FAMILY LAW PROTECTION IN LIGHT OF REHABILITATION OF PERSONS WITH CONDUCT DISORDER

ABSTRACT: Family law protection and rehabilitation of persons with conduct disorder is a serious medical, psychological, socio-economic and general social problem. The attention of a large number of experts in various fields of science, such as economics, medicine, sociology, law etc., is focused on solving this problem, and all of them offer their own interpretation. However, a comprehensive analysis of family law protection, rehabilitation and social integration requires an interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary approach. From their perspective, the above mentioned fields of science devote considerable time to solving this problem, but an adequate result has not been achieved yet. With this regard it is necessary to associate the system of family law protection with rehabilitation of persons with acute or chronic conduct disorder.

Key words: family, legal protection, rehabilitation, social integration, conduct disorders.

Normative and actual approach to family protection

Family is the primary social group which is also the oldest of all unions. Family is characterized by common residence, economic cooperation and reproduction. In family law, family is considered from the aspect of rights and duties of family members, which can be noted in conceptual determination of family in several selected definitions:
• “A family is a group of persons related by marriage or extra-marital union and kinship, among whom rights and duties are established by law, the non-compliance of which entails certain legal sanctions.”
• “A family is a group of relatives who have mutual rights and duties established by the law.”
• “A family is a group of persons who are related by marriage and kinship.”

Family law protection involves protection of a family member from violence perpetrated by another family member, and in this respect, according to the Family Act of the Republic of Serbia, family members are:
  • Spouses or former spouses;
  • Children, parents and other blood relatives, as well as in-law or adoptive relatives, namely, persons related by foster care;
  • Persons who live or have lived in the same family household;
  • Domestic partners or former domestic partners;
  • Persons who were or still are in emotional or sexual relationship, that is, who have a common child or the child is to be born, although they have never lived in the same family household.”

According to the available data, family originated during the Early to Late Paleolithic transition, and at the stage of development characterized by appearance of gender. Family is the universal and inevitable part of human society which has a sexual, reproductive, economic and educational function. There would be no family without these functions, because there would be no members of society without sexual and reproductive function, life would be extinguished without the economic function, there would be no culture without education. It is impossible to even imagine that human society could function without family. The way a family functions is directly associated with the occurrence of conduct disorders. Family has numerous significant functions, both with regard to individuals and society.

The most important functions of a family are:
  • Marital function of a family involves emotional bonding, support and assistance of spouses;

---
2 Đurović, Lj. (1988), Family Law, Belgrade, Naučna knjiga, p. 34.
• Reproductive function of a family has the biological role and involves childbearing;
• Other functions are economic, educational, protective and psychological-emotional, while the economic function of a family most often plays the most significant role in family functioning and survival.5

In the past all family members used to depend on family production, whereas nowadays family members are independent and related to sources of income generation outside the family. Family has the protective function as well, in terms of emotional protection, physical protection or care of sick, elderly and disabled persons. Socialization function involves upbringing, rearing, education, taking care of adoption of norms, traditional rules, system of values, style and way of living. Disturbed family relations, family aggression, alcoholism, drug addiction, etc., are causes that lead to conduct disorders. In addition, poverty, large families, a minor mother, incomplete family, marital conflicts, conflicts with social environment, inability to solve current problems, can all result in parental depression as well as moral disintegration, leading to occurrence of conduct disorder. Appropriate treatment can be implemented to prevent cases of conduct disorder in families, aiming to neutralize difficulties and create conditions for development. Protection of human rights is provided by the International Covenant on civil and political rights and its Optional Protocols and by the International Covenant on economic, social and cultural rights which was ratified by our country in 1971. The European Convention for Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms is the most important document in the field of protection of human rights at the regional level.6

This Convention developed the interpretation of the term ‘family life’, in two separate segments:
• In terms of the relationship between spouses and extramarital partners;
• In terms of the relationship between parents and children, namely between the other persons who form a family or are in a family relationship.”7

“The right to family life always basically implies the right of family members to live together and develop mutual relations. In the practice of the

