



SAVE

SOLUTIONS AGAINST VIOLENCE IN EUROPE

VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN IN ROMANIA

Local situation analysis: Support system and examples of good practice

**The Social and Medical Services Department
of the Municipality of Cluj-Napoca, Romania**



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1. Child abuse: concept

Considerations regarding violence against children known nationwide are a subject of interest to governmental authorities, county authorities and local authorities as well.

In terms of specificity in Romania, at governmental level, there are instruments and measures which are reglemented by the different existing institutions.

Domestic violence is one of the most serious social problems faced by the contemporary society, both internationally and in Romania as well. Although domestic violence, especially violence against women and children has constituted a subject of debate for decades, the international community has failed to put an end to this extremely destructive phenomena until nowadays.

Domestic violence is a complex issue involving both the protecting the personal integrity of victims and protecting their common social interests, such as freedom and democracy.

Generally, **the abuse** may be defined as being an inappropriate behavior causing intentional physical, mental, financial injury, to an individual or group (taking into account the cultural, social factors, the situation of children in every country, prosperity, income distribution).

Particularly an **abuse of a child**, means "any act committed by an adult, which is detrimental to his development, which is physically or emotionally destructive for him" (Holt Romania, 2002, p. 358).

The abuse is "squeezing the power difference between an adult and a child with the disregard of the personality of the second" (Roth, 1999, p. 45).

A **child abuse** is "any voluntary action of a person who is in a relationship of responsibility, trust or authority over it, through which the life, the development of physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social, personal integrity, physical or mental health of the child is jeopardized " (art. 89, paragraph 1, Law No. 272/2004).

Types of violence against children:

- Physical abuse: acts by a caregiver that cause actual physical harm or have the potential to harm;
- Sexual abuse: acts where a caregiver uses a child for sexual satisfaction;
- Emotional abuse: failure of a caregiver to provide an appropriate and supportive environment, and including acts that have an adverse effect on the emotional health and development of a child;



- Neglect: failure of a caregiver to provide conditions for the development of the child in one or more of the following areas: health, education, emotional development, nutrition, shelter and safe living conditions (to distinguish from circumstances of poverty).

- Cybermobbing (-bullying, -stalking etc.): has become more prevalent over the last few years. It occurs when a person uses the internet to embarrass, threaten, harass or otherwise cause harm to individuals.

Our report within SAVE (Solutions Against Violence In Europe) project will focus on physical, sexual and psychological violence against children.

2. Description of Romanian institutions involved in the child abuse field

The National Authority for Child Protection, hereinafter referred to as the **Authority**, is organized and operates as a specialized body of the central public administration, with legal personality, subordinated to the the Ministry of Labour, Family, Social Protection and the Elderly, according to Decision no. 1432 issued in September 2nd, 2004 regarding the responsibilities, organization and the functioning of the National Authority for Child Protection.

The Child Protection Division is a specialized department within the Ministry of Labor, Family, Social Protection and the Elderly.

2.1 Institutions at national level

ANPDC – The National Authority for Child Protection- **DPC** – The Child Protection Department

- elaborates and develops programs in the family protection field in order to prevent and combat domestic violence in the family and in the child protection field and promotion of children's rights;
- monitors the compliance of legal children's rights and recommends the local and central authorities to take the necessary measures in the field;
- summarizes and synthesizes information about the principles and norms established by the Convention regarding the Rights of the Child which was ratified by Law no. 18/1990, republished, with all ulterior modifications, and monitors and takes the necessary steps to implement the recommendations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child;
- coordinates and methodologically guides the activities of the services which prevent the child's separation from his/her parents, of the services of special child protection and of the activities of the child protection committees;
- elaborates standards, methodological rules and work procedures for the services which ensure the prevention of the child's separation from his/her parents, the services for the special protection of the child, as well as for the family protection, for the services for domestic violence victims and the ones destined to the perpetrators;
- elaborates the accreditation methodology and the evaluation criteria for the services destined to prevent the child's separation from his/her parents, the services for the special protection of the child, as well as for the family protection, for the services for domestic violence victims and issues the licence for these services:

2.2 Institutions at local and county level

DGASPC – The General Department for Social Work and Child Protection

The General Department for Social Work and Child Protection has the following responsibilities in the child protection field:

- a) coordinates the social work, child and family protection activities at county level;
- b) coordinates, at county level, the activities and the implementation measures of the objectives of the county strategy in the child protection field;
- c) assures the methodological guidance of the activities of the social work public services;
- d) assures, at county level, the uniform application of the legal provisions of the legislation regarding the child protection field;
- e) monitors and analyzes the compliance with the children's rights legislation at county level and makes proposals regarding the measures to be taken for the situations within which they are violated;
- f) monitors the authorized activity according to article no. performed by children in the following fields: cultural, artistic, sports, publicity and modelling, in its area of territorial competence;
- g) requests information and documents, under the law, from any public or private, legal person or from any persons involved in its sphere of competence.

