

Changes in the Social Work with Multiple Problem Families in Poland

Abstract

The necessity of real changes within social work with families has been demonstrated. It is not meant to be work for the family, but rather with the family, a combination of activities of welfare, material, social and educational character.

In 2008 work on the principles of the act on family support and foster custody of children began. The Act introduces a family assistant, whose task is to provide thorough support for families bringing up children, at risk of different dysfunctions. A family assistant's work is aimed at making the family reach a basic level of life stability enabling it to bring up children [www.mpips.gov.pl]. In spite of the fact that the act has not come into force yet, in a number of Polish social welfare centers family assistants have already started their work. In some facilities a family assistant performs social and therapeutic work, in others social and educational work with families who struggle with such problems as: poverty, violence, disability, unemployment, addictions, chronic diseases and behavior issues in children. Sometimes they are also teachers of skills necessary to run a household. They help clients to fix their overdue administrative matters or meet the requirements of other institutions. They become a link between a client and specialists putting together help and other services provided to clients by different professionals and institutions.

Key words: *social work with families, family assistance, social welfare system in Poland.*

Social work is a profession that is gaining more and more significance. The EU guidelines as well as the EU legislation in the field of social welfare oblige the member countries, including Poland, to a greater professionalism of this profession.