

## TEACHER – PREVENTION METHODIST IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS

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*Jana VESELÁ*

**Abstract:** *The paper deals with the role of a teacher methodology prevention in elementary school. Trying to assess the status of prevention methods in teaching staff, his teaching load and the possibility of further professional education. Reconnaissance section is based on qualitative research, where research sample consisted of 5 teachers of methodology prevention at age 27-35, from Brno and Vyškov schools with 2-5-year experience. Interviews were in January to March 2009 recorded voice recorder and analyzed. The probe into this area has shown the motivation of teachers, methods of prevention, for work in school, the lack of preparedness for prevention work methodology while studying teaching at university, in a small space to write their own prevention programs in elementary school.*

**Keywords:** *teacher, prevention, primary prevention, communication, decree, socio-pathological phenomena, prevention programmes, values, guidelines, laws, Framework Education Programme*

The Czech educational system is currently undergoing important transformations which are reflecting socio-political changes of the country, especially concerning more democratic education. Nevertheless, these transformations are not conceptual from the long-term point of view, the reason of which is a changing political directing of the country. The main reason of such political changes is in the reflection of last election results. Mainly the education is bearing the marks of personnel changes at the Ministry of Education of the Czech republic. The impact of these conceptual and personnel changes at the ministry represents a great strain for teachers who are missing a long-term conception of education. They are in the situation where neither clear limits of teachers' authority nor clear measure of demands on curriculum that need to be acquired exist. The teaching profession is changing at this time of media expansion. Teacher is a guide in the information field where he or she expounds data to the children but it is his educational function which is more and more foregrounded. The school is an important socialization factor in the life of a child and its function should not be underestimated on no account. School attendance is obligatory for all ethnic groups living in the Czech republic. Respective

ethnic groups bring their own norms into the school environment, and these norms are subsequently confronted with the majority society. Pupils from the majority society familiarise themselves with different lifestyle and different norms. One of the possible solutions to school issues is the ability of the school to satisfy „the need to express one`s ideas and feelings and communicate.“

Communication between the teacher and the pupil is an important part of this mutual relationship, it helps to promote relations and common activity between actors. The ability to communicate forms an integral part of teacher`s personality. The above mentioned relationship is influenced both by verbal and nonverbal communication and by communication by acts. The verbal communication is represented by a spoken word - in teacher`s profession it is primarily by explanation and dialog; nonverbal communication is represented by facial expressions, eyes, body language, touches and acts and it reflects teacher`s attitude to pupils as well as to diverse situations in education. (Nelešovská, 2005).

Kolář and Šikulová (2007) accent the need for communication as well. Effective communication exists under some conditions and one of them is the systematic creation of favourable social climate and convenient atmosphere in class based mainly on building of mutual confidence and on a natural unforced respect for a teacher. It can be proved that a good communication is fundamental not only to creation of a relation between teacher and pupil but also to friendly atmosphere in class and to winning pupil`s confidence.

It is very hard to satisfy the need to communicate during lessons because at that time communication is very limited and it usually concerns only teaching process. However, pupils can have opportunity to express themselves and communicate outside class, for example in the form of „pupils` autonomy“ (Bendl, 2003).

In the first place, it is school that should prevent the formation of socio-pathological phenomena in children by providing pupils with stimulating environment and by realizing activities that would support children`s attitude of refusal to socio-pathological phenomena. Among protective factors on the school level we could firstly name clearly defined rules about socio-pathological behaviour which are embodied in a school code, secondly the active involvement of pupils and their parents in school activities, thirdly a forthcoming atmosphere at school, and finally an effective preventive programme and school activities following quality ways of spending free time.

The first school pupils are the easiest to educate and influence and that is why it is necessary to pay a particular attention to the prevention at this age. If they grow in the environment where socio-pathological phenomena are missing and strictly refused, children will more easily develop an attitude of refusal to these phenomena. The prevention in children should be first of all the task for parents, secondly for school. The optimal situation is when family and school are cooperating in the field of prevention. For effective prevention, it is necessary that family and school have an unanimous attitude to socio-pathological phenomena. In the development of preventive activities in pupils, school conditions are advantaged mainly thanks to the possibility of a long-term and intensive educational influence on children.

