

COMBATING VIOLENT CRIMES AGAINST CHILDREN: CHALLENGES FOR UKRAINE, INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCE, INNOVATIVE METHODS OF PRACTICAL LEARNING

Mykola Semenyshyn, Maksym Kornienko, Andrii Kostyuk

ABSTRACT

Chapter 6, based on the analysis and generalization of constructive foreign experience and the legal practice of Ukraine, outlines the key aspects of countering violent crimes against children and specifies innovative methods of training students of higher education in this direction in the practice of Ukraine. A comparative analysis of experience in the investigation of violent crimes against children is conducted and the possibilities of its implementation into the legal practice of Ukraine are determined. The peculiarities of the organization of detection of violent crimes against children on the basis of legal knowledge for the purpose of educational work and prevention of countering violent crimes against children are highlighted. In order to improve the quality of the teaching of such academic disciplines as "Criminal Studies", "Criminology", "Criminal Law", "Operative and Investigative Activities" in the training process of legal experts, the methodological features of the use of information and technical support for the detection, investigation and prevention of violent crimes against children in "Child-Friendly Interview Room". Mechanisms to prevent re-traumatization of the child's psyche during the interview process are substantiated thanks to special methods and the creation of a psychologically comfortable atmosphere.

KEYWORDS

Minor, child protection, convention, communicative readiness, competence, psychological contact, "Child-Friendly Interview Room".

INTRODUCTION

The war in Ukraine has led to a "crisis for the protection of children of an extraordinary scale" – Aaron Greenberg – UNICEF regional advisor for Europe and Central Asia on child protection issues, said on May 6, 2022 at a press briefing at the Palais des Nations in Geneva regarding the situation of children in Ukraine [1]. Children in Ukraine need the protection and assistance of the state more than ever. The introduction of martial law, as a special regime, introduced on the territory of Ukraine by the Decree of the President of Ukraine dated February 24, 2022 No. 64/2022 due to the act of military aggression of the Russian Federation became a test for the entire people of Ukraine. The tragic events that are happening now affect the increase in cases of children falling into difficult life circumstances, committing cruel treatment and committing violent crimes against children.

Therefore, modern legal studies cannot fail to take into account the comparative legal aspect. After all, legal comparative studies is an important factor in improving the law enforcement activities of state authorities, including in the field of law enforcement, in particular, combating violent crimes against children. "Crimes against minors have recently begun to acquire an international character. Guilty persons can move from state to state, in particular to developing countries, given the less severe punishment" [2], Interpol emphasizes.

It should be noted that borrowing the experience of developed countries, primarily European states, has certain problematic aspects associated with different legislative regulation of relevant social relations in Ukraine.

For a more effective investigation of violent crimes against children, the introduction of positive international experience and the training of specialists for such activities, it is necessary to summarize some modern trends and strategies for combating violent crime against minors, to investigate and summarize the typical problems in crime prevention in this area, which are faced by workers in different states. "For Ukraine, under the current conditions, the foreign experience of both countries with a strong civil society and the rule of law, as well as countries in which democratic institutions are only being formed, requires special attention of scientists and practitioners in this context. The state, with the help of legal norms and the use of power levers, regulates social relations, establishes and maintains the necessary order in the country, but it itself is subordinate to society, called to serve it" [3], Alla Dhakal notes. Peculiarities of the investigation of violent crimes against children have their own specificity related to the child's psychosomatic characteristics.

In general, the practice of investigating such crimes in European countries and the United States of America is carried out within the framework of criminal proceedings, taking into account the child's psychosomatic characteristics. An extremely important aspect that advanced states take into account in such cases is ensuring the interests of the child and its psychological health. The world community is paying more and more attention to the involvement of the public in its various manifestations in the case of combating violent crime, the peculiarities of committing such crime against children.

The progressive international practice of public influence on crime and the activation of its activities in this area shows that the public is most often used to study the state of local crime (Colombia, South Africa); prevention of recidivism (Singapore, Brazil, Uganda, Kenya); protection of public order (USA, Great Britain, Peru, Brazil); financial incentives to the public for their contribution to crime prevention (Australia, Canada); use of communication tools in crime prevention (USA, Great Britain, Australia), etc. The investigation of violent crimes against minors differs from the investigation of violent crimes against adults and partially minors. That is why in European countries, in particular Great Britain, as well as in the United States of America, every criminal proceeding in cases involving minors is carried out by persons who have acquired special skills and received appropriate training [4].

The biggest differences in the investigation of violent crimes against children and adults relate to hearing children as victims. A child under the age of 15 will not be questioned in court, so its testimony at the preliminary investigation stage is part of the trial [5]. The special status of the child must also be taken into account in other procedural procedures. A person under the age

of 18 must be treated, undergo an appropriate psychological examination or an appropriate course of treatment in accordance with its age and state of development.

The continuing rise in violent crime against minors is increasing the demand on the public for the services of the police, the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS), local authority children's services departments, criminal and family courts and specialist community sector services for victims (various community organizations) [6]. As the English researchers emphasize, the police and children's services proceedings about violent behavior against children is life-changing for the victim. When the proceedings last a long time, it causes the risk of increasing the trauma (primarily in the psychological aspect) of children and their families [7].

The aim of research: based on the analysis and generalization of constructive foreign experience and the legal practice of Ukraine, outline the key aspects of combating violent crimes against children and specify innovative methods of training students of higher education in this direction in the practice of Ukraine.

The aim is implemented in the following **tasks**:

- describe the international experience in investigating violent crimes against children and determine the possibilities of its implementation in the national legal practice;
- popularize legal knowledge in order to prevent and counter violent crimes against children in educational work, highlight the process of organizing the detection of violent crimes against children;
- improve the quality of teaching such educational disciplines as "Criminal Studies", "Criminology", "Criminal Law", "Operational and investigative activities" in the educational process to characterize the information and technical support for the detection, investigation and prevention of violent crimes against children.

