because each case is different and must be considered separately. Minors may be sent to a MOW due to their failing to perform well in a youth educational centre, running away from it, failing to cooperate with the probation officer, while others may be sent to the MOW because

they repeatedly miss classes and, for example, take psychoactive substances. First of all, the family situation of each charge is different, which significantly affects their daily functioning and the process of socialization or resocialization.

What is resocialization? It is often defined as part of the educational process, as a result of which an individual who fails to adapt to the generally accepted and applicable principles of social life is taught to re-socialize, adopt pro-social behaviours, and take constructive actions (Kalinowski 2008; Wysocka 2022).

Readaptation means striving to change the attitudes and behaviours of charges in order to help them find their place in society in accordance with common norms and principles. The centre in which children are placed has to implement a whole range of procedures enabling their optimal social readjustment. However, lack of life prospects, problems in finding employment after leaving the facility, insufficient social assistance or lack of support on the part of any environments apart from pathological ones may constitute factors hindering social readaptation of young people (Pytka 2000, 10). An important element in social rehabilitation and readaptation is developing minors' positive habits. This allows charges to learn self-discipline, punctuality, time management as well as conscientiousness in performing their duties. Simultaneously, minors may develop interpersonal skills and social competences (Karpuszenko 2017, 189).

The essence of the readaptation process is, among others, preventing social marginalization of charges. These goals can be achieved through various educational and resocialization activities, such as reducing or eliminating aggression, verbal and physical violence, therapy of addictions, participation in trainings, workshops, sections, and additional classes (Klingemann, Miturska and Moskalewicz 2008, 131).

As resocialization work is complex and multidimensional, it is difficult to clearly define the criteria of its effectiveness. Nevertheless, the Supreme Audit Office's (NIK) research findings clearly show that resocialization process conducted in the MOW centres faces various barriers and limitations, which result not only from the character of the centre's activity itself, but also from incorrectly imposed systemic solutions. In Poland, there is still insufficient number of specialized facilities dedicated to solving specific dysfunctions of the charges. Young people referred to a youth educational centre show varying degrees of demoralization and aggression, they may require addiction treatment or psychotherapy, e.g., due to their suffering from depression, ADHD, personality disorders, or psychiatric disorders. Directors of such centres openly admit that they are at times apprehensive when it comes to dealing with pregnant minors because they do not know what to do with them as such minors require not only psychological support but also providing them with medical care, specialized tests, and monitoring their health condition. All this has a negative impact on therapy, educational process and resocialization. The time allocated for specialist support from a psychologist, therapist, educational and career advisor, etc. is minimal, i.e., up to one hour per week. Individual Educational and Therapeutic Programs (IPE-T) and Self-Empowerment Programs (PU) imposed by law are in many cases implemented in a standard manner. The most

frequently quoted shortcomings as regards IPE-Ts included failure to specify the period of providing assistance; number of hours of psychological and pedagogical support, social rehabilitation and sociotherapeutic activities, activities in the field of educational and career counselling, activities supporting the child's parents, the scope of cooperation between specialist teachers and the child's parents. Another barrier hindering proper functioning of youth educational centres was the lack of legal regulations regarding the possibility for MOW employees to directly inspect personal belongings in cases justified by the behaviour of charges. Minors arriving in the centre for the first time, those returning from leave or visits to friends, smuggle various types of prohibited items and substances, including drugs and medicines. In the centre's jargon, this is called "messing around" or "trafficking." This not only exposes other charges to temptations and dangers, but also affects the entire MOW staff, e.g., by causing situations that may get out of control (fights, fainting, other illnesses, trading in goods, i.e., selling or exchanging these prohibited substances for other items). Moreover, the fate of the charges after leaving the centre is not monitored (*Działalność resocjalizacyjna* 2017, 8-15).