## Possibilities of prevention in school environment

Prevention of socio-pathological phenomena in school environment is first of all in a scope of Ministry of Education of the Czech republic in cooperation with other departments, for example Ministry of the Interior, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, Ministry of Health. Ministry of Education creates a legislative framework for the realization of prevention in school environment, passes ordinances, guidelines and laws for provision of prevention of socio-pathological phenomena in school environment. The ministry imposes on schools a duty to create Minimum preventive programmes and to establish posts of school prevention methodists at schools. Prevention of socio-pathological phenomena should make part of schooling according to Framework Education Programme.

### Framework Education Programme

FEP (Framework Education Programme, 2007) is a basic document concerning curriculum, defining the content and aims of education and schooling. It also defines binding frameworks of education for its particular periods – preschool, primary and secondary education. Framework Education Programme is a base for creation of School Education Programme for every school.

The cross-section topics which are part of FEP reflect actual requirements and issues of contemporary society. Thematic scopes are going through educational spheres and enable the interconnection between educational contents of different domains. Thus they contribute to the complexity in pupils' education and influence the process of formation and development of key competences<sup>1</sup> of pupils in a positive way.

FEP tries to integrate topics supporting the formation of right life attitudes into education. According to efficiency principles of primary prevention, adoption of the above stated values and skills should lead to an attitude of refusal to socio-pathological phenomena. FEP is a document specifying the correct ways of realization of schooling and thus it is not primarily focused on prevention of socio-pathological phenomena. The document directly covering the realization of primary prevention in school environment is called Minimum preventive programme.

### Minimum preventive programme

Ministry of Education passed<sup>2</sup> a guideline for prevention of socio-pathological phenomena in children and youth that incorporates a realization of Minimum preventive programmes at schools and school institutions. MPP is a concrete school document focusing on pupils education for a healthy lifestyle, on their personality and social deve-

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<sup>1</sup> Key competences represent a complex of knowledge, skills, abilities, attitudes and values which are important for a personal development and self-realization of each member of a society. The key competences in the period of primary education are the following: competences for learning, competences for problem solving, communication competences, social and personal competences, civil competences, working competences (FEP, 2007).

<sup>2</sup> Actual guideline for prevention of socio-pathological phenomena was passed 16th October 2007 and came into effect 7th November 2007.

lopment and on a development of their social communication skills. Realization of MPP is binding for every school and every educational institution and it is under control of Czech school inspection (Minimum, 2007).

MPP ordains schools the obligation to create posts for school prevention methodists<sup>3</sup>. The basic duty of school prevention methodist is a systematic and coordination activity, providing information and counselling. MPP assigns to every school the duty to ensure education for school prevention methodist as well as for other pedagogical workers in the sphere of prevention of socio-pathological phenomena.

Decree n° 72/2005 Sb., about providing of counselling services at schools and educational counselling institutions delimits, among others, what does the work of school prevention methodist consist in (Decree, 2005).

Decree n° 72/2005 Sb., about providing of counselling services at schools and educational counselling institutions delimits, among others, what does the work of school prevention methodist consist in (Decree, 2005). The methodist is occupied with:

- creation and realization of preventive programme;
- coordination of pedagogical workers' education in the domain of prevention of socio-pathological phenomena;
- cooperation with institutions working in the domain of prevention of socio-pathological phenomena;
- collection of expert information on problems and prevention of socio-pathological phenomena and their handing over to pedagogical workers of the school;
- providing consultancy to pupils with risk or manifestation of socio-pathological behaviour as well as to their legal representatives;
- cooperation with class teachers.

During the creation and evaluation of MPP, the school prevention methodist cooperates, if necessary, with a school psychologist, counsellor for education or prevention methodist in Pedagogical-psychological counselling services. The creation and realization of MPP should be ensured by all pedagogical workers of the school. MPP is usually formed for one school year, it is regularly evaluated and another procedures for prevention of socio-pathological phenomena are suggested following obtained results. (Minimum, 2007).

