

# THE ATMOSPHERE OF FAMILY LIFE AS AN IMPORTANT CONDITION FOR OPTIMIZING FAMILY EDUCATION ON THE EXAMPLE OF THE FUNCTIONING OF FOSTER FAMILIES IN THE CITY OF SZCZECIN

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**Abstract.** *The family, influencing a child in the course of everyday life, has many mechanisms at its disposal, which it uses intentionally and unintentionally. The basic value of a family home is a unique atmosphere, a climate specific to each family, in which it organizes conditions for the child's development in all its areas and personality development. In addition, the atmosphere of family life significantly contributes to building the emotional balance of the child, protects it against various unfavorable phenomena and situations, and builds the child's awareness of himself as a person. The atmosphere of family life is not an easy phenomenon to define. It consists of many factors, such as internal factors, such as the personality of the mother and father, mutual coexistence between family members. Another group of factors are those of an external nature, for example the size of the family, its economic and social status, place of residence. The first part of the text is a discussion of the atmosphere of family life in the light of pedagogical and psychological literature, indicating various approaches, their specificity and its importance in optimizing upbringing in a family. The empirical part focuses on the description of the atmosphere of family life and its specificity in foster families operating in the city of Szczecin. Here, particular attention was paid to the types of atmosphere in these families, its conditions and importance for the optimal development of a child. The final part of the text consists of the final conclusions and conclusions resulting from the research on the practice of working with families, including foster families, as well as with families of children in this form of foster care.*

**Keywords:** *atmosphere, family, family support, family values, foster family, multidimensional work with the family, reintegration, relations between family members, self-help, upbringing in a family.*

## Introduction

Upbringing in a family is a process of intuitive or thoughtless, planned or spontaneous influence of parents on a child, its siblings, other relatives or relatives living with a given family or having constant and meaningful contact with them. Family education aims to build proper interpersonal relationships in the family based on love, reciprocity and respect between all family members. This process consists of caring, educational and socialization activities, as well as forming moral, social, cognitive, intellectual, creative, aesthetic, health and

environmental values for which parents are primarily responsible (Marczewski, Gawrych, Opozda, Sakowicz, & Skrzydlewski, 2017). The aim of upbringing in a family is to support a child in his comprehensive development, enrich his personality, show him how to use potential abilities, help in self-realization and prepare him for life in a society in which he is to play the role of an active member and play basic social roles in the future.

One of the key elements of the family upbringing process is the specific atmosphere accompanying it. It was made the subject of the research presented in this text. The aim of the research was to characterize the atmosphere of upbringing in professional foster families functioning in the city of Szczecin. Apart from describing the specificity of the atmosphere of upbringing in families, attempts were made to show the premises for practice, i.e. specific guidelines for the needs of working with families, for families, with particular emphasis on professional foster families.

These studies were quantitative and qualitative, taking into account the concept of family epistemology. The triangulation of research methods, techniques and tools was applied in accordance with the adopted research objective. The final part of the research process was the analysis of the obtained research material. More about the research methodology adopted for the purposes of this text can be found in the following parts.

### **The atmosphere of family life - an outline of the problem**

The uniqueness and specificity of educational and socialization interactions in the family towards / for the benefit of the child make the family the first and basic educational environment, a key place for development, education, satisfaction of needs (e.g. love, security, recognition, self-fulfillment or physiological). The atmosphere created by the family as a unique human community strengthens and enriches the child's development process from the first days of life. Each family creates a specific atmosphere, unique in other families or in other environments, it organizes conditions for the development of personality, achieving emotional maturity and life balance. The educational atmosphere in the family is characterized by mutual kindness, marital and parental love for children, cooperation and interaction of family members, the use of positive educational methods, creating and cultivating family traditions and a sense of responsibility of family members for themselves, especially parents for their children.