NIK conducted research in the years of 2018-2020. The percentage of people who came into conflict with the law after leaving the centres increased from 21% to 23% compared to the period of 2015-2018, those who continued education - from 37% to 54.5% or took up work - from 43.5 to 51.5%. NIK proposed, for example, the creation of several specialized MOWs intended for charges requiring addiction therapy, care related to pregnancy and maternity, or intensified supervision due to aggressive behaviour. What was disturbing was the fact that minors with different care and educational needs and showing very different degrees of demoralization, i.e., from those running away from home, those with symptoms of alcohol or drug addiction, to members of criminal groups, were sent to the same facility. This gave rise to conflicts, formation of subgroups or the so-called parallel life in the facility, with informal rules established by the strongest and most influential charges in the centre. The less demoralized assimilated from the more demoralized destructive behaviours such as vulgar language, shoplifting, cheating on the Internet, or learned what over-the-counter drugs or available chemicals can be used to make drugs or legal highs. (*Funkcjonowanie młodzieżowych ośrodków wychowawczych* 2021). There are also problems of a different nature, for example, the question of administering medicines, including psychotropic drugs prescribed by family doctors, specialists, and psychiatrists. As MOW centres do not have nurses, medications are usually administered to the charges by teachers on duty according to the schedule that defines which pupil should take what and how much. Needless to say, the responsibility associated with a minor's reaction to medications is enormous.

Strategies of actions of the Youth Educational Centre towards their charges during the suspension of parental rights

For the duration of the minors' stay, youth educational centres de facto take over the care and upbringing of their charges, who for various reasons, have been separated from their family environment. This suspension of parental custody

usually lasts from several months to several years. The task of youth educational centres is to eliminate in their charges any symptoms of social maladjustment, develop in them habits of constructive problems solving, teach them how to build healthy relationships, and prepare them for independent life led in accordance with applicable social and legal norms. This is a very difficult and tedious task, especially that the centres receive minors with different care and educational needs and varying degrees of demoralization. Among the charges there are young people who repeatedly evaded school obligations, resorted to using physical and psychological violence against their peers, stole, and took dangerous psychoactive substances. Therefore, an Individual Educational and Therapeutic Program (IPET) is developed for each student.

Children staying in a facility such as a youth educational centre (MOW) or a district educational centre (OOW) still remain part of their own families: natural, foster, adoptive, reconstructed, or patchwork. They still maintain a relationship with their family members. However, such a relationship may take different forms and sometimes it can be difficult. MOWs are under no obligation to conduct a systemic, i.e., family therapy, but through their activities they show young people the principles of social behaviour and teach them how to implement those principles in life. Their role is much wider though as they provide children with an opportunity to understand how they themselves function in a group. Such an experience usually proves to be difficult for either charges themselves or their families because leaving family home involves the necessity of learning new rules in a new environment and building relationships with strangers.

MOW employees include many specialists and people experienced in working with minors, such as, psychologists, pedagogues, therapists, teachers supporting the educational process, educators, trainers, tutors of individual charges. The resocialization process will not bring the expected results if there is no cooperation with parents and joint development of a rehabilitation process strategy. Contact with the parents of children staying in the centre can be difficult for many reasons, e.g., parents themselves may refuse to have any contact with either the centre or the specialists working there, or the distance from the place of their residence to the centre can make direct contact difficult, rare, or even sporadic. There is no comparison between a face-to-face conversation with parents and a phone conversation. It also happens that parents, facility employees and the charges widely differ in their expectations. For example, when a charge takes psychoactive substances such as marijuana and amphetamine, the family may expect that their son will completely give up these substances, while their offspring is currently able, as he says himself, to give up amphetamine and possibly limit smoking marijuana. This is difficult for both parties, because the ideal scenario cannot be introduced by force, and the pressure from parents is enormous, sometimes parents even accuse the facility of implementing ineffective measures. Meanwhile, giving up one substance and limiting the use of the other is a great success and the adolescent should be further supported in his decisions, because perhaps after some time, as a result of therapy, he will