6 Zakon o ratifikaciji Evropske konvencije za zaštitu ljudskih prava i osnovnih sloboda, Službeni list Srbije i Crne Gore – Međunarodni sporazumi, br. 9/03, 5/05, 7/05-ispravak, Službeni glasnik Republike Srbije – Međunarodni aranžmani, broj 12/10.
7 Gajin, S., (2012). Human rights – Legal system framework, Belgrade, Faculty of Law of the Union University on Belgrade, p. 72.
European Court of Human Rights, the concept of family is determined with regard to interpretation of the right to respect the family life” taking the de facto situation into account in every individual case. Living together is not a prerequisite for the family life. “The Constitution of the Republic of Serbia guarantees the right to human dignity and free personal development, right to secrecy of writing and other means of communication, protection of personal data.” In the Section on human and minority rights of the Constitution of the Republic of Serbia there is no specific definition of the right to privacy in terms of Article 8 of the European Convention for Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms.

Social and educational approach in group and individual treatments

Social Integration – Waiver of selection/separation and the right of every man to education and upbringing represent the basic principles of social integration. It is most important that the child is a measuring unit in that process. Very small steps are actually the drivers of major changes in the overall development of a child – with or without conduct disorders. Finally, it must be remembered that the question arises from which angle and in which way adults view the child’s development. “Social integration means mutual learning, learning from one another. Adults can learn from children, equally as children learn from them, grown-ups learn from little ones, healthy people from disordered ones and vice versa.” Social integration can be characterized by elimination of delinquent activity, sociopathic behaviour, paying attention to physical appearance, good results in school, improvement of family relationships, avoiding deviant groups, engaging in macrosocial activities (sports, cultural etc.). Relatively medium social integration is characterized by reduced delinquent activity, reduced sociopathic behaviour, paying attention to one’s appearance, inconsistent success at work, inconsistent attitude towards the family, avoiding deviant groups, negative attitude towards social activities. Finally, the poor social integration can be characterized by outstanding delinquent activities, more pronounced sociopathic behaviour, paying inconsistent attention to one’s appearance, poor success at school and work, negative attitude towards the family, continued socializing with deviant peers, refusing to take part in social activities.

9 Ustav Republike Srbije, Službeni glasnik RS, br 98/06.. See, Articles 23, 41. and 42.
10 Sources: www.salzburg.gv.at (downloaded on 10 October 2019).
Social work with individuals – Individual work is “the oldest and most developed form of work in methodical terms” and numerous scientists emphasize that history of social work is actually the history of approach to individuals and family. Social work with individuals or individual social work is the scientific discipline dealing with providing assistance to individuals in functioning, that is, in solving complex problems in life aiming to overcome them by applying various methods and techniques. In general it can be said that this is “the process that develops a personality in view of adaptation to social environment as well as the process of performing various requirements on behalf of certain people with their cooperation, while achieving, at the same time, the improvement in them and in the society in which they live.”11

Most scientists agree that social work with an individual has the aim to help both development of a personality and development of interpersonal relations towards adaptation to social environment and at the same time to provide help to individuals when they are in a crisis or are prevented from satisfying the needs of growth and development. Individual work can be divided in several stages: case detection and identification, case testing, case treatment, post-treatment. In order for the individual social work to be successful, it has to be systematic in terms of organization, gradual in terms of complexity, permanent in terms of duration, and inclined to the minor in mobilizing manner “not working for him but working with him”.12 When it comes to individual work, particular attention should be paid to children and young people with social disorders.

The legislator has prescribed the obligation of making plans and programs while working with minors who have disorders in social behavior, and difficulties in dealing with minors arise in the form of great distrust that young people have in adults, in expert team members, self-doubt, reduced empathy, avoidance of emotional conflicts. Attention should be paid to timeliness of making contact, frequency of contact, method of making contact, location of contact, atmosphere of contact, as they are essential in the relationship between the professional team and the minor. This involves the activity in changing the milieu, namely the closest minor’s environment, first of all referring to the family and closer environment, and primarily by individual contacts.

