

Children and adolescents with severe behavioral disorders—what works? Pedagogical medical treatment model in the residential treatment and counseling center Planina, Slovenia

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Abstract

Identifying children with the most severe emotional and behavioral disorders is extremely challenging. Emotional and behavioral disorders can find expression to different degrees; they can be variously manifested and located on a continuum from minor behavioral problems to the most severe forms of behavioral disorders. At the end of the continuum we find the percentage of the most dangerous and therapeutically unresponsive children - children with callous-unemotional traits.

We are very good at describing violent, dangerous behavior, but we are stuck with providing the right assistance programs – what works? Many mental health conditions in adulthood show their first signs already in childhood and, if left untreated, these can develop into conditions which need a regular care.

In the period from 2005 to 2010 the situation in Slovenia was so severe that the Social work centers and the court called upon the responsible institutions for action – residential treatment institutions did not accept violent children and adolescents; they were excluded from institutions during their stay, rejected by pediatric psychiatric hospitals, and were hospitalized in adult psychiatric wards. The whole system was afraid of them. In 2010, the Ministry of Labor, Family and Social Affairs commissioned a survey on the situation in Slovenia which showed alarming numbers of untreated children, rejected across the entire system. In my speech, the pedagogical medical treatment model will be presented in more detail, together with the goals and the evaluation report.

Biography:

Dr. Leonida Zalokar has worked with troubled youth for 25 years, first as a counselor and educator in student homes, and later as the director of the Residential Treatment Institution Planina in Slovenia, where the most dangerous and neglected Juvenile delinquents are treated. Her competences include not just working with these children, but also training and directing People working with them. Her work has set new foundations and guidelines for improving existing practice in Slovenian correctional institutions, for which she has received numerous awards of excellence and special appointments by various ministries and the government.

Speaker Publications:

1. Planina Residential Treatment Institution breaks new ground while treating aggressive children

[4th International Conference on Addiction Therapy;](#)
Webinar- November 27, 2020.

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