



KEEPING YOUTH AWAY FROM CRIME SEARCHING FOR THE BEST EUROPEAN PRACTICES

National Report

Lithuania



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Introduction

Since the restoration of its independence on March 11, 1990, Lithuania tried to implement modern children and youth prevention principles and methods against the negative impact of risk factors. However the scope of social problems in the country remains wide. Poor financial state, unemployment, drug and alcohol dependency, children neglect in the families – these are the difficulties that the newly restored state has had to face.

Although, according to the specialists, the situation in the country is improving, the statistics show that social and economic problems still remain. In 2012, the Statistics Lithuania informed that 20% of Lithuanian people lived below poverty, and that in January 2013, the rate of unemployment was 13.3%. It is important to note that Lithuania is affected by emigration the most of all the European countries. In 2009, 21.970 Lithuanian citizens emigrated and a year later, in 2010, the number was four times higher – 83.157 citizens. In 2011, there were 53.863, in 2012 – 41.000, and in 2013 – 40.391 Lithuanian citizens that emigrated from Lithuania. The main reasons for emigration are the economic ones.

The statistics indicate that in 2012, there were 10.389 families at social risk raising 21.303 children in Lithuania. According to the statistics of the State Child Rights Protection and Adoption Service under the Ministry of Social Security and Labor, at the end of 2012, the number of children living in children care homes was 4030.

Very often children raised in poor environment have behavioral and emotional difficulties, dependencies, they do not attend school and bum around. According to the statistics of the Center of Information Technologies in Education, in 2013, 969 children did not attend school. Most of them did not go to school for social-psychological reasons: lack of parents attention, vagrancy, conflicts with peers, teachers, and parents, neglect, or change of place. According to the State Mental Health Center, in 2006–2011, there were 137 in-patient children treated for alcohol dependency and 227 children – for psychotropic substance dependency. In 2011–2012, the number of children treated for behavioral and emotional disorders reached more that 8.000 (State Mental Health Center and

Statistics Lithuania). According to the National Health Insurance Fund under the Ministry of Health, the number of such children is even higher – 40.000 (6.7% of all children in Lithuania).

State Child Rights Protection and Adoption Service informs that in 2012, 1343 children were abused. In 2013, 2451 minors suspected of committing criminal activities were registered, 2222 – for crimes, and 229 – for penal violations. (2)

Since Lithuania's independence, juvenile delinquency and its prevention was and still is a burning issue. It motivates to analyze the current situation, create and implement the necessary prevention and intervention measures that would help to reduce juvenile delinquent behavior and buffer from it in the future. A growing number of juvenile delinquent criminal acts (for example, in 2001 there were twice as much of juvenile delinquent crimes than in 1990, is a huge concern of the state and a society (Ombudsmen for Children Rights of the Republic of Lithuania, 2013). It was one of the main reasons that pushed for the reform in juvenile justice. Other reasons that prompted the reform were the inefficiency of juvenile criminal justice, different approach to punishment as the main state's response to juvenile delinquent criminal behavior, and international obligations that the Republic of Lithuania took upon itself (for example, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child).

In 1996, the juvenile justice reform was implemented in Lithuania. Its main goals were to create and implant other than punishable, as well as preventive-social intervention measures for juvenile delinquents.

The year of 1999 marks the beginning of the Juvenile Justice Program for 1999–2002 in Lithuania which main goal was to reduce the number of repeated juvenile crimes. In 2004, the Government of the Republic of Lithuania ratified the second Juvenile Justice Program for 2004–2008 aimed at the re-socialization of juveniles who violated the law and thus, reducing the rate of juvenile crime, also at creating an optimal network of the institutions that work in juvenile justice system and at constantly improving the training system for the officers and other staff that work in this area.

Both programs led to a significant progress in juvenile justice system – it became more humane and oriented towards the juvenile age characteristics and the needs of juvenile education. Based on these programs, the system of minimal and *medium* care for the child was created and ratified in 2008. The system is aimed at creating an integral system to work with minors that have behavioral problems by providing them with social, pedagogical, psychological, and other help.

Juvenile Justice System in Lithuania

It is important to define specific categories when talking about the juvenile justice system in Lithuania. Youth in Lithuanian juvenile justice system is a child who, under the Law on Fundamentals of Protection of the Rights of the Child of the Republic of Lithuania, is a human being below the age of 18 years (an adult).

Lithuania's laws provide several descriptions of criminal acts that can be used to distinguish the specific types of delinquent behavior:

- Crimes (The Criminal Code (CC) Article 11)
- Misdemeanors (CC Article 12)
- Administrative violations (The Administrative Code (AC) Article 9)
- Failure to attend school on regular basis or not attend at all which is regulated by the compulsory education programs (Law 8, Article 1, page 5)
- Harmful conduct that poses danger to the child himself or his surroundings (Law 8, Article 1, page 4) (Nikartas, Ūselė ir kt., 2013).

Children who behave in a delinquent way are subjected to criminal and administrative liability and can receive social and psychological assistance. The CC provides two criminal liability types for age groups: *de facto* it is under 16 years, although in certain criminal acts (serious violent crimes and personal property damage acts that are traditionally attributed to juveniles) – from 14 years. If the minor commits a **serious** or **very serious** crime, he is subjected to penalty which can be: public work, a fine, freedom limitation, detention, and imprisonment. The exact penalty is foreseen by the Criminal Code Article 90.

If the minor commits a **criminal act** or **not very serious** and **light** crime, he can receive a penalty or in some cases can be released from criminal liability (e.g., if he compensated for the damage done to property) (Sakalauskas, 2013).

Children who have not reached criminal liability age, under the Law on Fundamentals of Protection of the Rights of the Child of the Republic of Lithuania, as well as the *United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child*, are subjected to the principle of the best child's interests which means that in any case related to the child the most important thing is child's interests. The administrative liability is applied to children who are of 16 years old (Nikartas, Ūselė ir kt., 2013, Sakalauskas, 2013).

In Lithuania, the delinquent children who because of their age or the criminal act they committed cannot be subjected to administrative and criminal liability are subjected to measures foreseen by

the **Law on Minimal and Medium Care for the Minors of the Republic of Lithuania**. The Law does not fall into the criminal (or administrative) justice system, it is part of education system. The Law on Minimal and Medium Care for the Minors, aimed at bringing the changes into child's behavior (Article 2.7), highlights child's well-being and help. It foresees two types of measures:

Minimal care:

Measures that aim at providing help and education (e.g., obligations to see a specialist; to attend day center, open youth center, or any other social services center; to continue schooling at another school; to study in elementary, primary, secondary, or vocational training programs; to take part in social education, rehabilitation, integration, prevention, educational, and other programs).

Measures that aim at child's control (e.g., obligations to be at home at certain times; avoid places or people that have negative influence on child's behavior; if the child agrees, to perform educative types of work).

Medium care – child's care at the Children Socialization Center (Government Secondary School) (Article 7.1).

Specialists observe that the measures foreseen by the Law react to already committed acts and child's behavior and not his personality or needs.

The scope of the measures provided by the Law is diverse. While implementing these measures, it highlights the introduction of various sources. Multiple research and studies show that the implementation of standards of minimal and medium care for the minors is not smooth. Some measures are seldom applied, the implementation of the measures is formal and not delivered to the child, and the institutions which foresee the implementation of the measures are not collaborating enough (Bieliūnė, Juodkaitė, Uscila, 2010, Nikartas, Ūselė ir kt., 2013)

State's response to children delinquent behavior is presented in Table 1 (cited in: Nikartas, Ūselė ir kt., 2013).

Table 1. State's response to children delinquent behavior.

Base	Criminal Acts	A crime when the person is not liable; when the penalty is	Administrative violation	Criminal act/administrative violation when the person has not	Administrative violation without administrative penalty;

		suspended; person is on parole from the correctional institutions.		reached the age of criminal/admini strative liability	dangerous or harmful behavior; refusal to study by compulsory education programs
Measur e	Penalties	Educational measures	Administrative penalties	All minimal and medium care measures	Minimal care measures foreseen under the Law (Article 6, page 1–5) and medium care measures
Instituti ons that prescri be the measur e	Court		Court, police, and other qualified institutions	Municipality's administration and child welfare commissions, court (prescribing measures and medium care measure under the Article 6, page 6–8)	
Instituti ons that implem ent and apply the measur e	Correctional institutions, probation agencies, socialization centers, bailiffs, and other institutions and organizations		Police, and other qualified institutions	Schools, children and youth day centers, and other institutions and organizations	
Instituti ons that foresee the	Prosecutor		Police, municipality, and other qualified institutions	Municipality's administration – municipality's child welfare commission	

implem entation			
Ministr y that coordin ates the process	Ministry of Justice	Ministry of Justice and Ministry of the Interior	Ministry of Education and Science

S. Nikartas and his colleagues (2013) observes that the system is created in such a way that almost every socially adverse minor's behavior falls into certain category and is accordingly dealt with. The measures are applied to every child age not only for the offense committed but for any dangerous or harmful behavior – in children's case the control is very extensive.

In Lithuania, juvenile delinquency prevention is ensured by the Measures of Minimal Care for the Child. Therefore the goal of this law is not only to intervene but to prevent as well.

There are also early intervention programs. The National Children and Youth Crime Prevention Program (1996), which was prepared following the memorandum No. 38(2) of July 10, 1996 of the Government of the Republic of Lithuania “An Outline of the National Prevention Program for Juvenile Delinquents”, is a set of short- and long-term measures. The program seeks to implement basic principles of the Law on Fundamentals of Protection of the Rights of the Child and reduce violations in child rights and law done by children themselves. The program is implemented on three levels: state (national), regional/municipality, and institutional (by educational, social help and care, public and other NGOs).

Table 2. Government and self-government institutions responsible for the implementation of Prevention Program for Juvenile Delinquents.