In the literary spectrum, in the course of defining the atmosphere of family life, it is emphasized that this is an ambiguous concept. When analyzing them, many researchers pay attention to various components (Świdrak, 2013, p.42 and next; Śnieżyński, 2019, p.79 and next). One of them is the nature of the relationship between spouses and the resulting relationship as parents. The

following elements play a key role in forming marital relations: the quality of experiences from the family home, the specificity of the culture of the family of origin or the personality of the spouses. The relationship between parents may depend on factors such as: social positions and roles, emotional attitudes, perception of oneself and of a partner, behaviors and habits preferred by parents or the way of solving conflicts in the family (Sikorski, 2021, p.80 and next; Rostowska, Lewandowska-Walter, 2019, p.105 and next). Another element indicated as important in understanding the atmosphere of family life is the degree of interest in and attitude towards the child. It is very important that parents are constantly interested in the problems, worries, experiences of the child, his interests or passions (this is especially evident in the later stages of the child's life). Their interest in the child allows them to build a correct image of themselves and the surrounding world, and thus to shape their personal and social identity. It is also significant that the attitude of a parent to a child should be positive and saturated with deep affection (Tyszkowa, 1990, p.13 and next; Nikitorowicz 2005). Another element indicated in the literature when considering the atmosphere of family life are the methods of upbringing in the family (Bereźnicka, 2014, p.120 and next; Janke, 2008; Konarzewski, 1987; Ochmański, 2001). The upbringing methods used by parents should take into account the child's abilities in accordance with the child's development stage, have a positive and liberating connotation, be preventive and predictable, expressed in removing threats in optimal development, guided above all by the principle of the best interests of the child. Yet another factor determining the choice of a method of upbringing in a family is explaining, excuse for to the child in the course of educational interactions the legitimacy of taking certain behaviors and avoiding others, showing the possibility of choice and its consequences, as well as using one's own example (Łobocki, 2003; Dąbrowska, Wojciechowska-Charlak, 1996).

When analyzing the atmosphere of family life, many authors, for example H.Cudak (Cudak, 1995), draws attention to the importance of everyday behaviors of family members manifested towards each other and setting them in the family system of culture, integrally connected with the system of values preferred by family members. According to Cudak (1995) a very special element emphasized in the spectrum of views on the atmosphere in the family is its unique emotional saturation, emotional mood or empathy.

Considering the multiplicity of approaches to the atmosphere in the family, one can find numerous classifications thereof. One of the most frequently quoted is the division of the family atmosphere into friendly and unfriendly (Ziemska, 1979). In a friendly family member, positive emotional ties, trust, love, tolerance are united, and the relations between them are based on cooperation and mutual help. In an unfriendly family atmosphere, there are negative emotional ties, the

lack of positive relations between family members, a high level of conflict or a sense of loneliness (Olearczyk, 2007).

An interesting classification of the atmosphere in the family from the perspective of family pedagogy is the one proposed by J. Wilk (2002), distinguishing a democratic, autocratic or disorderly atmosphere. In a democratic one, there is mutual kindness and trust, parents take into account their children's needs and foster their satisfaction, create opportunities for the child to initiate, use adequate rewards more often and rarely resort to punishments, stimulate the ambitions and aspirations of their children and self-control mechanisms. The autocratic atmosphere is characterized by a traumatic relationship between parents and children based on fear, parents do not take into account the needs of their children, they set norms, prohibitions and orders in a directive (without justification), apply strict control and require absolute obedience, and the child faces a system of repression for all transgressions. In an atmosphere of disorderly relationships in the family, coincidence, chaos, confusion, indecisiveness and inconsistency of parents in relation to the child are ruled by, there are no clear rules and norms, and even if they are, no importance is attached to them, but possible reprisals for exceeding them. In the above-mentioned two classifications, the positive dimension of the atmosphere in the family is clearly visible and its negative contexts are also noticed. It is indisputable that when considering the optimization of family education, we will only take into account the positive types of atmosphere in the family and strive to develop them. In the event of negative types of atmosphere in the family, there will be a need to holistically support the family, undertake educational activities for the benefit of the family and with its participation in the process of transforming intra-family educational mechanisms.

The atmosphere of family life analyzed above, as an important condition for optimizing family education, is a very important area of research interest in the spectrum of pedagogy and beyond. That's why undertaking further theoretical and research in this area is justified.

### **Methodological basis of research**

The research presented in this publication was conducted in the form of family foster care, i.e. professional foster families operating in the city of Szczecin, West Pomeranian Voivodeship (Poland). They were implemented as part of the project "Professional foster family - a chance for a better future for a child" affiliated at the Department of Social Pedagogy of the Institute of Pedagogy, Faculty of Social Sciences of the University of Szczecin in 2014-2020.