To solve the problems, the research methods and methodology were chosen: the *dialectical method* is the basis of the research, which allows to find out the state and dynamics of committing violent crimes against children, the dependence of such crime on various social factors; *logical methods of analysis and synthesis* were used to determine the state of the scientific development of the investigation of violent crimes against children, to carry out classifications, as well as to distinguish the signs of the concepts that make up the subject of the study, formulating definitions, conclusions; *the activity approach* is used to learn about the organization of detection, investigation and prevention of violent crimes against children.

The comparative legal method was used to study international experience in the investigation of violent crimes against children; *the legal modeling method* is applied to characterize the personality of criminals and victims. The following scientific methods were also used: *the historical-legal method* was applied to find out the historical origins, prerequisites and determinants of the development of violence against children, as well as legal means of combating it; *the method of comparative analysis* – for the analysis of the current state of the tactics of conducting investigative (search) actions and covert investigative (search) actions in combating violent crimes against children and foreign experience in this regard; to analyze the forms and directions of international cooperation in the investigation of violent crimes against children; to analyze directions for improving the

legislation of Ukraine to ensure effective countermeasures against violent crimes against children; *legal-technical (formal-dogmatic) method* – to determine the legal nature of the circumstances that make up the specifics of the subject of evidence in the investigation of violent crimes against children. *Forecasting and modeling methods* were used to develop proposals for improving the professional training of national police officers and improving its quality.

COMBATING VIOLENT CRIMES AGAINST CHILDREN

The issue of combating crime is characterized by its permanent relevance, which is determined, first of all, by the state and dynamics of crime in Ukraine in general, "underage" crime, in particular. At the same time, the number of crimes, the victims of which are children, is systematically increasing (at the same time, these crimes are mostly violent).

Violent crime is a heterogeneous social phenomenon. Thus, in the scientific literature of criminology and criminal law, the opinion is expressed that violent crime and self-serving violent crime, violent crime and aggressive crime do not completely coincide. The understanding of the content of violence changed during the historical and legal development of counteraction to this phenomenon. Together with the transformation of society, there is also a change in the psychological influence and violence of one person on another. Today, there is a need to rethink the essence and content of psychological coercion, in particular, such forms as *bullying* and *stalking*, which should become the subject of a separate complex interdisciplinary study (within pedagogy, legal psychology, criminology and criminal law).

It is expedient to consider the normative and legal regulation of combating violence against children at several levels: *international* (which includes universal and regional levels) and *national* (which combines common law and criminal law levels). International acts (both hard law and soft law) enshrine the positive obligations of states, according to which national authorities must normatively regulate relations regarding the provision of children's rights, create appropriate state bodies, including bodies for combating violent crime against children.

Thus, it should be determined that a crime against children in the criminal legislation of Ukraine, where the norm of the article directly uses the definition "minor", consists of 29 articles. These articles can be grouped by generic object, where the victim is defined in the disposition of the article as a minor. *Depending on the generic object of crimes*, the following can be distinguished: crimes against the life and health of a minor; crimes against the will, honor and dignity of a minor; crimes against the sexual integrity of a minor; crimes against labor and other personal rights and freedoms of minors; crimes against public morality against a minor; crimes in the sphere of trafficking in narcotic drugs, psychotropic substances, their analogues or precursors and other crimes against public health against minors. The organization of the detection of violent crimes against children is closely related to activities related to the prevention of such crimes and involves the interaction of law enforcement officers both among themselves and with teachers of general educational institutions, social workers who can detect indicators of violence against a child.

Today, the issue of protecting children's rights is extremely relevant for society, given the prevalence of crimes against children and the consequences of such offenses for future generations. Children sometimes suffer from the abuse of adults (usually close relatives) and they can and should be protected primarily by the state in the form of law enforcement agencies and state social protection services. The representative of law enforcement agencies, who constantly communicates with citizens in the service territory, is the precinct police officer. It is he/she, who is able to detect and stop all illegal actions against the child at the initial stage. However, taking into account the peculiarities of the victims, in particular their psychosomatic characteristics, the main role in combating violent crimes against children should be carried out by the juvenile prevention units of the National Police, whose employees have the appropriate knowledge, competencies and skills in dealing with children, including those who commit administrative and criminal offenses [7].

Proceedings related to violence against children, as practice shows, last longer than all other types of crimes. Therefore, the police and other law enforcement agencies must explore ways to operate more efficiently to minimize delays and increase the speed of decision-making. The UK Children's Commissioner proposed the implementation of three measures to improve the quality and speed of decision-making in criminal investigations of violent crimes against minors [6]: licensing the practice of specialists, who work in cases of violent crimes against minors to improve the decision-making process during investigations; the introduction of specialists who will cooperate with the police into police teams investigating violent crimes against minors; creation and deployment of "children's houses", child-friendly places where victims of violent crimes against minors participate in police interviews and receive therapeutic support.

Previous findings from the UK Children's Commissioner have revealed the prevalence and high latency of violent crime against minors, as well as the barriers and challenges to identifying children who have been victims of violence. Addressing such barriers and challenges can improve the identification of victims of violent crime. However, greater identification of victims will increase the demand on resources between agencies, and there is a risk that cases will be delayed.

Given the social negative impact of violent crimes against minors on victims and the growing demand for appropriate protection services, it is critical to regularly report on the timeliness of the investigation and prosecution process to ensure effectiveness is reviewed. In particular, data on the results of the investigation and the timeliness of court proceedings should be divided into published data on victimized children and victimized adults in order to ensure control over the prevention of violent crimes against minors [6].