Group social work – When it comes to social work, its history is also very rich and originates from a large number of humanitarian and charitable

activities which had initially been performed spontaneously, then in an organized and institutionalized manner, and in the last hundred years they have been professionally developed around the needs of people and their primary groups and communities in everyday life. As a practical social activity, social work arose out of the need of first organized communities and societies to protect their vulnerable members in order to preserve cohesion and safety of communities, namely countries. It was based on the principles of organic or natural solidarity and mercy, while it later acquired the characteristics of class and historically variable category, whose goals, contents and methods were formed depending on the character of concrete global societies and predominant systems of value and general goals. It can be said that social work activity is a civilization category. “Social work as a professional activity which appeared at the beginning of XX century, under the influence of civilization processes such as: expansion of humanistic values and ideas; development of social and humanistic sciences; raising and strengthening of political and social movements, political and social contradictions and problems of civil society.”

Being one of the most significant means and instruments of social policy, social work is specifically based on different scientific knowledge, social values and professional and ethical principles, traditional and practical experience, and its goals, contents and organizational-institutional forms are diverse and often conflicting. In order to accomplish its objectives and purposes, social work uses the knowledge and theoretical starting points of different humanistic sciences as well as different methodological approaches, specific methods, tools, skills and procedures. From the historical aspect, the methodological approach designated as case work, namely work with an individual, was developed first.

Different methods of using the case were applied within this approach as special methods: biographic, autobiographic, diagnostic or in-depth interviews, conversation, social anamnesis and similar, or methods of protection of individuals; therapeutic interview, counselling, counselling work, empowerment. According to some authors, helping individuals and methods of social work on the case are distinctive characteristics of this activity in relation to other and similar activities, therefore they do not accept other methodological approaches beyond this frame. The methods of social work with a group or of group social work have been developed under the influence of psychology, particularly social psychology, sociology, social medicine and psychiatry. Various forms of work with groups are used by applying different methods in

practice. The social work recognizable from humanistic aspect is based on the fact that it is always and consistently focused on universal human rights, needs and interests, problems and well-being, irrespective of the requirements and criteria of governing and state authorities. Being the social and professional activity, social work is most directly associated with social policy, with which it cannot be equalized, regardless of the fact that they refer to similar field of activity. Similar to social policy and sociology, social work has emerged from the necessity of theoretically organized dealing with the conditions of meeting human needs by suppression of social problems and contradictories of civil society. These pragmatic needs originate from two civilizational creative currents: sociology and special sociologies and other humanistic sciences, as the need to explain the nature and causes of social contradictories, social policies, as the need to conceptualize different types of social reaction to social contradictories and problems and social work, as the necessity to deal with the consequences of these phenomena on a daily and permanent basis.

Owing to the fact that, in addition to social circumstances and development of sociology and social sciences in general, certain political and social movements have significantly contributed to emergence of social work, in addition to social circumstances and development of sociology and social sciences in general, these activities and sciences have been developed under the strong impact of ideological and political doctrines and understanding, which even further complicated their becoming independent as the activity and as the science. Social work itself can also be considered as an internationally accepted discipline. Since social policy was developing under a significant influence of political science, economics and law as well, social work, due to its mainly pragmatic nature and direction, has mainly been influenced by such sciences and professions as medicine, psychology, pedagogy and social pathology. Social group work is the method which offers help to an individual through group experience with the aim to develop the individual’s personal potentials, to improve his/her relationships and social functioning. This form of work can be used in different conditions, institutions as well as in different environments. On the basis of the experience of various countries, it can be concluded that this form of social work has been mostly implemented in the USA.

According to most authors, the essential elements of definition of a group are: the existence of common and individual goals, the existence of interaction between group members, the existence of a certain level of communication between members, noticeability, so that observers can define it as a group, and the division of roles of work and positions within the group in accordance with the existing standards. “According to Bierer, there are four types of
group work: Treatment in the group “the patient is treated by the therapist in presence of others”; Treatment with the help of the group, the patient is treated with the help of another person in the group, a delinquent is taken care by a whole group of therapists; Treatment through the group, clients outnumber clinicians; Institutional collective treatment, orientation to therapeutic methods is present; Treatment of a group – group as a whole is the treatment unit, not an individual.”

