

THE ENVIRONMENTAL CONTEXT OF EDUCATIONAL WORK WITH THE YOUTH AT RISK OF SOCIAL MALADJUSTMENT

INTRODUCTION

The article addresses a range of issues connected with the risks faced by adolescents raised in dysfunctional families and local environments; it emphasizes the importance of preventive and educational functions of school as well as the resulting tasks for the teacher. The example of Bytom, a Polish city in Upper Silesia, was used to illustrate the multitude of social problems inherent in such an environment. What characterizes it is pauperization of families, negligence in the upbringing of children and youth, lack of parental supervision over free time activities of minors, i.e., the so-called “children of the street.” Schools, teachers, and guidance counselors, who work in them, occupy an important place in this difficult environment. Though simultaneously, educational institutions often become a place where negative patterns of behavior acquired in the family or local environment manifest themselves. Another problem is the attitude of parents towards school, characterized by indifference and lack of interest in the child, which results in rare contacts and insufficient cooperation in educational interactions. An environment prone to social pathologies (be it a family or local community) serves as a catalyst for various problems such as: risky behaviors, petty crime, aggression, nowadays also electronic aggression, lack of life perspectives, threat of social maladjustment or lack of authority figures. The empirical part of the article presents the results of a survey conducted among adolescents and their teachers in a selected group of schools (elementary and vocational ones) in Bytom.

The article addresses the following questions:

- problems of local environment and social problems of youth and their families – a description;
- research methodological assumptions;
- research results and discussion;
- practical implications.

KEYWORDS: *prevention, youth, learning environment, social risks, diagnostic study*

PROBLEMS OF LOCAL ENVIRONMENT

Bytom is one of the cities in the Silesian Voivodeship where most economic and social problems were concentrated. It was painfully affected by the restructuring of industry. According to various estimates, between 30,000 and 50,000 jobs disappeared during the transformation. For many years, the city has been struggling with unemployment, which remains high despite the dwindling population. Currently, a seven-year program of comprehensive revitalization and renewal of the city is being implemented. Its objectives include revitalization of the city center, fighting poverty and unemployment, and stimulating the economy. Data from the Regional Labor Office in Katowice shows that at the end of October 2020, the unemployment rate in Bytom was 10.3% compared to 4.8% in the Silesian Voivodeship and 6.1% in Poland. Other cities in the region have much lower unemployment rates with, inter alia, Katowice at 1.7% and Gliwice at 4.7% (www.wupkatowice.praca.gov.pl).

At the end of November 2020, there were 4,554 unemployed people of all ages registered in the Labor Office in Bytom, while in the Silesian Voivodeship – 89,487 (www.bytom.gov.pl). The local authorities of Bytom are taking remedial measures to improve this situation. These include such projects addressed to the unemployed and job seekers as “Zero risk for the employee,” “Social revitalization of unemployed residents in Bytom through professional activation,” “Professional activation of the 30-plus registered in the District Labor Office,” or “New professional horizons.”

SOCIAL PROBLEMS OF STUDENTS AND THEIR FAMILIES

“The youth”, “teenagers” or “adolescents” are terms resulting from age and a set of specific biological, psychological, and social characteristics. Adolescence is a phase of life that has the character of a sociocultural phenomenon, arising from particular social conditions (Kędzior, 2008, p. 9). The youth as a specific social category is characterized by the following features:

- unspecified age ranges, being in a state defining a transitional phase of life between childhood and adulthood;
- learning, adopting to and creating adult roles, manipulating and negating the ones imposed by the society’s normative system (customs, laws);
- changing group affiliation, sharing norms and values that result in a sense of belonging and social identity, being introduced into culture (Wrzesiński, 2003, p. 40).

The contemporary youth mature earlier, but the process of becoming an adult lasts longer (a longer period of education, a later start into professional career) and is connected with the need to overcome subsequent barriers of social adaptation (Wysocka, 2009, pp. 59-60). The process of becoming an adult entails striving to achieve some of the most important goals, such as:

- experiencing physical sexual maturity,
- developing one’s own individuality,
- forming social obligations,
- gaining autonomy,
- growing out of egocentrism,
- reorganizing one’s value system. (Kędzior, 2008, p. 12).

With these goals in mind, Anna Oleszkowicz’s comment that adolescence comprises both biological changes connected with puberty as well as adolescent idealism and the search for the meaning of life, which may be accompanied by the so-called adolescent crisis or adolescent rebellion, seems fully justified (2006, pp. 101-102). Therefore, values, personal role models and authority figures are an important part of a young person’s development. Every

human being has two inalienable needs, namely dominance and dependence (Murzyn, 2001, p. 51). The need for dependence translates into the need to seek identification role models and authority figures, which is related to their influence on the individual. There is a common tendency for adolescents towards choosing pop culture figures as idols, which stems from the attractiveness of such icons and the youth's need to identify with someone different than the people who bring them up (parents and teachers).

