

DELINQUENCY IN GYMNASIUM

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Abstract:

The gymnasium years can be the most innocent ones, but they can remain marked for ever by sad memories because of the fragility of this age. Whether the delinquent acts that happened to you personally or you only witnessed them, you may never forget them.

*In my writing I included fragments about **sanctions** from the Regulation of Rules and Management for Secondary Schools, because many times parents or other persons who don't know the rules, propose unacceptable solutions.*

*Using real facts, accumulated from a long teaching experience, I presented some **causes** of delinquency.*

*The final of writing presents a possible solution for diminution of juvenile delinquency: the emphasis of **Education for Responsibility**, as a logical acceptance of consequences which follow a decision, a behavior, an attitude, without obstructing free choice.*

Key words: gymnasium, solutions, free choice

Gymnasium age sometimes remains as a confused period of life. This age lacks of substance and do not fit our further fulfillment.

When we recall our primary school mates we remember them all as being cute, friendly etc. But the secondary school time is not one's pride, not even in photos....The one who used to be plump runs a Top Modeling Company, the floppy ears kid leads a successful business in electronics, that popular boy killed himself while in army, the girl next to him was broadcasted while being charged as a peculator etc.

Rarely a picture from gymnasium shows the real potential of future adults. Contrary, many times ex-mates surprise us with their achievements and their changed looks. But the saddest moment is when we remembered about the disappearance of one of us, or about the troubles we got involved in.

The age of gymnasium - 10/11 till 14/15 years coincides with puberty. The latest generation just demonstrates an earlier debut in puberty: the children are taller and more physically developed. They are still very sensitive, even if they are hiding behind a rough attitude. This is the reason why this period is full of conflicts. The teen-ager is not a child, nor an adult, and makes him feel uncertain. He is dependent on his parents, who consider it is too early to give him freedom for own decisions, but mature enough to talk about responsibilities which are awaiting him. The teen-ager feels it should be the other way round From his point of view everything is up side down and nobody understands him!

Even with the obedient children these signs are more visible today. Some of the lines given today by the "obedient" kids to their parents were unacceptable only few decades ago...But the world has changed!

Generally, parents and teachers accept them today if their typical teenage manifestations, remain in some normal limits. The adults should not worry as long as the teenager's behaviour does not lead to unaccommodations and rebellios prolonged too much in time.

At this age the manifest can be in less grave forms under juridic or penal aspects, like: lying, inconsequential behavior, verbal violence, denial to greet, smoking, harshness, unconformist wear etc. But they can manifest grave aberrations of moral rules and penal legislation, such as: theft, vagrancy, prostitution, burglary, robbery, current consuming of alcohol, drugs etc.

The factors which can provoke the appearance of offensive behavior can be classified in two big categories determined by: internal factors and external factors. The internal factors are reporting to the hereditary inheritance which predispose the child to violent manifestations and delinquency. As the world that surround the teen-ager is moving is mainly, the family and the school, the external factors are connected with family and school.

Generally, in gymnasium the behavior is less grave. It is not really offensive. But, in last few years there also appeared some situations of delinquency too.

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According to the Regulation of Rules and Management for Secondary Schools-2005(R.O.F.U.I.P.) the 4th section, article 112, it is forbidden for the pupils:

- a) to destroy the school documents, like catalogues, pupil's notebooks registration papers etc.
- b) to deteriorate the patrimony of school
- c) to bring and to spread in school materials which can make an attempt to independence, sovereignty and national integrity or materials which promote violence and intolerance.
- d) To organize and participate to protest actions which affect the running of school activities or the pupils frequency and class attending
- e) To block the access ways to or in school
- f) To posess or consume drugs, alcohol or cigarettes and to participate at gambles inside or outside school
- g) To introduce in the perimeter of school any types of guns or other instruments like ammunition, petards, crackers etc., which can affect the physical and psychical integrity of pupils or school staff
- h) To posess or spread obscene or pornographic materials
- i) To use cell telephones during the classes, exams or competitions
- j) To rumour false announcement about the position of explosive materials in the perimeter of school
- k) To have hostile and instigator wear and attitude

- l) To provoke offences and to have aggressiveness in language or in behavior against mates or against the school staff

Some pupils can easily accommodate themselves without problems in the school requirements. Others oppose them due to personal reasons connected with internal or external factors. These pupils are punished according to the gravity of their penalty faults.

