

The author compares approaches to co-operation with the family as applied in mainstream kindergartens and alternative kindergartens with the Step by Step programme. The thesis aims to determine the extent to which the forms and intensity of communication and co-operation between family and kindergarten differ depending on the kindergarten's educational programme, and identify the strengths and weaknesses of mutual communication.

In the theoretical section, the author outlines the importance of co-operation between family and kindergarten for the development of preschool children, the possible forms of such co-operation and the rules laid down by applicable legal regulations and curricular documents, and describes how this co-operation is understood in the Step by Step programme.

In the empirical section, the author uses a mixed research strategy combining quantitative and qualitative research to answer the research questions. Data for the research were collected through a questionnaire survey, where the respondents included teachers and parents of children attending selected Prague-based mainstream kindergartens and kindergartens with the Step by Step programme.

The research has shown that, in terms of the forms of communication and co-operation between family and kindergarten, there are no significant differences between mainstream kindergartens and kindergartens with the Step by Step programme. However, while generally high, the intensity of communication and co-operation is higher within the Step by Step programme. The key strengths and weaknesses of communication between family and kindergarten are the same for both mainstream kindergartens and kindergartens with the Step by Step programme. Yet kindergartens with the Step by Step programme put increased emphasis on certain areas and forms of communication, which the parents see as additional strengths.