The role model is the basis for shaping the ideals of a young person's life. The source of personal patterns determines the contemporary, transforming world, to which almost all aspects of the socio-cultural existence of individuals are subject, constituting the context and background shaping the functioning of the young generation. The world is no longer unambiguous, orderly and categorized for young people, thus the sense of certainty and relative stability is often replaced by uncertainty and ambivalence (Kancierz, 2016, p. 281).

Youth is strongly influenced by global change processes, which affects their functioning in today's reality. As Jacek Pyżalski writes, "young people, especially teenagers, in a complicated, multicultural and high-tech world, have a much wider range of possibilities than their parents' generation, but many of those possibilities only give the appearance of a choice, an escape from freedom, and sometimes are simply an offer of enslavement" (2015, p. 5).

The social changes that young people witness are a set of processes called globalization. They include: the development of modern information and communication technologies (which is manifested by the Internet) and a network of economic, financial, political, strategic and cultural relations (Sztompka, 2012, pp. 582-583). Young people seem not to perceive these processes as a threat, for them it is a natural process in which they participate from an early age.

Manuel Castells called the new society emerging in the era of globalization a "network" (Castells, 2007, p. 364). It is characterized by the emergence of a new industrial space, the transformation of working time, the breakdown of biological and social rhythms of the life cycle, the emergence of informational cities. It bases interpersonal communication on modern technologies (mobile telephony, Internet). Social relations created in the network become superficial and devoid of permanence (Krauz-Mozer, Borowiec, 2008, p. 37). Young people cope well with the transformations and changes that occur with

the development of new technologies, however, this affects the way they function and the choices made both in the real and virtual world (Kanclerz, 2016, p. 284).

When talking about youth in the context of contemporary society, it is worth referring to the views of Ulrich Beck. The author is convinced that we are witnessing a crack in modernity, which breaks free from the framework of classical industrial society and takes on a new shape, which he defines as a risk society (Beck, 2002, p. 16). Beck points out that the category of risk includes dealing with uncertainty, which cannot be overcome by the increase in knowledge. Beck argues that uncertainty can even be caused by the increase in knowledge (Beck, 2012, p. 17). The author draws attention to the “fragility” of modern civilization. On the one hand, we are dealing with advanced modernization processes, on the other hand, we are unable to avoid risks and threats (Krauz-Mozer, Borowiec, 2008, p. 45). In comparing the risk society to the industrial society, Beck is not saying that the past era was less risky. In his opinion, “the universalization of dangers and uncertainty and the resulting domination of public and staged by the mass media perception of risk constitute an epochal difference” (Beck, 2002, p. 348). The atmosphere of risk and uncertainty accompanies young people every day, and influences their choices and functioning in the modern world. Especially now, when the word crisis is overused.

In recent years, systematic research has been carried out on the situation of young people in Poland (Szafraniec, 2011; CBOS Report and the National Bureau for Narcotics Prevention, 2019; Batory Foundation Report, 2020). The results show that today's youth is a decreasing group, which has its demographic consequences. Youth becomes independent late, although they take up paid work faster, usually occasional. It is a generation that has a sense of a worse start in life, and at the same time a consumption generation situated between “to be” and “to have”. Young people not only have problems with entering adulthood, but also their mental maturation is getting more and more difficult. And although they do not complain too much, many of them cannot cope with the excessive demands of society, the cultural pressure to achieve success, the illegibility of social norms, the lack of interest from adults, the weakening of family ties, or the burden of their parents' problems.

The description of the transformations of contemporary society and research on the situation of young people show how important are the conditions in which the adolescence process takes place. In some environments, the young generation is morally corrupted. The lack of chief values and goals to which a person strives has a negative impact on the behavior of young people (Izdebska, 2015). This is confirmed by the research I conducted in the city of Bytom.

METHODOLOGICAL ASSUMPTIONS

The study used the diagnostic survey method and the following techniques: questionnaire, document analysis, observation. While analyzing empirical data, a quantitative and qualitative strategy was adopted.

It was conducted by means of a diagnostic survey in September/October 2020. It was a difficult period due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Children and adolescents were particularly affected. The effects are not as much related to physical health as to the social and emotional well-being impacted by social isolation, the remote education, deepening social inequalities and a mental health crisis (Pawlak, <https://brpd.gov.pl>; Kocejko, 2021). Although, the COVID-19 pandemic was not a subject of the study, it could be an intermediary variable that might have influenced the results. It would be beneficial to repeat the study a few years after the COVID-19 pandemic to verify how a return to normalcy might affect the answers. The results of the diagnostic survey were subject to quantitative analysis, and the data from the students' observation sheets and from the review of documents were subject to qualitative analysis. The study was diagnostic in nature and served to obtain answers to the following research questions:

- What are the characteristics of adolescents' educational environment (family, local community)?
- What problems and negative behaviors are reported and observed among adolescents?
- What preventive measures can help to compensate for and correct the educational problems exhibited by the students?