No	RESPONSIBLE INSTITUTIONS:	MAIN FUNCTIONS:
1.	Ministry of Education and Science	General coordination of the program; initiation of local programs
2.	Ministry of Social Security and Labor, The Institution of the Ombudsman for Children Rights	Document preparation of the order of implementation of the Law on Fundamentals of Protection of the Rights of the Child, recording specific cases on child rights violations, and

		informing institutions and public
3.	Ministry of Health	Healthy lifestyle education, providing health care for children in temporary care programs
4.	Ministry of the Interior	Early prevention of delinquents
5.	Ministry of Justice	Providing expertise on child rights protection legal documents
6.	Ministry of National Defense	Civil and patriotic education, early prevention
7.	Regional municipal subdivisions	Coordination and initiation of regional programs
8.	Municipalities	Coordination and initiation of local programs

Youth Care System from the Perspective of Juvenile Crime Prevention

In the Republic of Lithuania, the child rights are defined by the Law on Fundamentals of Protection of the Rights of the Child of the Republic of Lithuania which is based on country's Constitution, the United Nations Declaration of the Rights of the Child (1959), Convention of the Rights of the Child (1989) and other norms and principles of international law. Under this Law, child rights in Lithuania are ensured by:

- the state and institutions (The Institution of the Ombudsman for Children Rights, Ministry of Social Security and Labor, and State Child Rights Protection and Adoption Service under the Ministry of Social Security and Labor).
- Institutions of local municipalities (Municipal Child Rights Protection Agencies).
- Public organizations which activities are related to the child rights protection (Law on Fundamentals of Protection of the Rights of the Child of the Republic of Lithuania).

Municipal Child Rights Protection Agencies are responsible for organizing the protection of children who were left without parents care rights and interests; provide help with the training material and consultations; deal with other child rights questions; offer suggestions how to improve the protection of child rights and his legitimate interests, child care and law violation prevention to state and municipal institutions. Among other goals, the agency also:

- prepares and implements the measures for protection of children rights and their legitimate interests that are also meant to improve the prevention of child rights violation;
- in certain cases, participates in court and during pretrial interviews with a minor, acting as witness, victim, suspect, or defendant, and other pretrial activities.
- participates during the interview with a younger than 18 year old witness or victim; hears out child's opinion about applying to him minimal or medium care measure.
- consults parents, foster-parents, guardians, educators, social workers and other people or organizations and children about child rights protection, care, adoption and law violation prevention.
- collects and analyzes reports about abused children and children who abuse, initiates the necessary help by professionals and institutions for children and their parents.

- collaborates with social help agencies and centers, elderships, and coordinates decisions and actions with them.
- organizes collective meetings and makes coordinated decisions about improving child rights and law violation prevention.
- Collaborates with The Institution of the Ombudsman for Children Rights of the Republic of Lithuania – makes suggestions about how to reinforce child rights protection, participates in work groups established by The Institution, discussions and meetings about practical ways to improve the protection of child rights.

<http://www.vilnius.lt/index.php?646590016>

The Institution of the Ombudsman for Children Rights of the Republic of Lithuania is an independent children rights monitoring and control government institution maintained from the state's budget and is established following the Parliament resolution to protect the Ombudsman's for Children Rights work.

According to information provided by the municipalities, almost every municipality in Lithuania has a professional responsible for the protection of youth rights. Besides this main goal, he provides other functions (Republic of Lithuania Ministry of Social Security and Labour).

One of the most important factors in attempts to protect minors from committing crimes is work with the families. According to the Law of Social Services of the Republic of Lithuania (2006), **family at social risk** is a family that raises children under 18 years old and where one of the parents is abusing alcohol, drugs, or other substance, has an addiction to gambling, does not know how or cannot take care of his kids due to the lack of social skills, abuses them, and does not use state's financial help for family's needs, thus putting his children's physical, mental, and moral development and protection in danger. A family at social risk is a family which children are appointed temporary care (protection) by law. On December 31, 2012, there were 10.389 families at social risk raising 21.303 minors.

Child at social risk – is a child younger than 18 years old, who bums around, begs, does not attend school or has behavioral problems at school, abuses alcohol, drugs, psychotropic or toxic substances, has addiction to gambling, is involved or leans toward criminal activities, was abused or is at risk to be psychologically, physically, or sexually abused, experienced abuse in the family and because of this his chances to develop and be part of public life are very limited.

When the Child Rights Protection Agency receives a written report that child rights have been violated, agency's representatives visit the family to evaluate the situation and fills out the visitation form. The commission deliberates upon the matter and if it agrees that the situation at home is dangerous for the child, enlists the family into the group of families at social risk. The agency takes farther steps towards organizing help for the family – it informs the family, contacts municipal agency of social help and eldership's social worker that provide social help for the family and take other necessary steps (Order of the Ministry of Social security and Labour, 2006).

Municipality's administrative division (usually it is social service or social help centers, family help agencies or family support institutions) decides what social services and help the family needs and provides it.

It is important to note that in theory and practice the social risk is identified in those cases when neglect and abuse against the child is already present in the families or the child already has problems because of his criminal behavior, begging, and etc.

The family is assigned a social worker. Social workers not only inform and consult families about the social help available to them, but also provides social skills training and support services. They also provide social and psychological help to the families that try to deal with problems.

Social workers who work with the families at risk periodically assess positive changes in the family and decide whether any adjustments need to be made or whether it needs an additional help. Together with the Child Rights Protection Agency, they decide whether the family needs to receive farther help, or it was able to solve all of its problems and can be removed from the list of the families at social risk, or the family has to receive other measures (e.g., putting the child into temporary care with another family or institution).

Help and services to the families at social risk are also provided by the NGOs, crisis centers, day centers and other organizations and institutions working in child rights protection (State Child Protection and Adoption Service).

In attempts to secure the protection of rights and legitimate interests of the child and to create infrastructure of social services for work with the families at social risk, the Government of the Republic of Lithuania approved the National Children's Day Centres Program that can serve to

solve social problems of the children living in the families at social risk, organize their education and after-school time, and to secure social work with parents. Day centers established by the NGOs provide environment for children to socialize, early prevention of juvenile delinquency, and social services for the families that have problems. Children are sent to day centers by the municipality's Child Rights Protection Agencies and social workers. Such centers provide education to children, help them to do their homework, they spend their after-school time and are fed. Parents of children who go to day centers are given systematic social training. They are encouraged to take a better care of their kids and their education, they are provided with psychological, pedagogical, and legal help hoping to eliminate the reasons which can lead towards putting their children into the care of others

(An Act of Ratification of the National Children's Day Centers Program for 2005–2007, 2004).

Day center attendance is one of the minimal care measures. Law Institute of Lithuania notes that the obligation for children to attend day center could be used more often, although its practical implementation is limited by the fact that some municipalities do not have enough day centers or they are already overcrowded.

The Ombudsperson for Children Rights also points to the problems at day centers. She observes that the current financial support of the centers from state's budget does not ensure its continuous activities and that a project-based financing limits possibilities to establish and expand the system. Due to the shortage of finances and human resources, day centers especially lack individual psychological consultations (Nikartas, Ūselė ir kt., 2013).

In Lithuania, work with young people is assigned to Open Youth Centers. **Youth Center** is an institution or its division that provides social, pedagogical, or educational services and where the right of the ownership or partnership belongs to the municipality, NGOs, or local and religious community. Open Youth Centers/Spaces focus on the youth from 14 to 29 years old. Special attention is paid to the youth that has less opportunities or motivation and for various reasons cannot or does not want to be involved in youth activities. Centers employ people who seek to engage young people to develop socially and personally either through individual work or groups or communities and who have sufficient professional competence to the job. It is important for such staff to have background in education, psychology, or social sciences or to have experience in social work with young people.

In 2013, 12 Open Youth Centers were financed. Also, in 2013, 13 institutions and organizations received financial support from the Financing of the Activities of the Open Youth Spaces project **(Department of Youth Affairs under the Ministry of Social Security and Labor)**.

Education System (for 10–18 years old) from the Perspective of Juvenile Crime Prevention

Lithuania's Constitution Article 41.1 states that education is compulsory for persons under the age of 16. After graduating from 10th grade, the person receives basic education. After 10th grade adolescents can enter high school or vocational training program or choose both. In Lithuania, the student cannot be expelled from the school. Although if the school for impartial reasons cannot provide the student with psychological, special education, or social help, after discussing it with his parents (foster-parents, guardians), Pedagogical-Psychological Agency, and Child Rights Protection Agency, it can recommend him to switch to another school.

Although education in Lithuania is compulsory for persons under the age of 16, the statistics provided by the Ministry of Education and Science show that a huge number of children does not attend school. According to the information of the Center of Information Technologies in Education released in May 2013, 969 children did not attend school in Lithuania. The majority of them (564) did not attend school for social-psychological reasons, i.e., abuse, bullying, academic failure, hiding from the police, addictions, and etc. The Ombudsperson for Children Rights notes that at present time there is no mechanism in Lithuania that would allow to gather accurate statistics on how many children from 7 to 16 years old do not attend school (2012).

Children spend the biggest part of their time at school, therefore events that take place in school, the knowledge they receive and the relationship they develop there have significant impact on the development of their personality and their communication skills. The school plays a very important role in early delinquency prevention. In Lithuania, educational institutions administer various juvenile delinquency prevention programs, such as national, initiated by NGOs or local communities and organizations; they are also carried out in schools.

In Lithuania's education system, the main body responsible for juvenile delinquency prevention is **Child Wellbeing Commission** that can be found in every school. Its purpose is to organize and coordinate preventive activities, create secure and healthy environment for the child to develop, adapt education programs for children with special needs, conduct primary assessment of the requirements for the child with special needs (except for the needs that arise because of exceptional child's abilities), and perform other functions directly related to the child's well-being. The Commission also cooperates with similar commission in municipality, participates in creating a better set of minimal care measures, and talks to school principal about applying minimal or medium care measure to the child.

The activities of the **School-based Prevention Work Groups** also contribute to early prevention. Under the order of the minister of Education and Science (2004), every school has to have such a

group. The main goal of the School-based Prevention Work Group is to solve questions in the field of prevention, such as law violation, alcohol, tobacco, drug, and psychotropic substance use, abuse and crime prevention, also to organize help for the student, teacher and his parents. The group consists of a director or vice-director of education, teachers, head teachers, professionals (social educator, public health specialist, psychologist, special educator, and etc.); students and their parents can also be part of the group.