The General Department for Social Work and Child Protection which is subordinated to the County Council has the main responsibility to deal with the intervention part in child abuse cases. Any person or institution can notify this institution regarding any abuse situation against a child or a known situation.

The General Department for Social Work and Child Protection assesses the situation of abused children or notified cases and then establishes and implements an intervention plan. In case of necessity the institution proposes special protection measures or emergency special protection measures.

Within The General Department for Social Work and Child Protection also functions a shelter for women, domestic violence victims, and their children, in another city, Campia Turzii.

The public social work services organized in cities and towns, as well as the staff involved in social work within the local municipal councils fulfill the following duties regarding the child protection field:

- a) monitor and analyze the situation of children in the administrative-territorial unit, and the observance of the rights of children, ensuring the centralization and synthesizing of relevant data and information, based on a monitoring sheet approved by the Minister of Labour, Family, Social Protection and the Elderly;
- b) prevent the child separation from his family;
- c) identify and assess the situations which require the provision of services and/ or benefits for preventing the separation of children from their families;
- d) develop the necessary documentation for providing services and/or benefits and grant these services and/or benefits under the law;
- e) provide counseling and information to families with children regarding their rights and obligations, about children's rights and the services available at local level;
- f) ensure and monitor the implementation of measures to prevent and combat alcohol and drug abuse, to prevent and combat domestic violence and delinquent behavior;
- g) make home visits regularly, to families and children who receive services and benefits and keep track of the use of benefits and families who take care of children with parents working abroad;
- h) submit proposals to the mayor, if necessary, to take measures for the special protection of children, under the law;
- i) keep track of the evolution of the child development and how his parents exercise their rights and fulfill their obligations with regard to the child who has benefited from a special protection measure and was reinstated in his family;
- j) collaborate with the General Directorate of Social Work and Child Protection in the child protection field and transmit all data and information required in this area;
- k) monitor the implementation of the decisions of the child protection commission / court guardianship regarding the actions of local interest

3. Relevant data regarding domestic violence, research

3.1 Data regarding domestic violence at national level

Source: UNICEF

The statistical data found in a UNICEF research shows that Romania had a total of 82,000 reported cases of domestic violence and 800 deaths between 2008-2011. The CURS opinion poll conducted in 2008 shows that in 45 % of families in Romania there is a risk of violence against children and 10% of them are manifested as forms of abuse on minors

The characteristics of child abuse committed by parents in the family environment demonstrate that:

- 38 % of the parents recognize physical abuse on children in the family
- 63 % of the children say they are beaten at home by their parents

„Corrections” like „slapping” and „ shaking” are not perceived by most parents, and to a certain extent, by children, as being physical abuse behaviors.

- 20 % of parents positively appreciate beating as a means of education of the child

18 % of the children say that they have been beaten at home with a stick, 13 % of the children say that they have been beaten at home with a belt, 8 % of the children say that they have been beaten at home with a wooden spoon

Characteristics of child abuse committed by teachers in the school environment show that 86% of children are scolded by teachers when they are wrong; 33% of children are offended and labelled at school by teachers and 7% of children say they are beaten by their teachers

Source: The abuse and neglect of children in families: sociological study at national level. “SAVE THE CHILDREN ORGANIZATION” 2013

Data collected from studies such as BECAN, DAPHNE

The first data of this study shows that:

	Type of experience	Male abuser N = 4398	Woman abuser N = 5042
girls N = 2983	psychological	N = 1265, P = 60.8%	N = 1826, P = 87.7%
	physical abuse	N = 725, P = 57.2%	N = 1010, P = 79.7%
	sexual	N = 109, P = 81.3%	N = 35, P = 26.1%
	sexual contact	N = 40, P = 29.9%	N = 3, P = 2.2%
	positive methods	N = 2038, P = 70.4%	N = 2779, P = 96.0%
boys N = 2272	psychological	N = 1193, P = 74.1%	N = 1232, P = 76.5%
	physical abuse	N = 752, P = 69.9%	N = 806, P = 74.9%
	Sexual abuse	N = 61, P = 49.6%	N = 80, P = 65.0%
	sexual contact	N1 = 9, P1 = 7.3%	N1 = 61, P1 = 49.6%
	positive methods	N = 1806, P = 83.8%	N = 1949, P = 90.4%

Table 1 psychological abuse

The data presented below has been published in various books, so the copyright on information borne by the team called BECAN

In case of psychological abuse (Table 1), according to the analysis of the questionnaires applied on parents, in 2012-2013, the prevalence of abuse was higher in mothers (58.5%) than fathers (54.9%) as well as lifetime prevalence of abuse (75.7% for mothers and 73.9% for fathers).