The survey covered 109 students of the School Complex No. 3 in Bytom Bobrek, of which 67 (including 27 girls and 40 boys) are primary school students (grades VII and VIII), and 42 (including 19 girls and 23 boys) – high school with a vocational profile. In the study, teenage boys (58%) were the dominant group, and girls were less numerous (42%). The collected data were not analyzed in terms of gender, but it would certainly be worth paying attention to this variable in subsequent studies. All students are residents of Bytom coming from challenging backgrounds or foster care facilities. The study also took into account the observations and results of the questionnaire completed by 20 teachers who work with a group of surveyed students on a daily basis. The collected empirical material was supplemented with an analysis of selected documents (mainly school diaries).

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The results obtained were quantitatively analyzed and then qualitatively interpreted. The first area studied was the students' family environment. The family is the most important element of the social space in which a young person lives and grows (Matyjas, 2017, pp. 41-54). It can be defined and classified in various ways, but regardless of the theoretical position adopted, it should be remembered that as an educational environment it is shaped by a combination of material, socio-cultural and psychological factors that determine the quality of education and the standard of living of its members (Doniec, 2013, pp. 165 – 166).

The data concerning the students and their families are included in Table 1.

Table 1. Data regarding students and their families

Students and their families	Elementary School		High school	
	number of respondents	%	number of respondents	%
Students	67	62% (for N=109)	42	38% (for N=109)
Students raised in families	58	87%	35	83%
Students from care and education centers for children and young people	9	13%	7	17%
Single-parent and broken families	22	34%	14	33%
Unemployed families	26	39%	18	43%
Families at risk of social pathologies (alcoholism, drug addiction, crime)	20	30%	11	26%
Families with parental inefficiency	35	52%	19	45%
Families whose functions are supervised by a probation officer or family assistant	17	25%	4	10%
Students included in the records as at-risk and socially maladjusted	32	48%	15	36%

Source: own research.

As shown in Table 1, student respondents' families often have multiple problems. Difficulties observed and highlighted in the families are likely to have occurred before. This may have negative consequences for the process of upbringing (Simon, Stierlin, 1998). Social problems are observed in families, among which the following are prevalent: parental inefficiency (52% of parents of students in elementary school and 45% in secondary school), unemployment (39% of parents of students in elementary school and 43% in high school), broken or single-parent families (34% of families of students in elementary school and 33% in high school), risk of social pathologies such as alcoholism, drug addiction or crime (30% of families of students in elementary school and 26% in high school). As a result of problems in families, various forms of family support are introduced, such as: probation officer's supervision over exercising parental custody or/and family assistant (25% of parents of students in elementary

school and 10% of students in high school). The final resort is sometimes the application of foster care in relation to the biological family; thus, some of the student respondents are raised in care and education centers (13% of elementary school students and 17% of secondary school students).

The conclusion is that not every family can be a valuable and educational environment for its members. It can be an mediocre, unfavorable, disharmonious, or even pathological environment. This situation results from the threats that appear in social life, making the home a source of fears, oppression or even pathology for the child (Kawula, 2008; Bobik, 2020).

Lack of positive role models in many families results in lowering the level of control over the child and the way they spend their leisure time. Quite considerably, it limits how the surveyed adolescents spend their leisure time, which is presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Manner of spending leisure time by the surveyed youth

Degree of importance / leisure activities	1		2		3		4		5	
	ES N=67	HS N=42	ES N=67	HS N=42	ES N=67	HS N=42	ES N=67	HS N=42	ES N=67	HS N=42
Reading books	10	2	0	0	1	2	2	0	3	1
	15%	5%	0%	0%	1,4%	5%	3%	0%	4,5%	2,3%
Computer games and entertainment	3	2	6	4	8	3	18	5	25	15
	4,5	5%	9%	9,5%	12%	7%	27%	12%	37%	36%
Using the Internet	0	0	1	1	6	2	22	12	29	12
	0%	0%	1,4%	2,3%	9%	5%	33%	29%	43%	29%
Watching television	4	2	9	4	15	7	13	9	5	11
	6%	9%	13%	9,5%	36%	17%	19%	21%	7%	26%
Practicing sports	5	5	7	6	8	4	10	10	13	12
	7%	12%	10%	14%	12%	9,5%	15%	24%	19%	28%
Meetings with peers	0	0	0	0	4	3	28	18	34	21
	0%	0%	0%	0%	6%	7%	42%	43%	51%	48%
Using social networks	0	0	2	6	7	2	27	11	28	16
	0%	0%	3%	14%	10%	5%	40%	26%	42%	38%

ES – elementary school; HS – high school; where 1 – not important, 2 – rather unimportant, 3 – rather important, 4 – important, 5 – very important

Source: own research.

