



Child abuse and alcohol related violence – interventions in Poland

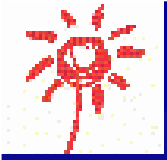
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Child Health Center, Warsaw Poland
www.czd.pl



Mederi Foundation – help the children
Mederi = help, prevent, treat
www.czd.pl/~mederi



Poland: population 40 million

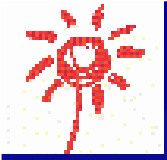
alcohol consumption: 8l/per capita



Alcoholics: 700 000 – 800 000 people

Youth drinking: high risk group 20-
25% of teen population

66% of domestic violence is linked to
alcohol abuse



2 million children living in families with alcohol problem

- * alcohol abuse
- * co-alcoholism
- * changing of roles in the family
- * depression, PTSD
- * child abuse and neglect

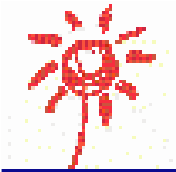


Alcohol and violence in polish families

1 among 5 polish families admit conflicts because of alcohol abuse (CBOS 2002)

1 among 4 patients of out patients clinic for alcohol dependency – admit alcohol related violent behavior directed to children

(Institute of Health Psychology 2000)



Domestic violence

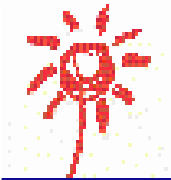
According to police statistics - **in last 6 months**

- 47 833 interventions in domestic violence
 - 77% of abusers were under alcohol influence,
 - 36,5% of victims there were children,
- Children were always witnesses of violence between parents
- 17 281: abusers in Penal Court



Increase of child abuse in alcoholic families (2005-2006) or improvement of diagnosis

- 4,5% children < 13 years
- 36,1% adolescents > 13 years



Child abuse

- 60% neglect
- 19% physical abuse
- 8% sexual abuse
- 50% emotional abuse

Support for children affected by parenteral alcohol problems

Psychological and medical help

Socio-Therapy Centers for family members of alcohol dependent person

NGO`s establishments :

Family Confidence Center - Mederi Foundation,

Telephonic Emergency Service Blue Line

Telephonic Orange Line for children

Telephonic Help for persons with alcohol problem

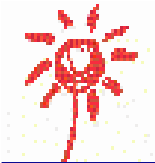
Prevention programmes: school, kindergarten



TWO WAYS OF LEGAL INTERVENTION in case of child abuse possibility of reporting

- Family and Juvenile Court = civil procedure

- Penal Procedures



In the Polish civil law

- person under the age of 18 is a person without full legal competence
- minor under the age of 15 is excluding from the public hearing ONLY in cases of offences against sexual liberty and decency and offences against family and guardianship.



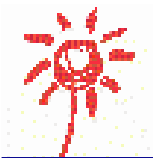
Guidelines concerning children participating in criminal procedures

1. In proceedings involving children efforts should be made to limit the number of child interviews.
2. A single interview is recommended. A child should be interviewed by the prosecutor in the presence of a psychologist.



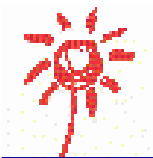
Conducting the interview

3. The interview is conducted by the judge with the presence of psychologist, prosecutor, lawyer of the offender and possible legal representative of the child (usually the parent)
4. The prosecutor shall set the place and settings of the interview with the aim of minimalizing potential trauma.
5. The setting should be adjusted to the child`s age and level of development, with audio-video equipment and a one-way mirror.
6. Good practice: the friendly interviewing room and one interview



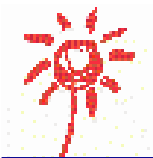
Friendly interviewing rooms

- ~130 rooms in Poland located at the police, courts, NGO`S, crisis centers, one rooms in hospital (they are equipped with usually one way mirror, the interview is recorded, expert psychologist is present before and at the interview).
- The police in Poland do not interview children.



Polish legislation on offences against children

- Whoever physically or mentally mistreats a minor who is vulnerable, shall be subject to the penalty of deprivation of liberty for a term between 3 months and 5 years.
- If the act is compounded with a particular cruelty, the perpetrator shall be subject to the penalty of deprivation of liberty for a term of between 1 and 10 years.



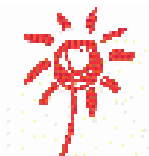
Penal Code Offences against the Family and Guardianship: Domestic violence

- Whoever induces a minor to become an inveterate drinker by supplying him/her with alcoholic beverages or by facilitating or by urging him/her to drink such beverages shall be subject to a fine, the penalty of restriction of liberty or the penalty of deprivation of liberty for up to 2 years



Polish legislation on offences against children

- Whoever despite a duty of care to a person under 15 years of age abandons such a person shall be subject to the penalty of deprivation of liberty for up to 3 years
- Whoever, with use of force, threat or ruse, induces another person to have sexual intercourse, may be punished with imprisonment from 1 to 10 years



National Emergency Services for the victims of violence

- Blue Line
- Blue Card for police and social workers
- Local communities
- NGO
- Crisis intervention centers



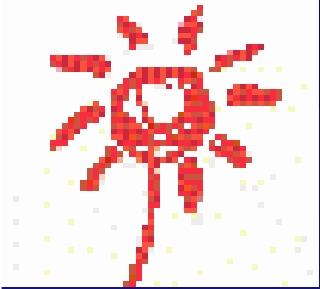
Strategies for action in Poland

- Limitation of availability and control of the alcohol market
- Legal and social control over harmful behaviors of abusive drinker
- Educational and prevention programmes for school, families and workplaces
- Early diagnosis and short intervention in primary health care
- Training of professionals and paraprofessionals
- Establishing of local coalities for prevention
- Psychosocial aid for families and counteraction of violence



Objective of Mederi Foundation

- Intergrating medical profession around the issue of child abuse; defining the standards of conduct in out patients clinics and hospital wards
- Ensuring permanent support for the child and abused family after the discharge from the hospital
- **Support for single mothers with preschool children** in cooperation with social workers
- Educational programmes for parents with preschool children and children affected by familial alcohol problems: „**Big Elephant**”
- In te future: Establishing a Diagnostic Center for child abuse



*Thank you for
attention*