One cannot ignore the positive experience in combating violent crimes against minors in the United States of America. According to the Federal Bureau of Investigation [8], thousands of children are victims of violent crimes in the United States every year, such as sexual assault and kidnapping. The Federal Bureau of Investigation is the main agency of the United States Department of Justice responsible for investigating crimes against children. The Ministry of Justice has made child protection a priority, as reflected in the Strategic Plan, which includes preventing, stopping and investigating crimes against children and describes its strategies to achieve this goal.

Priorities in the investigation of violent crimes against children for the FBI are child abductions, including parental and parental abductions; sexual exploitation of children – organizations engaged in child trafficking; Internet networks and enterprises engaged in the production, trade, distribution and/or sale of child pornography; child sex tourism (international travel for sexual activities involving children); production of child pornography, including coercion/luring of a minor; trade in child pornography and distribution of child pornography; possession of child pornography.

During investigations of violent crimes against children, evidence and information about the crime is gathered mainly from three sources: the victim; the suspect; crime scene (including other witnesses). Staff should carefully examine all three sources and any other available sources of evidence or information. However, investigations can be successful even if evidence is not available from all three sources. In response to complaints of abuse, every effort should be made to relieve the victim of feelings of shame and/or suicide. In order for victims to be able to provide the clearest and most complete information about the crime, efforts must be made to ensure that all activities are conducted in a professional and dignified manner [9]. Violent crimes against children are investigated by branches of the FBI, including the Child Exploitation Task Force (CETF), which combines FBI resources with other federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies. Special training is provided to all law enforcement officers involved in these investigations, including federal, state, local and foreign law enforcement agencies. According to American law, a criminal arrest warrant can be issued for one of the parents who took a minor under the age of 16 outside the United States without the permission of the other parent [10].

The investigative survey protocol of the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD) study [11] was designed to address the pitfalls that abound when interviewing children. It is designed to take into account issues of child development, language skills, memory, suggestibility, forensic needs, demeanor of the interviewer, effects of stress and trauma. It is the product of an interdisciplinary team of researchers, interviewers, police officers, and legal professionals who follow an evidence-based approach to criminal interviewing. The protocol is effective when used with child victims of sexual and/or physical abuse.

A child investigative interview is a developmentally sensitive and legally sound way to gather factual information about a criminal allegation. This interview is conducted by a properly trained, neutral professional (for example, a professional psychologist (specialist mediator)), who uses practice-based research methods as part of the investigative process. Unlike a clinical interview (for example, an interview conducted by a psychotherapist, social worker, or counselor that seeks to identify and assess the victim's physical and psychological needs and offer treatment for those needs), an investigative interview aims to obtain accurate facts that will be acceptable in to the court as evidence. This means that the interview must be conducted in such a way as to obtain a complete and accurate account of the events from the victim.

The use of the NICHD Protocol has a positive impact not only on the quality of interviewer questions and children's statements, but also improves the ability of professionals to distinguish between plausible and implausible statements and to assess the credibility of statements. One of

the main aspects of the Protocol is that it is flexible enough to allow the procedures to be changed according to the child's characteristics. Interviewers create a relaxed, supportive environment while trying to assess children's social status and emotional needs. Establishing and maintaining rapport can be critical to a child's readiness to speak at an interview and is further developed during the so-called practice interview. In the practical interview, children are asked to describe a real episodic experience in detail in response to open-ended prompts. Thus, they practice the required level of detail.

The protocol also focuses children's attention on real events because they are asked to provide specific details about things that actually happened, rather than what others have told them, for example. In addition, the protocol is based on the principle of the best interests of the child. In the context of an investigative interview, the emphasis on the best interests of the child involves preventing secondary victimization through interviews and obtaining the best evidence to ensure the best justice for the child victim. It is important that the principle of the best interests of the child serves as a yardstick for those conducting the survey, regardless of its stage.

The state legal basis of international cooperation primarily includes the Constitution of Ukraine, which contains a provision that defines international treaties of Ukraine as part of its legal system (Article 9) and notes that Ukraine's foreign policy activities are aimed at ensuring its national interests and security by maintaining peaceful and mutually beneficial cooperation with members of the international community according to generally recognized principles and norms of international law (Article 18).

In order to study the state and trends of crime in certain regions of the world, every five years, starting from 1955, scientific and practical events organized by the United Nations and called "UN Congresses on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice" are held [12]. The results of the 13th Congress are reflected in the Doha Declaration, in which the main problems in the field of crime prevention and criminal justice are indicated.

At the 13th Congress, UN experts gave additional arguments regarding the connection between the increased level of murders and other violent crimes, including those committed against children, with socio-economic development in various countries of the world [13]. UN experts point out that at the current stage of society's development, one of the most common forms of transnational organized crime recently is the sexual exploitation of children.

Globalization, social inequality, the imbalance of the law enforcement system, and the development of modern information technologies are considered to be the root causes of the listed forms of crime. These criminogenic factors contribute to the transformation of once local crimes into global negative phenomena of social reality. The spread of modern challenges to the world community in the form of various crimes is facilitated by the possibility of obtaining illegal excess profits. Among the main areas of prevention of transnational organized crime are the development of national legislation in the field of prevention of these crimes, strengthening of international cooperation and improvement of the activities of criminal justice bodies [14].

It is possible to distinguish typical problems of cooperation with the public in the world in the prevention of crime against children. First of all, this is limited knowledge about the procedure and

conditions for applying the strategy of public influence; lack of cooperation between the police and citizens; lack of political determination on the part of the authorities; lack of control over persons released from prisons and others [15].