Table 2. The prevalence of psychological abuse reported by different gender parents in 2011 taking into consideration the growing up period of the child (David Agnes et all, 2012)

Respondent	Prevalence of psychological abuse in 2011		Lifetime prevalence of psychological abuse	
	No form	At least one form	No form	At least one form
Mother	403 (41.5%)	569(58.5%)	236 (24.3%)	736 (75.7%)
Father	102(45.1%)	124 (54.9%)	59 (36.7%)	167 (73.9%)
Total	505 (42. 2%)	693 (57.8%)	295 (24.6%)	903 (75.4%)

Table 2.

The gender difference remains in the samedirection in the case of physical abuse as well (table 2), where the figures indicate a higher prevalence of abusive behaviours of mothers than those of fathers, at least in 2011 (37.3% – mother 32.7% – father), for lifetime (69.4% – mothers și 63.3% fathers).

Respondent	Prevalence of physical abuse in 2011		Lifetime prevalence of physical abuse	
	No form	At least one form	No form	At least one form
Mother	609 (62.7%)	363 (37.3%)	297 (30.6%)	675 (69.4%)
father	152 (67.3%)	74 (32.7%)	83 (36.7%)	143 (63.3%)
Total	761 (63.5%)	437 (36.5%)	380 (31.7%)	818 (68.3%)

Table 3. *physical abuse*

It is important to take into consideration within this context the frequency of using practices of positive discipline by parents of different gender.

In table 3 it can be observed that this time, mothers use methods of positive discipline more than fathers: 96.6 % to 95.6 % in the case of fathers if we mention the last year of the child; and 98.1% to 96.9% in the case of fathers if we mention lifetime prevalence.

Table 4. Prevalence of positive discipline methods reported to different gender parents (taken from David Agnes at all, 2012)

Respondent	Prevalence of positive discipline methods in 2011		Prevalence of positive discipline methods per lifetime	
	No form	At least one form	No form	At least one form
mother	33 (3.4%)	939 (96.6%)	18 (1.9%)	954 (98.1%)
father	10 (4.4%)	216 (95.6%)	7 (3.1%)	219 (96.9%)
Total	43 (3.6%)	1155(96.4%)	25 (2.1%)	1173 (97.9%)

Table 4. Positive discipline methods

From the comparative analysis of the results presented above we can observe that, considering all forms of abuse, if we refer to mothers, the abusive behavior is presented with a greater frequency than that of fathers, but at the same time, mothers use positive discipline methods more frequently than fathers. Therefore, it can be easily noticed that mothers are more involved in educational tasks to children than fathers. There is a recent study in Romania (Hărăguș, 2012) which shows that mothers are more involved than fathers in taking educational duties towards children.

Agnes David-Kacso (2012) while discussing these results takes into consideration the time spent by the parent with the child in order to understand the higher frequency of abusive behavior of mothers than that of fathers and the greater involvement mothers in correcting children's behavior compared with the fathers'.

If we observe the presence of abuse in Romania, depending on the residence environment, we can notice significant differences for certain types of abuse.

The differences are significant in the case of emotional abuse and in that of positive discipline methods.

In Table 4 we can see that emotional abuse and the use of positive discipline methods are more common in urban areas than in rural areas, while in rural areas the physical abuse is more common. The differences are significant for emotional abuse and positive discipline methods .

Table 5. Types of abuse on children considering their residence area (taken from Baciu et all, 2012)

Area of residence	Emotional abuse	Physical abuse	Sexual abuse	Sexual contact	Positive discipline methods
Urban N = 3302	N = 3293, P = 70.5%	N = 3288, P = 43.3%	N = 3264, P = 5.2%	N1 = 3260, P1 = 2.5%	N = 3294, P = 95.6%
Rural N = 2602	N = 2592, P = 59.8%	N = 2580, P = 46.7%	N = 2558, P = 4.9%	N1 = 2554, P1 = 1.8%	N = 2588, P = 90.6%
Chi-Square Tests Exact Sig. (2-sided)	.000	.010	.631	.086	.000

Table 5. Types of abuse on children considering their residence area

In order to clearly understand these differences in using positive discipline methods more frequently in urban areas than in rural areas, authors refer to the level of education which is higher in urban areas, to the accessibility to education and information through the media, school activities, internet, which are easier to reach in an urban environment than in a rural one. In rural areas the concern about children's education is not as evident and the lack of interest of the parents lead to their selecting information from the media which is detrimental to their learning positive discipline practices suitable for a harmonious growth of their children.