At the same time, the municipalities have **Coordination Groups for Preventive Work** which act as coordinators among institutions. The group also consults School-based Prevention Work Groups, unites staff from various agencies and NGOs working in the field of prevention, together with the representatives from the police, health care, child right protection agencies, pedagogical-psychological agencies, NGOs, and local communities foresees the necessary measures. Schools as well as informal education institutions also contribute organizing preventive and after-school activities. (Smolinas, 2010, Merfeldaitė, Railienė, 2007).

For juvenile delinquency prevention in Lithuanian education system very important is **Creating Jobs for Social Educators in Education Institutions for 2001–2005** program prepared by the Ministry of Education and Science. The purpose of the program is to establish job positions for social educators in education institutions and thus mobilize social and preventive work in schools, organize work with children at social risk, parents, and institutions that work to ensure children rights, protection, and social security, and create better social and educational environment for all children. Social educator coordinates preventive work while working in school with children at social risk and their families. Act 3. However, Lithuania still does not have the description of social educator's competences. Therefore it is still unclear what his competences, skills, and knowledge in the field should be. It is also important to note that due to the lack of finances job positions for social educators are established only in bigger schools. (Leliūgienė, Terechovienė, 2011)

Other specialists responsible for preventive programs in educational institutions are psychologists. Under the provisions of the order “Regarding the Validation of the Description Order for Providing Psychological Help” by the minister of education and science (2011), a school psychologist is responsible not only for psychological help and education, but also preparation, organization, and implementation of prevention programs and measures. The position for school psychologist can be established in schools with 301–600 students (if there is a possibility, in schools with lower number of students as well) and secondary schools for children with special needs (no matter the number of students in school). Psychological help and psychological problems prevention is also provided by psychologists who work in pedagogical-psychological agencies. Together with the school special educators they provide special educational help to persons under the age of 21.

The order issued by the minister of education and science validated the Children and Youth Socialization Program for 2010–2014 (2010) that is aimed to develop programs, expand opportunities to socialize, and develop new skills for children and youth who study in secondary schools. The program is supported from the state's budget, the European Union structural funds, and other sources. One of the measures for this program's implementation is to implant programs that develop specific life skills and reduce abuse and bullying in schools (e.g., Zippy's Friends, Second Step, OLWEUS, and etc.). The study conducted by The Institution of the Ombudsman for Children Rights in 2013, found that long-term prevention programs still lack financial support, therefore the prevention programs in schools are onetime programs and in some schools the prevention programs for various reasons (finances, lack of professionals, incompatibility among prevention programs, and etc.) are not carried out at all.

One of the main functions the Ministry of Education and Science performs is coordinating the work of Children Socialization Centers and special schools. **Special Schools** are secondary education schools for children with mental and physical disabilities who have special needs and cannot study together with other children in secondary education schools.

Children Socialization Centers can be described as closed-type centers for kids who are inclined to commit crimes. These are the state secondary schools with the function to apply medium care measures to children. Children Socialization Centers accept children older than 14 years old, although younger children can also be accepted if their behavior is really dangerous to other people lives, health, and property. Children get into the centers by the decision of municipality's administration to apply the medium care measure and after the court gave the permission. The goals of these centers are to ensure appropriate education, professional help and services for the child which can help to change child's behavior into positive, nurture his moral principles and social skills, and prepare him for independent life in society.

Health System in Lithuania

In 2007, Lithuania's Parliament approved of Mental Health Strategy that states that in trying to deal with the epidemic of abuse and suicides in the country it is necessary to invest in children mental health strengthening and modern prevention principles reinforcement. However, mental health professionals note that prevention programs have not become a priority in Lithuania yet (Pūras, 2011).

Health care institutions take part in juvenile delinquent behavior prevention mostly by providing written information about children to other institutions. Their effect on juvenile delinquent behavior prevention is only episodic, because health care institutions are involved in general prevention work only on demand (Šalaševičiūtė, 2011).

Consultations and treatment for children with mental and behavioral disorder are provided by mental health centers and centers for addictions. In-patient treatment and short-term psychological and social rehabilitation (1–2 month long) for children with mental and behavioral disorders related to the use of psychoactive substances are provided by centers of addictions. The services are free of charge. Children and Youth Long-term Rehabilitation Department serves children who need long-term psychological-social rehabilitation. The same services are provided by the public institution “Apsisprendimas” (12 beds) (Tobacco and Alcohol Control Department).

Lithuanian hospitals also have children mental departments that provide consultations and in-patient treatment for children with behavioral and emotional disorders. The Child Development Center of Vilnius Children Hospital runs children behavior disorder prevention program “Family's Academy” supported by Vilnius city municipality. 60–70 families visit the Academy every year. The team of professionals that consists of children psychiatrists, psychologists, and social workers provide individual and group psychological and mental help for parents and children.

Various mental health reinforcement programs are run by NGOs. For example, Children Support Center administers the Prevention Program of Emotional and Behavioral Disorders for Preschool and Primary School Children which is financed by the special Vilnius city municipality public health support program-2013.

The Ministry of Health implements the incentive program of 2014 for the NGOs that provide services in health support. Its goal is to encourage the NGOs actively participate in implementation of health policies by educating society, improving and spreading the information about healthy lifestyle and prevention, as well as other areas related to health support. Among other things, the program is aimed at prevention of the use of psychoactive substances among children and strengthening of children mental health (The Ministry of Health).

II. Juvenile Delinquency Prevention Strategies in Lithuania

The National Crime Prevention and Control Program (Article 31) ratified in 2003 notes that state and public investment in the children and youth, their personality development in the family, education, moral and legal nurturing, and their social protection are the factors that determine positive country's development, as well as success of crime prevention and control programs. The state recognizes the necessity to reduce social conditions which are the main reasons for high rate of juvenile delinquency (National Crime Prevention and Control Program, 2003). In the Republic of Lithuania, crime prevention is organized based on Lithuania's Government ratified programs which are described in the following section.

Juvenile Crime Prevention Programs in Lithuania

The legal system reform that took place after the restoration of Lithuania's independence brought reforms in juvenile legal system as well. In 1995, Lithuania ratified the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and after a year it enacted the Law on Fundamentals of Protection of the Rights of the Child (1996). The Law defines the importance of the child's, as a separate subject, rights protection and on legal level affirmed the necessity of crime prevention.

The Law distinguishes early or primary juvenile delinquency prevention as one of the most important child rights protection guarantees (here the prevention is understood as preventive and educational measures that help to stop the crime and other law violations). The Law also highlights child's protection against the negative social environment. The ratification of the Law on Fundamentals of Protection of the Rights of the Child led to its complex implementation in reality. The Government of Lithuania ratified a number of programs related to juvenile delinquency prevention.

Juvenile Occupation and Improving Delinquency Prevention Program for 1995–1996. The program was limited to foreseeing only general measures for juvenile occupation and delinquency prevention for government institutions. It is worth to mention the measures for minors who do not study or work and organizing summer camps for them. The program also intended to conduct a study that would research the reasons for juvenile delinquency.

National Children and Youth Crime Prevention Program for 1997–2005. It is the first national program aimed at the implementation of the Law on Fundamentals of Protection of the Rights of the Child. It provided a list of government and self-government institutions responsible for program's implementation, it also established the Children and Youth Crime Prevention Committee that foresees the implementation of the program. Program's creators raised the long-term goal – to improve the protection of children rights and interests and reduce the level of crime. It is followed by the short-term goal – to built an effective children rights protection and crime prevention system that would control (eliminate, limit, and reduce) the negative impact of social environment and various criminal processes and phenomena which in turn create favorable situations for violating children rights and crippling children's personalities.

In attempts to reach the goals, the program foresaw three levels of action: state (national), regional/municipality, and institutional (education, social help and care, public and other NGOs). The program also aimed at improving health care for students' and other children, conditions for their occupation (especially school attendance), and moral and behavioral conduct; ensuring social

care and help for children who live below poverty (especially for homeless children, bums, and beggars) by paying special attention to their educational care and occupation; concentrating preventive work in municipality's social care and help institutions that collaborate with the NGOs and other public institutions; coordinating actions of various government institutions that take part in children rights protection and crime prevention; and ensuring that the preventive work is supplied with all the necessary informational, legal, scientific, and training material.

In practice, the program was implemented by yearly organized contests. The program was more oriented towards the post-prevention, when the child is already in the group at risk and he needs help, and not towards the prevention – how to stop children from absorbing negative social experience and inappropriate social norms. In 1998, the program and the projects related with it received 5.85 million, in 2002 – 1 million litas.

National Drug Control and Drug Addiction Prevention Program for 1999–2003. Among other things, the program states that Lithuania ratified the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child in which the Article 33 obliges to protect children from drugs. The obligation led to one of the program's goals – reduce the level of drug and psychotropic substance abuse among the children and youth. The program included measures related to prevention of drugs and other harmful substances use in schools; introduction of drug prevention questions in preschool and other type of schools educational programs; preparation of drug prevention subjects and its introduction into health educational programs and various projects in schools; drug prevention development in informal schools; organizing more and better quality public events about drug abuse; organizing social campaign “School without Drugs”; organizing educational classes on drugs for parents (lectures, discussions, social campaign “School and Family – Against Drugs”); preparation and publication of information on drug prevention; organizing seminars for educators about drugs and other harmful substances and drug prevention; and monitoring and assessing the drug prevention work in schools.

Trying to implement the drug prevention programs, it is necessary to understand the reasons that motivates people to use drugs and other psychotropic substances. According to Dainius Pūras, children and youth psychologist, who is very critical of the implementation of preventive practices in Lithuania, the crisis in society which asserts itself by huge amount of risk factors and high level of toxic environment, social isolation, and lack of tolerance poisons the fragile spiritual life of adolescents and encourages them to use unhealthy forms of protest. Pūras invites to follow the European long-term and scientifically proved social-emotional skills reinforcement programs that

help parents and children to better understand oneself and each other, interact with others, and grow immunity (Pūras, 2007).