As Table 2 illustrates, the surveyed students indicated the following among their favorite leisure activities:

- meeting with peers (ranked 4 and 5 by 93% of elementary school students and 91% of high school students),
- using social networks (ranked 4 and 5 by 82% of students in elementary school and 64% of students in high school),
- using the Internet (ranked 4 and 5 by 76% of elementary school students and 58% of high school students),
- computer games and entertainment (ranked 4 and 5 by 64% of students in elementary school and 48% of students in high school),
- practicing sports (ranked 4 and 5 by 34% of students in elementary school and 52,5% of students in high school),
- watching television (ranked 4 and 5 by 26% of students in elementary school and 47% of students in high school).

It could be assumed that the need for contacts with peers is a consequence of limitations during the pandemic, if not for earlier studies (Szafraniec, 2011; Boni, Szafraniec, 2018), which also spoke of the great need for mutual relations between the young generation. In the case of this study, attention should be paid to the risks. It should be emphasized that the most popular “meetings with peers” often consist in the complete use of leisure time to be away from home, among dysfunctional peer groups, which are often a source of negative behavior patterns (theft, intoxication, petty robbery), which is reflected in the high percentage of at-risk or socially maladjusted students (48% elementary school and 36% high school – Table 1). Watching television and especially reading books were considered unimportant or rather unimportant activities.

The youth who participated in the survey feel and experience many problems, which are also recognized by the teachers who work with them (Tables 3 and 4).

Table 3: Problems experienced by the surveyed youth

Type of problem	Most important		Very important		Important		Not very important		Unimportant	
	ES N=67	HS N=42	ES N=67	HS N=42	ES N=67	HS N=42	ES N=67	HS N=42	ES N=67	HS N=42
Lack of authority figures or disillusionment with authority figures	8	7	12	0	31	20	11	7	7	6
	12%	17%	18%	0%	46%	48%	16%	17%	10%	14%
Loneliness, feeling lost among people	9	7	26	19	11	6	7	7	9	3
	13%	17%	39%	45%	16%	14%	10%	17%	13%	7%
Lack of goals and perspectives in life or plans for the future	10	7	15	11	9	9	5	0	4	3
	15%	17%	22%	26%	13%	21%	7,5%	0%	6%	7%
Problems and stress at school	11	9	12	8	29	18	10	7	5	0
	16%	21%	18%	19%	43%	43%	15%	17%	7%	0%
Problems in the family (unemployment, conflicts with parents)	25	14	16	7	11	6	8	5	2	2
	37%	33%	24%	17%	16%	14%	12%	12%	3%	3%
Problems in contacts with peers	10	6	11	5	25	17	9	2	6	0
	15%	14%	16%	12%	37%	40%	13%	5%	9%	0%
Rebellion against the existing reality	12	8	9	7	26	19	6	5	4	3
	18%	19%	13%	17%	39%	45%	9%	12%	6%	3%
The need to make important life decisions (choice of school, profession)	26	17	22	12	10	3	5	6	4	4
	39%	40%	33%	28,5 %	15%	7%	7,5%	14%	6%	9,5%
Problems with the opposite sex	8	4	4	7	9	2	7	4	19	16
	12%	9,5%	6%	17%	13%	5%	10%	9,5%	28%	38%
Lack of support from others	29	16	14	11	13	10	4	3	7	2 –
	43%	38%	21%	26%	19%	24%	6%	7%	10%	5%

ES – elementary school; HS – high school

Source: own research.

Table 4. Problems among adolescents as observed by teachers

Type of problem	Most important N=20		Very important N=20		Unimportant N=20		Important N=20		Not very important N=20	
Unemployment and lack of money	12	6%	7	3,5%	1	0,5%	0	0%	0	0%
Lack of authority figures or disillusionment with authority figures	5	25%	13	65%	2	1%	0	0%	0	0%
Conflicts with parents and other adults	3	1,5%	14	70%	3	1,5%	0	0%	0	0%
Difficulties with peer interactions	6	3%	12	6%	2	1%	0	0%	0	0%
Problems with the opposite sex	4	2%	11	55%	5	25%	0	0%	0	0%
Loneliness, feeling lost among people	1	0,5%	4	2%	13	65%	2	1%	0	0%
Lack of goals and perspectives in life or plans for the future	3	1,5%	1	0,5%	16	80%	0	0%	0	0%
Rebellion against the existing reality	3	1,5%	7	35%	10	50%	0	0%	0	0%
Lack of support from others	1	0,5%	3	1,5%	15	75%	1	0,5%	0	0%

Source: own research.