Exposure to abusive experiences in childhood:

<p>Exposure to abuse, neglect and disfunctionalities at family level</p> <p>Physical abuse</p>	<p>A relatively high percentage (27,5% of men and 26,6%of women) have been exposed to a form of physical abuse in the first 18 years of life. There aren't significant differences between men and women regarding their exposure to physical abuse in childhood.</p>
<p>Corporal punishment</p>	<p>More than one third (37,1%) of the respondents have reported that they have been physical punished this way during their first 18 years of life. There are significant differences between men and women regarding their exposure to this kind of physical abuse in childhood, as men have reported a higher prevalence of this kind of punishment (42,4 % vs 34,4 %). Men have reported that they have been hit at least with a medium intensity, more than women (39,9% vs. 29,2%).</p>
<p>Psychological abuse</p>	<p>23,6 % of the participants to the study have been psychologically abused. There aren't significant differences between men and women regarding their exposure to psychological abuse, but women have reported a grater prevalence of psychological abuse than men in the first 18 years of life (24,9% vs 21,3%)</p>
<p>Sexual abuse</p>	<p>9% of the participants to the study have reported that they have been sexually abused in the first 18 years of life, but women have reported a grater prevalence of exposure to sexual abuse than men. The most frequent form of sexual abuse to which the participants to the study have been exposed was the touching of the body (7,6 % of the participants). 3.6 % of the participants have reported that adults have tried to have sex with them. 2,7 % of the respondents went through fully sexual contacts as form of sexual abuse. There are differences between men and women regarding their exposure to sexual abuse in childhood.</p>

Exposure to abusive experiences in childhood:
 The results of a study developed by the World Health Organization in Romania on students -2012

Tabel 6. Relevant data at national level regarding violence against children

<i>Cases of abuse, neglect, exploitation (period: January 1st, 2014 –September 30th, 2014)</i>									
Cases:	Total Cases	Urban	Rural	Number of children who remain in the family (services offered)	Number of children for whom the DGASPC director has disposed the measure of emergency placement (and other services)	Number of children for whom the court has disposed emergency placement with presidential ordinance and DGASPC offers other services	Number of cases for which the criminal prosecution of the prosecutor has been initiated	Number of active cases	Number of closed cases
a) physical abuse	779	362	417	641	131	7	90	326	453
b) emotional abuse	1304	738	566	1155	149	0	16	588	716
c) sexual abuse	449	136	313	379	69	1	194	168	281
d) Neglect	6575	2867	3708	4521	1910	144	100	2530	4045
e) Exploitation through work	208	143	65	186	19	3	16	93	115
f) Sexual exploitation	23	13	10	18	5	0	13	10	13
g) Exploitation for committing felonies	120	66	54	115	5	0	2	81	39
Total	9458	4325	5133	7015	2288	155	431	3796	5662

Case of:	Family	Foster care	Rezidential Services	Educational institutions	Other institutions	Other locations
a) Physical abuse	716	2	6	15	1	39
b) Emotional abuse	1254	4	6	12	1	27
c) Sexual abuse	264	2	4	7	1	171
d) Neglect	6428	8	6	6	19	108
e) Exploitation through work	109	0	0	0	5	94
f) Sexual exploitation	7	0	0	0	0	16
g) Exploitation for committing felonies	51	0	0	0	0	69
Total	8829	16	22	40	27	524

Cases of:	Gender distribution		Total
	Masculine	Feminine	
a) Physical abuse	394	385	779
b) Emotional abuse	607	697	1304
c) Sexual abuse	75	374	449
d) Neglect	3361	3214	6575
e) Exploitation through work	134	74	208
f) Sexual exploitation	0	23	23
g) Exploitation for committing felonies	87	33	120
Total	4658	4800	9458

http://www.copii.ro/alte_categorii.html

3.2 Data regarding domestic violence at local level (Cluj county and city)

Regarding the number of violence/abuse situation at Cluj county level, the statistic report of 2014 provided to us by the **The General Department for Social Work and Child Protection** shows the following data:

160 reported cases of which:

60 cases– emotional abuse

44 cases – physical abuse

21 cases – sexual abuse

35 cases - neglect

2013				
Number of domestic violence victims		Age distribution of domestic violence cases		
		0-13 years old	14-17 years old	above 18 years old
masculine	urban	38	2	0
	rural	34	3	1
feminine	urban	27	19	52
	rural	41	13	21
Total		140	37	74
2014 – until October 1 st				
Number of domestic violence victims		Age distribution of domestic violence cases		
		0-13 years old	14-17 years old	above 18 years old
masculine	urban	27	4	0
	rural	26	7	0
feminine	urban	20	7	7
	rural	45	10	27
Total		118	28	34

Another statistic report was provided to us by the **The Local Police Department**, through **The Centre for Crime Prevention**. This report shows the following data:

For 2013: 481 cases of domestic violence out of which 46 fellanies were committed between relatives

