

FOSTERING RESPECT FOR LIFE IN PRIMARY SCHOOL

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The respect for life educational process is extremely important for primary school. Psychologists assert that exactly the early school age strongly requires fostering the feelings of love, sensitiveness and help as the period is important for the mastering and establishing certain standards of behaviour. This is the key for the explanation of the different aspects of the teenager's behaviour in nature. If the teenager ravages nature, it means that parents, teachers and other educators have not paid enough attention to that age range when a certain standard of behaviour developed on the basis of some habit (Dzenuškaitė, 1975).

One of the sources of the child's respect for life education is nature. Nature becomes the major source of education when human being accepts it, perceives the correlation between the reason and the result. It is not enough to profess your love for nature. First, you have to perfectly know it. And the classroom is not the way out as it is necessary to get in touch with nature. A practical link is essential. Much more have to be done in order the springs of goodness should sprout in the soul of the pupil. The class, extracurricular activities, parks and forests are the places to reach it (Kundrotas, 1983).

Prof. T. Ivanauskas, one of the pioneers of nature protection in Lithuania, took care about the promotion of natural science and its ideas. In 1923 he wrote in his book „Our Birds and School“: „The school is only a poor educational institution if it is not able to manage the pupil in the forests, meadows, lakes, if it cannot properly introduce animals, birds, insects, plants, the sky, clouds, if it doesn't encourage the pupil to love nature (Ivanauskas, 1923; quoted from Budrys, Prusaitė, 1976).

The educational role of nature is widely accepted but pupils act differently in nature – some of them are polite, the other part cause harm and is rather cruel: they maul animals, break sprouts, litter up etc. Hence, there should be the ingenious moderators who could teach to notice the beauty and goodness of nature, to see a thorough interest and moral benefit for human being. In this case, parents and teachers should become the moderators (Nature Protection and School, 1980).

Thus, school, teachers and parents play a crucial role in the process of fostering pupils respect for life. The child's behaviour in the future depends on the habits acquired during this period. The establishment of the conditions under which the child could communicate with nature and then foster his/her moral and aesthetic feelings is very important at this age range. In order to make influence on pupils, the teachers should have broad knowledge and a responsible moral attitude towards the issues discussing respect for life.

The teachers should speak about respect for life in the classroom, about the integration of the educational content of universe science and other subjects more frequently as the level of pupils' concept of respect for life is insufficient. The teachers should more creatively apply different tasks, adopt practical activities, provide the situations that are close to children's daily life. To foster children's respect to life, the teachers should more interdependently contribute among themselves or to the teachers of other educational subjects (ethics, religion studies, biology). A cognitive, aesthetic and ethic children's relation with nature should be improved (Lamanuskas, 2003).

The empiric observations, statistic data and other sources of information confirm that we are experiencing a general decline of moral culture that comes along with increased human immorality, expressed by aggressiveness, cruelty, violence, roughness. These humiliating forms of disrespect are extremely characteristic for the present generation, even for teenagers. It could not be denied that fostering respect for life becomes an overall and highly relevant task for our society.

An important point is to set out the conditions for the child to correlate with nature and on that basis to foster moral and aesthetic feelings in the junior school age. Presumably nobody could deny that fostering respect for life becomes a universally accepted and relevant objective of our society. It could responsibly be contended that society must reconsider its principles of the correlation with nature.

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