The National Program Against the Commercial Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse of Children for 2000–2004. The program states that violence and abuse against the children only encourages violence and abuse. Abused children very often become cruel to others. The program included legal, social, medical, psychological, educational, organizational, and informative measures. The research conducted in 2007 showed that the sexual abuse prevention programs in education institutions are not effective and that 47% of the respondents do not know where to seek help in case of sexual abuse. If we want to teach children to protect themselves and say “No” they have to know their rights and what kind of help they can get. Sexual abuse against children is a very negative and criminal act. Many factors lead to it, for example, person's biological nature, family, school, peers, media, society, country's economic situation, and level of poverty. To limit child abuse, scientifically-based concepts are created and institutions are established. They all make one solid system which encourages socially acceptable children activities, limits and suppresses socially unacceptable behavior, and implements a number of preventive programs. However, the authors of the research observe that using the above mentioned measures not always brings the results we expect (**Kunigytė-Arlauskienė, Butvilas, 2007**).

The Children and Youth Socialization Program for 2004–2014. The program is aimed to ensure the well-being of children and youth under the age of 18 by creating and implementing purposeful occupation, prevention, and education programs (strategies) based on social partnership that can have a positive effect on successful children and youth socialization, their cultural maturity, public spirit, social skills, self-expression, talents and interests, and help to ensure better social and educational conditions for them. One of the program's priorities is children rights protection and antisocial behavior prevention that in the program are defined as measures and strategies trying to stop the rise and development of social risk factors. The program also draws attention to socially and educationally abandoned children whose rate increases with every year and whose parents lack basic education, and family's social state is poor. That is why such children early on find themselves living in the environment that is not appropriate for their positive socialization.

Juvenile Justice Program for 2004–2008. The program is created to continue previous activities in juvenile justice and to pursue the goals that for various reasons (mostly financial) could not be achieved earlier. In reality, the Juvenile Justice Program started in 2005 when it received partial support (less than one third of the money intended) for implementation of a few measures (**Vileikienė, 2007**). The main goals of the program were to seek re-socialization of juvenile

delinquents and thus reduce the rate of juvenile crime, also to improve juvenile justice system by creating the optimal network of the institutions working in the field and constantly improving the training of legal workers and other professionals. In comparison to previous juvenile justice program, the number of institutions implementing the program increased. Therefore the program tried to make sure that certain measures would be implemented by specific institutions directly related to juvenile justice.

According to Evaldas Visockas (2007), the project director of Crime Prevention in Lithuania Center (former) for Information Technologies, although crime prevention has been implemented, many projects have been carried out, and a lot of money has been given, the results are barely noticeable. The main focus is on problems of socialization and occupation. But these problems are only the tip of an iceberg in attempts to reduce the rate of crime. Therefore it is quite clear that we need to finance specific projects that aim at specific crimes. Otherwise we will not achieve a broader effect directed towards the crimes and the prevention would be understood only something like an organizing of the drawing contest or going to the cinema (Visockas, 2007).

Juvenile Justice Program for 2009–2013. The program is a successive continuation of the program of 2004–2008. The goal of the program was aimed at creating focused, long-term, and complex conditions for improvement of juvenile justice system by creating more differentiated system, i.e. by identifying and implementing measures meant for juveniles of various groups at risk and trying to re-socialize and not to punish or isolate them. The program is based on the results of the previous program of 2004–2008 and on the need to further the measures that were successful and overcome difficulties which had arose in the process, i.e. it is important to correct some parts of the program to make sure the measures applied in juvenile justice are effective.

The Government of Lithuania ratified the Juvenile Justice Program for 2009–2013 that aims at reinforcement of protection of juveniles' interests during the administrative and criminal process by establishing clear and effective re-socialization system for children who return from the places of imprisonment and children socialization centers, by expanding the minimal and medium care system for juveniles, and by ensuring to increase the level of competence of the staff working in juvenile justice.

It is important to note that the United Nations Development Program contributed to the reform of the justice system in Lithuania. In 1998, the program stimulated few studies. The Law Institute of Lithuania analyzed the juvenile justice system in Lithuania and described the current system's situation and pointed to main directions: “the effect of crime justice on juvenile's personality and his behavior with the results of the sociological research about the minors who are imprisoned, and the

Concept of the Juvenile Criminal Justice Reform with more specific and extensive suggestions on how to improve the juvenile crime justice system” (Vileikienė, 2007).

2.3. Competences of Professionals Who Work in Juvenile Justice

Even if the preventive measure has been chosen and the institution responsible for its implementation has been assigned it does not mean that the intended goals would be met. Criminal literature notes that in every single case one has to analyze what kind of difficulties he would face in trying to implement the measure, how the problems would be solved, and what side effects it might have.

One of the components of the prevention system is people who work directly with juveniles. And that means that it is very important that those people are ready for such work.

The United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Administration of Juvenile Justice ratified in 1985 highlights competence and specialization: “police officers who frequently or exclusively deal with juveniles or who are primarily engaged in the prevention of juvenile crime shall be specially instructed and trained” (Jungtinių Tautų dokumentų rinkinys, 2004).

During the implementation of the second juvenile justice program for 2004–2008, the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) project “Support for the Development of an Efficient Juvenile Justice System in Lithuania” was endorsed. Its goal is to reinforce the competences of the staff in juvenile justice system in attempts to create effective, modern, and humane juvenile justice system. Three quarters of the project were financed by the UNDP, one quarter – by participating government institutions, in other words, “UNDP initiated project was a form of direct support aimed at the implementation of the Government endorsed yet insufficiently financed second Juvenile Justice Programme” (Vileikienė, 2007).

Gintautas Sakalauskas, a criminologist, states that understanding the meaning of state's forced measures applied to juvenile delinquents is a necessary precondition for its effective and purposeful application. Therefore legal acts have to foresee the specialization of professionals who work with juvenile delinquents – in police, prosecutor's office, courts, and correction and imprisonment institutions (Sakalauskas, 2013).

2.4. Community's Role

Community's role in juvenile crime prevention is described in many international documents. In the Article 1.3 of the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Administration of Juvenile Justice ("The Beijing Rules"), countries are encouraged to pay sufficient attention to positive measures that involve “the full mobilization of all possible resources, including the family, volunteers and other community groups, as well as schools and other community institutions, for the purpose of promoting the well-being of the juvenile, with a view to reducing the need for intervention under the law, and of effectively, fairly and humanely dealing with the juvenile in conflict with the law.”

Crime prevention and its control can be successful if all social subjects – legal institutions, public administrative institutions, municipality institutions, businesses, public organizations, and private people – actively participate in it. New attitude towards the security is based on the principle that both the state and the citizens are equal partners and are equally concerned about how to ensure safe environment.

Based on the results of the studies conducted in the Republic of Lithuania, it is clear that the prevention model oriented towards the community cannot be easily introduced. One of the reasons is that the police has lost contact with a society. 18,6% of the respondents living in Vilnius city (Žirmūnai, Verkiiai, Šnipiškės, and Žvėrynas) say that they would like to see more cooperation with the police officers. Moreover, almost 35% of the respondents think that police and society have no contacts whatsoever (Uscila et. al., 2006).

In most of the countries, the main cooperation in crime control and prevention takes place between the police and the members of a society. The possibilities of the police officers to act mostly depend not only on their moral principles or competences, but also on people's willingness to help. Trusting each other and cooperation improve police work and increase the sense of safety among the members of a society (Center for Crime Prevention in Lithuania publication, 2006).

According to dr. R. Uscila, Lithuania's legal system is dominated by jurisdiction conflict-solving strategies (pretrial inquest, judicial inquest, judicial conciliation, when the victim and the perpetrator reconcile in court, and etc.). The criminal justice model is very primitive. There are no non-jurisdiction conflict-solving strategies in Lithuania's criminal justice, i.e. resolving the conflict using the Round Circle Principle, conferences-councils, Community Damage Repayment Model, families gathering, and Victim-Offender Mediation), although European legal practice has dozens of progressive models when in conflict-solving are involved not only conflicting sides but also the community (Uscila, 2007).

III. Early Prevention

Good Practice Fiche - “Second Step”

CONTEXT	<p>During the past decade, the level of abuse among Lithuanian school children has risen significantly. These days it is no surprise that children use violence in schools. Also, the number of younger kids using abuse and violence in schools has increased. Constant bullying, racketeering, physical abuse, and group punishments show that children have difficulties with self-knowledge, anger management and controlling impulses – necessary skills that could keep them away from using the abuse.</p> <p>It has been observed that today schools are witnessing bullying (27% of the school children fall prey to bullying 2–3 times or even more often a month) and behavioral and emotional problems among the children. It can be related to even bigger difficulties and more aggressive conduct among them.</p> <p>In Lithuania, 22% of the kids were subjected to abuse in school, 19% of them were ripped off money, personal belongings, or food. Another study showed that 58% of the children think that some kids feel alienated in classroom, 69% - that children very often sneer at each other.</p> <p>Social skills are one of the factors that has an impact on bad behavior or its prevention. The “Second Step” program helps to develop and reinforce social and emotional skills among the children.</p>
GOALS	<p>To reduce aggressive conduct among the children by developing and reinforcing social and emotional skills:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- teaching children to recognize and express their feelings in appropriate ways;- resisting impulsive behavior;- dealing with conflicts and problems and understanding the consequences of one's behavior.
DESCRIPTION	<p>In Lithuania, this program is applied in elementary schools for 1–4th grade school children.</p> <p>The program is used in the classroom. The <i>Second Step</i> classes that take place once a week are easily integrated into the core curriculum. All children</p>

	<p>participate in the class led by a head teacher.</p> <p>Teachers are provided with the teaching material – teacher’s book, videos, posters, which are important in teaching children about their feelings and how to deal with the problems, and A3 format photo cards with the text on the back for teachers.</p> <p>The program has few teaching components. First, children are introduced to the theme. Later, they hear a real story, and the teacher models the skill he wants the children to teach. After that children play role-playing games. They also do homework related to the theme they covered in class – how could they use social skills they have been taught in their everyday life.</p> <p>The program consists of three parts: empathy, impulse control, and anger management.</p> <p>Children are encouraged to use newly acquired skills during the day. Parents are invited to be active participants of the teaching process and positively reinforce new skills at home.</p> <p>The Children Support Center specialists, responsible for program’s quality, train elementary school teachers to work with the program, provide all the necessary information, and advise them during the program’s implementation.</p>
BUDGET	<p>The cost of the package of the <i>Second Step</i> teaching material is 700 litas (200 euros). Schools that want to participate in the program can purchase the package. The trainings are supported by Lithuania’s Ministry of Education and Science; they can also be supported with the money from the European Union, or the school itself can pay for it. The teaching material can be used by several teachers of the school. Knowledge gained during a 24 credit hour training course is sufficient to teach the <i>Second Step</i> program for a year.</p>
OUTCOMES	<p>Studies conducted in Lithuania and abroad show that children who take part in the program are less likely to use abuse, they demonstrate better behavior and social skills. Teachers also see positive changes – they observed that changes are especially visible in children who have serious behavioral problems and emotional difficulties.</p>