The conducted research consisted of three stages. First, it was a theoretical-methodological conceptualisation of research issues. On the basis of this

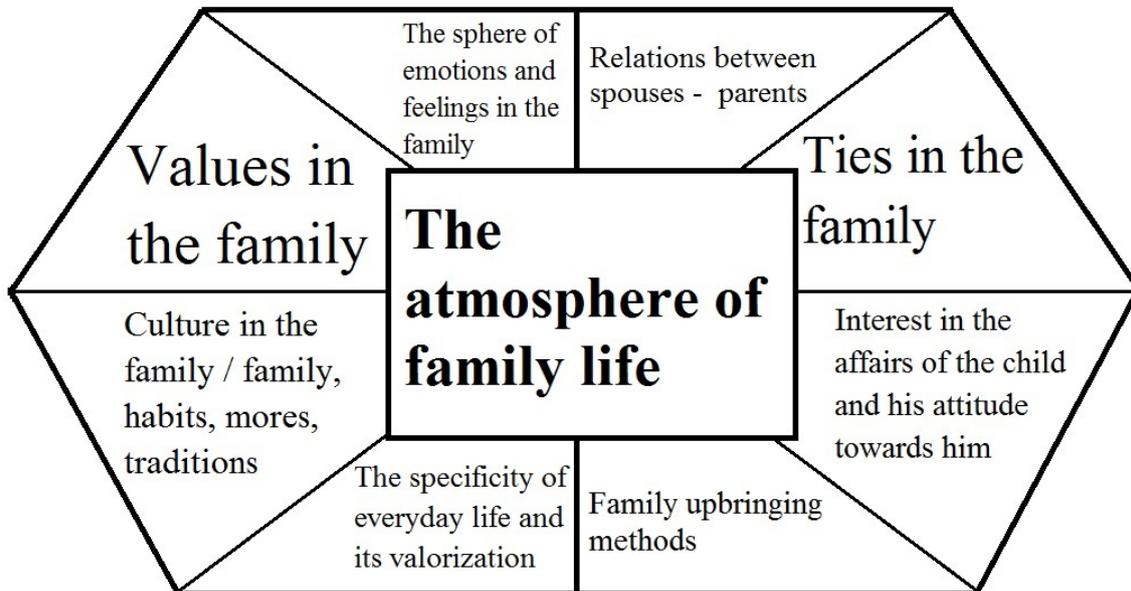
analysis, pilot studies (i.e. the second stage) were conducted in five professional foster families in the city of Szczecin. Only after the previously adopted methodological assumptions and the obtained data from the pilot studies were corrected, were the actual studies carried out, i.e. the third stage.

Among the surveyed professional foster families there were: 9 professional families, 3 specialized professional families, 16 professional families performing the functions of family emergency. In total, 28 foster families with 182 children were examined. In the group of surveyed parents, there were 28 men and 28 women. They were between 25 and 40 years old. The group of 182 children included 90 boys and 92 girls. Among the examined children there were 70 children up to three years of age, from three to 10 years there were 60 children. The rest were children over 10 years old. There were also 6 family care coordinators (3 woman and 3 man) as well as 6 social workers working in the city of Szczecin in the Municipal Family Support Center in Szczecin (only woman), 6 family assistants (only woman) and 6 family doctors and specialists doctor. For the purposes of this article, the problem of the atmosphere of family life in professional foster families for children staying in this form of foster care was analyzed (due to the given editorial requirements). The analysis of the specificity of family life in these families, with particular emphasis on its internal and external elements, was considered through the prism of Ludwik von Bartalanffy's concept of family epistemology, whose fervent supporter in Polish psychopedagogical literature is Ryszard Praszkiel (Praszkiel, 1992, 37-61; von Bartalanffy, 1984). When analyzing the obtained material, the author took into account the model the so-called *The Diamond of family life, that is a holistic model of the atmosphere of family life*.

The research used triangulation of research methods and techniques (Palka, 2005), because the diagnostic survey method with the qualitative dimension of the case study was used. The use of triangulation of methods makes it possible to obtain richer material and a wider interpretative spectrum of the problem under study.

As part of the diagnostic survey, a questionnaire was used for foster care coordinators, social workers, family assistants and family doctors as well as specialist doctors. The individual questionnaire was varied. In the questionnaire for foster care coordinators, the respondents were asked about the fulfillment of the tasks assigned to them by foster parents, with particular emphasis on the implementation of educational and socialization processes towards / for the children entrusted to them.