The 6th section, Art. 118 (2), lists the penalties which can be applied to the students:

- a) individual observation
- b) reprimand in front of the class/and/or in front of the Council of the Class/The School Council
- c) written reprimand
- d) temporary or definitely recession of the grant /scolarship
- e) elimination from courses for 3-5 days
- f) the moving in another class in the same school
- g) the moving in other school, with the new school Council approval
- h) notice for expulsion
- i) expulsion (with right to join next year in the same school; without this right; the expulsion from all schools without right to join for a while)

Art 125 specifies that the notice for expulsion and the expulsion itself are applied only to high school students.

I emphasized this fact because there are situations when parents, or other persons who don't know the rules, ask why a student who is a real danger for kids and violate the moral and ethical rules is not expelled.

The reason is that the Regulation does not permit the expulsion in gymnasium. The most drastic measure which can be applied is the disciplinary movement to another school, but only with their accept.

It is very difficult to find a school that is open to accept an unorderly student or even a delinquent. And, neither the parents are interested in moving the child to another school. In this type of families parents have often contributed a lot to the critical situation of their child. And so, minor children are staying further in the school where they started to be delinquent until they are 16 years...

The law is made to protect the teen-ager. His place is in school and his expulsion from scholar background system can hurry his destiny to even worse delinquency. But it's very difficult to keep a proper education climate in class, however a good teacher you are, when the behavior of a single child harms the majority.

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Such a student was F.

His parents divorced, but it was not a harmonious separation. It was an "ugly" divorce. After that none of the patents found a balance. F. remained in mother's care. But she wanted to remake her life, she wanted to live free and in her plan wasn't place for F. Under a mask of care, in fact she was collecting proves to institutionalize him.

The conditions for institutionalization were not sufficient according to regulations. Mother had lodging and a job. Father without a logging and constant job, could not obtain the custody. Maybe he did not want it very much. F. was living for a while together with his father in a single-room flat with other 3 men who were working "by day".

For mother, the single chance to get rid of her boy was to prove that F. is an extremely bad child, who was a danger and had to be institutionalized.

When F. came to our school, he was behaving as his mother wanted him to behave, as a "bad" boy. He had already been in 5 schools. He had left all these schools with low grades both in learning and behavior.

When F. was in classroom, teachers could not develop a normal activity because all the time he interrupted the explanations: he used to ask for different things, didn't take notes, teased his mates, listened music cell phone, threw with different things, use to walk around the classroom, everything to interrupt the lesson. But everything was OK if we started to talk about...life: so he could express himself share his experience, be listened to. Unfortunately, this thing was not possible all the time. The children became uneasy and angry, even sometimes they were glad that somebody stopped the lesson. Their parents became uneasy too. They understood that this boy had problems, but they were asking for this situation to be solved.

Usual sanctions remained without effects. He had got them in other schools too. He loved the long talks with the school psychologist. It was clear for anyone that F. missed love which he hadn't receive in early childhood.

He destroyed his desk and the furniture in the classroom. But he was also the one who bought a hammer to fix it. All his actions let us see that he wanted to be in the center of attention and to be loved.

For his acts, Police took course and punished him. Generally, the attendance and discussions with policemen prove to be efficient. But in this case they didn't work. He was fined for violent behavior and language. The penalty had to be payed by his parents. It was another scandal.

Finally, after a discussion with his father, he accepted to move F. to another school. After a lot of insistences, he was accepted in a school in Oradea.

F. left us, but I didn't fill the joy of a solved case. The classroom is quiet now, the children aren't stressed and restless. It isn't perfect, but we have only normal teen-age problems to deal with.

Only the desk in the back, crippled with crooked nails, stays there like a proof of his passage through our classroom. Sometimes I am looking to his desk and I can see his soul: crippled, with slashes made by people who should have loved him unconditionally...I know that I nailed some pins in his soul, myself. But I considered that it is the only way I could protect the other children. I hope, from all my heart, that the school where is F. now is better for him. If the majority of the pupils have such problems, the teacher can stop from teaching and talk with them until their soul is discharged by its sadness.

In such a school the teacher shouldn't be reprimanded if their student didn't promote the exam, or they get low marks in tests.

