

# OPINION

of Assoc. Prof. Diana Krasteva Ivanova, PhD  
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**Subject:** Defense of the dissertation of *Diana Neycheva Grozdeva - Foteva*, student, PhD student in an independent form of study on "Nurseries in support of parents to form healthy habits of the child" for the acquisition of educational and science degree „PhD“ in higher education 7. Health Care and sports, professional field 7.4. Public Health, Research in Health Care Management

By Order № P-109-590 / 22.12.2021 of the Rector of MU - Varna, Prof. Valentin Ignatov, MD, PhD - I have been appointed as an external member of the Scientific Jury, and on the basis of Protocol №1 / 04.01.2022 I have been appointed to prepare an opinion on the procedure for obtaining the educational and scientific degree " PhD " with candidate Diana Neycheva Grozdeva - Foteva

## **Brief data on career development and qualifications**

Diana Grozdeva - Foteva was born on February 14, 1969 in the town of Dobrich. In 1990 he graduated from the Higher Medical Institute - "Prof. Dr. Nencho Nikolaev" - Varna, specialty "Nurse - Children's Profile". In 2000 he obtained a master's degree from the University of Veliko Tarnovo "St. St. Cyril and Methodius" specialty "Administrative and Health Management". Since 2002 he has a postgraduate professional qualification from the University "Bishop Konstantin Preslavski" Shumen - specialty: "Teacher". In the period 2004-2005 she obtained a degree - specialist in "Medical College" Dobrich - specialty "Nurse". In 2013 he graduated with a master's degree from the Medical University "Prof. Dr. Paraskev Stoyanov" - Varna, specialty "Health Care Management".

She began her professional career in 1990 at the Hospital - Dobrich, as a "Nurse" in the ward for premature babies. From 1996 to 2005 he worked as a lecturer at the Medical College - Dobrich. In the period 2005-2018 he worked as a lecturer at the Medical University "Prof. Dr. Paraskev Stoyanov" in Varna at the Faculty of Public Health, Department of Health Care. Since 2018 he has been an assistant at the Medical University "Prof. Dr. Paraskev Stoyanov" - Varna, at the Faculty of Public Health, Department of Health Care. Assistant Diana Grozdeva - Foteva teaches classes in the following disciplines: Philosophy and introduction to nursing care, Theoretical foundations, Practical foundations of nursing care, Nursing care for patients with somatic diseases; Nursing care for patients with cancer; Nursing care in pediatrics; Nursing care for the neurologically ill; Nursing care for the mentally ill; Nursing care for parturients and newborns; Nursing care for eye and ear and nose and throat diseases; Nursing care at home; Palliative nursing care; Nursing care for children and adults with disabilities; Nursing care for adults. He is active in research and has 28 publications, participates with reports in scientific conferences and congresses.

## **General characteristics of the dissertation**

The dissertation developed by Diana Grozdeva - Foteva has a volume and form that meets the requirements of the Academic Staff Development Act and the Regulations for the development of the academic staff of the Medical University "Prof. Dr. Paraskev Stoyanov" -

Varna. It contains 176 standard pages and is structured in three chapters: chapter one - literature review; Chapter two - purpose, tasks and methodology of the study; Chapter three - results and discussion. Conclusions, conclusions, contributions and recommendations of the dissertation. The developed dissertation work is illustrated with 40 figures, 4 tables, and 6 appendices. The bibliography includes 182 literature sources, of which 81 in Cyrillic and 101 in Latin.

The relevance of the dissertation is based on the existing various practices to support young parents in raising and educating children. Modern living conditions require a large number of children from an early age to enter kindergartens - nurseries. In the fast-paced daily life, the desire to keep a job and career development requires many mothers to return to work before the expiration of the regulated parental leave. On the other hand, the main directions in the education of children for the formation of healthy habits. They are part of creating a positive attitude of the child towards a healthy lifestyle. The idea of a healthy lifestyle begins in the family from the birth of the child. The beginning of the development of healthy habits should be placed in a family environment. Nursery nurses help parents in their efforts to instill positive habits in their child. In order to achieve the desired results, it is necessary to interact and cooperate closely.

**Evaluation of the Literary Review.** Written on 34 pages, the review shows good literature on the PhD student's awareness of crèche issues and children's health habits. The experience in specific countries in this regard and in France in particular is examined in more detail. The different stages in the development of crèches are considered. The main moments of the regime of care and upbringing in the French nurseries at the beginning of the new century are described - welcoming, playing, dressing, eating and sleeping. The upbringing, care and formation of interests in children begin at a very early age. According to many psychologists who analyze the behavioral patterns of young children, it is the time spent in kindergarten that is extremely important. Different approaches to children's upbringing and entertainment are chosen in different countries. One of the main stages in a child's development is early childhood. In this period there is an intensive growth with rapid development of cognitive and mental functions. The optimal development of children requires more careful consideration of the problems of early childhood and to discuss the issues of institutions in which children are raised and educated at this age. Nurseries are the main structure of the children's preventive institutions, as well as the nursery groups in the united children's institutions. Nurseries remain one of the most appropriate forms of support for families in the upbringing and education of generations. Over the years, they have proven their important place among the various institutions for public upbringing and education of children. They apply modern scientific achievements in the field of pedagogy and psychology of early childhood development, physiology of childhood, pediatrics and the organization of health care. The crèche employs highly qualified health professionals to help the family and society. The formation of a healthy lifestyle begins from the first day of the newborn. Creating at the beginning of a proper diet to meet the needs of the child; the clothes they wear it with; the basic hardening procedures, which are carried out from the first week; daily bathing and dressing and others are the first steps in creating conditions for a healthy lifestyle of the child. These actions require certain knowledge of the parents, perseverance and high commitment. Health education is a purposeful process of impact, through which health knowledge is obtained, health skills, habits and habits are formed. It builds healthy behavior

to prevent disease, restore, protect and improve the health of the individual and society as a whole.