**The Diamond of family life, this is a holistic model of the atmosphere of family life according to Urszula Kazubowska**



*Figure 1 The Diamond of family life, that is a holistic model of the atmosphere of family life (made by author)*

In the survey for social workers, emphasis was placed on the dimension of cooperation between foster parents and biological families of children staying in their family. Family assistants were asked in the survey about the specificity of reintegration work carried out by foster parents towards the children's biological families. Family assistants were also asked to assess the biological parents' readiness to resume parental responsibilities.

When examining doctors, the aim was to obtain information to what extent foster parents use the services of family doctors and specialist doctors. However, as part of the case study, an in-depth qualitative interview with foster parents in professional foster families was used, from which a wide spectrum of knowledge was obtained about the functioning of their family and the creation of upbringing, socialization and educational processes towards children temporarily entrusted to them (Kvale, 2004).

As part of learning about the specificity of the processes carried out in foster families, the focus was, among others, i.e. on creating the atmosphere of family life, its components and methods of their implementation for children staying in them. The material obtained through the interview was supplemented with the technique of direct observation of family members, which allowed for deepening the knowledge about the ways of carrying out the upbringing, socialization and educational processes in the surveyed foster families. The obtained empirical material was subjected to an in-depth quantitative and qualitative analysis with the aim of making a holistic diagnosis of families. The family environment as the first and most important educational environment in

human life is a unique research area of a sensitive nature. This is called a soft area of research that requires a researcher to be reflective, deeply reflecting and interpretative multidimensionality, a specific research intuitiveness, and a narrative nature of family life. Analyzing the problem of the atmosphere of family life as an important condition for optimizing the process of upbringing in the family, evaluation was avoided, while single-level evaluation was aimed at subjecting the obtained data to a multidimensional, objective analysis aimed at creating a model of the most effective possible reintegration work with biological families of children staying in family forms of foster care.

### **The atmosphere of family life as an important condition for optimizing family education on the example of the functioning of foster families in the city of Szczecin - analysis of own research**

In many definitions, the atmosphere of family life is of special importance to the mutual relations between parents (Bakiera, 2020; Ładyżyński, 2012). Sometimes you can find the phrase that the atmosphere of family life consists only of relations between parents, which are generated due to various faces (favorable-good, unfavorable-bad) by the use of educational methods. The relationship between parents has a significant impact on the development of the child's personality and behavior (Bakiera, 2013; Margasiński, 2015; Gójska, Huryn, 2007). In 28 surveyed families, parents were asked to evaluate their mutual relations. All surveyed parents assessed their relationships as positive, arguing that they respect each other, help each other and can always count on each other. They declare that in the event of any conflict, they always try to talk and work out consensual solutions. In the conflict that arises, they negotiate their positions, which in total allows for the strengthening of mutual relations. They avoid arguments that are usually accompanied by anger, aggression and anger.

When asked about the causes of conflicts and quarrels, the most common reasons are household matters or financial problems. Conflicts related to running a household are primarily related to the scope of tasks performed by individual family members. It is about avoiding the interchangeability of tasks between individual family members, which may lead to an excessive burden on one of the family members. When it comes to financial problems in foster families, they are primarily related to the lack of adequate resources to meet all the needs of the entire family. It happens that the funds obtained from appropriate institutions are insufficient in relation to the real needs of children brought up in a foster family. Importantly, these conflicts are not related to different views on raising children or opposing views on the model of family functioning. It is important that the surveyed foster parents always try to reach consent, being aware that only it guarantees the proper upbringing of the child. Good and positive relations between parents declared by the surveyed foster parents give

hope that a favorable atmosphere of family life will be created by them, which is an important condition for optimizing the family process of upbringing and socialization.

There are many theoretical approaches to family ties in the literature (Dyczewski, 2002; Kawula, 2006; Janicka, 2010). The family bond after L. Dyczewski is a complex of forces that draw its members to each other and bind them together, and these forces result from the marriage relationship, awareness of genetic relationships, emotional experiences, relationships, cooperation, legal, religious and moral factors (Dyczewski, 2002). On the other hand, S. Kawula believes that the family bond is the oldest type of bond, thanks to which it is possible to transmit the most important values of culture in the family, such as, for example, traditions, rituals and customs. Strengthening these ties is the best way to counteract various dysfunctional and pathological in the family phenomena by consolidating many positive values and inhibiting negative ones (Kawula, 2006).