- 4 cases- bad treatment applied on minors
- 371 cases- family abandonment
- 47 cases- did not comply with the measures of child custody
- 1 case- homicide
- 2 cases- murder attempt
- 1 case- injury
- cases- threats
- 1 case- illegal deprivation of liberty
- 42 cases- physical violence

For 2014: 410 cases of domestic violence

- 8 cases- bad treatment applied on minors
- 243 cases- family abandonment
- 38 cases- did not comply with the measures of child custody
- 2 cases- homicide
- case- murder attempt
- case- injury
- 10 cases- threats
- 99 cases- physical violence
- 1 case- blackmail
- 6 cases- incest
- 1 case- harassment

4. Legislation in the domestic violence field at national level

<p>Law no. 18/1990</p>	<p>Law no. 18/1990 ratifying the Convention on the Rights of the Child of 20 November 1989 (published in Official Gazette no. 314 of 13 June 2001)</p>
<p>The Hague Convention of October 19th, 1996</p>	<p>The Hague Convention of October 19th, 1996 on Jurisdiction, Applicable Law, Recognition, Enforcement and Cooperation in respect with Parental Responsibility and Measures for the Protection of Children *) > Adopted on 10.19.1996 (October 19th, 1996) and came into force on 01.01.2002 (1 January 2002)</p>
<p>The UN Convention of 1989 regarding the rights of the child</p>	<p>The United Nations Convention on 20.11.1989 Republished in the Official Gazette, Part I, no . 314 of 06.13.2001 (13 June 2001) on the Rights of the Child</p>
<p>Convention on the prohibition of child labour</p>	<p>Convention no. 182/1999 regarding the prohibition of the most severe forms of child labour and taking immediate actions for their elimination, published in The Official Gazette, No. 577 of 17.11.2000 (17 November 2000)</p>
<p>Law no. 272/2004 (the actual version)</p>	<p>Law no. 272/2004 regarding Child Protection and Promoting the Rights of the Child, Published in the Official Gazette no. 557 of 23.06.2004 as modified by Law no. 257/2013</p>
<p>Art 49 of the Romanian Constitution</p>	<p>The protection of children and youngsters in the Romanian Constitution – Art. 49 (1) Children and young people enjoy are subject to special protection and assistance in realizing their rights (2) The State offers allowances for children and benefits for the</p>

	<p>care of the ill or the disabled. Other forms of social protection for children and young people shall be established by law.</p> <p>(3) The exploitation of minors, their employment in activities that might harm their health or morals, or endanger their life and normal development are prohibited.</p> <p>(4) Minors under the age of 15 may not be employed as employees.</p> <p>(5) The Public authorities have the obligation to contribute to creating the conditions for the free participation of young people in political, social , economic, cultural and sports life of the country.</p>
<p>Law no. 217/2003 regarding domestic violence</p>	<p>Law no. 217/2003 regarding domestic violence (published in the Official Gazette no. 367/29.05.2003)</p>
<p>Declaration no 1386 of the UN Organization regarding children's rights</p>	<p>Declaration no. 1386 of the UN Organization regarding children's rights proclaimed in the General Meeting of 20.11.1959.</p>
<p>The New Civil Code</p>	<p>The family institution in the new civil code - guide for the use of SNG trainers (the national school of clerks)</p>
<p>Methodology framework for the implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, which was ratified by Romania through Law No.18 / 1990 and Law no.272 / 2004 * updated* on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of the Child and Law No.217/2003* updated</p>	<p>Methodology framework for prevention and intervention within the multidisciplinary team and networkin cases of violence against children and domestic violence</p>

in 2014 to prevent and combat domestic violence	
Law no. 286/2009	Law no. 286/2009 regarding the new Penal Code, published in the Official Gazette no. 510 of July 24 th , 2009, in vigoare de la 1 februarie 2014.

Orders which establish the inter-institutional cooperation regarding social work services

- Ord. 95/2006 – which establishes the cooperation with DGASPC
- Ord. 5115/2015 – which establishes the cooperation with the educational system
- Ord. 1103/2015 – which establishes the cooperation with hospitals

5. Presentations of good practice models

In the following section, we shall present a few different local practice models, which are linked to the theme of the report:

5.1 Cluj County Intervention Centre for Abused Children

Address: Cluj-Napoca, 56 Avram Iancu St.

Tel/fax: 0040 264 430 909

Contact: Mrs. Dana Joldea, Head of Department,

e-mail: cjica_cluj@yahoo.com

Cluj County Intervention Centre for Abused Children is subordinated to the The General Department for Social Work and Child Protection (the county level institution) and it provides protection services to abused/neglected children by the parents or by any other persons who are responsible for taking care of them and their development.