The generalization of modern trends and strategies for combating violent crime against minors in different countries of the world gives reason to assert that modern global violent crimes against children are characterized by relative constancy of quantitative indicators for most property and violent crimes; the most common profitable types of transnational organized crime against minors are crime in the sphere of child trafficking; sexual exploitation; use in porn business; removal of organs, conducting experiments on children; successful prevention of most crimes is not possible without broad public participation; the strategy of public influence on crime consists in the involvement of individual citizens, public law enforcement organizations focused on the protection of law and order, participation in programs for the prevention of violent crime against minors, providing information about committed crimes with mandatory material encouragement of these areas of work by the state and private business.

One of the important aspects of the effective investigation of violent crimes in the countries of Europe and the United States of America is significant attention to the initial phase of the investigation. At the same time, the main priority is to ensure the child's psychological health. Therefore, the time of conducting, the order of conducting investigative actions is largely determined by this factor.

International cooperation in criminal proceedings is an integral part of the proper implementation of its tasks. The importance of such cooperation is difficult to overestimate, because it is with the help of joint actions of various member states of the international community that effectively ensures the inevitability of punishment of a person who has committed a criminal offense, including violent crimes against a child.

International cooperation of states in this area is based on a system of certain criteria, standards, that is, international principles that determine the essence of the organization and activity of states, as well as international organizations in the field of combating violent crimes. The basis of international legislation on these issues is multilateral (conventions and additional protocols to them) and bilateral treaties. Bilateral acts establish more specific forms of cooperation in the fight against certain types of crimes, in particular, in relation to the investigation of violent crimes against children.

One of the Guiding Principles of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe states that in all proceedings children should be treated taking into account their age, special needs, maturity and level of understanding, and taking into account any communication difficulties they may have. Cases involving children should be handled in a non-intimidating and child-sensitive environment [16]. Thus, Valerii Shepitko [17] defines that *psychological contact* is the most favorable psychological atmosphere of interrogation, which promotes interaction and mutual relations between its participants, it is a certain setting for communication.

Tactical techniques aimed at establishing psychological contact with the interrogated are based on the use of data from psychology, logic and other sciences. As noted by Larysa Udalova [18],

in the process of verbal (speech) contact, trust, mutual understanding, and the desire of the participants of the interrogation (the investigator and the interrogated) to exchange information are largely determined by the individual's personal characteristics, its typology, life and social experience, the position and role of the interrogated in the event of the crime.

The ability of the investigator to understand the psychology of persons, to analyze their behavior, to possess tactical methods of logical and psychological influence, to correctly interpret testimony during interrogation in order to establish their reliability, truthfulness, completeness, to determine the positions of the interrogated – all this is far from a complete list of the necessary requirements for conducting an interrogation as a method of obtaining verbal information [19].

According to Tetiana Shmyhol [20], interrogation of minors is one of the most difficult investigative (search) activities. This difficulty is caused by a number of factors: those that determine the difficulty of any interrogation (difficulties in establishing contact, the need to obtain full and truthful testimony about events that have long passed, lack of goodwill, etc.); peculiarities of the psychology of minors prone to fantasizing, self-suggestion; the need to interrogate a minor suspect, the accused with the participation of a lawyer, legal representatives and a teacher (psychologist), who have the right to ask questions. In practice, these issues are resolved ambiguously.

Kseniia Plieva and Galyna Stepanova [21] emphasize that the characteristics of the psyche characteristic of minors undoubtedly affect the process of forming and giving testimony, but they are not obstacles to their interrogation related to mental or physical disabilities. Scientists emphasize that in the practice of investigating crimes, there are many examples when children aged 3–5 years reported data during interrogation that contributed to the establishment of the objective truth in criminal proceedings.

At the same time, it is recommended to interrogate children only in extreme cases, because the interrogation (both the process itself, the information discussed during it, and its environment) can negatively (traumatically) affect their psyche. The peculiarity of taking into account physiological and psychological changes during the child's development is an important criterion for the investigator, since knowledge of the stages and crises of personality formation can affect the tactics of questioning a minor, therefore, having also psychological competence in the aspect of age characteristics is a key basis for the success of the investigator's communicative readiness to interrogation of the child.

Among the age-related features of the psyche of children of transitional age is the tendency to fantasize, which the investigator must always remember when evaluating the results of investigative actions involving minors. Their emotional life is quite unstable, which can be explained by the temporary disharmony between the functions of the cortex and subcortex of the brain, the first and second signaling systems, which is characteristic of the period of puberty. Often, teenagers perceive many events incompletely and inaccurately, but very often such details remain in their memory that adults do not even pay attention to.

The personality of a minor suspect is endowed with some specific features, which in their totality act as the psychological basis of illegal actions. Minors are often characterized by suggestive-

ness, excessive credulity, and a tendency to imitate. Increased activity, mobility, initiative, excess energy, caused by a general increase in vital activity, growth of vital forces are also characteristic.

Minors especially want active activities, unusual adventures, acute conflict situations. Adolescents are prone to stubbornness, irritability, resistance, criticality, aggressiveness, hatred, isolation, indifference. The main root of stubbornness is the desire for liberation, a strong need for freedom and independence. The teenager internally distances itself from its parents, becomes indifferent to family and school life. Therefore, negativism, the need for prestige, freedom and independence occupy an important place among the age characteristics of a teenager.

The specifics of the interrogation are determined depending on the person being interrogated. Depending on this, the investigator needs to build a certain line of communication. An important aspect when interrogating a minor or a minor is taking into account the child's age and tendency to fantasize and the possibility of misperception of information.

If a child has suffered as a result of a crime or has witnessed sexual violence or exploitation, other crimes, or is suspected of committing crimes, that is, the child has come into contact with the law, then the investigator and other procedural persons must conduct the interrogation exclusively in the "Child Friendly Interview Room".