Asking the surveyed foster parents about the specificity of ties in their families, all agreed that they are very important to them and that building and nurturing them is an end in itself. Above all, they emphasize a strong emotional bond in their family manifested by mutual love, kindness and devotion, a sense of security and a sense of belonging to the family. They also mention economic ties (running a household, satisfying developmental needs) or securing ties (performing caring activities for family members). While characterizing the ties in the family, the surveyed parents stated that they are crucial for them in the process of raising children entrusted to them and they try to constantly and systematically build a bond between themselves and their children in everyday situations of family life. The all respondents described their bond with the child as safe, i.e. characterized by a parent's friendly attitude towards the child, stimulating its development in accordance with their abilities and the pursuit of satisfying their needs. The surveyed parents also pay attention to the importance of the marital bond and the need to develop it at all stages of family life.

Another element considered in the holistic spectrum of the atmosphere of family life is the parents' interest in and attitude towards the child. In this regard, the surveyed foster parents agreed that the parents' interest in the child's affairs is one of the most important elements of a favorable atmosphere for family life. They do not allow the lack of interest in the child's affairs, worries, problems or experiences during the implementation of the upbringing process in the family towards the children entrusted to them. They emphasize the need for parents to be fully involved in the child's life, its presence and accompanying the child in every situation. Without it, upbringing in a family would only be an instrumental activity towards a child. The surveyed parents believe that every parent, including foster parents, must have a positive attitude towards their children, full of love, dedication and the joy of being with them.

Considering the atmosphere of family life, the surveyed parents noticed that its important component are the methods of upbringing in the family. The methods of upbringing in a family are specific ways of dealing with children in family and extra-family life, creating educational conditions and situations. Their aim is to induce positive activity of the child and changes in mental dispositions and behavior. If we describe the methods of upbringing in the family in this way, the following types of upbringing methods can be mentioned after M. Grochociński: direct and indirect influence (Grochociński, 1979; Sikora 2010). The methods of indirect educational impact consist in deliberately organizing the conditions and way of life of a child so that his experiences, reactions and acquired experiences bring him closer to the educational aims set by his parents. The methods of direct educational impact are those that are implemented during direct contact between the educator-parent and the charge-child. The basic condition for the effective use of these methods is, above all, the authority of the educator towards the pupil, the free and honest atmosphere of upbringing and the child's trust in the educator. The method of conversation can also be included among the aforementioned methods of upbringing in a family (Kazubowska, 2020). Among the 28 surveyed families, all parents expressed their opinion on the use of upbringing methods in the family. For all surveyed parents, the most preferred methods were direct, i.e. applying explanations to the child and convincing them in various matters and situations, suggestion and persuasion towards the child, and the method of reward and punishment (the latter were pedagogical punishments, i.e. they did not degrade the child's dignity). It is also important that the surveyed parents highly value conversation as a key method of upbringing in a family. They do it very often, talk about various matters, sometimes even very unpleasant ones, but they are aware that this method requires enormous commitment, tact and knowledge about the child's needs and the specificity of its development. It is very pleasing that the surveyed parents indicated that a very rich source of knowledge about the methods of upbringing in a family was the completed training course for them to take on the role of a foster parent. They do it very often, talk about various matters, sometimes even very unpleasant ones, but they are aware that this method requires enormous commitment, tact and knowledge about the child's needs and the specificity of its development. It is very pleasing that the surveyed parents indicated that a very rich source of knowledge about the methods of upbringing in a family was the completed training course for them to take on the role of a foster parent.

The next element of the holistic model of the atmosphere of family life adopted in this text is everyday life and its valorization. The process of upbringing in a family takes place mainly in the course of various situations in everyday life. Everyday life is a source of learning a variety of social behaviors, building a model of communication with people and interpreting all changes in

the surrounding world (Ładyżyński, 2020). The surveyed parents perceive everyday life in their family as a systematic process of raising the children entrusted to them, teaching children to behave properly in various situations, or the possibility of building relationships between family members. They indicate that they use everyday situations to show the meaning of specific situations in the family or events in the context of values and norms recognized in the family.

