



## The transition of pupils with intellectual disability from education onto the labour market – the parent’s perspective

**ABSTRACT:** Wojciech Otrębski, Katarzyna Mariańczyk, *The transition of pupils with intellectual disability from education onto the labour market – the parent’s perspective*. Interdisciplinary Contexts of Special Pedagogy, No. 20, Poznań 2018. Pp. 59–89. Adam Mickiewicz University Press. ISSN 2300-391X

**INTRODUCTION:** The interactive model of vocational rehabilitation includes two key components: the rehabilitated individual and the vocational rehabilitation environment. The interaction of these two elements should contribute to the improvement of vocational competencies of people with disabilities<sup>1</sup>. Due to the fact that parents are considered to be the second main contributors (just after teaching staff) of vocational training as well as life and vocational orientation of children and teenagers<sup>2</sup>, the family environment can be treated as a significant part of the vocational rehabilitation of people with intellectual disability. Therefore, the aim of this study was to discover how parents of individuals with intellectual disability participate, if they do, in the vocational training of their children.

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<sup>1</sup> W. Otrębski, *The interactive model of rehabilitation of persons with mental retardation (Interakcyjny model rehabilitacji osób z upośledzeniem umysłowym)*, Wydawnictwo KUL, Lublin 2007, p. 56.

<sup>2</sup> J. Stankaitytė, N. Janonytė, J. Muriniene, A. Paszkowska-Rogacz, *The stages of the child’s development and choice of professional career (Etapy rozwoju dziecka i wyboru kariery zawodowej)*, [in:] *My child chooses professional career (Moje dziecko wybiera karierę zawodową)*, ed. A. Paszkowska-Rogacz, Społeczna Wyższa Szkoła Przedsiębiorczości, Łódź 2008, pp. 19–33.

**MATERIALS AND METHODS:** The study was conducted among parents of graduates of special vocational schools using the ASZ-S-R survey by W. Otrębski and K. Mariańczyk. The results are based on the answers of 71 parents/guardians of graduates of special vocational schools located in the south-eastern part of Poland.

**RESULTS:** Nearly 88% of respondents declared that they supported the vocational preparation of their children by conducting conversations about various vocational activities. Circa 40% of them also helped their children with disabilities to find employment (e. g. by searching for job advertisements); nevertheless, over a quarter of them do not engage in such an activity at all. The active participation of parents of graduates with intellectual disability is necessary to prepare their children to undertake vocational activities.

**KEY WORDS:** intellectual disability, employment, parents of students with intellectual disability

## Introduction

Professional activity and its fulfilment is an important indicator of the level of development of adults. Professional work is not only the basis of livelihood of the human being; it also ensures his participation in social reality and gives the feeling of being usable and important<sup>3</sup>. Undertaking professional activity is also perceived as one of the indicators of health<sup>4</sup>. In the case of disabled persons, it is also necessary to point out the rehabilitation perspective, which gives even broader importance to professional activity: it is perceived as a set of actions restoring or generally enabling the functioning of disabled persons in the mainstream of social life<sup>5</sup>. To

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<sup>3</sup> A. Jachnis, *The psychology of an organisation (Psychologia organizacji)*, Difin, Warszawa 2008, p. 15.

<sup>4</sup> K. Hildt-Ciupińska, J. Bugajska, *The role of pro-health behaviours in the promotion of employees' health (Rola zachowań prozdrowotnych w promocji zdrowia pracowników)*, „Bezpieczeństwo Pracy” 2011, No. 9, pp. 10–13.

<sup>5</sup> D. Becker-Pestka, *The social and professional activation of disabled persons – problems and challenges (Aktywizacja społeczna i zawodowa osób niepełnosprawnych – problemy i wyzwania)*, „Colloquium Wydziału Nauk Humanistycznych i Społecznych” 2012, No. 4, pp. 29–50.

a certain extent, professional activity documents successes of disabled persons in their compensation for limitations caused by their disability. On the other hand, unemployed disabled persons experience many additional difficulties in this respect, which deepens their disability in the professional or social sense<sup>6</sup>.