## **Possibilities of preventive work of school prevention methodist**

The offer of school subjects is varied and some subjects come into consideration for being used in prevention teaching. This is executed by a prevention methodist who, in the cooperation with his colleagues, incorporates into education items like respect for a human being, tolerance and solidarity. Obviously, the first to be taken into consideration are subjects having a direct relation to the prevention of socio-pathological phe-

<sup>3</sup> Occupation of school prevention methodist is delimited by annexe n° 3 of decree n° 72/2005 Sb., about providing of counselling services at schools and educational counselling institutions

nomena like civics, family education, basics of social sciences, art lessons or physical education. Some schools are introducing a subject called dramatic education which has a great potential.

### **Class teachers' lessons**

In class teachers' lessons, there is a space for class teachers to work with group dynamics of the class which means an intentional dealing with forces that emerge among pupils in their life in a group. If the prevention methodist is present in a school, teachers have a possibility to profit from his professionalism when they are implementing activities in teachers' lessons. In case of bullying, aggressors subconsciously and without reflection use group dynamics to destruct positive relations in the group. That is why the teacher should understand these relations, support the growth of positive bonds in the class and to fix them in cooperation with a prevention methodist.

Techniques or games focusing on self-examination and class reflection should be in the content of class teachers' lessons. Similarly the development of competences to realize a co-responsibility for the character of the class, to unify the group, to realize oneself, and to strengthen self-confidence should be the part of these lessons. A good management of the class gives an opportunity to diagnose relationships and monitor problematic behaviour during various activities. In his publications, Kolář (2001) focuses on the rules of school teams meetings.

### **Campaign**

It is possible and very efficient to employ the method of campaign for a preventive work. The campaign can include different activities, children can for example make posters or come up with a slogan. Pupils' activity can be used also for making leaflets or information brochures. (Bendl, 2003). Pupils should be informed from different types of sources and if the leaflet is on the right place at the right time, it can do a great turn.

### **Games**

Respected author Kolář (2001) decidedly refers to the benefit of games in a preventive work. Games represent a many-sided diagnostic and therapeutic potential. Therefore it is necessary to have a good practical knowledge of ways to use concrete games. Games are inestimable especially for the practice of a new behaviour because their strategy is based on fun and interestingness. The uninitiated can not see different theories of learning that are hidden behind. It is not convenient to include games leading to victory or defeat, neither games sorting children into strong and weak. He emphasizes games with cooperative rules and games supporting mutuality and cohesion. Thus a class teacher and a prevention methodist can strengthen in pupils desirable patterns of social behaviour like togetherness or teach them to avoid aggression, relax, etc. Another respected author of gaming activities Hermochová (2005) speaks about their influence on the dynamics of team. The reason for this claim is that games are important means of overcoming stagnation of team development, they accelerate and intensify the process of mutual discovering, forming of deeper understanding among team members and conflict solving. Alternatively they can give the team some preventive tools and techniques to forestall conflicts.

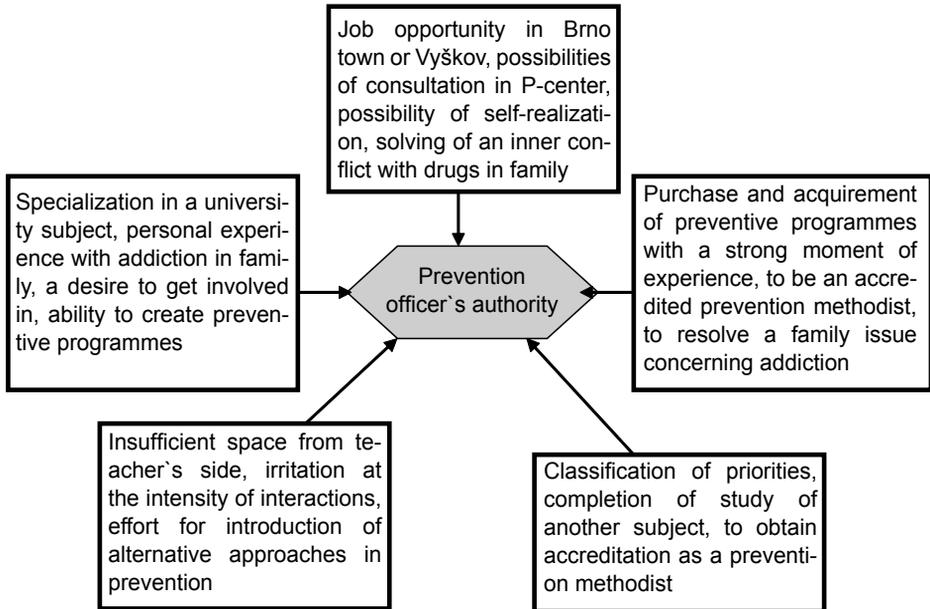
### Probe into personality of prevention methodists

There were many thesis, contributions in anthologies and chapters in monographs written on the topic of „the teacher“. That is why I focused my research on prevention methodists, on their perception of the profession and on their appraisal of acquired professional skills and competences.