Another important component of the atmosphere of family life is the culture of the family / family, customs and customs preferred in the family. The culture of the family is a specific result of two cultures, that is, the mother and father brought out of the family home. It is this area of cultural contact, previously subjected to the process of marital internalization, that constitutes a unique platform for introducing a child into the culture of the family. The concept of parents' pedagogical culture is also connected with the family culture. M. Bereźnicka defines it through the prism of three aspects. The first is the theoretical aspect related to the need for parents to have a certain compendium of pedagogical knowledge in the field of educational issues. The second is the instrumental aspect related to caring for the comprehensive development of the child / ward, noticing and stimulating his interests, cognitive curiosity and activity. The third aspect is the normative one, requiring parents to evaluate and interpret positive and negative events, to choose educational methods adapted to the age and situation of children, and to apply adequate rewards and punishments (Bereźnicka, 2015, p.35). In the family, the child is introduced to social life by participating in the socialization process conducted by the parents. The surveyed parents, referring to the role of culture in the family, indicated its various aspects. They emphasized the importance of the internal - family culture that determines the recognized patterns of behavior, the attitudes of family members towards themselves and the surrounding social reality. Above all, they indicated that they teach children brought up in their families to live in accordance with the culture adopted in the family. This applies even to very mundane activities, e.g. they show how to behave at the table, how to use cutlery, how to relate to other children or to themselves. They introduce children to the culture of social life, for example by taking children to the cinema, theater, church or shop. The surveyed parents pay great attention to the issue of children's participation in the media and teach them how to use them safely. Foster parents familiarize children with the customs and traditions functioning in the family and teach children how they can participate in them. In this way, they forms the child's identity and help them prepare for effective participation in social life. The surveyed foster parents integrate the system of values recognized in the family in a very integral way. They are a kind of guideline for parents, which allows them to follow the path to the full development of humanity. Parents' own and realized values constitute the foundation on which they carry out family educational and socialization processes for the benefit of their

children (Kazubowska, 2019; Kazubowska 2010). Values are a path for them to follow, encouraged by their raised children. Importantly, the values are not only a theory for the surveyed foster parents, but try to introduce them to the practice of everyday life. This process, called the axiologization of everyday life, is showing children how to introduce the adopted values into the practice of family life. Everything that happens in the family, even in the most trivial matter, is always related to the values recognized in the family.

The last element indicated in the *The Diamond of family life* (see "Methodological basis of research") is the sphere of feelings and emotions in the family. For the surveyed parents, it is a very special area in the specter of family upbringing and socialization processes. Foster parents care very much about this sphere in their family and children brought up in their family teach how to "tame" emotions, anger or aggression at times. Sometimes, as they say, it is not easy, sometimes they feel helpless in the face of the enormous emotional neglect of the children entrusted to them. In their educational and socialization activities towards / for children, foster parents focus in a special way on the sphere of feelings and emotions, talk about it with children and try to make them aware of why it is worth and should understand themselves and try to understand others. The surveyed foster parents strongly emphasized the need to teach children the art of expressing feelings, talking about what they feel and how to sympathize with the feelings of others. It is noteworthy that all surveyed fathers agree that upbringing in a family cannot lack the emotional closeness of the parent with the child (writes about it e.g. Żywczok, 2013, p.24), cordial relations between the mother and father and him, as well as constant helping the child in many problematic situations or supporting him in making various choices and the integral responsibility for the latter (the role of the father in the family was also researched by Sosnowski, 2018).

Among the 6 surveyed coordinators who were asked about the assessment of the atmosphere of upbringing in 28 surveyed foster families functioning in Szczecin, all agreed that it is a very friendly atmosphere, having a developmental character for children placed in these families. Working and cooperating with foster families, meeting them in various situations, they emphasized the high level of parents' preparation for the tasks assigned to them, as well as the high level of responsibility for the children entrusted to them. The coordinators state that the surveyed foster parents are also characterized by a very well-developed pedagogical awareness (writes about it P. Wesołowska, 2019), which helps them to effectively implement educational and socialization processes in their families towards and for the benefit of children raised there.

Similarly to the coordinators, the surveyed social workers (6 in number) and family assistants (also 6) assessed the atmosphere of upbringing in 28 surveyed foster families, with whom they systematically cooperate, stated that the atmosphere in these families is positive and shows signs of development.

