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Family counseling - a preventive intervention

In the paper it is argued that the following issues are of most crucial concern for contemporary family policy: (1) educating, guiding and supporting parents *in general*; (2) guarding the changed social *upbringing conditions*; (3) giving priority to general, *early preventive parent-focused counseling* services; thus (4) *reducing* tardy, often overdue, *problem focused* interventions.

The lecture starts with a short overview of the knowledge base and development of services about childrens needs and parent-child relationships. This is connected to counseling and family life education, leading to a short definition of the concept of counseling. The landscape of current upbringing conditions, as manifest in increased contemporary individualism, and heightened extent of risk groups, is portrayed. Some evidence-based primary and secondary prevention and treatment programmes are presented, most of them problem-focused. The more general focused programs, e.g. based on life course events research are gaining emerging recognition.

Based on recent scientific knowledge, communications studies and family research, devotion in reinforced general counseling services is suggested as a part of a progressive family policy, facilitating present and future childhood conditions.