

The aim of this thesis is to document volunteer programs at children's clinics. It attempts to synthesize different people's opinions about volunteering and to highlight the importance of the activity.

The thesis has two parts: theoretic and empiric. The first part, theoretic, is focused on basic terms, function, and principles of volunteering. The main point is to specify the activities of volunteers in children's clinics. Special attention is given to a program called "The Volunteers in Hospitals", which is aimed at monitoring the influence of illness on a child's mental development in addition to the impact on his or her friends and relatives. It also tries to define the basic set of skills for those who volunteer for this program.

The aim of the second part is to learn the attitudes of volunteers and their reasons for volunteering by means of a questionnaire. The goal is to learn how they prepare themselves for volunteering, to examine their sociological and pedagogical background, and how volunteering affects their social life. A second questionnaire asks volunteer coordinators about programs at the hospitals they work at. In addition, it asks about benefits offered to volunteers. Finally, coordinators give their opinion about volunteering.

Despite the fact that volunteering is increasing in our society, there are still many people who haven't noticed it. Nevertheless, there are more and more people dedicating their lives to helping others - either to the weak or the ill. Volunteering has become a part of their lives. Volunteers are now an essential component in children's clinics and are important and valuable colleagues to hospital staff.