In group work relations must be warm, human, full of understanding between the therapist and the group members, as well as among the group members, verbal communication, non-verbal communication, with targeted selection and creation of new environment. Group work is one of the methods of social work, and group is the basis of this work, that is, individuals in mutual interaction. Group members help one another to gain knowledge about themselves, their behaviour and the effects of their behavior upon others. In the initial stage of group work, members are turned to the therapist, they seldom express their feelings, their monologues are longer, and they all depend on the therapist to a great extent. In the second stage, group members speak more freely, their monologues are shorter, they are more active, therefore the dependence on the therapist shifts to dependence on the group and at that point members gain a realistic insight in their own behavior as well as in behavior of others. The final stage of group work is planned together with the members, and the end is reached slowly and gradually, to avoid states of depression and fears. For this reason, interaction among the group members is very important, because this interaction creates conditions for a change of behavior, that is, the group becomes “the field suitable for social learning”, as emphasized by K. Levin.

Social work in the community – Social work in the community aims at preventive action. There is no generally accepted definition of social work in the community, it is difficult to determine both the subject and the content of social work in the community. There are several models of social work in the community: community organization model, community development model, social planning model in the community, education model in the community, feminist and anti-subordinate social work in the community. In local community, social work has the role of bringing various sectors in connection, providing precise and necessary information to various sectors, as well as helping and expediting coordination establishing processes. Social work must include the phase of getting to know the community, defining needs, problems,
identifying available resources and funds, defining the desired goal, planning, performing the action, evaluating.

Social workers and other experts employed in centers for social work have noticed through their everyday practice that, in case of most beneficiaries of social and other professional work services, namely beneficiaries of social protection and assistance, in addition to individual causes, it is also necessary to identify general common causes that have brought a person or individual into a state of need for protection and assistance. The common terminology in practice usually identifies centers for social work with guardianship authorities, which results from the fact that centers for social work have nowadays also undertaken the jobs of guardianship authorities in the municipalities where they were formed. “Being the guardianship and social welfare authorities, centers for social work or corresponding municipal bodies entrusted with the role of guardianship authorities, have special duties and rights as regards protection of juvenile offenders and prevention of delinquency.”\(^\text{15}\) In simple terms, the same body, either the center for social work or the corresponding social protection body in municipalities where no center for social work has been formed, have both the role of the guardianship authority and the social protection authority. The above mentioned roles should not be separated, except in legal terms and with regard to diversity of content.

**Stage of development of conduct disorders** – When talking about disorders, a distinction must be made between disorders in the social behavior of young people and adults. There is a big difference between these two categories of persons, both in disorder forms and in possibilities of re-socialization. It should be emphasized that it is important to make a distinction between the process of re-socialization between young people and adults, that is, the process of re-socialization is significantly greater in young people both because of the disorder and because of the greater opportunity for corrective work. Complex issues posed by disorders in the social behaviour of young people also require engagement of experts of different profiles. The role of experts in work with young people is precisely to study all aspects, problems that young people face, which results in the selection of the most appropriate form of assistance. Conduct disorders occur earlier in boys than in girls.

On average, boys begin to show conduct disorders in late childhood, whereas girls start in early adolescence. An earlier beginning of disorders is related with a more serious prospects, and specific changes in manifestation of destructive behaviour occur during development in terms of a higher degree

of open aggression at younger age, and a latent one at older age. Different terms are used to describe conduct disorders beginning early, and the term is “life persisting”, whereas the disorders beginning in adolescence are called “restricted to adolescence”, and they usually do not result in serious consequences and open delinquent behaviour.\textsuperscript{16} Late conduct disorders in girls are often associated with emotional distress, particularly with anxiety, and gender differences may generally be related to differences in pubertal status and the pace of psycho-sexual development of boys and girls, as well as to the specific attitude of society towards children of different sex, whereby open aggression in girls is often ignored and pressure is put on them to accept gender specific behaviors whereby they are expected to pay attention to perspective and feelings of other persons in interactions, whereas such type of requirements is generally smaller when boys are in question.\textsuperscript{17}

\textit{Prevention of disorders in social behaviour (general, specific and special prevention)} – The consequences of the war in former SFRY are definitively still present in the large number of young people, especially in generations of children who were at least five years old during the war. Nowadays this population is the risk group, not only because of the war casualties and the effects of war anti-values imposed by the war events, but also because of the fact that most of them were in post pubertal period and adolescence at that time.