The capacity of the centre:

-the residential component offers 14 places to children who are exposed to any forms of abuse or neglect within their families or outside of them.

The multidisciplinary team consists of:

- Social workers
- Educators
- Psychologists

The centre provides services such as:

- Counseling and personal optimization
- Mediation of social relations and of relations with family members
- Legal advice

- Receiving and hosting abused children in secure conditions, within a special shelter

There are 3 specialized components within the centre

- a counseling centre for abused, neglected and exploited children
- a secret shelter which is destined to the upper-mentioned category - „Perlino” House, which offers protective residential services
- foster - currently consists of seven caregivers trained to work with children victims of abuse

Eversince its creation in 2003 through a PHARE funding, the centre has been acting successfully in the child abuse field, being the only institution of this kind in the county, and offering all the integrated services mentioned above in a professional manner.

The professionals working within the centre receive complaints through diverse channels, most cases being referred by city halls, hospitals, police departments, schools. When they receive these complaints they make a complex assessment, make contact to all parties involved and other relevant persons, they talk to the local authorities, to neighbours, family, school, kindergarten, etc, in order to obtain as much information about the case as possible. This way they can decide whether to establish a special protection measure or to keep the child within the family.

This very much depends on the family's willingness to cooperate or not. In case they decide to keep the child within the family, the professionals offer the family psychological counseling and they monitor the situation together with the local authorities. If the professionals of the centre decide to establish a special protection measure, this would mean finding a maternal assistant or a special centre (if the child's life is in danger).

The statistics show the fact that the most frequent cases of child abuse are the ones involving physical abuse(around 50 cases/ year in the last years), followed by the ones involving sexual abuse (around 30 cases/year in the last years), emotional abuse and exploitation through labour.

Every new case represents a real challenge to the professional working within the Cluj County Intervention Centre for Abused Children and we consider that their work should be replicated in other similar institutions in other counties as well.

5.2 A different, innovative approach

Following all campaigns and other such events, which have the purpose of raising awareness and understanding among the general public about the harmful effects of domestic violence and abuse, a few representatives of the local authorities of Cluj-Napoca, of local profile NGOs and representatives of other institutions such as The Local Police Department, the District Attorney's Office, Babes-Bolyai University of Cluj-Napoca, lawyers and other institutions decided to form an initiative group in the violence field. They had a few meetings and then they decided that they should be organized in an official way in order to be more efficient. In this regard, they signed a cooperation agreement to work together on domestic violence matters, both in a theoretical and practical way as well.

The newly formed initiative group has started to grow and have more and more participants with valuable expertise from the field. They monthly meet and discuss the legislative changes in the domestic violence field, other changes that should be made for legislation improvement in the field, possible collaborations between group members and institutions, certain violence cases.

As all these participants to the initiative group against domestic violence are linked, it is clear that every participant in the group will do his/ her best to refer any domestic violence victim to the right person and to help the victim take the right steps for herself, in order to improve her situation.

As the initiative group in the violence field has been functioning for awhile, it intends to write projects and develop services for the target group in order to work more efficiently in the area.

We consider it a good practice model, in a innovative way, because we are not aware of other similar structures formed of so many different institution in the field of violence working together in order to improve the situation of the violence victims.

6. Interviews with experts in the domestic violence field

In order to identify good practice models at local level (Cluj-Napoca, Romania), we chose 8 experts from different institutions who have worked or work within projects/ programs or campaigns addressed to the sphere of emotional -psychological violence, of physical violence and of sexual violence against children.

We chose experts working in public institutions and in private profile institutions, in order to be able to sense the differences (if there are differences) in their approach of the violence phenomena.

Following the interviews, after analyzing and interpreting the answers of the respondents, we outlined relevant aspects in the work of the local experts in the violence field covering the three levels of interest for the project.

Most of the persons who participated in the interview work in institutions belonging to the public sphere which have, among their objectives, the objectives of prevention, detection and intervention in situations of violence against children in identified cases.

If we refer to the institutions which were represented in our interviews, first we consider that we should point out some of their relevant actions in the domain of the project:

The first institution we chose to be represented by experts in the interviews, is our own, **The Social and Medical Services Department of the Municipality of Cluj-Napoca**. Its mission is that of identifying the social problems of the local community and finding the proper solutions regarding child and family protection, the elderly, persons with disabilities and other persons in need. Since it is the most complex institution in the social field at municipal level, and there is a department called ***The Child and Family Protection Department***, which functions within it, it is clear that our social workers and psychologists get involved in child abuse and domestic violence cases often. As our institution deals only with the prevention part in child abuse matters, it makes an initial assessment of the child's situation and then refers the case to the institutions which are abilitated to do the instrumentation and intervention part.