Thus, the team of Ukrainian scientists Dainius Puras, Olha Kalashnyk, Olena Kochemyrovska, Tetiana Tsiuman [23] determine that the organization of such work is carried out on the basis of an individual approach to each child, taking into account its age and psychological characteristics. "Green room" helps children to feel a home atmosphere, promotes trustful communication with adults.

Let's note that the conditions of the "Green Room" allow taking into account all the main psychological features of the interrogation of minors:

- duration of interrogation – no more than 1 hour;
- demonstration of objectivity, which contributes to the establishment of psychological contact;
- finding out which of the adults communicated with the child on the merits of the case and about what specifically (to identify persons who could influence the testimony);
- inadmissibility of leading questions;
- choosing the right tone of interrogation (inadmissibility of both harshness, dryness, and pandering or condescension);
- conducting the introductory part of the interrogation in the form of a conversation;
- maximum simplification, detailing of questions, dischapter of events into a number of components;
- use of audio and video recordings;
- involving, if necessary, a specialist, parents or other authoritative persons for the teenager;
- recording of the testimony after the teenager's story is finished (so that interruptions in the testimony do not interfere with the reproduction).

Therefore, the organized system of work in "green rooms" takes into account the age and psychological characteristics of both those children who are in conflict (committed offenses or crimes), and those who are in contact with the law (became victims or witnesses of a crime or offense). These children require special legal procedures, social support, psychological assistance and

rehabilitation services compared to adults. Such procedures should be carried out in specially equipped rooms.

Taking into account the needs of the above-mentioned groups of children is evidence of the humanity of the state, a manifestation of its social and legal nature, focus on helping and taking into account the needs and interests of each child. Work on the creation of "green rooms" will also contribute to the improvement of the professional level of specialists, will provide an opportunity to conduct effective complex and systematic work with children, to achieve appropriate results in it.

Thus, the Odesa State University of Internal Affairs created a dual purpose training ground "Child-Friendly Interview Room" and "Recognition beyond visual and audio observation", which meets the requirements of all international standards [24].

Also, in order to operate and use the "Child-Friendly Interview Room", which will ensure social and legal protection of children, detection and documentation of criminal activities directed at children or with the participation of children, a Memorandum of Cooperation was concluded between the Odesa State University of Internal Affairs and Odesa Research Institute of Forensic Expertise of the Ministry of Justice of Ukraine.

This room is equipped with comfortable furniture adapted to the child's height, the necessary video and audio recording equipment, as well as methodical materials for working with children in accordance with the requirements of international standards. The "Child-Friendly Interview Room" consists of two adjoining rooms: the first is a therapeutic room, in which there is a specialist who works directly with the child (police officer, psychologist, specialist in pediatrics, children's gynecology, psychiatry, pedagogy, etc.) and the second is a room for observation, i.e. a workplace for the police and involved specialists, in which the child's behavior and reactions are observed. Therefore, the "Child-Friendly Interview Room" is as comfortable as possible for both the child and the people watching. After all, the communicative readiness of the investigator during the interrogation of a minor is determined by the integral state and the ability to effectively interact socially with the child [19].

The success of this investigative (search) action is determined not only by knowledge of the age characteristics of the child's development, but also by taking into account the location of the interrogation. This room claims the title of the best project, which has great prospects for the need for its use during investigative actions and practical classes in educational disciplines.

For the sake of a systematic and coherent approach to the prevention of negative phenomena in the educational environment, direct participation in the educational process of the employees of the National Police of Ukraine is necessary.

Thus, an example of effective cooperation between the police and educators is the security project "**School Resource Officer**", which was developed to solve the problem of juvenile and child crime. Police officers focus their work on conducting educational and preventive classes with students under the "**School and the Police**" program, which was approved for implementation in educational institutions (letter of the State Scientific Institution "Institute of Modernization of the Content of Education" No. 2.1/12-Г-159 dated 18.04. 2016).

The aim of the "School Resource Officer" model cooperation program is to create a harmonious (safe) environment in general education institutions, which will contribute to a more effective educational process, resolution of conflicts in schools, safety of students, teachers and other employees, and prevention of antisocial behavior of students.

The main task of the project is to ensure the implementation of effective prevention of offenses among students, the use of restorative practices in order to prevent conflicts, offenses and other negative phenomena.

The program defines *the duties and powers of the school police officer*, namely:

- cooperation in partnership with students, teachers, parents, school administration, social community to create and support a healthy and safe school team;
- conducting educational and preventive classes with students under the "School and the Police" program;
- conducting individual meetings with children, school youth, their parents or guardians;
- participation in meetings of crime prevention councils, if necessary, in meetings of parents' committees and pedagogical meetings in an educational institution;
- participation in parent meetings and parent meetings; carrying out informational and explanatory work among parents and pedagogical workers regarding the prevention of negative phenomena in the student environment; ensuring effective and timely response to the challenges of heads of educational institutions.

This program combines the efforts of two organizations due to their unique mandates – the police, who are responsible for crime prevention, and schools, who are responsible for educating children where they spend most of their time. *School resource officer (SRO)* is a model of cooperation between general educational institutions and the Patrol Police Departments of the Patrol Police Department of Ukraine. The implementation of the project took place gradually. The normative basis was the orders of the National Police and the Department of Patrol Police, as well as memoranda between the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine.

Secondary education institutions join the program only at their own request. Cooperation is carried out on the principles of legality, taking into account the student's interests, the fastest response, proportionality and expediency, confidentiality of private information about the child, proper use of information.

Classes with children are structured in such a way that after a short theoretical part, students have the opportunity to test these or other theses in practice. For students of junior grades, classes are held in the form of a game, with middle and senior grades, various practical situations are worked out during group work. Since the classes are held simultaneously for groups of up to thirty children, each student joins the game or the discussion, which, in fact, contributes to better learning of the material.