The form of a qualitative research seemed to be the most appropriate for this study. Stratified sample was represented by 5 prevention methodists at the age 27-35 years. They came from schools in Brno town and Vyškov town and their experience in prevention was between 2-5 years. Semi-structured dialogs took place from January to March 2009, they were recorded on a Dictaphone and analysed subsequently.

<b>Factor</b>	<b>Description</b>
Phenomenon	Prevention officer's authority
Causal conditions	Specialization in a university subject, personal experience with addiction in family, a desire to get involved in, ability to create preventive programmes
Context	Job opportunity in Brno town or Vyškov town, possibilities of consultation in P-center, possibility of self-realization, solving of an inner conflict with drugs in family
Intervening conditions	Insufficient space from teacher's side, irritation at the intensity of interactions, effort for introduction of alternative approaches in prevention
Actions, strategies, processes	Classification of priorities, completion of study of another subject, to obtain accreditation as a prevention methodist
Consequences	Purchase and acquirement of preventive programmes with a strong moment of experience, to be an accredited prevention methodist, to resolve a family issue concerning addiction

## Axial model



From the analysis of dialogs it is clear that the work of prevention methodist is not financially rated at schools and only some schools appraise this work by a position in teaching staff. Prevention methodists, mostly women, are performing their work from their conviction that prevention is needed and useful or because they are motivated by some experience from their own family. The key phenomenon of prevention methodist's authority was, during the dialogs, overlapping with verbalized feelings of hopelessness and futility. The principal of „hot potato“ appears. Parents are defending family autonomy even at the cost of denial of the problem and if they cooperate, it is only on a formal basis. Prevention methodists need compiled strategies how to react in certain situation to support their authorities. This is a challenge for further education of pedagogical workers.

Annexe n°3/II of decree of Ministry of Education n° 72/2005 Sb., O poskytování poradenských služeb ve školách a školských poradenských zařízeních. Praha: MŠMT, 2005, s. 2

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### **Annexe n°1 Dialog with a teacher - prevention methodist**

At the beginning of this work I had an impression that I knew what I was taking up - clear drug problems. It was a clear image, because I used to work in Podané ruče („Given hands“ - a citizen association).

Till now I have problems with solving the bullying, especially concerning other than class teachers in sixth and seventh years.

It is easier with class teachers, they organise special lessons, so called „little houses“ where they discuss, besides other things, the atmosphere in the class, the cohesion and ability to cooperate.

It depends on class teacher a lot, how much is he or she engaged in the issue.

Help can be found in seminars, in courses for prevention methodists... it is paid..

Seminars of Mgr. Michaela Veselá seems to be well designed, the issue is defined and she answers.

From my position, the cooperation with class teachers who organise „little houses“ is important for the prevention.

The content of „little houses“ is important though - mere concentration on written excuses and general class paperwork is undesired.

Time demands depend on how much you are engaged in this work. I am finishing master's degree studies of English this year so I can not go in for it too much, .. it demands significantly more.. about 1 hour a week.

Some packages compiled for prevention would be very helpful for me, they represent created programmes and contain among others working possibilities like for example to try testing for alcohol, drugs... Methodology of prevention methodist's work is also well elaborated, it says how to make a record, when to contact,.. who to contact.

Accredited prevention methodist has a supplement 1000-2000 CZK..... at the moment I have personal supplement 400-500 CZK.

After 2 years of work I am annoyed that I can not influence it, a feeling of vainness is coming upon me, I can not discuss it with parents, they usually keep denying, children are not doing it at home.

I have to watch the bullying, prevention is quite all right.

I can not influence alcohol, smoking, pot - it's helplessness.

„Our class doesn't smoke“ was a great project.....pupils were describing that odd are

both - the one who smokes as well as the one who doesn't...  
Pot smoking worries me the most, it is a fashion, smokers are cool.