The natural processes of coming of age in this population were additionally burdened by negative effects of war, which was full of numerous stresses and traumas. This effect is immediate in situations where a child was directly exposed to traumatizing events, such as bombing and shelling, destroying of the whole community or one’s own home, personal life threatening, injuries, violent death of one parent or both, presence of a child in the killing of the loved ones and other events resulting in numerous stresses. The indirect effect of war experience on a child exists in various situations and circumstances which do not represent immediate danger to the life of a child or his/her loved ones, but have stressful effects and traumatic consequences most often in terms of mental issues. “In order to prevent more serious and continuous forms of conduct disorders in children and adolescents, which resulted from interactions of a child’s traumatic experiences, following actions must be taken:


66
• Directing professional actions towards the child, family and local community at the same time;
• Planning and implementation of tasks and duties determined by programs, starting from providing material assistance and various benefits, as well as creation of a network for the child and its family, up to counselling work with the family and education or teaching the other staff in schools for timely interventions to initial signs of a disorder in a child;
• Establishing full cooperation and actions of different groups and institutions in local community such as pre-school and school institutions, court, police, medical institutions, non-governmental organizations, youth associations etc.

Successful implementation of all these activities entails setting up of professional potentials and full equipping of centers for social work, which cannot be accomplished under current circumstances in our society in case of most centers for social work, even in case of the centers which cover large urban areas.”

In recent years’ professional practice, prevention has been defined in form of primary, secondary and tertiary prevention. This is the most common classification, although the prevailing classification in sociological literature takes conditions and causes of a phenomenon as its starting point, creating the division into general, special and individual, namely specific prevention. Primary prevention involves problem forestalling, that is undertaking various measures and actions by the social community before the problem arises. In practice, primary prevention measures are basically equaled with social policy, pursued by the social community, namely with all other measures creating better conditions, especially for the purpose of proper development of children and raising the standard of living and social security of the family. Secondary prevention involves identification of a social problem, its stopping and assistance in its solution. In case of our country, actions at the level of a family would be most appropriate. Families without any income where parents are unemployed, families with disturbed structure, as well as families in which one parent or both of them are manifesting some of the forms of socio-pathological behaviors, should be given priority. In addition to measures from the domain of children and social protection, directed to families, and measures aiming to stabilize relationships and preserve family structure, and to assist in realization of economic, educational and other family functions,

it is also necessary to organize actions of assistance and different children-oriented actions. Tertiary prevention is focused on continuation of treatment of an already identified problem and on mitigating its effects, on the example of its further expansion and including a larger number of society members.

**Role of the Center for social work in criminal treatment of young people**

Centers for social work, as guardianship authorities and social protection institutions, have special legally prescribed obligations and rights, both with regard to protection of children and juvenile delinquents, and to prevention of socially unaccepted behavior of children and minors. It should be emphasized that the role of guardianship authorities in protection of children and juvenile offenders is normatively regulated through the determined obligations of guardianship authorities in the course of criminal proceedings against minors and in execution of the imposed educational measures and educational recommendations. “The role of guardianship authorities in prevention of social unaccepted behavior of children and minors is defined indirectly, and its realization, irrespective of how necessary that role may be, depends on numerous different factors”.\(^{19}\) This role depends on various factors, such as personnel and technical equipment of social work centers, level of established cooperation with various institutions and organizations within the local community, and the required additional education of social workers and other professional workers in centers for drawing up prevention programs and research implementation. “For the purpose of the fullest possible consideration of the role of the guardianship authority in protection of children and minors with socially unaccepted behavior, irrespective of the previously indicated criminal law classifications of minor delinquents, following has been extracted from the literature:

