

Abstract

For most people, family represents a place where they feel safe and loved. But not everyone is lucky enough to have a place like this, to have a functional family. If the biological family does not work as it should and a baby is threatened in some way, the state has several options to help the child. If there are solvable problems in the family, the state can try to help it by various interventions to improve the situation. But if these actions do not help and the child is forced to leave this family, it is necessary to ensure alternative environment for baby. The child can either be placed in institutional care, or to substitutional family care. Considering the shortcomings of institutional care, various forms of substitutional care are mainly supported.

Probably the best known form of substitutional care is adoption. In the case of adoption, baby becomes the member of new family and relationships between child and his biological family vanishes. This form is only possible for a small percentage of abandoned children, because most of them still has some kind of relationship with biological family. For these children, there is an alternative, namely foster care. In the case of foster care, child grows up in a foster family, foster parents care for him every day, but the child still has a relationship with the biological parents as well.

The Czech Republic is currently facing a problem of relatively large number of children placed in institutional care because there is not enough foster parents. This thesis is concerned with the possibilities of increasing interest in foster care, which would allow children to grow up in a family and build a closer relationship than would be possible in institutional care.

Based on qualitative research, which was conducted through nine interviews with foster parents and two interviews with experts, this thesis deals with the motivations and opinions of current foster parents. On the basis of this opinions it proposes possible changes that could lead to the improvement of the current situation in the field of foster care.