In Oradea function a lot of Primary and Secondary Schools, some High Schools with gymnasium classes and 3 Special Schools, for learning difficulties, or with different disabilities, up to 14 years old or maxim 16. At these schools, together with children from normal families, are learning children from Orphanages Centers. This measure was taken in last years for a better socializing. They are accepted at Special Schools after a decision of a special committee.

In case of F. it was not about the impossibility to rationalize or concentrate etc. He was not a student recommended for the Special School. He could promote the committee's tests. This fact was confirmed by the school psychologist. The bad results in learning and the non-promotion were caused by lack of interest, of elementary knowledges, school attendance, and other causes connected with his family's problems. In case of F. the most critical problem was his behavior, not his learning results.

Therefore, besides normal schools and help schools, I am thinking that there must exist schools, or classes where the most important objective should be that children are provided with trust, responsibility, joy etc. Some of the children who lack these qualities are not from Orphanages Centers. They came from troubled families. Their place is neither in Orphanages Centers, nor in Special Schools, not even in normal schools because they become aggressive and indifferent toward learning, not in Disciplinary Schools(a single school in Romania) because they didn't commit grave delinquencies (yet!).

In such classes or schools, all matters should be taught by teachers with a very good training in psychology (the graduation of some training is not a certainty!), and the school curriculum more permissive. I consider that is more important for us, to have healthy children –emotionally and mentally balanced.

After graduating eight classes they should go to a vocational school, to learn a profession, not to be ignored or be thrown up and down in a school system unadapted to their requirements. After the vocational school, for those who will want to continue the studies, should be provided.

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Many times in teaching profession we ask ourselves if our reaction was the most suitable. if it wasn't exaggerated, if we found the adequate words and methods. The puberty is a natural state which must be dealt with patience, gentleness and wisdom.

An inadequate "treatment" can do a lot of harm, even the intention was good.

The exaggeration, the disproportional punishment toward the teenagers act, can estrange them from us, can block communication and lost their trust – in themselves and in the people who should care for them. It is possible that in such conditions the teen-ager looks for understanding in unadequate company and preoccupations.

I think is very important that teachers and parents to make a difference between simple unpleasant happening and real tragedies, before reacting. In Romanian language we have the expression “ to do **from mosquito – stallion**, for these situations.

The aggressiveness manifested by kids in school is unfortunately sometimes a model copied from their family. The courses who deal with our aggressive tendencies, anger control, conflict solving, are recommended for kids and adults too. The students answer positively to such lessons given as discussions, plays, movies etc.

Not the same thing we can say about adults. The parents with ”problem kids” don’t come to such meetings. Only a few of the present parents are really interested to learn new methods for better communication and relationship with their children. Unfortunately, the same thing can be said about some of the teachers.

The psychology and pedagogic trainings are graduated by a lot of teachers, but only a part of them apply new methods. Adults, teachers or parents sometimes consider that they know everything in education, even if the failure is obvious. Lamentations like “ it was different in my time...”, “ he’s missing those 7 years from home”, “ this is what they learn at school...” don’t fix the problem. The victim is the child, caught in the middle, between two worlds .

F. was not the only child whom I know that had changed a lot of schools.

In case of a girl, same age, the reasons were different. By the time she graduated gymnasium she had changed 3 school teachers in primary school and 3 school masters in secondary school. Even in kindergarten she had changed two educators. Her mother considered that nowhere his daughter was treated how she deserved. She was not “the first”...She was a good child, pretty, healthy, sensible, with talents in some domains, and less in others. Of course the faults was in educators, teachers, principals, all those who, in a way or another, didn’t recognize a genius in her girl.

Because at that moment she was not a genius. She was only a perfect child. Yet. But nobody knows for how long. Only her soul knows that how much humiliation, pain, anger she repressed. She didn’t have any friends. The children were afraid of her mother...

Some children carry their suffering, their blights in silence. Some of them, the majority in fact, contrive to get over. Only one of them flare up. Some of them we see at the news. Some of them we know from neighbors, or we met them in schools. Or in own family.

Behind each delinquency case is a drama. A pained soul. **The delinquency in minors is a scream!** The people often say: she missed nothing, she had everything,...Some of children became delinquencies because they missed food, others because they missed love...For all something is missing. The same thing, in fact: Happiness, inner peace.

The facultative classes in schools, could be allocated to the study of some themes very interesting for teen-agers: “ How to solve the conflicts”, “How to get

to understanding with difficult people”, “Learn to smile” “Learn to forget” etc. These themes exist in Educational Class Curriculum, but class masters are teachers have different specialties. They g have all graduated psychology courses. But these courses prove to be really efficient if they are taught by psychologists or teachers with real competences.