decide to give up all stimulants. It is difficult to predict the outcomes of the therapy, as much as it is difficult to say whether there will be relapses, which are a natural part of the therapeutic process. Sometimes, parents are advised to start marital or individual therapy as it is difficult to help a child in a constructive manner if one element of the family system is dysfunctional. The whole system requires attention. Certain behaviours and events are difficult to make up for, although there is much that can be improved and learned. Parental bonds and the ways of building them are an integral element of the functioning of the entire system in which children also have to find a place for themselves. Such a family pattern of daily activity includes the parents' previous experiences, their beliefs, and the quality of life, including the so-called mental well-being, social and emotional skills, thinking and behaviour patterns. Parents who are interested in the fate of their offspring staying at MOW centres and who are provided with information about their children are sometimes surprised hearing that their child is artistically talented, can ride a horse well, has a good sense of humour, likes order, gets along with his or her friends, willingly talks to therapists, etc. At times, it appears that parents do not know their children at all and are unable to establish proper relationships with them, blaming them for all the misfortunes of the entire family.

Visits from the minor's relatives are always welcome at the facility. They usually take place on weekends or holidays, in cases when the family court refuses to grant permission for the charge to go on leave or for other reasons, e.g., to prevent the charge from running away before the date of court hearing. Depending on the minor's behaviour, visits may take place inside the facility, in specially designated rooms, in the common room, or outside the facility. The family may also take their child to do shopping or to go for a walk. Visits also depend on the distance from the parents' or legal guardians' place of residence. There are people who live on the other end of Poland, and it is difficult for them to come to the centre for financial reasons, because they work on weekends, must take care of other children, or have other obligations. It is important that children know why they are not visited, and that the separation is compensated by telephone calls, so as not to trigger in them the feeling of rejection, uncertainty, helplessness, hopelessness.

If the charges do not have close relationships with their relatives, it is important to strengthen their bonds with distant family members, peers, friends, and in adult life, with co-workers and, finally, with their own families. It is very important because after leaving the centre, children usually return, at least initially, to their environment which is often destructive. Therapeutic work at the centre is intended to restore the charges' faith in their own abilities, to teach them how to distinguish what is good and what is bad, to help them learn how to think and act constructively, transform old wrong habits, i.e. the imprinted patterns of behaviour and conduct, into those promising for the future, or to revise former beliefs that did not serve the good of either themselves or the society. "An important element of strengthening mental well-being is the sense of agency, which means the ability to initiate some actions, solve problems and persistently pursue goals in a specific

situation. An ability to solve a problem brings satisfaction and increases the child's motivation to act and set new goals" (Syrek and Polok 2023, 58).

MOW centres help the charges to discover and strengthen their own potential and interests through participation in various types of sections. This in turn allows parents to start perceiving their children as young people showing some potential and accept them the way they are. It is crucial that parents, but also the children themselves, should distinguish absolute acceptance from the possible lack of approval for their actions, i.e., for their improper behaviour.



Infographic 2. Support for the child and parents/guardians with the help of the Youth Educational Centre (MOW); source: own study.

MOW centres undertake a number of activities intended in the first place to serve the children's well-being, to prepare them to responsibly fulfil various roles in society as well as to build their potential. In this way, they also support the family that, for various reasons, has not been able to cope with its tasks. It is up to

the family itself whether it will take advantage of the opportunity and accept help in the form of advice on how to deal with children, notice their strengths, and introduce changes in the current, dysfunctional, educational approach.

### 3. TASKS AND ACTIONS OF PARENTS DURING SUSPENDED PARENTING OF CHILDREN PLACED IN A YOUTH EDUCATIONAL CENTRE

Being a parent means being there for your child: physically and mentally. Creating a new life involves taking responsibility and offering constant attention to children's needs until they reach the age of majority, or in fact, maturity, which does not always coincide with the age of 18. There is no law or school for parents that would allow them to have children only after obtaining a certificate. Just as there is no single way of upbringing children, there are no strictly established norms of conduct. Parenting is a process governed by the experiences of people's own parents, grandparents, their observations, instincts, beliefs, assumptions as well as many other factors. Moreover, each period of children's development is different, each subsequent child in a family is different. John Bowlby wrote that in raising a child properly, it is good to be a good enough parent. According to this theory, an extremely important factor in the first stage of life are proper relationships with parents, especially the relationships of a child with the mother or guardian. The term "secure base" is also used in this context. Mothers provide such a secure base for their children. They are a safe haven where children can come if they need it and which allow them to discover the world with curiosity (Gawda and Czubak 2012, 37-54; Bettelheim 2005; Ainsworth 1989, 711; Bowlby 2020).