Also family doctors and specialist doctors (especially cardiologists and orthopedists, because families consult them most often) assessed the attitude of foster parents towards children as positive, which manifests itself in conscientious, constant care for children, care for their health, responsibility for them and educational awareness.

The above-presented analysis of selected components of the holistic model of the atmosphere of family life called the Diamond of family life in the spectrum of research conducted in 28 foster families of the city of Szczecin allows us to ask ourselves about the specificity of the educational atmosphere in these families. From the obtained data, one can very clearly conclude that the dominant type of family atmosphere in the surveyed foster families is a favorable, democratic atmosphere focused on the multidimensional development of all family members. This atmosphere makes it possible to optimize the upbringing and socialization processes carried out in the family. Taking into account the way of carrying out the process of upbringing and socialization in foster families in the city of Szczecin, it can be stated that all activities of these parents serve the child's good and fulfill the tasks assigned to them in an optimal way. In the event of any problems or difficulties in the implementation of educational work with children, parents turn for help to appropriate social service employees, various institutions or support from other sectors, e.g. non-governmental. In the light of the foster parents' educational work, there is a need to support them even more intensively so that they can fulfill the important task of bringing up children in the foster care system even more effectively. It is also important in the context of social needs to promote foster parenthood, so that there are more people willing to take on this responsible and very demanding task, which is raising and caring for children under the foster care system.

### **Conclusions and summary**

Considering the problem of the atmosphere of family life as an important condition for optimizing family education, on the example of the functioning of foster families in the city of Szczecin, it is worth indicating, on the basis of the adopted Diamond of family life, i.e. a holistic model of the atmosphere of family life, specific features of the atmosphere in these families. Taking into account the adopted components in the indicated model, the following features of the atmosphere of family life in the surveyed foster families can be distinguished: 1) relations between the parents were positive and imbued with respect and lack of conflicts; 2) family ties are safe, aimed at stimulating the child's development; 3) foster parents are very involved in the child's affairs and have a positive attitude towards him; 4) are supporters of unconditional upbringing (writes about it A. Kohn, 2013, p.28 and next), and the resulting deep convictions influence the upbringing methods used in the family, which are direct and based on dialogue

with the child; 5) foster parents perceive everyday life in the family as an opportunity for the multidimensional development of a child; 6) family / family culture is transmitted through the participation of children in various family events; 7) values preferred by parents are for them the basis for building upbringing and socializing influences towards and for the benefit of the child; 8) the sphere of feelings and emotions is for the surveyed parents one of the key areas in the area of upbringing processes in the family and they take care of it especially when working with their children. From the abbreviated features of the atmosphere of family life in foster families operating in the city of Szczecin, this model of atmosphere could be called a "two-subject model of the creative development of children and parents in the educational process" (term created by the author of the text).

In the above-mentioned model, the two basic entities, parents and children, complement each other, and by being in the family educational process, they contribute to the creative development of both parents and children. This mutual, direct relationship between parents and children, saturated with deep emotions, contributes to the optimization of parental competences and at the same time creates an opportunity for the children for harmonious and multidimensional development. The indicated two-subjectivity in the context of family upbringing processes can also be understood as an important element in the process of preparing candidates to fulfill parental functions in family forms of foster care.

From the research results presented above, significant conclusions can be drawn for social practice. During the training of candidates for various forms of foster care, particular attention should be paid to the aspect of building relationships between parents and children, as well as the mechanisms of building the atmosphere of upbringing in the family. One should also not forget to teach candidates a constructive, art-based model of conflict resolution within and outside the family. During the training, candidates for parents in foster care should be convinced of the necessity to saturate educational influences on the children entrusted to them on axiology. Yet another important element in working with candidates for foster care is the need to teach them methods and techniques of working with biological families of children. On the other hand, when it comes to reintegration work with the background families of children brought up in care, it is important to work with them holistically, using new methods such as SWOT analysis, genogram, ecomap, in-depth motivational interview or the Family Group Conference. All this would be aimed at creating a chance for the child to return to the family home.

The above-mentioned selected proposals for activities towards / for the benefit of the child and the family give hope for the optimization of upbringing processes in foster families and create opportunities for children to achieve full personal and social development.

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