PROFESSIONAL S INVOLVED	Program is taught by teachers who took a 24 hour training. They are trained by the Children Support Center specialists – experienced psychologists.
INSTITUTIONAL PARTNERS	Schools, Lithuanian Ministry of Education and Science, and National Center for Special Needs Education and Psychology.
CONTACT	<p>Program <i>Second Step</i></p> <p>Program coordinator Žydrė Arlauskaitė</p> <p>Phone: +370 52715980, +37061143567</p> <p>Address: Latviu g. 19A, 08113 Vilnius, Lithuania</p> <p>E-mail address: www.pvc.lt</p>

Practice Evaluation		
Criteria	Satisfactory	Average
Program relevance	+	
Program efficiency and effectiveness	+	
Program impact	+	
Program sustainability	+	
Program transferability	+	
Translating evaluation findings into statements of good practices	+	

http://www.ipji.org/fileadmin/data/documents/strategies_planning/IPJJ_CriteriaDesignEvaluationJJProgrammes_2011_EN.pdf

Program “Second Step” is a program that develops and reinforces children social and emotional skills. The main goal of the program is to reduce a number of problems that children face interacting with each other, lower the level of their anger, teach them to cope with the feelings, deal with the impulsive behavior and understand the consequences of such behavior, and learn to solve behavioral problems.

“Second Step” In the World

The program was created in 1986 by the Committee for Children, team of professional educators and physical health specialists. Today the program is accessible to every country in the world. It was translated into many languages and adapted for different cultures. Third edition of the “Second Step” violence prevention program (2002) is used in Denmark, Finland, Germany, Greenland, Iceland, Japan, Lithuania, Norway, Slovakia, Sweden, Kurdistan (Iraq), United Kingdom, Chile, Turkey, Venezuela, US, and other countries.

All these countries signed a contract with the Committee for Children, translated and adapted program’s material to its needs, ran a test, and now propagate it within the country. In some countries, the program became an integral part of their educational system curriculum.

“Second Step” In Lithuania

In Lithuania, the program has been administered by Children Support Center since 2004. To make sure it works for Lithuanian schools, in 2004, the Center ran the program in 16 Vilnius city classrooms. Since the results were very positive, in 2007, the Center signed a contract with the Committee for Children and was granted the right to carry out the program in Lithuania. All Lithuania’s schools can participate in the program.

The program works as a violence reduction and prevention tool. In 2008, The Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania supported the implementation of the program in Lithuanian schools. The program became an effective tool for teachers to work with, for children – a real opportunity to become successful and healthy. It is important for parents too, because they know that their children are given strong mental foundation that will be useful in their future lives. Today the “Second Step” program is used by more than 1,300 Lithuanian teachers.

Theoretical Reasoning

The main focus of the program is social skills that play crucial role in helping children to succeed while interacting with peers without using aggression. The program is devised in such a way that it addresses one of the three child's social responses: emotional, cognitive, and behavioral.

Children try to use their behavioral skills in complicated social situations (Hirschstein, 2002). Lack of social skills can lead to inaccurate interpretation of social signs and one's intentions and cause inadequate social response. Studies show that lack of social skills is related to child's adjustment in the classroom, social status, and effective relationship with his peers.

The child who was rejected is less likely to show socially positive and cooperative behavior and has more difficulties to become part of the group. Children with high social status show higher degree of social and cooperative behavior than the rejected ones (Walker, 2004). The problems that arise while interacting with the peers can become the reason of aggressive behavior and encourage such behavior (Coie & Kupersmidt, 1983, cited in: Walker, 2004). Boys who were rejected or isolated most often would demonstrate inadequate behavior and physical aggression. To the contrary, the boys who are popular in the class are less likely to behave aggressively and antisocially (Dodge, 1983).

Poor social skills and communication difficulties are related to behavioral disorders (Gaffney, McFall, 1981, Spence, 1981, cited in: Spence, 2003). If the child cannot recognize difficult social situation and think of possible ways to deal with it, as well as foresee and evaluate possible implications, he would less often show socially adequate response (Lochman, Dodge, 1994, Spence, Sheffield, Donovan, 2002, cited in: Spence, 2003).

Social skills act as a very important preventive factor. Children with poor communication skills have higher risk to adjust themselves in the future than children who are socially competent (Cowen, and etc., 1973, cited in: Goldstein). Bernard distinguishes 4 important factors of strength. Two of them are social and emotional factors: 1) social competence (communication skills, empathy, responsibility, and caring); and 2) problem-solving (planning, flexibility, and decision making) (Bernard, 2004). Social and emotional education has significant impact on the factors that lead to harmful behavior or is related to person's health – drug and violence abuse (Fredericks, 2003).

By developing children social skills in school we secure safer environment with less possibility of violence and crime (Skiba, Boone, and etc., 2000).

Program's Teaching Material

The teachers are provided with all the necessary material to teach the “Second Step”: a teacher's book, video recordings on DVDs that contain visual parts of the program, posters that are necessary to learn how to deal with one's feelings and solve problems (“Calming Yourself Down”; “What to Do When You Are Angry”, and “Problem-solving”), and A3 format cards with pictures for children in front and text for teachers on the back. The teacher conducts a 30–40 minute class using one card and following the earlier devised plan. Such a format helps to relate children emotional experience with the experience showed in the pictures and on video.

The story told in class is used as a platform to start discussion, to play role-playing games, and do other activities. The same story is used in higher grades, only its content is adapted to children age group.

The card contains all the classroom activities and suggestions for the teacher how new skills can be modeled during the week. The classes are consistent and devised in such a way so they can be taught consecutively. Children are taught necessary social and emotional skills using situations from everyday life. The newly learned skills are repeated and reinforced in other classes.

Program's Content

The program is created to develop child's social competence by teaching him social and emotional skills that will be useful in the future. The program is an universal abuse prevention program that includes all children in class. It is devised for 4 age groups: preschool/kindergarten; 1–3th grade; 4–5th grade, and high school students. In Lithuania, this program is translated and adapted for 1–4th grade school children.

The teaching material is used in the classroom, therefore it requires minimum preparation time from the teacher. The “Second Step” classes are easily integrated into the core curriculum and take place once a week.

All children participate in the program led by the teacher. Children are encouraged to use their newly acquired skills not only in class but during the day as well. Parents are also welcomed to participate and positively reinforce their children new social skills at home.

The program uses few teaching components. First, children are introduced to the theme. Later, they hear a real story, and the teacher models the skill he wants children to teach. After that children play role-playing games. Children also take home some homework related to the theme they covered in class – how they use new social skills in everyday life.

The “Second Step” program is based on cognitive behavioral methods that are found in Bandura's social learning theory (1986) (cited in: Hirschstein, 2002) and social information

processing models (Crick and Dodge, 1994). The program is based on Kendall's (2000) viewpoint on psychological problems that are related to cognitive and behavioral reasons.

The teaching program consists of three parts: empathy, impulse control, and anger management that follow each other in a consecutive order:

Part I – Empathy development. Children are taught to recognize their own and others' feelings, use different point of views, and react emphatically. In the classroom, they learn to identify and name various feelings, are taught to recognize them, and react to other people.

Empathy provides emotional scheme for problem-solving:

ability to recognize and understand one's own feelings;

ability to “read” feelings of others;

ability to see the situation through the eyes of other people.

What worked? What didn't worked? What do I have to do differently? Did I do ok?

Part II – Impulse control and problem-solving. Here, the main focus is on calming oneself down, recognizing sudden and ill-considered behavior in complicated situations, and reflecting over the problem. Children learn and are taught how to use three strategies: calming yourself down; social problem-solving, and taking behavioral skill steps that can be used trying to come up with the decision. In this part, the skills that children learn are used in the third part of the program.

Children get introduced to problem-solving procedures. They are taught to identify and name the problem, think of the ways to solve it, evaluate possible effects and results, perform the decision, and assess its outcome.

Part III – Anger management. Children are taught to recognize anger, to use various anger management techniques, and use problem-solving strategy in angry situations. The goal of this part is to reduce angry behavior among children. Anger management techniques are specifically adapted for early age children. It integrates both calming yourself down and problem-solving strategies taught in the second part of the program and adds a reflective component which children use to assess their own behavior while dealing with angry situations (Hirschstein, 2002).

Here children are presented with the situations that usually makes them angry, including the situations or activities where the child is left alone, is alienated and gets under fire, also conflicts with a brother or sister, peers or parents.

Trainings

The teacher plays a very important role in helping children to develop their social and emotional skills. That is why Children Support Center specialists who supervise the quality of the program in schools teach educators how to work with the “Second Step” program. They provide them with all the necessary information about the program, introduce to the goals, and guide them throughout the process. The length of the training is 24 credit hours.

Assessing the Program

Grossman (1997) (cited in: Frey, Hirschstein, Guzzo, 2000) conducted a test with 12 schools. The focus group for 4–5 months participated in the “Second Step” program. The method used – parents and teachers' assessment and direct observation of children behavior. The study showed that physical aggression and calling names declined in the focus group. The changes were more visible in less structured environment – on the playground and in school cafeteria. The level of friendly, social, and neutral conduct increased in the “Second Step” classrooms. Even after 6 months, school children showed lower level of aggression and higher level of positive interactions. According to studies conducted by Beland (1988, 1989, 1991, 1992, cited in: Frey, Hirschstein, Guzzo, 2000), the level of verbal understanding of others' viewpoint and social problem-solving abilities in focus group increased significantly. Meanwhile, the children from control group did not show such changes. Also, it was observed that children who participated in the program showed better knowledge of social skills (for example, how to calm yourself down when one gets angry).