The presented literature review is thematically focused, logically built on serious sources. With its independent significance, it is a very good basis for building an adequate methodology of one's own research. With this review presented, the PhD student fulfills the requirement for degree „PhD" - to be able to use and analyze scientific literature and on its basis to formulate research goals.

### **Assessment of the purpose, tasks, methodology and organization of the study**

The aim of the dissertation is to study and analyze the role of the nurse in the nursery for the formation of healthy habits of children, together with parents and to develop approaches to improve the interaction between the nurse and the family. The goal is clearly and precisely defined, corresponding to the topic and content of the independent research. To achieve this goal, the doctoral student has identified six tasks that detail the steps to study the problem.

- To study and analyze the scientific literature on the problem related to the organized upbringing and the formation of healthy habits in children under 3 years of age in the world and in Bulgaria.

- To study the range of children of nursery age in nurseries in Bulgaria for the period 2010-2020.

- To study the level of habits related to the health of children attending crèches, through the eyes of parents and the nurse.

- To study the interaction of parents and the nurse with regard to the formation of health-related habits.

- To develop a methodology for improving the effectiveness of the interaction between parents and the nurse in terms of forming habits related to health.

- To test the methodology and assess its impact on the level of children's health habits.

Four hypotheses are presented, which reflect the in-depth knowledge and practical experience of the doctoral student for the formation of healthy habits in children.

- The application of a methodology for improving the effectiveness of the interaction between parents and the nurse will lead to faster and more lasting formation of healthy habits in children.

- In the process of creating healthy habits in children under 3 years of age, the nurse in the nursery does not take an active part.

- The interaction between the parents and the nurse in the nursery, in terms of forming healthy habits, is unsatisfactory and there is no feedback.

- The support of parents by the nurse will increase the effectiveness of building healthy habits in children.

The subject of the present study is the interaction between the family and the nursery for the formation of health habits in children up to 3 years of age.

The object of the study were selected three groups of respondents:

- nurses practicing in nurseries in Varna - covered 49, which are 31.5% of the list of nurses working in nurseries in Varna.

- Parents of children under 3 years of age attending crèches in the city of Varna - covered 844, which are 41.6% of the parents of children attending crèches in the city of Varna.

- Children up to 3 years of age attending crèches - covered 844, which is 41.6% of the children attending crèches in Varna.

Attached are: documentary method, survey method, observation and statistical method. Data processing was performed with SPSS v. 20.0 for Windows, as the significance level of the results is  $p < 0.05$ .

A methodology has been developed to improve the effectiveness of the interaction between the nurse and the parents after the main study before the training of the parents. The aim of the methodology is to improve the interaction between the nurse in the nursery and the parents in building healthy habits of children up to 3 years of age.

### **Evaluation of results and contributions**

The results are presented and discussed according to the studied sites. The general characteristics of the presentation of the results should be noted the precision in the application of statistical methods, skillful search for causal relationships, continuity between literature data / good practices, set research goals and objectives and proving or rejecting research hypotheses. The results are presented in perfectly formed figures and tables, and logical scientific thought is evident in their discussion.

One of the main problems for the enrollment of children in crèches is that the number of places in crèches is several times smaller than the number of children who need this service. The majority of children are admitted to crèches between the ages of 2 and 3. That is why their stay in the kindergarten is about 1 year - until they turn 3 years old. The fact that the relative share of children who are the first child in the family is (65.0%) is worrying. At the beginning of parenthood, the family still has no experience and traditions in raising children. In the period of forming habits, they feel insecure and need support and information. The study of the level of habits related to the health of children attending crèches begins with a survey of parents' views on the upbringing of children.

The presented guide "Practical tips for parents" summarizes information about the most important health habits and offers parents valuable practical advice. The guide outlines some basic guidelines for building habits in young children. The guide is richly illustrated with colorful pictures to be attractive and interesting to parents, and at the same time to facilitate them.

The formulated conclusions are presented synthetically, based on the analyzed data and results. Nursery in Bulgaria is a unique form of comprehensive educational, health and social care for children up to 3 years of age, ensuring their proper physical, mental and cultural development. Creating healthy habits for children is a priority for both the family and the nursery team, respectively the nurse.

The presented abstract reflects the essential elements of the study and meets the technical requirements.

There are 4 full-text articles on the topic of the dissertation, with leading author - Diana Grozdeva - Foteva, one of which is in English.

### **Conclusion:**

The dissertation of Diana Neycheva Grozdeva - Foteva is relevant, in-depth and is a scientific product of high value, innovative in design and character, implemented according to modern rules, providing rich new information, with significant theoretical and applied contributions. Fully meets the requirements of the Law for the development of the academic staff in the Republic of Bulgaria and the Regulations for its implementation, as well as the



Regulations for the development of the academic staff at the Medical University - Varna. There is no doubt about the personal participation of the doctoral student, which proves her preparation and ability to perform quality research work. The results of the dissertation are multi-layered and contain potential and ideas for future research and multifunctional applications.

In conclusion, I give a positive assessment of the presented dissertation, and strongly recommend the members of the Scientific Jury to award educational and scientific degree "PhD" to Diana Neycheva Grozdeva - Foteva in the scientific major "Health Care Management", Higher education area 7. „Healthcare and sports“, professional field 7.4. Public Health.

19.01.2022 г.

Prepared the opinion:

Assoc. prof. Assoc. Diana Ivanova, PhD