Upbringing styles are not the same as types of parenting. An upbringing style is a specific determinant of the quality of the family environment. Each family has its own unique style, which includes ways of expressing feelings, exercising control, showing mutual understanding, as well as attitudes towards the world (Zaborowski 1976, 57-58). The concept of type of parenting is much broader and superior to upbringing styles. Parenting types may, but do not have to include upbringing styles. Parenting may drift between styles or there may be no particular style at all, because if parenting is dysfunctional, it is difficult to talk generally about upbringing understood as intentional interactions aimed at achieving desired changes in the functioning of individuals and groups, especially minors.

There may be various signs that the system is failing and needs support or various indications regarding possible solutions to crises. Children's behaviour is one of the possible indicators regarding the functioning of the whole family, whether the needs of all members are met, what emotions are most often revealed, and which are suppressed, what are the communication patterns in the family members, what scope of responsibilities and privileges individual household members have, and what values they cultivate.

If one of the elements in the family system begins to fail, the whole family should be closely analysed in order to restore the state of stability or to be able to provide

special support to the person who requires such help, e.g., in cases of physical or mental abuse, addiction to psychoactive substances or certain activities, e.g. games, Internet (behavioural addiction). Families differ and their structure is often complicated and changes dynamically, e.g. patchwork families, living with the parent's common-law partner, parents living abroad, children from foster families, conflicted families, parents unable to solve their own problems. In families where a son or daughter is placed in a youth educational centre, the burden on the family system increases. In any case, placing a child in a MOW centre does not release parents from their duties and neither does it transfer the child's upbringing to the institution. The facility is responsible for the care, and to some extent for the education, resocialization and support of children. However, a youth educational centre is not a repair shop where children can be placed to be "fixed" or cured. The entire family of children placed in the centre, including the children themselves, experience many emotions, usually negative ones. During many years of consultations with parents and the centre charges it was possible to discover varying reactions: aggression, anger, disappointment, disbelief that the whole situation got out of control, mutual blaming for what happened, shame and sometimes great relief. This last emotion may concern both children who admit that they finally have a chance to escape from a family that did not understand them and where they experienced physical and mental abuse, while the parents may feel comforted that their child is finally safe (e.g., he or she will not get involved in fights or use drugs) and will continue compulsory education. Paradoxically, the separation of children from their parents, even the forced one, provides families with many opportunities to reflect and work on their own weaknesses, neglects or deficits. While visiting their children at the centre, parents themselves often admitted that they had not noticed certain behaviours of their children before.

The time and space distance between parents and children makes room for action. Below is the list of actions that can be taken by parents whose children stay in MOW centres, depending on the situation they are in:

- revise their current behaviours and activities: what worked and what did not work, e.g. spending time together, preparing and eating meals, revising the dos and don'ts,

- learn how to have honest, calm conversations with teenagers: what they expect from their parents and vice versa. Contrary to appearances, it is separation and longing that allow for a constructive exchange of opinions. This most often happens during visits and during leaves,

- taking care of themselves, e.g., by starting a therapy, doing medical tests, seeking help from specialists, looking for a job or changing jobs to a more favourable one in various respects,

- dealing with the feeling of guilt and remorse. The feeling of guilt can be very destructive if the act that causes this feeling of discomfort is not named and possibly corrected. Remorse is the mind's response to a mistake made or a bad deed done. Guilt is a thought pattern that is selected and perpetuated. We feel guilty when we condemn ourselves for something, when we believe that we are

responsible for some bad act. A person can be stuck in guilt for a long time, which is destructive and may obscure other perspectives (Eger 2021, 100).