The study conducted by Beland and Frey (2002) showed that children's, who participated in the “Second Step” program, attitude towards aggression and understanding of social skills have changed. They are less likely to approve of aggressive actions and tolerate physical aggression, aggression in the relationship, and alienation than the control group (Beland and Frey, 2002).

The study conducted for 3 years with 6–9 years old children who took part in the “Second Step” program found that parents saw significant changes in their children behavior – it changed outside the school (Schick, Cierpka, 2005).

The study on the effectiveness of the program in which more than 100 first grade school children took part was conducted in Lithuania. The goal of the study was to assess children knowledge of social skills and behavior before and after the program. The study showed that after the program the social skills, especially in anger management, of the focus group increased

significantly. To the contrary to children who did not take part in the program, even after a year children who participated in the “Second Step” showed better social skills. It was also noted that the program had stronger impact on children with bigger emotional and behavioral problems (Kuraite, 2008).

What Lithuanian Teachers Say

Today the “Second Step” program is one of the most popular social-emotional development programs in Lithuania. Teachers who worked with the program since its beginning confirm its long-term effectiveness. They say that they had noticed positive changes in children after a very short time.

The analysis of the “Second Step” effectiveness conducted in Lithuanian education institutions found out that 6 (46%) institutions consider the program “very effective” and 7 (54%) institutions - “effective” (The Ombudsperson for Children Rights of the Republic of Lithuania, 2013).

The teachers noted that children learned to be more relaxed, are not afraid to express their opinion, find more and various problem-solutions, and express their feelings using words and not fists. Also, the number of aggressive conflict problem-solving has decreased. The educators observed that children who participate in the program for longer than a year have significantly improved their social skills. Unfriendly behavior in school has become less common, children are more emphatic and tolerant, ready to interact with others and collaborate. Moreover, they are able to strike up a friendship and keep good relationship with their peers and teachers. Children who participate in the program can better concentrate and study in school.

“Children are happily awaiting for their class. Parents also are happy with the program. They joke that now it's their children who teach them how to calm down and to solve various problems. I am happy to see children using new skills in their daily life, various situations, they help their friends to solve problems,” says teacher I. Karskiene of Siauliai.

“The program is useful not only to children, but to their parents and teachers. These days when there is so much aggression, envy, and intolerance around us it's very important to learn how to calm oneself down and to make the right decision,” says V. Riaukiene, teacher from Priekule. Teacher Rasa: “Teachers who want to help children face a number of problems: reduced additional work hours, insufficient salaries for extra work, and etc. This program suits all teachers without any exceptions. Even without receiving an additional pay for his work, the teacher prioritizes and chooses what's the best for him and his children.”

Neringa, teacher who has been working with the program for six years, says: “I cannot doubt the meaningfulness of the program. In the middle of the second year of program's implementation, I noticed that children politely chime in the conversation, the interactions among them have improved – they ask each other how they feel and try to help the one who looks sad. It's great that the parents also noticed the effects of the program, they want it to be applied for higher grades as well. Children talk more about feelings, they are able to express what they feel in various situations, they are more tolerant.”

“I found it strange that children can have so much experience – both negative and positive. Many children act spontaneously, they would solve their problems by attacking or using aggression. I noticed that [after participating in the program] children's behavior has changed. There are nine kids from the families at social risk in my class. I noticed that especially these kids are the most active in the “Second Step” classes.

I, myself, am looking forward to these classes. I admit that I am learning from my children as well. We, adults, simply don't notice what our children DO, don't listen to what they SAY and most importantly – we don't know what they FEEL,” - Lina, P. Armino High School in Marijampole teacher.

What Children Say

“I learned how to calm myself down – I have to count backwards and think about something that is calming.” Simas

“I really liked the Second Step classes. We talked how to control oneself and how to play along the rules.” Pijus

“I liked the class because I could tell my opinion on how to solve the problem.” Gabriele

Good Practice Fiche - “Big Brothers/ Big Sisters”

CONTEXT	<p>A continuous unstable social and economic situation that has been haunting Lithuania for the past few years put many families raising little children into difficult and critical situations. Such families face unemployment, conflicts in the family, divorce, migration, and etc.</p> <p>During the past three years, the number of divorces has increased* (in 2010, there were 10,006, in 2012, 10,399 divorces). After the divorce children stay with one of the parents (in 2012, there were 7,809 children living with one parent). There is also a high level of unemployment (in 2012, there were 195,200 unemployed people in Lithuania). Parents who raise little children and face different crisis sometimes try to deal with them in inadequate ways.</p> <p>The number of families that cannot effectively deal with family crises and are listed as families at social risk (in 2011, there were 10,608 such families in Lithuania) is growing. There are many children in Lithuania whose parents lost the right to raise their children**: every year the number of such kids reaches 2,000.</p> <p>Lithuania is on top of the list among the European countries that suffers from emigration. The intensity of migration seen in Lithuania parts and separates thousands of families (for example, in 2011, 40,740 people of a productive age emigrated from Lithuania). Children are left behind without one or both parents. They are left to be looked after by their distant relatives or complete strangers. Such children lack positive examples, stability, and steadiness in their lives. And that undermines children physical, emotional, and social well-being.</p> <p><i>* Statistics Lithuania</i></p> <p><i>** Ministry of Social Security and Labor of the Republic of Lithuania and State Child Rights Protection and Adoption Service under the Ministry of Social Security and Labor.</i></p>
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<p>GOALS</p>	<p>The goals of the program „Big Brothers Big Sisters of Lithuania“ is to organize and implement personal help by an adult volunteer intended for a kid living in Vilnius and expand it throughout Lithuania.</p> <p>BBBS program:</p> <p>organizes a long-term relationship between the child undergoing psychological difficulties and the volunteer, ensuring psychological support and professional supervision to both parties.</p> <p>Prepares program coordinators and provides help establishing programs in other cities of Lithuania.</p>
<p>DESCRIPTION</p>	<p>The main idea of BBBS is voluntary and personal help intended for children and provided by the selected and trained volunteer who interacts with the chosen child aged 7–17 and helps him to overcome various, but not very serious psychological difficulties. The interaction between the child and the volunteer is supervised by specialists (psychologists, social workers, and etc.).</p> <p>The interaction takes place between one child and one volunteer. Male volunteers interact with the boys, female volunteers – with the girls.</p> <p>The friendship starts with the introduction and signing of the Contract of Friendship.</p> <p>The friendship lasts one year. After a year, the friendship is terminated by mutual agreement of the child, volunteer and program coordinators or is renewed for another year.</p> <p>The Big Friend and the Little Friend meet once a week and spend together no less than two hours. The time spent together is dedicated for interaction, educational activities, leisure, and hobbies.</p>

	<p>Friendships are supervised and facilitated by program coordinators.</p> <p>The child and the volunteer follow program's rules.</p>
BUDGET	<p>Children participate in the program free of charge.</p> <p>The cost of one friendship is approximately 1,700 litas a year.</p> <p>The program is supported by businesses, foundations and residents of Lithuania who donate 2% of their income taxes.</p>
OUTCOMES	<p>The results of the studies conducted in Lithuania and the US show that <u>personal relationship between the child and the volunteer</u> has a positive effect on child's emotional state, self-confidence, ability to make decisions, his relationships with peers and adults, and has an impact on better results at school and school attendance.</p>
PROFESSIONALS INVOLVED	<p>Psychologists, case managers, social workers, an accountant and administrator.</p>
INSTITUTIONAL PARTNERS	<p>Separate projects are funded by city's municipality and businesses. In search of children and volunteers for the program, BBBS also partners with schools, Child Development Center, day centers, children homes, and municipal child rights protection agencies.</p>
CONTACT INFORMATION	<p>„Big Brothers Big Sisters“ phone: 8 611 22612, 8 5 271 59 80 email: jurate@pvc.lt Address: Latviu st. 19A, Vilnius Jūratė Baltuškienė, director www.pvc.lt/big-brothers-big-sisters</p>

Practice Evaluation			
Criteria	Satisfactory	Average	Unsatisfactory
Program relevance	+		
Program efficiency and effectiveness	+		
Program impact	+		
Program sustainability	+		
Program transferability	+		
Translating evaluation findings into statements of good practices		+	

Big Brothers Big Sisters and Its Mission

BBBS is one of the oldest, well known and the most effective programs in the world for children. It is the unique program which success is ensured by the friendship between the child and the volunteer. The volunteers are specially trained and their friendship with children is professionally supervised.

The mission of BBBS carried out by the NGO Children Support Center is to spread the word in Lithuania about personal and voluntary help by the adult volunteer for children.

History

The idea of BBBS was born in the United States **in 1904**. New York City court clerk named Ernest Coulter noticed that interaction with children helps to keep them away from trouble. He understood that adults by interacting with children can help them. He started to look for volunteers and that was the beginning of the Big Brothers movement.

At almost the same time, a women group called Ladies of Charity started to look over the girls who came through the New York Children's Court. Later the group changed its name to Catholic Big Sisters.

In 1977, both groups joined their efforts and established organization of Big Brothers Big Sisters of America. The main goal of the program was to help socially abandoned young people who do not have strong and positive adult role models in their lives.

BBBS came to Lithuania **in 1995**. In Lithuania, the program was first implemented by Open Society Fund of Lithuania. Later, the Children Support Center took over and started to administer it in Vilnius. Today the program is successfully implemented in many Lithuanian cities and schools.

Program's Main Idea

Big Brothers Big Sisters, the program based on the principles of mentorship, serves as a tool for prevention and early intervention. Its main idea is personal and voluntary help for children where carefully selected and trained volunteer interacts one on one with the child aged 7–17 and helps him to deal with uncomplicated psychological problems. The relationship between the volunteer and the child is supervised and facilitated by specialists (psychologists, social workers, and etc.).

The volunteer (Big Friend) and the child (Little Friend) meet **once a week** and spend together no less that two hours. At the beginning of the friendship, they sign a Contract of Friendship that lasts **a year**. After one year, the contract is terminated or renewed for another year by mutual agreement of the child, volunteer, child's parents or foster-parents and program coordinators.