A separate area of work of school officers is establishing interaction with parents. In general, parents have a positive attitude towards school officers, but there are also cases when adults, unfortunately, do not understand that it is they who bear full responsibility for the health and

well-being of their child, and some of the parenting methods they use are not always effective for today's youth. Therefore, police officers who have undergone special training and are appointed as school police officers are involved in this activity. Officers to work in schools are selected on a voluntary basis, giving preference to persons with pedagogical or legal education. A school police officer is assigned to two to five general educational institutions of the district in which it carries out patrol duty, taking into account the knowledge of the specifics of the district, the possibility of frequent visits to schools even outside of lessons or educational activities. Cooperation with school police officers is reflected in the work plans of general education institutions for the academic year. Each institution appoints a person responsible for the implementation of the project (as a rule, the deputy director of the educational institution for educational work or a social pedagogue).

On **November 4, 2021**, during the "Ukraine 30. Safe Community" forum, the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine launched a large-scale and multi-component project "**Safe Childhood**", which aims to confront the threats facing children in the family, on the street, and in social networks and school. The improvement of trends in this area lies precisely in the cooperation and coordinated work of various institutions. A school and other institutions where children and young people study should be a safe space. For this purpose, within the framework of the "Safe Childhood" project, one of the components of achieving the goals of ensuring a safe educational environment was the "Safety Educator" project, which became relevant and was implemented as early as 2022 by the Ministry of Internal Affairs in cooperation with the Ministry of Education and Science, the Ministry of Development of Communities and Territories, the Educational Ombudsman, the Association of Cities of Ukraine, the Association of United Territorial Communities, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the Department of Preventive Activities and the communities themselves during the period of martial law on the territory of Ukraine.

The project aims to help communities build an environment for children free from bullying, drugs and violence. "**The security educator** is a civilian who will undergo selection and training. And its main task is to identify and stop offenses within the educational institution, participate in preventive measures and make proposals to strengthen the safe educational environment", **Kateryna Pavlichenko**, the Deputy Minister of Internal Affairs of Ukraine, said during the forum "**Ukraine 30**".

The competence of the "**Safety Educator**" includes:

- prevention of bullying (harassment) of participants in the educational process;
- detection and termination within the scope of competence of offenses in the premises of the educational institution and in its adjacent territory;
- communication with the administration of the educational institution, representatives of the police and the children's service regarding manifestations of suicidal behavior among children;
- implementation of activities related to ensuring the child's right to education;
- participation in conducting individual preventive work with students who are on internal school records and on preventive records in the National Police of Ukraine;
- prevention of offenses in the student environment (conducting individual discussions, lectures, interactive classes, etc.);

– implementation of best practices and innovative techniques in organizing the safety of participants in the educational process, increasing the level of protection of children, countering the commission of offenses by children and in relation to them, etc.;

– combating tobacco smoking, consumption of alcoholic beverages among children, illegal circulation of narcotic drugs on the territory of the educational institution and the surrounding territory;

– creation of safe infrastructure on the territory adjacent to schools, etc.

Subjects of interaction on issues of student safety in the educational environment are: specialists in the safety of the educational environment; village, settlement, city (district) councils; territorial (separate) units of the National Police of Ukraine; territorial subdivisions of the State Emergency Service of Ukraine; managers and other employees of general secondary education institutions; bodies of parental self-government. The position of "*Safety Educator*" is introduced under the program initiated by the National Police. The position is financed by local self-government funds.

Interaction between the security specialist and territorial (separate) units of the National Police of Ukraine (juvenile prevention units, community police officers and precinct police officers of the National Police of Ukraine) is organized in the following directions:

1) exchange of information related to criminal and administrative offenses committed in educational institutions and in the territory adjacent to them, cases of injury or death of children and other events related to ensuring the safety of children;

2) development and implementation of agreed measures aimed at preventing, detecting and stopping offenses committed in educational institutions and in the territory adjacent to them, protecting the property of the educational institution and participants in the educational process from illegal encroachments;

3) summarizing the results of joint work, holding joint meetings and working meetings.

On December 8, 2022, an extended meeting of the Interdepartmental Coordination Council (ICC) on issues of mental health protection and provision of psychological assistance to persons who suffered as a result of the armed aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine was held (Decree on the formation of the ICC of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine dated May 7, 2022, No. 539), chaired by Denys Shmyhal, Prime Minister, and Olena Zelenska, First Lady. The "Road Map" developed within the framework of the National Mental Health Program, which defines the list of psychosocial support measures for Ukrainians, is presented. An operational Roadmap will allow to quickly respond to "Here and Now" challenges. It defines the priorities on which everyone who works in the field of mental health in the conditions of a humanitarian crisis should orientate themselves. This strategy singles out internally displaced persons, military and veterans, elderly people, teenagers, and citizens in the de-occupied territories. A separate task is psychological support, mastering the skills of psychological first aid and stress management for first contact specialists, including the National Police of Ukraine and the State Emergency Service of Ukraine.

"Live a difficult situation with everyone and strengthen the vital energy of everyone" – this is the principle of psychotherapeutic groups of police officers. They were introduced by special-

ists of the psychological service of the National State University of Ukraine in the Odesa region as part of the National Program of Mental Health and Psychosocial Support, initiated by Olena Zelenska, First Lady. "This kind of practice gives an opportunity to get acquainted with the experience of others, to try a new way of responding to challenges, which significantly strengthens the vital energy of everyone", explains the head of the department of psychological support of the HONP in the Odesa region, Andriy Kostyuk, police lieutenant colonel, who notes that the forms and methods of work that psychologists use quite a variety of methods, but psychotherapeutic groups, in contrast to individual consultations, have shown their effectiveness and efficiency in dealing with various types of problems that most police officers face. The psychological stability of law enforcement officers plays an important role in their daily official activities. Therefore, psychologists constantly familiarize them with the latest psychological technologies of self-regulation, providing psychological help to themselves and others.

