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STIGMATIZATION OF CHILDREN WHO LIVE IN TERMS OF POVERTY: CAN IT BE DIFFERENT?

Children who live in difficult social conditions are one of the most discriminated groups in primary and secondary schools. These were the results of research about opinions and attitudes of children and youth conducted in Croatia in 2008. After that time Croatia has faced economic crisis which significantly influenced on increase of unemployment, insecurity on the market and on decline in population standard. The rate of children's poverty in 2010. has grown and was for the first time above the national average. Almost every third single-parent or family with three or more children is in the risk of poverty. Those circumstances have influenced the more and more unfavourable position of children and youth who live in poverty.

Poverty leads to social stigma and can lead to long-term disadvantage position of children. Because of impossibility to afford necessity means for life and education which are available to other children in poverty can be exposed to ridicule, avoidance and other forms of stigmatization from other children and parents. Researches show that mostly it's about the accumulation of disadvantages and stigma on one life-area influences other life-areas (poverty on peer relationship, availability of educational and cultural possibilities) and positions the child long-term in disadvantages position and makes it difficult to get out from this situation.

Because of all, children living in poverty started to be a significant case of interest for professional community which is making affords to encourage measures and programmes for suppression of poverty.

In the presentation we will show the results of conducted researches about the life of children in poverty, their perspective and experience of stigmatization. The data will be discussed in the context of new approaches to poverty problem solving as well programmes directed to constructive and concrete forms of help to children and their families with the goal to improve their status in society and to create the area in which they will be able to achieve their potentials and implement their life plans.

Key words: children and youth, poverty, stigmatization, programmes for help and support