Abstract

Title: The importance of nature as a learning environment by mapping forest clubs and forest kindergartens in the Liberec region from the point of view of educators.

Objective: The aim of my thesis is to map forest kindergartens and forest clubs in the Liberec region. Further, by using semi-structured interviews to obtain specific information about the operation and educational activities of the forest kindergartens and clubs in the district.

Results: Literature about pre-school pedagogy, alternative ways of education, forest kindergartens gave us insights into the topic. From semi-structured interviews that I conducted with various teachers of forest kindergartens or clubs in the Liberec region, I received necessary information. The functioning of forest kindergartens and forest clubs is different in many ways. Opening hours of kindergartens are about 7:00 to 17:00. Their approach to children is inspired by Waldorf and Montessori pedagogy. The timetable of the day differs, but the materials they use are similar and come from nature. All respondents mentioned that parents cooperate with them. It was evident that all of them have good relationship to nature and see its positive influence on children. Crucial final information is that the way of education changes from authoritarian to liberal, the society changes and parents welcome forest kindergartens and forest clubs.

Keywords: education, alternative educational guidelines, relations with nature, forest kindergarten, Liberec, teacher interview, the importance of nature, operation