The event in culture center Rubin helped my work the most, it was a meeting with a former junkie, there were 500 people, when she was talking it was a total silence, they combined authentic evidence with a movie.. very impressive.

I am annoyed because of the lack of experiences, I am often at my wits' end  
I do not like the feeling of being lost, not knowing what to do.

The change is needed.

More sophisticated system....to specify everyone's authority, but clearly, concretely, not theoretical abstract conceptions of current academic educationalists.

I have an idea what is my scope of activity

- what about class teachers
- what about school management
- what about parents.

With parents it should be rather on informative basis, then I would like to go around the classes with somebody who had an experience, to focus on ninth years who are leaving school, for instance even via P- center for parents on Sládkova street and of course detect the sixth classes straight away.

On a social evening, there were some drunk pupils; there is no respect for school from parent's side, let alone pupils.

Practical seminars at a faculty, project formulation and creation of facultative seminars would be helpful.

Involvement of the family in the cooperation, not their control, but mutual and equal cooperation.

**Extract from a work of prevention methodist in a school year 2008/2009**

## **Adaptation course classes 6.A, 6.B**

- **Date:**

Class 6.A experienced its adaptation course from the 10th to 12th of September and class 6.B from the 17th to 19th of September 2008.

- **Purpose of adaptation course:**

The purpose of this course was not only to introduce new classmates in a group of children but also to try to weld a new team together; help children to feel comfortable and safe in this team and show them that they can experience nice and unforgettable moments at school if they will be supportive of each other.

- **Programme:**

The programme was very tight. The get-together games helped new children get to know their classmates, during active motion games they let off steam, psycho-social and moral games helped them to think of themselves as well as of people around them. One of the parts of this course was a night at school promised in advance thus it was impossible to miss out sausages roasting, night game and discotheque.

Children were mostly interested in baseball, the spirit of which went through the whole course. This sport game helped children to realize that some rules have to be observed and also that they are part of the team. It was not only the game itself what facilitated to experience togetherness with the team but also the common team shout, flag and other unifying factors.

- **Particular items of the study and their scale:**

- ▶ **Psychological environment**

- mutual respect among participants
- cooperation among participants
- possibility to rely on each other
- reciprocal support and aid
- frankness and authenticity
- pleasure and joy of being the part of the community
- humanity in actions and behaviour

- ▶ **Pupil's involvement in a collective plan creation**

- ▶ **Pupil's involvement in diagnostics of his/her own needs**

- ▶ **Pupil's involvement in goals defining**

- ▶ **Pupil's involvement in procedure proposition during problem solving**

- ▶ **Pupils' help to realize suggested learning method**

- ▶ **Pupil's involvement in evaluation of the course and results of his own learning**

- ▶ **Autoregulation**

- ability to take in the assignment
- ability to take a decision about the type of task solving
- ability to meet the task finishing
- ability to accept teacher's authority
- ability to keep time standards
- ability to observe the rules
- ability to reflect the quality of task fulfilment

never	sometimes	always
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## Assessment of particular pupils from 6.A class

Name	Field	Scale		
		never	sometimes	always
Veselá Jana	<b>Psychological environment</b>			
	mutual respect among participants			X
	cooperation among participants			X
	possibility to rely on each other			X
	reciprocal support and aid			X
	frankness and authenticity			X
	pleasure and joy of being the part of the community			X
	humanity in actions and behaviour			X
	<b>Pupil's involvement</b>			
	Pupil's involvement in a collective plan creation			X
	Pupil's involvement in procedure proposition during problem solving			X
	Pupil's involvement in diagnostics of his/her own needs			X
	Pupil's involvement in goals defining			X
	Pupil's involvement in evaluation of the course and results of his own learning			X
	<b>Autoregulation</b>			
	ability to take in the assignment		X	
	ability to take a decision about the type of task solving		X	
	ability to meet the task finishing			X
	ability to keep time standards			X
	ability to reflect the quality of task fulfilment			X
	ability to accept teacher's authority			X
	ability to observe the rules			X

**Jana is a friendly girl who has no problem to express her feelings, she is open, sincere. In front of the whole class she apologized to her classmate for not wanting to be in friendship in the past and she told her that she would be happy to set it right.**

