Family of a disabled child

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Reviewed by Michaela Tichá

The publication "Family of a Disabled Child" can be seen as a specialised theoretical and practical text of transdisciplinary nature, providing up-to-date information regarding the issue of families caring for children with disabilities.

The first chapter deals with definition of the term of family, functions of family and significance of the family bonds in general, regardless of the fact whether there is a healthy or disabled child in the family and the changes occurring in the last century in the theoretical notion in the specialised literature but mainly statistically. What is significant is mainly the data recording the increasing divorce rate, growing number of children born outside the wedlock, higher age of mothers when giving birth to the first and second child and lower number of children in families. In terms of special education, the data regarding decreasing number of stillborn children is significant. This is an evidence of progress in medicine; however, this data can also mean a certain increase of the number of children that would not have survived in the past, either due to premature birth, low birth weight or congenital malformations. It is the number of children in the family, age of parents and family completeness that have a significant impact in the event of birth of a disabled child and determine the further functioning of the family and success of intervention.

Chapter Two is dedicated to family after the birth of a child with disability. The first sub-chapter analyses in detail the process of dealing with the crisis which the disability in a child represents. Since every type of disability has its own specifics and completely different impact on family, there is an extra space dedicated to the basic characteristics of a family of a child with visual disability, hearing disability and a child with cerebral palsy. Chapter Three, which is no less important, is dealing with the relationship of the parents of a disabled child and professionals in the field of pedagogy, special education, medicine and psychology. The reader is provided

with a relatively detailed characteristics of individual team approaches. In conclusion of the chapter, the starting points of pre-natal and paediatric care are described, followed by evaluation of the team approaches solved by several foreign research works. Chapter Four, which along with the two previous ones can be considered as the pivotal part of the publication in terms of significance of the information needed for good navigation through the issue focused on the family of a disabled child, is dedicated to the options of system support to these families by individual resorts.

The penultimate Chapter Five sums up the knowledge about the family of a disabled child in the contemporary foreign and Czech literature. For us, this chapter can be a guide for solving various issues related to the family of a disabled child and the need of support. What we can find here is the basic overview of the publications by authors dealing with the topics such as acceptance of a disabled child, burden of the carer, need for support, education of the child and so on.

The final Chapter Six presents the results of research focusing on parenthood, family relationships and evaluation thereof. The introductory part of the Chapter contains definition of the risks impacting the family environment the disabled child is growing up in, which can negatively influence both the child and the family's co-operation with a team of professionals. This is followed by a sub-chapter focusing on diagnostics of the family and family approach using the Parental Acceptance-Rejection Questionnaire PARQ/Control intended for diagnostics of the family relationships and parental educational style. This Questionnaire is used on an international level. The Questionnaire is created in the variant for parents or other carers and in the variant for children aged 9 to 15. In the Czech Republic, the research was attended by total of 440 children, whereof 56% were children with special educational needs and 44% were intact. It follows from the interpretation of the research results that perception of the family environment in children with special educational needs basically does not differ from the perception of intact children. By disabled children, the notion of family and the parenting style is seen as favourable, supportive and open, which can be reflected positively also in the result of intervention and thereby in the process of education of these children.

The publication in hand is a suitable guide for all professionals dealing with the issue of families caring for a disabled child. It brings up-to-date information concerning the family of a disabled child and the support options. What can be assessed very positively is the extensive list of literary sources related to individual topics as well as the comprehensive comparison of the domestic and foreign specialised studies in every chapter.

Mgr. Michaela Tichá
Institute of Special Education Studies
Faculty of Education

Palacky University Olomouc
Žižkovo náměstí 5
771 40 Olomouc
Czech Republic
e-mail: misak.ticha01@upol.cz