Ever since its founding in 2008, The Social and Medical Services Department started to get involved in actions for women who were victims of domestic violence. These actions were linked to violence against children as well, as in families where acts of domestic violence exist, unfortunately and inevitably, they are collateral victims as well. In this regard, these women and children were psychologically counselled, their relationship with their partner was mediated and they received support for benefitting from social allowances. A part of these women were advised to enter

specialized shelters for domestic violence victims. We don't have a specialized centre for domestic violence victims and their children in Cluj-Napoca, but we have helped victims by offering them temporary shelter in our Emergency Night Shelter for Homeless People. Some of these women have entered the shelter and brought their children with them, because they could not leave them with their aggressive partner. This way, the children could continue focussing on their education and escape the violent environment. They have been psychologically and professionally counselled as well within the centre. Most of them have found a job and left the shelter afterwards because it enabled them to afford paying the rent and taking care of their children as well. Considering the fact that domestic violence and abuse against children cannot be eradicated only by using individual intervention measures, The Social and Medical Services Department initiated local prevention campaigns, every year, with the purpose of raising awareness and understanding among the general public about the harmful effects of domestic violence.

Another action of our institution was an advocacy campaign which led to the forming of several periodic discussion work-shops regarding domestic violence towards women and children. We need to mention some of the activities of the mentioned institution which we consider to be relevant. The Child and Family Protection Department was actively involved in the annual 16 days Campaign against violence towards women, called "Stop the violence towards women". This event was organized in partnership by institutions and private non-governmental organizations such as: PATRIR, AFIV ARTEMIS, The Labour, Family and Social Protection Ministry, The Social Work Faculty within Babes-Bolyai University of Cluj-Napoca, The Local Police Department, World Vision Romania, ANES. The need of modifying the national legislation regarding domestic violence was clearly pointed out during these campaigns.

The Social and Medical Services Department of the municipality of Cluj-Napoca has written an application which implies the creation and development of a Counseling and Support Centre for Children and their parents and it intends to apply for receiving the necessary funding as soon as the financing lines will be available this year. One of the roles of this centre will focus on prevention, detection and intervention in situations of violence against children. The specialists working in the The Child and Family Protection Department within the institution will refer all cases which match this profile to the centre. Another project which will be issued as soon as the financing lines will be available this year is creating a specialised shelter for women, victims of domestic violence, which will focus on their children as well if the case. The implementation of this project would mean reducing domestic violence cases and minimizing the negative consequences of domestic violence to victims and collateral victims in Cluj-Napoca. The actions to be funded within this project will contribute to the improvement of the safety of victims and their children. Apart from all these, there

will be educational and recreational activities for children which will seek to evaluate the way the children adapt to their scholar activities and will provide a framework for relaxation (theatre, film, games etc.). There will be activities which will assure the development of their abilities and will work on their deficiencies and they will be supported in doing their homework. There will also be created a counseling centre for the victims and their children, which will be complementary to the shelter. One of the activities of this counseling centre would be offering counseling to children (they have the opportunity to discuss their needs, problems, to share their experiences of violence). This activity would increase emotional stability and would help the children overcome the consequences of trauma.

The target group of the The Child and Family Protection Department is the community, the children and their parents.

The second institution we interviewed is **The Local Police Department**, through **The Centre for Crime Prevention**, which was founded in 2012 through a financing line of the German Federal Government, together with the Municipality of Cluj-Napoca who provided the building for the activity of the centre, has conducted and conducts regular violence prevention actions in educational institutions like schools, day-care centres and residential centres at local level. These actions are mostly campaigns financed through the state budget and have permanent character. These campaigns are developed at their initiatives but at the initiatives, proposals and requests which come from other institutions, as well.

The campaigns are permanent activities for this institution, but they have changed through time, meaning that nowadays they are addressed to certain, specific target groups and their messages are adapted to the sphere of the children's interest and needs. The persons running the campaigns within the The Centre for Crime Prevention want to make sure that the right message is transmitted to the right target group and that the message is heard and understood, that is why they concentrate on smaller groups of children having the same needs and interest regarding the violence field.

The core contents or specific aspects of their concept are: preventing violence among children and children abuse.

The target groups of their actions are: children, teachers, parents.

The third institution we interviewed is a private one, **The Association of Women Against Violence- ARTEMIS** was the first local/county NGO who aimed to provide specialized care for girls and women affected by abuse and violence. Their programs were initiated and developed by a team of psychologists and psychiatrists, psychotherapists, social workers, lawyers and economists.



The team was enriched over time with volunteers and staff from various other fields, all with a desire to contribute to changing the situation of women experiencing abuse, violence. Currently the team AFIV - ARTEMIS is involved in providing counseling services - in Cluj and Baia Mare. The association is active in local action groups against domestic violence and in the national network of NGOs active against domestic violence and violence against women.

