

INTRODUCTION

For the past several years, we have conducted theoretical and practical research of issues related to school and health. The impulse and inspiration for our work were modern documents outlining the present and future concepts of healthcare and education in this country and in the world. The process of mutual connecting, influencing and utilizing is increasingly evident in today's scholastic and healthcare programs, real or potential. It eventually leads to goals characterized by words like health, upbringing, quality of life, prevention (especially the primary kind), resistance, optimism and others. Our research indicates that the interaction between "school" and "health" issues appears to be highly effective for both sides, which have more things in common than originally thought.

This volume is another in the series of publications coming from the SCHOOL AND HEALTH FOR THE 21ST CENTURY research project that the Faculty of Education at the Masaryk University has pursued since 2005. The project activities culminate every year in a conference called SCHOOL AND HEALTH 21 with international participation, where researchers from project teams and other participants in the project report on their work. Our conferences are also traditionally attended by a number of scientists who are actively involved in a given project and consider periodic contacts with other experts in the field essential for their own work. We appreciate the cooperation of foreign colleagues as both valuable and symptomatic of the fact that health education commands world-wide interest, although it might stem from different concerns or emphasize different objectives. In addition to the three-day SCHOOL AND HEALTH 21 conference (August 24-26, 2009), we began to sponsor, on a quarterly basis, one-day thematic seminars devoted to specific problems arising from active projects. There have been seminars on environmental studies, traffic education, the role of teachers in health education, philosophical and historical aspects of health education and other subjects. A selection of proceedings from the conference and seminars is presented in this volume. We tried to organize the studies to reflect the entire range of the "school and health" research and the next phase of our project.

The contributions contained in this publication are linked by a common theme of "school and health" and reveal, in many cases, the author's fundamental expertise as his or her starting point, because health education requires a multi-discipline approach. The editing of the individual articles was minimal as the full responsibility for the studies rests with their authors, whose complete contact information is listed at the end of the book.

This compilation is a working document intended to show the status of health education research with regard to the current school system and its policies. We

do not aspire to formulate definitive conclusions but hope to spark off discussions, innovative suggestions and new ideas.

It closing, it is our pleasant duty to thank the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports, as well as to the leadership of the Masaryk University and the Faculty of Education for making our work on this research project possible.

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Evžen Řehulka

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“SCHOOL AND HEALTH FOR THE 21st CENTURY”