The youth listed the following problems as the most important (Table 3): the need to make important life decisions (choice of school, profession), lack of support from others, problems in the family (unemployment, conflicts with parents). As very important, they indicated the following: loneliness and being lost among people, lack of goals, life perspectives, and plans for the future. Among important problems, they distinguished: lack of authority figures or disillusionment with authority figures, problems and stress at school, rebellion against the existing reality, and difficulties with peer interactions. They considered problems with the opposite sex as not very important or unimportant. The teachers presented a slightly different hierarchy of problems

they observed in adolescents (Table 4). They rated problems in the family as the most important (unemployment, lack of money). As very important, they indicated: lack of authority figures or disillusionment with authority figures, conflicts with parents and other adults, problems in contacts with peers, and problems with the opposite sex. Among the important ones, they distinguished: loneliness and feeling lost among people, lack of goals and perspectives in life, lack of plans for the future, rebellion against the existing reality, and lack of support from others.

Both the youth and teachers identified the local environment in which adolescents grow up as the source of many problems. This environment seems to have determined the hierarchy the respondents adopted to indicate the problems' influence on everyday life of the examined subjects. Quite unanimously, the youth listed a number of negative factors in their social environment, which are presented in table 5.

Table 5. Negative factors in the local environment as indicated by the respondents

Negative factors in the local environment	Elementary school	Number of choices (N=67)	%	High school	Number of choices (N=42)	%
	lack of good role models among adults and peers	27	40%	lack of good role models among adults and peers	17	41%
	low standard of living	19	28%	low standard of living	15	36%
	bad example set by adults	6	24%	poverty	13	31%
	poverty	13	19%	bad example set by adults	11	26%
	peer pressure	11	16%	unemployment	10	24%
	sale of stimulants to minors	10	15%	peer pressure	9	21%
	condoning petty crime	6	9%	sale of stimulants to minors	8	19%
				condoning petty crime	6	14%

Source: own research

The data in Table 5 show that the youth are critical of the local environment in which they grow up. They point to such negative factors in this environment as:

- lack of good role models among adults and peers,
- low standard of living among local people,
- bad example set by adults,
- poverty,
- unemployment,
- peer pressure,
- addictive substances sold to minors and condoning petty crime.

These factors are related to the economic transformation of the city as well as its low material and social status; they also affect the young generation's standard of living. Lack of authorities, bad example set by adults, peer pressure and condoning antisocial behavior pose a threat of social maladjustment for young people, which may result in negative behavior such as: adaptive aggression (Connor, 2002), impulsive and instrumental aggression (Vitiello and Stoff, 1997), susceptibility to traditional and behavioral addictions (mainly Zawadzka, Stalmach, Tabak, 2016).

Table 6. Use of addictive substances by adolescents

Type of addictive substance	Number of choices students in elementary school						Number of choices by students in secondary school					
	yes	%	I only tried	%	no	%	yes	%	I only tried	%	no	%
cigarettes	45	67%	15	22%	7	11%	29	69%	8	19%	5	12%
alcohol	31	46%	21	31%	15	23%	26	62%	6	14%	10	24%
illicit drugs, designer drugs	12	18%	24	36%	31	46%	9	21%	15	36%	18	43%

Source: own research

As shown in Table 6, the youth participating in the study have full access to addictive substances. Most of them smoke cigarettes and drink alcohol, only a few use illicit and designer drugs. Their responses showed that access to cigarettes is very easy, as one can buy them in shops, get them from parents,

siblings or friends. This leads to a situation where more than half of the adolescents surveyed smoke daily or smoked on multiple occasions despite being aware of the consequences of nicotine. The use of alcohol by young people is also alarming. Beer is the most popular alcoholic beverage, followed by vodka and wine. The most common place for alcohol initiation is in the company of friends, but a significant number of youth also mentioned their own home or family. Adolescents have knowledge about detrimental effects of alcohol, hence the recorded statements: “alcohol destroys life”, “alcohol leads to addiction”. At the same time there were statements expressing approval of alcohol, passed on as social myths, e.g., that alcohol “improves the mood”, “facilitates social contacts”, “cures diseases”. What can be regarded as positive is the data on the use of illicit drugs (and designer drugs). In this area, only a few respondents admit that they use them more often, most youth admit that they merely tried psychoactive drugs. As their source of access to them, they mention their friends or a dealer.

Apart from addictions to traditional substances, behavioral addictions also constitute a problem of the youth. All the respondents routinely use cell phones; they cannot imagine their life without them. They use the phone for texting, talking, playing games, listening to music, accessing the Internet, and taking photos. They use the phone everywhere, i.e., at home, at school, on the playground, and even in church. The second piece of equipment necessary in the daily life of a young person is a computer. It is used for surfing the Internet, communicating via e-mail and social networking sites, and playing computer games, which – according to the respondents – “help to unwind”. Young people also use tablets, but it is not yet widely used in the surveyed community.

PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS

Contemporary youth faces the challenge of constant change, which results from the necessity to adapt to the changing reality, which in recent years has deepened the sense of alienation (pandemic) and threats (war, social, and economic crisis). In the face of these, often unpredictable shifts, the known strategies and ways of dealing with one’s own life do not always work. As

Zbigniew Melosik notices, “the world rushes forward, and we rush with it” (2005, p. 16) – but is it always in the right direction? In the case of young people, it depends, to a large extent, on the quality of the educational environment. The nationwide research on Polish youth conducted by the Centre for Public Opinion Research in 1994, 1996, 1998, 2003, 2008, 2010, 2013, 2016 and 2018 (<https://www.cinn.gov.pl>) showed that the aspirations and life plans of young people have remained quite similar for many years. The most important are: love and friendship, and a successful family life. Subsequently, young people focus on getting an interesting job. Other important goals in life are a satisfactory material situation and a peaceful life – without troubles and conflicts. A much smaller group of young people want a colorful, fun and rich social life. Even fewer attach importance to success in the science field, being independent at work, or living a religious life. Only a few indicate such goals as gaining political power and the possibility of making important decisions in the economic sphere (Boguszewski, 2016, pp. 52-53). There is a lack of research on the aspirations of young people brought up in a dysfunctional educational environment; therefore, the presented results may partially fill this gap.

When summarizing the research results, it is worth focusing on distinguishing what characteristics are exhibited by young people brought up in a dysfunctional family and/or local environment. The obtained results allow to identify the following characteristics of the surveyed adolescents:

- a strong need for authority figures, whom they cannot find in their formative environment,
- a critical attitude to their living environment, noticing problems in the family and local environment,
- search for support in a peer group who occupy a prominent place in their lives,
- passive forms of spending leisure time, physical and mental activity takes a distant place in their choices,
- susceptibility to traditional (mainly nicotine and alcohol) and behavioral addictions (cell phones, Internet),
- early use of addictive substances in the absence of social control over the phenomenon or even consent of adults to such behavior.

Research shows that in the family and local environment which turns out dysfunctional for the young generation, preventive and educational work conducted by educational institutions, mainly school, is necessary. The literature on the subject (Sałasiński, Badziukiewicz, 2003; Lewandowska-Kidoń, Kalinowska-Witek, 2016; Szczepanik, 2019; Bobik, 2020) draws attention to the dependence of which model of work of the given educational institution adopts on the tasks that are prevalent in the work with the child, its family, and the local environment.

In teacher's work with adolescents at risk of social maladjustment, a model of work that emphasizes interventional, environmental, and social activities may be particularly useful (Bobik, 2020, p. 209). With such a focus, the teacher deals with many ad hoc issues at school related to the living, parenting, and social situations the youth find themselves in, arranging meetings with parents for this purpose, both at school and at home. He or she thoroughly examines the student's learning conditions, is interested in whether the student is properly nourished, and whether there is an appropriate educational atmosphere at home. He or she advises parents on how to deal with difficult behavior of a teenager, how to influence his/her upbringing and development more effectively, how to involve a spouse in common care of the child and its socialization. A teacher or educator who implements this concept seeks material means to help those in need. He/she organizes subsidies for meals, looks for cheap places at summer camps, tries to get welfare benefits for families. In order to do that, he/she cooperates with institutions and organizations that help children and families, such as family counselling centers, court, welfare, police, care and education centers, prevention and re-socialization institutions.

Practical experiences of counselors allow to indicate forms of support for young people brought up in a difficult educational environment. They can be related to the research results by formulating the following recommendations:

- in terms of the lack of role models: workshops and meetings with interesting people representing various areas of social life, youth education through culture, sport, nature,
- in terms of improving the quality of the educational environment: showing patterns of a functional family (e.g. during classes), involving parents in cooperation (e.g. as part of the "School for Parents"),

concluding contracts with the student or his parents or caregivers in order to determine the rules of conduct, limits of freedom and cooperation,

- in terms of shaping a positive self-image and correct peer relations: therapeutic classes for students that can help shape the ability to deal with negative emotions (the aim of the classes may be to silence negative emotions, change the way of thinking and improve interpersonal communication), use of psychological punishments aimed to arouse feelings of responsibility for the committed negative actions, conducting workshops in the field of interpersonal communication,
- in terms of changing the way of spending free time: conducting interesting extracurricular and extracurricular activities, organizing closer and further trips, developing passions and interests,
- in terms of prevention of social risks and marginalization: meetings and workshops for students on social risks (mainly addictions) and showcasing the model of a healthy lifestyle, talks about problems bothering young people, seeking support from external institutions (therapeutic centers, social welfare, health services) for preventive measures, cooperation of various institutions (court, police, social welfare, school), creating interdisciplinary teams in order to solve problems of students and their families.

To conclude, it can be said that young people who are raised in areas threatened by social pathologies seek values, but the family and local environment does not generally constitute their source. Therefore, a great responsibility lies on educational and support institutions whose task is to recognize the needs of young people and undertake activities aimed at satisfying those needs. Simultaneously, the young people's parents should be involved in this process. The success will be achieved when the forms of activity proposed to the youth turn out to be more attractive than the current ones which are generated by negative factors in their formative environment.

