

ABSTRACT

This thesis deals with the specifics of subjectively perceived well-being of early and mid adolescents (11 – 15 years) who are currently living in Czech foster homes. The purpose of this study is to describe whether their life satisfaction differs from those who are growing up with biological parents. If so, in what aspects and why. The theoretical part focuses on various concepts of well-being, current institutional care situation in the Czech Republic, its benefits and risks, the developmental period of early and mid adolescence with its outstanding characteristics. In addition, the newest studies related to the topic are covered. The practical part includes mixed approaches (both quantitative and qualitative) through the KIDSCREEN-52 questionnaire and supplemental anamnestic questionnaire. In total 53 children from 8 different foster homes filled out both questionnaires.

The research results show that life satisfaction of children in institutional care is in three domains (moods and emotions, school environment, social acceptance and bullying) lower in comparison with children who are living with their families. No significant differences were found in the remaining seven domains. Children from foster homes are satisfied with both biological parents and professional carers. They tend to idealise their parents but they perceive the carers more realistically. Boys are more comfortable and confident when it comes to their physical appearance plus personality characteristics and they also more often reflect on happy moments in their lives. On the other hand, girls are more contented with the school environment, relationships with teachers and academic successes.

KEYWORDS

Well-being, self-perception, foster home, early and mid adolescence, gender