What do the Big Friend and the Little Friend do together? They

talk;

walk in the city;

draw, write poetry, do pottery;

cook;

shoot baskets, go swimming, ride bicycles or roller-blades;

go to movies, theater, or ballet;

simply dream and do nothing.

The friendship between the child and the volunteer follows certain rules. It is supervised and facilitated by the professional BBBS coordinators and/or case managers.

Target Audience – Children

The age of children participating in the program is 7–14; they can continue to be in the program until they reach 18 years. Children are selected to the program for several reasons:

There is only one parent in the family who takes care of the child/children;

Parents are divorced or they quarrel all the time;

There are 3 or more kids in the family;

Child lives with his foster-parents or at children home;

Mother or father lost his/her job;

Family barely meets the ends;

Child does not socialize, he has no friends;

After the school, the child spends a lot of time alone, without adult's supervision or he is lonely;

Child has problems fitting in school or is bullied;

Child was abused;

One of the parents is dead, in jail, or missing;

Child has problems, although not very serious with the police;

Child has a developmental, mental, or physical disorder.

The program helps children who lack direct attention and long-term support, do not socialize, and have no positive adult role model to follow. The program is useful to children who were emotionally, physically, or sexually abused, were neglected, experienced alienation and sneering by the peers; whose parents are divorced or they lost close member(s) of the family, whose family members abuse alcohol or drugs, or they live in the family where a physical punishment is a norm.

How do children get into the program?

Children are directed to the program by their teachers, psychologists, or social workers. Also, parents find out about the program on internet, hear about it from friends and acquaintances. There

are cases when children ask to be accepted into the program because their brothers, sisters, or friends had Big Friends.

All children who want to participate in the program undergo psychological evaluation where child's needs and difficulties are weighted, family's situation is looked into. The person who does the evaluation tries to establish whether the child needs any help. Once the evaluation takes place, family members or foster-parents receive recommendations regarding further help. It could be a suggestion for the child to have a Big Friend or recommendation to seek another type of help (such as psychological, mental, or provided by social workers).

„Safety Classes“ for Children

All children participating in BBBS have to take a „Safety Class“. Multiple studies show that abuse against children is widely spread and that children are often abused at or near home. For many different reasons children who were abused do not seek help – they are afraid or do not know that such behavior is inappropriate, or they do not know who to turn to.

The main goal of the „Safety Class“ is to minimize the abuse against children and develop children skills in safe behavior. They are told about child rights, abuse and its forms, are taught how to protect oneself from being abused and where to seek help. „Safety Class“ also strengthens children's self-understanding and knowledge of other people, it teaches them to understand various risks.

The „Safety Class“ is a two hour class. The teaching methods are chosen according to children age, stage of development, and cognitive skills. They help to reinforce the necessary children's skills in safe conduct. The „Safety Class“ is created and adapted for children of different age (7–10 and 11–14 years old). The content of the class consists of various games, stories meant for discussions, drawings, emotional cards, and handouts.

During the class children are taught the most essential things – how to recognize inappropriate behavior against them and how to avoid it. First, children learn to recognize and trust their own feelings, and then to decide whether the situation or other person's behavior is dangerous to him. Children learn about their rights and forms of abuse, are introduced to the term of sexual abuse. During the „Safety Class“, children learn to name their intimate body parts, they are taught the rules of safe touch. They find out what are good and bad secrets and what to do if you have bad secrets (related to abuse). They learn how to deal with dangerous and risky situations in which children can be abused. „Safety Classes“ also encourage children to say „no“ in dangerous situations and ask for help if the abuse has taken place.

Help Providers – Volunteers

To become a BBBS volunteer can any motivated and responsible person of 18 years or older who wants and can understand children and their needs, and would like to be friends with the child. This work is free and voluntary intended to help the child to become psychologically stronger and teach him to live differently. The volunteers can be people of any profession. But first they have to undergo screening and take a special training.

Screening and Training

People who want to participate in the program and become volunteers have to be screened. At the first screening, a volunteer-to-be fills out an application, submits two recommendations and a copy of his ID. The purpose of the conversation with the volunteer is to evaluate his psychological state. It is important to see what is volunteer's motivation to participate in the program, what is his personality and life story, what traumatic experiences one has had and how they were dealt with. The conversation allows to examine volunteer's ability to be stable and consistent, whether he can keep one's promises and pursue goals. Volunteer's values and the ability to be a role model for the child are taken into account as well. The volunteers who make through the first screening are invited to participate in a ten week (total of 20 hours) training, the second part of the screening routine.

The goals of the training:

Education – the purpose of the training is to introduce volunteers to child's psychology, the specifics of interaction with the child, crisis and forms of abuse, and how to help the child who finds himself in trouble. Volunteers also learn about BBBS rules and principles while working with the child.

Selection – during the training, the program coordinators get to know better volunteers, further evaluate the level of their motivation, the ability to interact and follow one's commitments. This also helps to select right people to the program.

Making a decision – The length and subjects covered during the training allow people to decide whether BBBS is the right place for them.

Program Effectiveness

Why is friendship useful to children?

Friendship with the trained volunteer helps the child to start trusting himself and others, deal with difficulties and overcome the isolation, open up, interact with others in a friendlier manner, and learn how to take care of himself and others. The Big Friend becomes a role model to the child. Volunteers encourage children in difficult moments of their lives, and teaches them to tell good from bad. The volunteers, students or people of different professions, show children the importance of learning and education, and introduce them to their profession and work. The Big Friends have a positive impact on children's independence, they teach them various practical things (for example, how to take public transportation or plan one's day).

Tolerant volunteers try to understand and listen to children. This encourages children to open up and tell about their problems. The volunteers do not avoid difficult questions, instead, they teach children to know and understand themselves better, and to help themselves or others.

Friendship with the Big Friend teaches the Little Friend how to make friends with others. The child becomes more courageous, and starts feeling more confident about himself and others.

In 2000, a study, conducted in the US (http://www.bbbs.org/site/c.9iILI3NGKhK6F/b.5961035/k.A153/Big_impact8212proven_results.htm), found that after 18 months of friendship with the Big Friends the Little Friends, compared to children who did not take part in the program, were:

46% less likely to begin using illegal drugs;

27% less likely to begin using alcohol;

52% less likely to skip school;

33% less likely to hit someone.

The study also found that children in the program were more confident of their performance at schoolwork and getting better along with their families.

In 2005, a study was conducted in which 200 respondents (children, volunteers, and parents or foster-parents) were asked questions about the effectiveness of the BBBS program in Vilnius. The study found that 89% of children, 95% of parents, and 96% of volunteers noticed positive impact on

children. Both the volunteers and parents agreed that children started more to trust themselves and others, became more confident and independent. They made more friendships with their peers, became more attentive and responsible, learned better to express their feelings, and improved their relationship with parents and friends of their own age.

Adults noticed positive changes in children's abilities: children got better at expressing opinion (18% - very improved; 48% - improved); to care more about their looks and personal hygiene (18% - very improved; 62% - improved); to make decisions (15% - very improved; 56% - improved); to trust themselves (14% - very improved; 64% - improved); to express their feelings (11% - very improved, 62% - improved); and they got better at controlling their emotions (8% - very improved, 39% - improved).

Children's answers show that many of them feel that friendship with the Big Friends improved their skills of interaction with others, and their relationships with peers, parents, and teachers: with school buddies (21% - very improved, 33% - improved); with other peers (12% - very improved, 50% - improved); with teachers (9% - very improved, 32% - improved); and with parents (3% - very improved, 42% - improved).

Parents noticed a positive impact on children's achievements: attending extracurricular activities (12% - very improved, 21% - improved); at school (11% - very improved, 30% - improved); school attendance (8% - very improved, 6% - improved); and doing their homework (6% - very positive, 21% - improved).

The study shows that **children's** participation in the program is important for several reasons. Children:

found a true friend: *"I found a friend whom I can talk to; now it's more fun."*

expanded their horizons; they spend their leisure time in a more creative way; found new hobbies: *"I discovered a bigger world, started to interact more with others, and I think more before I act;" "[A child] could go where grandma couldn't go; [he/she] got a chance to go to the summer camp."*

gained more confidence, became more independent; also, started to understand better himself and others, became friendlier: *"It gave me more confidence, I am more relaxed while interacting with others. I have more useful and interesting time, long walks are good for exercising my legs;" "[he/she] gained more confidence in himself/herself, found new friends, has better relationships with peers;" "[he/she] understands better what other people need."*

Parents and foster-parents said that the chance for their children to participate in the program is a **huge help to them** because:

it makes them feel calmer: *“Our relationship with children improved; the friendship between two people has a very important impact on trust and attitude towards the others in future life [of the child];” “I became calmer, because now my daughter has a friend whom she can open up to. I feel a very positive impact the program has [on us].”*

children became more independent and confident, they interact in a more open way: *“I like the changes in my son: he gained more confidence, started a friendship with the Big Friend;” “My child didn't feel restrained, somehow his Big Friend knew how to achieve it.”*

children started spending their time in a more interesting way; their horizons expanded; they enriched their experiences: *“I am happy that my daughter has a new good friend, [that] she experiences new things, and her leisure time is more interesting;” “The Big Friend expanded my daughter's horizon, she is more confident about herself, and I am very happy about this friendship.”*

In what ways is participation in the program useful to volunteers?

Every volunteer who helps the child gains new experience and skills, gets a better understanding about care and friendship with younger people, learns to understand families and kids with different life experience, expands his horizons, becomes more mature, and has a good time with the child.