REFERENCES

- Adamski, W. (1993). Młodzież współczesna [Contemporary Youth]. in: W. Pomykała (ed.), *Encyklopedia Pedagogiczna [The Encyclopedia of Pedagogy]*, 380-384. Wydawnictwo Fundacji Innowacja.
- Beck, U. (2002). *Spółeczeństwo ryzyka. W drodze do innej nowoczesności [Risk Society: Towards a New Modernity]*. Wydawnictwo Naukowe Scholar.
- Beck, U. (2012). *Spółeczeństwo światowego ryzyka. W poszukiwaniu światowego bezpieczeństwa [A world risk society. In search of world security]*. Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN.
- Bobik, B. (2020). *Instytucjonalne, środowiskowe i indywidualne uwarunkowania funkcjonowania pedagoga szkolnego [Institutional, Environmental and Individual Conditions of School Counsellor's Work]*. Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Śląskiego.
- Bobik, B. (2016). *Uzależnienia wśród młodzieży na terenach dotkniętych transformacją gospodarczą [Addiction Among Young People in Areas Affected by Economic Transition]*, 6, 38-46. Problemy Opiekuńczo-Wychowawcze.
- Boguszewski, R. (2016). Aspiracje, dążenia i plany życiowe młodzieży. in: *Młodzież 2016. Raport z badania [Youth 2016. Research report]*, 52-77. Wydawca CBOS i Krajowe Biuro ds. Przeciwdziałania Narkomanii. Accessed 20.01.2021 on http://www.cinn.gov.pl/AppData/Local/Temp/Młodzież_2016_raport_z_badania.pdf
- Boni, M. (2021). *Młodzi 2020. W poszukiwaniu tożsamości. Raport [Young 2020. In search of identity. Report]*. Wydawca Fundacja Batorego.
- Castells, M. (2007). *Spółeczeństwo sieci [The Rise of The Network Society]*. Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN.
- Connor, D.E. (2002). *Aggression and Antisocial Behavior in Children and Adolescents: Research and Treatment*. Publishing house The Guildford Press.
- Doniec, R. (2013). *Rodzina jako środowisko życia i wychowania w XXI wieku – indywidualne doświadczenia i interpretacje [The family as an environment of life and education in the 21st century – individual experiences and interpretations]*, 12 (24), 163-196. Horyzonty Wychowania.
- Gabowska, M., Gwiazda, M. (2019). *Młodzież 2018 [Youth 2018]*. Wydawca CBOS i Krajowe Biuro ds. Przeciwdziałania Narkomanii. Accssed 10.01.2021 on <https://www.cnn.gov.pl>
- Izdebska, J. (2017). *Wielowymiarowość przestrzeni życia współczesnego dziecka [Multidimensional life expanse of contemporary child]*, 38, 41-54. Zagadnienia Społeczne.
- Kanclerz, B. (2016). *Młodzież w rzeczywistości „globalnej zmiany” z pespektywy rówieśników [Youth in the reality of “global change” from their peers’ perspective]*, 2 (10), 281-294. Kultura – Spółeczeństwo – Edukacja.