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The responsibility for minors actions is attributed to adults who, in a way or another are playing the most important role in the life of the teenager: first of all the parents, and after that the educators. These are the first places where, in the case of a delinquency the investigations start: **the house and the school.**

To assume the responsibility does not mean attitudes like: “ You are in my responsibility, so you will do what I say!”, “ I am giving you everything, I am asking only to listen me”, “These are the rules, you must accepted these” and others.

I am thinking besides the responsibility, the adults can decrease the juvenile delinquency through the Education for Responsibility. **Through Education for Resposability of adults and kids I understand the logical acceptance of consequences which follows a decision, a behavior, an attitude, without obstructing free choice.**

After a regretable action , both kids and adults, show sometimes an discordant attitude, toward something that was, in fact, a predictable situation. Uncalled, but predictable. For example, some parents, even if they knew that their son didn’t learn at all during the entire school year, they show amazement when he failed the exam. If their son didn’t learn and his family knew this, the failed of the exam is a predictable consequence. Or, if the parents accept that their daughter , 12 ears old (or less!) dress “sexy”, has a provocative behavior, they must to accept even the reality from street, where exist persons who can be aggressors. In mathematical terms, the probability to provoke an event is bigger in case of the persons who gives the possible aggressors signs through their attitude, behavior, language, clothes.

Police and School deliver this message often, using warnings and interdictions. Beyond these messages , the choice is free for anyone. The absence of responsibility for own decisions make us to look somewhere else for it. Neither is a good attitude to blame ourselves. The responsibility makes one accept a failure easier and have another choice.

In some cases parents oppose brutally to the choices made by their kids, because they consider them dangerous. Therefore, it is not surprising when a parent forbids his 14 years daughter to go to night clubs. But simple interdiction doesn’t change the decision of the teenager. If she is not responsabilised properly, friendly, open way, with calm, about the possible consequences, she will stay determined to go there . If adults forbid something to a rebel teenager, he will want it more. Another reason to want it so much is because he hadn’t discovered anything else to give him a bigger satisfaction. The teenager is looking for self-

discovery “Who am I”. He will look for it in minds and models which are stronger . Sometimes these models are from own family, friends, or movies,...

The responsabilisation made with finesse gives the teenager the possibility to change own mind, to give up, without the feeling of a defeat. It is very important for the teenager to know that the family is close to him after any deception or suffering in life. Nothing is unforgivable. Especially to a teenager. The unhappy events can be transformed in new conveniences. Even a failure is a gain in experience. The proverb says: “When a door is closed, a window is opened.”

To prevent or to correct some infractional behavior , we don't have to forget that teenager is not a passive hospitable host of of the requirements. Even if some of the children are more obedient , they can accumulate frustration which can prejudice them in development, communication, relationship.

One of these can be the decision about the future profession or high school, choice without the teenager opinion. Pupils who not let by their parents to follow the profession they want became apathetics.

They are forced to stay at uninteresting courses for them, courses they don't understand, so they look for other preoccupations, sometimes apart from school. This is not the only aspect. Another aspect is that they became “dangerous” persons for all of us: incompetent physicians, an incompetent mechanics, airily teachers etc.

Both teachers and parents are sometimes indifferents to the real “calling” of the children. The first, to report a good procentage in promovability, the others from pride.”If we are physicians, you can not be a manicurist, if your cousins graduated computer studies, you can not be just a cook,...” Unfortunately, in these cases when the parents decide instead of the children, the psychologist and school master opinion is ignored as well.

The school and professional orientation is efficient if it starts from the child abilities and needs. The educational offer must be according to the society economical demands, the practical abilities required at a certain moment by the society, not in the least by the intellectual capacity of the students.

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Juvenile delinquency is a reality of our days, in different forms of manifestations. It ignorance and treating with unefficient methods, can lead to a dangerous situation – similar to what has happened with our atmosphere due to pollution.

To acuse only the teenagers for their manifestations is like saying that only us, peoples who live at this moment, are guilty for ecology disasters. We, the present generation as well as the previous and maybe the future ones (if they will ignore the obvious signs of distroing), are together responsible for the ecological desaters.

The responsibility belongs to all of us.

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