With the assistance of the office of the European Union advisory mission in Odesa, psychologists of HONP in Odesa region conduct training sessions on the topic: "Communication between police officers and combatants. Algorithms of effective communication". It is the representatives of preventive communication management who most often feel the need for the skills of correct and effective communication with various categories of social groups. Today, issues related to the social rehabilitation of people who went through the ordeal of war are very important for Ukrainian society. Representatives of the preventive communication police will learn from psychologists about the peculiarities of interaction with people who took a direct part in hostilities. After all, it is necessary to know how strong is the traumatization of the psyche of a person who saw the horrors of war with its own eyes, received psychological, social, and physical injuries. The trainings also take place within the framework of the National Program of Mental Health and Psychosocial Support, initiated by Olena Zelenska, First Lady, which aims to help citizens overcome stress related to war and the consequences of experienced traumatic events, and prevent the development of mental disorders. The development and implementation of the program is coordinated by the Ministry of Health of Ukraine in close cooperation with Ukrainian and foreign specialists. The initiative is implemented with the support of the World Health Organization (WHO).

"We don't just believe that children are our future, but we prove it every day with our struggle. Today, we stand for a common cause – the well-being of our children. We are fighting not only for those who live now, but also for future generations", emphasized Denys Monastyrskyi, the Minister of Internal Affairs of Ukraine (July 16, 2021 – January 18, 2023), during the announcement of the children's drawing competition on the theme "I am safe with the Internal Affairs Ministry" for St. Nicholas Day by the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine, which was held from December 1 to 19. The participants of the competition were children under the age of 14 inclusive. According to the head of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, constant power outages and destruction of infrastructure facilities on the territory of the state require an appropriate response from the Ministry of Internal Affairs. "We must do everything to ensure that the security situation is stable and under control. Therefore, we have already developed all the

necessary algorithms so that our employees know how to act in a situation of a long-term absence of heat, electricity or communication. Also, we are already involving almost five thousand cadets of higher educational institutions of the Ministry of Internal Affairs system, who are undergoing practical training in police units, and representatives of voluntary formations of territorial communities, to the intensified service and patrolling. Routes of orders are as close as possible to social and critical infrastructure facilities, as well as to Points of Invincibility. In addition, in the event of a traffic light shutdown, patrol officers regulate traffic at all the most difficult interchapters" said Denys Monastyrskyi.

"Measures taken in time had a positive effect on the state of the criminogenic situation in the country. A 16 % decrease in crime is observed: in 11 months of 2022, 255,100 criminal offenses were entered into the Unified Register of Pretrial Investigations (URPI), and 305,000 criminal offenses in the same period last year". There is a decrease in the number of certain types of criminal offenses committed against life and health of people, as well as against property, in particular, theft – by 1.7 times, robberies – by 2.2 times, robbery attacks – by 2 times, etc. The reasons for the positive dynamics can be called the introduction of a curfew in all regions of the state, an increase in the presence of police officers, servicemen of the Armed Forces of Ukraine, the National Guard and Voluntary Formations of Territorial Communities (VFTC), as well as restrictions on the sale of alcoholic products on the streets of populated areas" added Denys Monastyrskyi.

Since the safety of children is very important, "Safety Classes" are being created in schools – a pilot project that is implemented as part of the initiative of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the National Police, the State Emergency Service and the Ministry of Education and Culture of Ukraine. The functioning of such classes is aimed at teaching children caution, prudence, correct behavior in various dangerous situations, in particular those in which Ukrainians found themselves due to the war. In November 2022, the project was implemented in three educational institutions of the Odesa region: Berezhivska, Yuzhenska, and Velykodolynska schools. The premises have all the necessary equipment and educational materials for studying the rules of behavior in everyday life, on the street, during study and recreation, familiarization with the algorithms of actions in case of emergency situations, detection of explosive objects, formation of skills in providing first aid, etc.

Lessons with children are conducted by pedagogic and medical workers, employees of the National Police, State Emergency Service and other specialists. The police conducted the first educational event together with the rescuers, during which the children received not only new knowledge, but also positive emotions. So, schoolchildren studied safety rules in modern society with law enforcement officers. Juvenile police officers talked with children about behavior during an air raid signal, being on the streets at night, dangerous finds, communication on the Internet. Juvenile police officers help children become visible in the dark. Law enforcement officers explain to children: in order for drivers to see them from afar in the dark, it is necessary to wear reflective accessories on their outer clothing. Young pedestrians are given flickers and taught to make them themselves. "It is nice to note that our children are well acquainted with the rules of life safety and they say

that they always follow them", the police emphasize and urge: "Citizens, take care of the safety of your children. Attach sparklers to their clothes, shoes and backpack. And use them yourself!"

Law enforcement officers give lectures to youth, communicate with adults and children on the streets, specially equipped information platforms and interactive installations, conduct themed games in quest rooms, visit families that have already come into view due to family troubles, and conduct other activities to attract attention citizens to the problem of domestic violence, from which anyone can suffer. Employees of all Odesa police departments tell people about each type of violence, how to recognize it, how to protect yourself, who to turn to for help, because domestic violence is not a "family matter", but a crime for which the person who committed it must be punished suffer punishment. Adults focus on conflicts within the family, and children are also told about the differences between jokes and bullying among peers. So, the police in the city of Odesa simply placed informational posters on the streets of the regional center with advice, addresses of institutions where you can go for shelter and support, and emergency service phone numbers. In general, the meetings are held in schools, public libraries, humanitarian centers and in the open air, in parks and squares, and in addition to the police, workers from free legal aid centers, social services, youth activists and educators join them.