- Kawula, S. (2008). Rodzina współczesna: przeobrażenia i przyszłość [Contemporary family: transformations and the future]. in: A.W. Janke (ed.), *Zarządzanie zasobami ludzkimi organizacji w czasie transformacji [Human resource management of the organization in the time of transformation]*, 112-165. Wydawnictwo Edukacyjne „Akapit”.
- Kędzior, J. (2008). Młodzież jako specyficzna kategoria społeczna [The Youth As a Special Social Category]. in: J. Kurzępa, A. Lisowska, A. Pierzchała (ed.), *Współczesna młodzież pomiędzy Eros a Thanatos [Modern Youth Between Eros and Thanatos]*, 9-17. Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Wrocławskiego.
- Kocejko, M. (2021). Sytuacja dzieci z niepełnosprawnościami w czasie pandemii COVID-19 – analiza intersekcjonalna [The situation of children with disabilities during the COVID-19 pandemic – an intersectional analysis], 20, 2, 76-91. Dziecko Krzywdzone. Teoria, badania, praktyka. Accessed 13.10.2022 on [https:// www.dzieckokrzywdzone.fdds.pl](https://www.dzieckokrzywdzone.fdds.pl)
- Krauz-Mozer, B., Borowiec, P. (2008). *Globalizacja – nieznośne podobieństwo? Świat i jego instytucje w procesie uniformizacji [Globalization – the unbearable resemblance? The world and its institutions in the process of uniformization]*. Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego.
- Lewandowska-Kidoń, T., Kalinowska-Witek, B. (2016). *Rola pedagoga szkolnego w szkolnym systemie pomocy psychologiczno-pedagogicznej [The Role of School Counselor in the System of Psychological and Pedagogical Assistance at School]*. Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Marii Curie-Skłodowskiej.
- Murzyn, A. (2001). *Filozofia edukacji schyłku XX wieku. Wybrane kwestie [Philosophy of Education at the End of 20th Century. Selected Issues]*. Oficyna Wydawnicza Impuls.
- Northey, W.F., Wells, K.C., Silverman, W.K., Bailey, C.E (2003). *Childhood behavioral and emotional disorders*, 29 (4), 523-545. *Journal of Marital and Family Therapy*.
- Oleszkowicz, A. (2006). *Bunt młodzieńczy. Uwarunkowania, formy, skutki [Adolescent Rebellion. Determinants, Forms, Consequences]*. Wydawnictwo Naukowe Scholar.
- Pawlak, M. (2021). *Najnowsze badanie: dla młodzieży izolacja jest gorsza niż nauka zdalna [Latest Study: For adolescents, isolation is worse than distance learning]*. Accessed 12.10.2022 on [https://brpd.gov.pl/2021/01/05/najnowsze-badanie-dla-młodzieży-izolacja-jest-gorsza-niz-nauka-zdalna/](https://brpd.gov.pl/2021/01/05/najnowsze-badanie-dla-mlodziezy-izolacja-jest-gorsza-niz-nauka-zdalna/)
- Powiat Labour Office in Bytom. *Statystyka dotycząca bezrobocia w powiecie bytomskim [Unemployment Statistics in Bytom Poviast]*. Accessed 04.01.2021 on <http://www.bytom.gov.pl>
- Pyżalski, J. (2015). *Wychowanie i społeczno-kulturowe kompetencje współczesnych nauczycieli [Education and socio-cultural competences of modern teachers]*. Wydawnictwo theQstudio.

- Raport z badania CBOS *Młodzież* [Youth]. Accessed 06.01.2021 on <https://www.cinn.gov.pl>
- Sałaśniński, M., Badziukiewicz B. (2003). *Vademecum pedagoga szkolnego* [Vademecum of a School Counselor]. Wydawnictwa Szkolne i Pedagogiczne.
- Simon, F.B, Stierlin, H. (1998). *Słownik terapii rodzin* [The Language of Family Therapy: A Systemic Vocabulary and Sourcebook]. Gdańskie Wydawnictwo Psychologiczne.
- Szafranec, K. (2011). *Raport Młodzi 2011. Raport Prezesa Rady Ministrów* [Report Young 2011]. Wydawnictwo IBRKK.
- Szafranec, K. (2018). *Młodzi 2018: cywilizacyjne wyzwania, edukacyjne konieczności* [Young 2018: civilization challenges, educational necessities]. Accessed 12.10.2022 on <https://mlodzi2018.pl/>.
- Sztompka, P. (2012). *Socjologia. Analiza społeczeństwa* [Sociology. Society analysis]. Wydawnictwo Znak.
- Szczepanik, R. *Podstawy pracy pedagoga szkolnego* [The Basis of School Counselor's Work]. Polski Uniwersytet Wirtualny. Accessed 16.10.2019 on <http://www.puw.pl>
- Wilk, T. (2003). *Wartości i style życia reprezentowane przez współczesną młodzież w Polsce odmiennych regionach gospodarczych* [Values and Lifestyles Represented by Contemporary Youth in Divergent Economic Regions of Poland]. Oficyna Wydawnicza Impuls.
- Vitiello, B., Stoff, D.M. (1997). *Subtypes of aggression and their relevance to child psychiatry*, 36 (3), 307-315. *Journal of American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry*.
- Voivodship Labour Office in Katowice. *Statystyka dotycząca bezrobocia w województwie śląskim* [Unemployment Statistics in the Silesian Voivodeship]. Accessed 04.01.2021 on <http://www.wupkatowice.praca.gov.pl>
- Wrzesiński, W. (2003). *Jednostka – rodzina – pokolenie* [Individual – Family – Generation]. Wydawnictwo Naukowe Uniwersytetu Adama Mickiewicza.
- Wysocka, E. (2009). *Doświadczanie życia w młodości – problemy, kryzysy i strategie ich rozwiązywania. Próba opisu strukturalno-funkcjonalnego modelu życia preferowanego przez młodzież z perspektywy pedagogiki społecznej* [Experiencing Life in Youth – Problems, Crises, and Strategies for Resolving them. An Attempt at Describing the Structural and Functional Model of Life Preferred by Adolescents from the Perspective of Social Pedagogy]. Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Śląskiego.
- Zawadzka, D, Stalmach, M., Tabak, I. (2016). *Zdrowie i zadowolenie z życia uczniów w wieku 13–17 lat jako determinanty subiektywnej witalności* [Health and life satisfaction among pupils at the age of 13–17 as determinants of the subjective vitality], 91, 14-19. *Pediatrics Polska*. Accessed 02.01.2021 on <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0031393915002565>.