**We recommend: put the accent on concentration. It is possible to rely on Aneta in the team.**

Class	Field	Scale		
		never	sometimes	always
6.A				
	<b>Psychological environment</b>			
	mutual respect among participants	0%	47%	53%
	cooperation among participants	5%	47%	47%
	possibility to rely on each other	0%	37%	<b>63%</b>
	reciprocal support and aid	0%	37%	<b>63%</b>
	frankness and authenticity	5%	26%	<b>68%</b>
	pleasure and joy of being the part of the community	0%	26%	<b>74%</b>
	humanity in actions and behaviour	5%	26%	<b>68%</b>
	<b>Pupil's involvement</b>			
	Pupil's involvement in a collective plan creation	16%	21%	<b>63%</b>
	Pupil's involvement in procedure proposition during problem solving	21%	42%	37%
	Pupil's involvement in diagnostics of his/her own needs	11%	26%	<b>63%</b>
	Pupil's involvement in goals defining	11%	32%	58%
	Pupil's involvement in evaluation of the course and results of his own learning	0%	58%	42%
	<b>Autoregulation</b>			
	ability to take in the assignment	11%	<b>68%</b>	21%
	ability to take a decision about the type of task solving	5%	<b>68%</b>	26%
	ability to meet the task finishing	0%	26%	<b>74%</b>
	ability to keep time standards	0%	26%	<b>74%</b>
	ability to reflect the quality of task fulfilment	0%	47%	53%
	ability to accept teacher's authority	0%	32%	<b>68%</b>
	ability to observe the rules	0%	37%	<b>63%</b>

Class	Field	Scale		
		never	sometimes	always
6.B	<b>Psychological environment</b>			
	mutual respect among participants	16%	37%	47%
	cooperation among participants	0%	42%	<b>58%</b>
	possibility to rely on each other	<b>11%</b>	26%	<b>63%</b>
	reciprocal support and aid	<b>11%</b>	26%	<b>63%</b>
	frankness and authenticity	5%	37%	<b>58%</b>
	pleasure and joy of being the part of the community	0%	32%	<b>68%</b>
	humanity in actions and behaviour	11%	37%	<b>52%</b>
	<b>Pupil's involvement</b>			
	Pupil's involvement in a collective plan creation	5%	52%	42%
	Pupil's involvement in procedure proposition during problem solving	0%	<b>58%</b>	42%
	Pupil's involvement in diagnostics of his/her own needs	5%	47%	47%
	Pupil's involvement in goals defining	5%	37%	<b>58%</b>
	Pupil's involvement in evaluation of the course and results of his own learning	5%	37%	<b>58%</b>
	<b>Autoregulation</b>			
	ability to take in the assignment	5%	47%	47%
	ability to take a decision about the type of task solving	0%	52%	47%
	ability to meet the task finishing	0%	21%	<b>79%</b>
	ability to keep time standards	0%	21%	<b>79%</b>
	ability to reflect the quality of task fulfilment	5%	37%	<b>58%</b>
	ability to accept teacher's authority	<b>16%</b>	21%	<b>63%</b>
	ability to observe the rules	<b>16%</b>	32%	52%

## UČITEL – PREVENTISTA

**Abstrakt:** Příspěvek se zabývá postavením učitele metodika prevence na základní škole. Snaží se posoudit postavení metodika prevence v pedagogickém sboru, jeho výukovou zátěž a možnost dalšího profesního vzdělávání. Průzkumná část vychází z kvalitativního průzkumu, kdy výzkumný vzorek tvořilo 5 učitelek preventistek ve věku 27-35 let z brněnských a vyškovských škol s 2-5letou praxí preventisty. Polostrukturované rozhovory byly v lednu až březnu 2009 nahrávány na diktafon a analyzovány. Sonda do této oblasti ukázala na motivaci učitelů, metodiků prevence, pro práci ve škole, na nedostatečnou připravenost pro práci metodika prevence během studia učitelství na VŠ, na malý prostor pro tvorbu vlastních programů prevence na základní škole.

**Klíčová slova:** učitel, prevence, primární prevence, komunikace, vyhlášky, sociálně-patologické jevy, preventivní programy, hodnoty, metodické pokyny, zákony, rámcově vzdělávací program