"More than once there have been cases when the victims feel sorry for the offender and do not report cases of abuse, or already at the stage of drafting the protocol or pre-trial investigation of the proceedings, they withdraw their statements and forgive the insults, threats, and beatings. We urge everyone who has witnessed or suffered from domestic violence not to be ashamed, not to sympathize with the offender and not to remain silent. As the experience of law enforcement officers shows, without punishment the domestic tyrant will continue to commit violent acts. Take a step towards your freedom from bullying and the police and social services will help and protect you along the way", the police urge.

Even war will not prevent law enforcement officers from informing people about types of domestic violence, ways to prevent and counter it. After all, personal safety is always on time. Police officers organize lectures and viewings of thematic films with schoolchildren; preventive conversations with families who have fallen into difficult life circumstances; street actions in which citizens are persuaded not to keep silent about the facts of violence and to report them to the law enforcement officers.

In November 2022, the worldwide action "16 days of activism against gender-based violence" started. This is an annual international action that begins on November 25, the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, and continues until December 10, the Human Rights Day. The Anti-Violence Campaign was launched in 1991 by activists from the first Women's Global Leadership Institute and is coordinated annually by the Center for Women's Global Leadership. The campaign consolidates people and organizations around the world and calls for the prevention and eradication of violence against women and girls. Ukraine joins this movement every year, because it has a well-developed system of preventing and countering violence. But this year, these 16 days are another reason for Ukrainians to remind the world about the total russian violence under which

Ukraine lives. In 60 cities and communities of Ukraine, symbolic events on the topic of domestic violence were held under the slogan "Deconstructing domestic violence".

"Combating gender-based violence is one of the values for which we are fighting today and for which we will win tomorrow", Denys Monastyrskiy, the Minister of Internal Affairs of Ukraine (July 16, 2021 – January 18, 2023), said on November 25, 2022, during the official opening of the mosaic on the occasion of the start of the national campaign "16 days of activism against gender-based violence" together with the Ministry of Social Policy and international partners at the Art Arsenal in Kyiv. "Despite the challenges of war, Ukrainians do not silence violence, and the state continues to develop countermeasures" **said Kateryna Pavlichenko, the Deputy Minister of Internal Affairs of Ukraine, during a panel discussion at the Ukraine-Ukrinform Media Center** on November 25, 2022. **Together with Oksana Zholnovych, the Minister of Social Policy of Ukraine, Pavlo Zamostian, the deputy representative of the UN Population Fund in Ukraine (UNFPA), Olena Vykhor, the representative of the Ombudsmen's Office, and Maryna Bardina, Deputy, the panelists discussed the impact of the war on Ukrainians.**

The deputy minister emphasized that among the more than 45,000 war crimes committed by the Russian Federation, sexual violence perpetrated by the occupiers against women, underage girls and older women is not uncommon. As of today, the police have initiated 46 criminal proceedings based on such facts. It is important to understand that this number does not reflect the full picture, because there may be several victims in one proceeding. In addition, in addition to the police, other law enforcement officers record sexual crimes. Kateryna Pavlichenko also spoke about new trends in combating domestic and gender-based violence. If since the beginning of the full-scale invasion in Ukraine, there has been a sharp decline in calls about domestic violence, now the police are recording a significant increase in the number of statements and reports. So, in the first six months of 2022, the number of requests decreased by almost 50 %, compared to the same period in 2021, and today this figure has decreased to 24 %. Kateryna Pavlichenko informed that in 10 months of 2022, law enforcement officers received more than 200,000 complaints about offenses related to domestic violence. At the same time, statistics are increasing in some regions. According to her, this means that people are not silent, do not tolerate and are ready to fight. "Ukrainian men and women will never allow violence to become the norm. We will eradicate this shameful phenomenon, which is not characteristic of our society" the deputy head of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine stressed.

CONCLUSIONS TO THE CHAPTER 6

It is worth noting that modern best international experience in preventing violent crime against children should be taken into account by the state bodies of Ukraine when developing and implementing strategies to combat such crime in our country. Analysis of foreign experience in this area indicates both the problems faced by foreign law enforcement officers and individual measures that can be introduced into the national legal system [4].

Based on the importance of improving the system of protection of children from violent crimes, the subjects of such protection need to promote effective interaction of services for children, centers of social services for families, children and youth, the National Police, educational and health authorities and institutions in prevention child abuse, physical, sexual, psychological, social violence, providing emergency aid to children, who have suffered from abuse.

The full-scale war that is currently ongoing in Ukraine requires enhanced training of qualified law enforcement officers in the aspect of countering violent crimes against children. Odesa State University of Internal Affairs is a leading institution of higher education that trains personnel for the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine and the National Police of Ukraine.

Teachers use educational training grounds (interactive rooms) as innovative training methods to conduct relevant classes with students of higher education, aimed at improving the effectiveness of information perception and checking the level of competences formed in practice: "Interactive room for practicing the skills of responding police officers to cases of domestic violence", "Child-Friendly Interview Room".

The main purpose of conducting an interview in the "Child-Friendly Interview Room" is to prevent re-traumatization of the child's psyche during the interview, both thanks to special methods and a psychologically comfortable atmosphere, and thanks to the technical equipment that makes it possible to correctly record the interview and use this video in the future to conduct the investigation without conducting repeated interrogations.

The direction of establishing international cooperation of the University with foreign institutions of higher education, international institutions, and organizations is an integral and extremely important part of the University's activities in order to improve the quality of training of national police specialists, a peaceful future in the state, and the earliest possible Victory for Ukraine!

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