One of their important projects was establishing a Counseling center for women and children victims of domestic violence, through a project which was entitled "Violence leaves you speechless, together we can end the silence". They offer specialized services for victims of violence, abuse and human trafficking.

The target groups of the organization are women and girls in situations of domestic violence, sexual violence, human trafficking and abused children (violence, sexual abuse, neglecting).

The core contents or specific aspects of their concept are:

- Promoting measures needed to combat violence against women;
- Promoting the rights of people victimized by any form of violence;
- Promotion and accreditation of the expert status in working with the victimized persons and that of the trainer for professionals who come into contact with these people;
- Facilitate communication between professionals who come into contact with victims of violence;
- Change of mentality in terms of violence, possibilities and importance of social psychological and legal assistance to people suffering from violence;

The scientific fundamentals/ concepts their concept rely on are the theories about maintaining the victim in a situation of violence: theories which place the causes of maintaining the victims in violent relationships to interpersonal factors, the traumatic attachment of the victim to aggressor theory, the victim blaming theory, the feminist theory.

Finally, the last institution we interviewed was the one we used in the good practice model section, **Cluj County Intervention Centre for Abused Children**, public institution subordinated to the The General Department for Social Work and Child Protection. We won't mention all its attributes again, but we will say that they conduct different campaigns addressed to the large public and to smaller target groups in order to prevent the violence and abuse against children from happening. They are the "top" institution in the intervention aspect of dealing with different types of abuse against children.

General discussion over the answers of the respondents:

All the experts who were interviewed from all institutions mention the fact that they carry out assessment and counseling activities for abused children. All these activities are directly related to physical, emotional and sexual abuse but make reference to the exploitation of children too. Social workers, psychologists and educators work within most of the services of this kind. The partnerships established within inter-institutional collaborations aim at specialized services such as detecting and preventing specialized intervention in violence against children.

The content on which the programs conducted at municipal level are based take into consideration aspects such as: legislative powers (for example Law no. 61/2004, Law no.272/2004, The Criminal Code, Government Ordinance no. 113/2014), theories of the social work system (the systemic theory, the functionalist theory) and cognitive-behavioural psychology theories, explanatory theories, behavioural paradigms). To all these, the roles of the different services regulated by specific laws and regulations are assigned. In addressing the issue of violence there are partnerships between public and private institutions for approaching systematically the three levels of working with violence (prevention, detection and case management). These partnerships are important because of the fact that within the public system, the three aspects of violence are regulated separately. This means that, in Romania, there are institutions which only do the prevention part, although all institutions deal with the prevention of such violence cases (for example The Social and Medical Services Department and The Local Police Department, profile NGOs, Cluj County Intervention Centre for Abused Children), other institutions which identify the violence and abuse cases (for example The Local Police Department, The Social and Medical Services Department, schools, hospitals, NGOs, etc) and instrument such cases (The Local Police Department, the District Attorney's Office), as well as other institutions who deal with the intervention part (Cluj County Intervention Centre for Abused Children, profile NGOs).

Basically the ICT tools used in addressing violence are limited to a child helpline (983), audio video materials used within violence prevention campaigns, powerpoint presentations, website, mobile phones, social networks (Facebook account), email addresses which may be used for requiring information or notifying different aspects of violence. The ICT tools are also used so that the support persons of the children can reach the services of the organizations in a manner that offers them the need information and the possibility to establish a meeting/ other form of communication

in order to offer safety and future protection for the children.

Regarding quality management, it is quite clear that none of the respondents has a clear vision on maintaining the quality of the services provided to the community in the violence field.

They all believe that supervision, institutional communication and financial support are the main contributions to the quality of programs.

Aspects which prove the need to develop these programs are limited in terms of the respondents, to financial measures, to the creation of related services to make the programs efficient in terms of portability. Continuous training of staff would be, in the opinion of those interviewed, necessary conditions to improve all activities in the field. The respondents also consider that there is need for much more collaboration and dialogue coming from other institutions involved in preventing and fighting against child abuse.

The existing best practices models as well as their replication and extension could be an opportunity if we refer to what the interviewees mention in the sense that they believe that Cluj-Napoca is a milestone in the field of psychological and social services. The chances are higher so that the concepts be transferred to other regions as the system is based on the same laws, rules, collaboration protocols. Regarding other systems, the concept is suitable for the social work system and other systems working with people at different levels.

In conclusion, referring to the above mentioned, we can underline the the following situation: The services are organized in such way that prevention is separated from the identification and intervention in child abuse cases.

As a matter of contingency, the interviewees consider that an integrated service offering unitary services in addressing violence is imperious necessary in Romania. Having said all these, our opinion is that we need to tackle violence through a continuity of actions and not a separation with different institutional objectives.

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