– looking at one's immediate life: functioning in a relationship and among friends and revising these connections. Jesper Juul (2017) wrote that in a relationship, two adults are equally responsible for each other's relationships, but only adults are fully responsible for the quality of the relationship with the child,

– trying to take an honest look at oneself: the mistakes made in life in order to become more aware of changing the current habits and breaking out of the functioning patterns, if this may prove beneficial for the person and the child,

– looking at roles and tasks in the family, who takes care of whom, because it sometimes happens that the child actually took care of younger siblings and mother, e.g., who was depressed, fired from work, betrayed by her partner,

– reflecting on the milestones in one's life and the significance they had for a given person as well as for the functioning of the entire family,

– consulting one's concerns and proposals for changing the current ways of functioning between parents and children with specialists working in the youth care centre,

– authentic and long-term cooperation with people and institutions that are able to improve the functioning of the entire family.

Sometimes a small change in behaviour, taking an initiative, correcting one's stereotypes of behaviour may mean a lot, because it may be the beginning of the path to self-understanding and to understanding one's child which may lead to improving the situation of the family. The sense of agency builds self-esteem.

## CONCLUSIONS. SUGGESTIONS REGARDING THE SYSTEM OF RESOCIALIZATION OF MINORS AND TIPS FOR PRACTITIONERS

The aim of the article was to present the importance of suspended parenting in the case of a minor's stay in a youth educational centre during the process of resocialization. Legally, the family may still have full parental rights, but physical and mental separation has its consequences, both positive and negative. The negative ones include difficulties in adapting to the new environment of the facility, rebellion, low mood, outbursts of aggression, refusal to accept the new rules, etc. The positive impacts include developing consciousness, fulfilment of school obligations, taking responsibility for one's own actions, learning consequence, discovering one's potential, correcting destructive behaviours and relations, functioning without psychoactive substances, taking care of one's health and well-being, the possibility of spending free time in a variety of ways, appreciating the efforts of parents or noticing their care and upbringing mistakes.

The effectiveness of youth educational centres in the process of resocialization of minors depends on many factors: the centres themselves, the atmosphere there, specialists, the children under their care who are burdened with various, often traumatic, experiences, as well as the parents of these minors.

1. From a statistical point of view, tendency to show risky behaviours in the case of teenagers is the highest in their entire life during adolescence, because it is an integral part of the maturation process. It is then that young people learn skills they will need in adult their adult life, they learn how to satisfy the need for experiences, crossing and testing boundaries. This is a kind of developmental norm as long as it does not get out of control, threaten the health and life of the teenager or other people, or grossly violate the norms of social functioning. However, the question arises: How to assess this thin border between the acceptable and the unacceptable, this crossing of the line beyond which a probation officer or an educational centre come into play? The way the entire family functions and responds to various types of situations is crucial for the proper development of minors.

2. The system of supporting minors does not work because it has gaps, e.g., after charges leave the centre, their future fates are not monitored nor is the fulfilment of parental duties checked, especially in the case of minors. The current systemic solutions are criticized by many specialists, pointing to social rehabilitation idiosyncrasies. Laws or regulations, fail to take into account the voices of directors and employees directly related to social rehabilitation centres, facilities supporting the development of children and youth, and scientists basing their knowledge on research (Konopczyński 2022).

3. The need for systemic solutions involving the participation of the entire family in social rehabilitation, i.e., active participation of parents in the resocialization process should not be voluntary but obligatory. During a minor's stay in a MOW-type centre, his or her family members should, for example, be obligated to participate in systemic therapy, support groups, training depending on the needs. In order to control the implementation of an educational measure in the form of placing a minor in a youth educational centre, the judge of the family court or the probation officer supervising the implementation of this measure may apply to the school attended by the minor to provide information on fulfilling by the minor's parents or guardian(s) the obligations imposed on them. In fact, this regulation is a dead letter that is not effective in practice to support the social rehabilitation of children.

4. Cooperation with parents during a minor's stay in a youth educational centre may be difficult or non-existent, e.g., due to the large distance from the facility where the child has been placed. Moreover, some parents believe that the child or partner is entirely responsible for the situation, and this is a case of shifting responsibility.

The article touches on the possibilities and limitations of helping children staying in youth educational centres and their families. At the same time, it draws attention to one more added value related with the content of this article. Dissatisfaction and frustration of children and teenagers provides very important information for adults, especially those responsible for supporting them and correcting their behaviour, including resocialization. If something hurts, we should first look for the causes and possible remedies, rather than inflict punishment.

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