

## DEPRESSION IN CHILDHOOD AND ADOLESCENCE - FAMILY SYSTEM FROM THE CLINICAL PERSPECTIVE

A. Sumiła<sup>1</sup>, W. Radziwiłłowicz<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Child and Family Support Foundation, <sup>2</sup>Department of Developmental Psychology and Psychopathology, University of Gdansk, Institute of Psychology, Gdansk, Poland

**Introduction:** The description of clinical features of depression among children and adolescents in clinical research still remains insufficient. Better understanding of the family system and home relationships can contribute to the development of high-quality health care services for clinical patients.

**Objectives:** The purpose of the study was to evaluate children's perceptions of the quality of their parents' relationship and the level of their family systemic resources.

**Aims:** The goal was to advance a comprehensive understanding of families with children suffering from depression, the depiction of various processes within the family, and ultimately, attempt to define the major predictors of depression.

**Methods:** The subject group consisted of 46 children and adolescents aged 9-19 with diagnosed depressive episodes. Symptoms of depression in children and their parents were evaluated with the Beck Depression Inventory. The qualitative assessment was conducted with the use of the Assessment and Documentation of Psychopathology Scale - AMPD.

**Results:** Clinical group assessed their parents' marital relationship as lower quality than the control group. Girls diagnosed with depression, perceived their parents' relationship as more dysfunctional ( $t = 5,87$ ;  $p < 0,01$ ). A higher rate of commitment in the relationships of parents with depressed children coexisted with a higher rate of depression in their mothers ( $r = -0,40$ ;  $p < 0,05$ ).

**Conclusions:** Depression in children and adolescents is connected with negative representation of parent - child and marital relationships and the systemic resources of the family as various sources of emotional security for the child.