- The first group is related to the field of social protection implemented exclusively in centers for social protection, and comprises children of up to 14 years of age, who are considered criminally irresponsible and against whom no criminal proceedings can be conducted, nor can any criminal sanctions be applied to them;
- The second group is based on criminal law and includes minors from 14 to 18 years of age, whereby for the group from 14 to 16 only educational measures can be applied, whereas for older minors, from 16 to

\(^{19}\) Ibid., p. 252.
18 years of age, educational measures can be applied together with the juvenile imprisonment measure under special circumstances.\textsuperscript{20}

Pursuant to the content-methodological activity and organization of guardianship authorities or social work centers, their obligation in realization of the tasks concerning the socially unaccepted behavior of children and minors “can be considered through the following key roles in which social work is irreplaceable:

- Social work in disclosing and monitoring children and minors with socially unaccepted behavior;
- Prevention and treatment of disorders in conduct of children and minors;
- Rights and obligations of guardianship authorities in criminal proceedings against minors;
- Tasks and activities of guardianship authorities in implementation of educational measures and elimination of unfavorable consequences in social development of minors;
- Protection and care of guardianship authorities in discharge of minors from institutions and their acceptance.”\textsuperscript{21}

The above mentioned activities and tasks of centers for social work, namely guardianship authorities, are the basis of a satisfactory and comprehensive care of minors manifesting any form of unaccepted behavior, especially of minors who have come into conflict with the law. The very level and consistency of the listed forms of work in the practice of social work centers are different and depend primarily on the staffing and financial capacity of these institutions.

**Conclusion**

Family law protection and rehabilitation of persons with conduct disorders is a serious social problem. Numerous causes lead to conduct disorders and it is indisputable that the emergence of this phenomenon is affected by a number of factors of different intensity and degree of connectivity. Numerous scientists have dealt with this problem, there is a substantial number of works, research, however, the common thing is that there are no well-defined causes that lead to many disorders. The undertaken activities have not given

\textsuperscript{20} Stakić, D., op. cit., pp. 10-11.
\textsuperscript{21} Miković, M., op. cit., p. 254.
satisfactory results to enable conceptualization of proposals and to act in a better defined manner on the causes of this phenomenon. The occurrence of this phenomenon is most often manifested in committing criminal offences and absence of personal responsibility.

Legal, economic, social, religious and other factors have influenced changes of the community’s attitude towards persons with conduct disorders through history. Change of the system of values, reform processes, market economy, rapid technological development, resulted in manifestation of different forms of unacceptable behaviour, from the mildest to the most serious ones. The combined action of many risk factors that exist in the family, individual personality, school, peer relations, environment, lead to conduct disorders. Untimely recognition and inadequate reactions very often lead to occurrence of new and most serious forms that can leave serious consequences and whose solution in most cases requires engagement of the entire society.

Vulević Predrag
Advokat u Beogradu

ZAŠTITNA ULOGA PORODIČNOG ZAKONA
U SVETLU REHABILITACIJE OSOBA SA POremećajem U Ponašanju

Re z i m e

Zaštitna uloga Porodičnog zakona i rehabilitacija osoba s poremećajem u ponašanju ozbiljan je medicinski, psihološki, socio-ekonomski i opšti društveni problem. Pažnja velikog broja stručnjaka iz različitih naučnih oblasti, kao što su ekonomija, medicina, sociologija, pravo itd., usmerena je na rešavanje ovog problema i svi oni nude sopstvenu interpretaciju u ovom domenu. Međutim, sveobuhvatna analiza zaštite uloge Porodičnog zakona, rehabilitacije i socijalne integracije, zahteva interdisciplinarni i multidisciplinarni pristup. Iz njihove perspektive, gore pomenute oblasti nauke posvećuju dosta vremena rešavanju ovog problema, ali se još uvek nije postigao adekvatan rezultat. S tim u vezi, neophodno je naglasiti i to da je potrebno povezati mehanizme zaštite koje nudi Porodični zakon sa
treatment rehabilitation of persons with acute or chronic conduct disturbance.

**Ključne reči:** porodica, pravna zaštita, rehabilitacija, socijalna integracija, poremećaj u ponašanju.

---

**Literature**