Bullying in the School Environment and Possibilities of its Prevention

Abstract

The paper clarifies bullying as a socio-pathological phenomenon. It points to the causes and consequences of bullying. It presents results of research focused on the secondary prevention through an intervention programme.

Key words: bullying, aggressor, victim, consequences of bullying, prevention of bullying

Bullying as a form of aggressive behaviour turns into a momentous educational and social problem nowadays and because of its seriousness it becomes more often a subject of interest of both the professional and lay public. It is striking that the age limit when we encounter bullying is shifting. At present this phenomenon often occurs already at the younger school age. Thus, it does not concern only the age period of puberty and adolescence. We consider it particularly serious that ruthlessness and brutality increase at this age. The social climate also co-participates in the development of such behaviour, but also the weakening of family bonds, increasing unemployment, the total uncertainty of young people as well as the weakening of social control. A similar opinion is presented by M. Zelina (2004, p. 7), who states that the number of criminal offences committed by children and juveniles has risen and apart from other criminal offences the number of those bullied and bullying has grown in the school environment. It can be assumed that civilization changes which are accompanied by changes in values, disintegration of various group bonds and a growing emphasis on an individual will consequently lead to further increase in aggression (Vagnerová, 2004, p. 761). Bullying thus has become a dangerously expanding sickness of society. Its consequences include damaging the health of an individual, groups, including the family and society. It