In the 2005 study, **the Bigs** stressed that the participation in the program:

gave them an opportunity to better understand children and adolescent world, gain more experience: *“It allowed me better to know and understand children, things that are important and not so important to them, subtleties of certain children age;” “[the program] taught me patience and tolerance. [Also, it] taught me to give more than gain. I am happy being able to donate my time.”*

gained more confidence, felt that he can be useful; felt a bigger sense of responsibility: *“I have more confidence about myself, I can more openly express my opinion, I have noticed this in my Little Friend as well. I became more active;” “I tested my sense of responsibility and patience. I learned to compromise and found little person who is very dear to me;” “I understood that I can help others; despite how I feel, I learned how to listen, control my emotions, and how to advise and help others to make decision.”*

allowed them to go back to the childhood; to experience new things and have fun time: *“I understand that I have forgotten what important problems I had when I was her [Little Friend's] age. I learned to look at the world through the eyes I saw it 10 years ago;” “We have fun time together. My friend is very kind, smart, and reliable, I could call her my sister. It's very nice to be a role model.”*

A number of Big Friends **could apply their knowledge and social skills:** *“[I was able] directly to see the results and reaction to the knowledge I gained at the university. I myself became more patient, more consistent, and flexible.”*

To motivate volunteers, various international projects and Volunteer Clubs are organized for them. On such events, they not only share their experience but have a chance to meet other volunteers, peers, and gain new experience.

Financial Support of the Program

The BBBS program administered by the NGO Children Support Center is supported by various entities. The program is supported by businesses, foreign foundations, and Lithuanian people who donate 2% of their income taxes.

Projects meant for BBBS participants (summer camps and other events), scouting for volunteers, training of children and volunteers, and program's advertising are supported by various ministries of the Republic of Lithuania and Vilnius city municipality. In these cases, the program is supported as part of the services to children who were abused or went through various crises.

BBBS at School

The BBBS program applied in schools prevents and intervenes. It helps to minimize isolation and aggressiveness among children in Lithuanian schools. **The main goal of the program** is to form a friendship at school between younger and older school kids where the older children become the Big Friends for younger kids. The friendships are professionally supervised by trained school teachers.

Why BBBS is useful in schools?

In the past decade, there have been significant changes of the rate of abuse among school children in Lithuania. It increased, and became almost the norm. Moreover, the number of younger children abusing each other has increased. Constant sneering, racketeering, physical abuse, and group punishments show that children have difficulties getting to know themselves, controlling anger and impulses, they lack ideals and values that can keep them away from using abuse. It is necessary to correct the situation, and good news is that it can be done. The school could contribute to minimize the rate of abuse among children and provide support for them using its own resources – older school children who are mature and focused and want to help younger children.

Volunteers in school

The older children can play a very important role at abuse prevention and intervention in their schools. 9–12th grade adolescents are active in school's life, they take part in useful school's projects, gain experience and practical communication skills while working voluntary with younger peers; they creatively influence their opinions, learn how to pass this social experience to others, feel their usefulness and purpose, and perform social activities.

The older children can be a positive role model to younger kids – they act as their support, and the source of information. They help them to get a sense of and understand school subjects, to keep relationships, choose right friends, and raise younger kids' self-confidence and self-esteem.

How does the friendship develop in school?

The friendship takes place in school at an appointed time and place. The activities of the Little Friend and the Big Friend are foreseen by the coordinator. The case manager regularly consults and professionally supervises the couple, and assesses the results.

The coordinator of the BBBS in school

In schools, the coordinator of BBBS can be a schoolteacher, social educator, psychologist, or any other school staff member who has a university diploma, completed BBBS in School training

course and has a certificate to prove it. These courses are organized by the NGO Children Support Center.

BBBS in Lithuania

The Big Brothers Big Sisters Association of Lithuania, established in 1999, unites BBBS programs in all Lithuania. The mission of the NGO Children Support Center is to spread the BBBS program in Vilnius city and the whole country.

Today the program is successfully implemented in nine Lithuanian cities and towns: Vilnius, Kaunas, Šiauliai, Klaipėda, Alytus, Joniškis, Kretinga, Molėtai, and Utena. In these places they are administered by pedagogical-psychological services, youth and day centers, and NGOs, schools.

IV. Evaluation Mechanisms for Early Juvenile Crime Prevention Programs

The history of prevention programs in Lithuania is very short. The significant changes in the area started to take place only after Lithuania regained its independence in 1990. As Dainius Pūras points out, only then the problematic issues such as child abuse prevention, alcohol and drug abuse prevention, providing help to families at social risk, mental health prevention and reinforcement, and etc. felt into the radar of society. In the Soviet Union, such problems were not raised or discussed for various reasons (Pūras, 2011).

However, Pūras acknowledges that although more than 20 years have passed, the infrastructure of prevention programs (creation, financing, and implementation) is still very fragmentary. There are still quite a few obstacles that prevent to implement effective prevention programs in the country. Pūras distinguishes lack of the investments as one of the main obstacles. According to him, in order to evaluate the effectiveness of prevention programs, one needs to invest in evaluation mechanisms. Regrettably, politicians tend not to invest in the programs which effectiveness is not easy and cheap to assess. Moreover, the results of the most effective programs for the most part can be seen only after 5–10 or even more years (Pūras, 2011).

As an example Pūras provides a method that proved to be very effective throughout the world. It is the method that teaches parents raising kids to acquire emotional skills while interacting with children and helps to prevent crime among children in later years. In this case the investments put in the program would pay off after more than 10 years. As for politicians, they often want to see an immediate and easily measured effect of such programs (Pūras, 2011).

In 2005, as part of the implementation of the National Crime Prevention and Control Program the methodology of evaluating the efficiency of crime prevention projects (programs) was prepared. It describes the scientific requirements of a crime prevention project that are needed in order to evaluate project's efficiency. In 2005–2006, a teaching methodology was prepared. Its purpose is to help specialists working in the field to get acquainted with current methods that assure the effectiveness of preventive projects and to apply them at preparing and implementing such projects (Justickis, Gečėnienė, Čepas, 2005). In 2007, the Drug, Tobacco and Alcohol Control Department prepared methodological recommendations for specialists who work in the primary psychoactive substances child prevention field. The recommendations were a reaction to the conclusions issued by the Commission in 2006 that note that specialists who work in the field of prevention do not have enough information about how the primary evaluation of the project. In 2009, the methodological tool, named “Beccaria. Seven Steps to a Successful Crime Prevention Project”, was

published on the website of the Ministry of the Interior of the Republic of Lithuania. It explains how to prepare an effective crime prevention project (Astrauskienė, 2007).

A study conducted in Lithuania aimed to analyze the crime prevention programs in the country and assess its correspondence to methodological requirements of such programs. Crime prevention programs of various levels as well as other programs related to the field (social, economic, and education) for 1993–2016 were analyzed. The quantitative and qualitative analysis of programs' content was carried out. All programs (42 programs, or 86% already implemented and 7 programs, or 14% are implemented currently) are national and are applied on the state level.

The study found that none of the assessed programs looked into the potential effectiveness of the measures chosen for the program. Therefore the preventive impact of the programs, which were put together by many institutions and required finances, is not known. The study showed that the average index of crime prevention programs that satisfy the criteria for such programs is 6.8 (out of 16). That means that the programs satisfy only less than half of all criteria used in the study. The study also noted that the prevention programs are centralized, which means that they are less oriented towards the regional and local level to ensure the closest interests and needs for human safety (Kiškis, Kuodytė, 2011).

M. Smolinas observes that the prevention program will be successful if it is designed according to the child's needs. Whereas in Lithuania, prevention programs are prepared and implemented for a general group of offenders not paying attention to the nature or reasons of a crime. Therefore it is clear that not all measures applied to the offender will be effective. Smolinas suggests to introduce an audit as one of the tools for evaluation the effectiveness of prevention programs (Smolinas, 2010).

Pūras also notes that throughout the world the mental health prevention is based on science and it is recommended to invest in general mental health immunity reinforcement and not in specific preventive factors. Whereas in Lithuania, applications oriented towards a very specific and narrow goal are selected (for example, presentations about the drug and alcohol abuse damage). The measures such as moralizing and categorizing families into bad and good ones still prevail in Lithuania. There is a huge need for positive preventive work with families at social risk (Šalaševičiūtė, 2011).

Conclusions

Lithuanian juvenile justice system stands on two poles that are reflected through its dependency to different areas of state's management: the measures, that are related to legal liability implementation, belong to the Ministry of Justice, and the measures, that are applied to deal with delinquent behavior and where legal liability is not possible, lies with the Ministry of Education and Science.

Penal and educational measures foreseen by the Lithuanian law system are applied depending on age group and character of socially unacceptable behavior, and whether such a behavior falls into the category of law violations. This distinction helps to decide what measures – of criminal justice or education system – will be applied in each case. Although the distinction between the measures applied is rather a formal one, the content of educational and preventive measures is very similar in both systems.

Penal and educational measures foreseen by the Lithuanian laws are a reaction to already committed violations and crimes. They emphasize child's behavior and his liability, but not his needs. The system is more oriented towards the punishment and not towards help.

The spectrum of the preventive measures applied to the delinquent youth is rather wide. However, few measures are rarely applied and the ones that are applied usually are not delivered through. There is also a lack of cooperation among the institutions that take part in appointing and implementing measures.

The education system carries the most responsibility for organizing the juvenile delinquent prevention in Lithuania. Within its framework the *Law on Minimal and Medium Care for the Minors* is applied, the activities of social educators and psychologists, as well as preventive group work is organized.

Although children that live in the families at social risk receive various help and preventive measures (child rights protection, day centers, financial and social help, and etc.), the resources and professional services are not sufficient, especially in remote places of Lithuania.

Health care institutions take part in children delinquent prevention very sporadically – only on demand.

In the Republic of Lithuania, preventive work is organized through the programs ratified by the Government of Lithuania: Juvenile Occupation and Improving Delinquency Prevention Program, National Children and Youth Crime Prevention Program, National Drug Control and Drug Addiction Prevention Program, The National Program Against the Commercial Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse of Children, The Children and Youth Socialization Program, and Juvenile Justice Programs.

Trying to create effective, modern, and humane juvenile justice system, it is important to reinforce the competences of the staff working in juvenile legal system, encourage the cooperation among the institutions, and deepen the specialization of the professionals working with the youth inclined to commit crimes.

Lithuanian juvenile delinquent system is dominated by legal conflict-solving strategies; therefore it lacks alternative – non-legal – conflict-solving strategies.

The preventive practices used in Lithuania today are considered to be effective and useful, theory and science-based, adapted by and used all around the world. They are oriented towards the strengthening children's resistance to negative environment's impact and social, emotional, and interpersonal skills training.

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