Considering dynamic changes on the labour market, the emergence of new professions and the vanishing of old ones, and the transformations of the directions of development of the industry and services, we can presume that persons with intellectual disability will find it difficult to cope effectively enough in this area to compete with able-bodied peers. In the subject literature, there are no works that would present a comprehensive view of the psychosocial situation of persons with intellectual disability on the Polish labour market. Among sources available in international literature, a glimpse into the results of analyses conducted in Canada forms an interesting picture that gives us certain knowledge on the situation of intellectually disabled persons living there on the labour market. In the age group of 35–44, 84.4% of able-bodied persons, 64.7% of disabled persons (with any other than intellectual disability) and 32.6% of persons with intellectual disability find employment. The differentiation of the level of employment can be seen clearly in the younger age group (15–24 years), where 15.5% of persons with intellectual disability, almost 50% of persons with other disabilities and 58.1% of able-bodied persons manage to find a job<sup>7</sup>.

In Poland, data about the scale of professional activity of persons with mental disability are much less optimistic and have remained unchanged for years. Studies prepared, among others, by

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<sup>6</sup> R. Ossowski, *The quality of life – the effective fulfilment of family and professional roles (Jakość życia – efektywne pełnienie ról rodzinnych i zawodowych)*, [in:] *A disabled person. Family and employment (Człowiek niepełnosprawny. Rodzina i praca)*, ed. M. Kościelska, B. Aouil, Wydawnictwo Akademii Bydgoskiej im. Kazimierza Wielkiego, Bydgoszcz 2004, pp. 21–35.

<sup>7</sup> C. Crawford, *The Employment of People with Intellectual Disabilities in Canada: A Statistical Profile*, Institute for Research on Inclusion and Society, Toronto 2011, p. 10.

the State Fund for the Rehabilitation of Disabled Persons (PFRON)<sup>8</sup> suggest that intellectually disabled persons (particularly those with more profound disability) need special support to cope on the labour market<sup>9,10,11</sup>. According to PFRON's report<sup>12</sup>, persons with intellectual disability are the least professionally active group among all disabled persons and that the percentage of those who have never worked increases along with the degree of mental disability (for example, 82% of persons with a significant degree of intellectual disability have never worked and only 6% are professionally active).

The available amount of knowledge can create a somewhat paradoxical impression in the reader. On the one hand, statistical data inform us that access to employment is difficult for intellectually disabled persons; on the other hand, there are data indicating that professional work fulfils a special rehabilitation function for these persons. Professional activity is an expression of normality (living in

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<sup>8</sup> PFRON's report, *Research on the impact of the direction and level of education on the professional activity of disabled persons. The perspective of persons with mental retardations (Badania wpływu kierunku i poziomu wykształcenia na aktywność zawodową osób niepełnosprawnych. Perspektywa osób z upośledzeniami umysłowymi)*, <https://www.pfron.org.pl/download/1/7782/RaportCZESC6z6Numyslowafinal.pdf> [access: 5.07.2017].

<sup>9</sup> E. Wapiennik, *Rights of persons with intellectual disability. Access to education and employment. Report. Poland (Prawa osób z niepełnosprawnością intelektualną. Dostęp do edukacji i zatrudnienia. Raport. Polska)*, Polskie Stowarzyszenie na Rzecz Osób z Upośledzeniem Umysłowym, Warszawa 2005, p. 112.

<sup>10</sup> E. Wapiennik, *The employment of persons with intellectual disability in Poland in the light of EU considerations (Zatrudnianie osób z niepełnosprawnością intelektualną w Polsce w świetle rozważań unijnych)*, „Szkola Specjalna” 2006, No. 1, pp. 23–34.

<sup>11</sup> M. J. Gacek, J. Nycz, *The situation on the labour market of persons with a mild degree of mental disability after graduation from vocational school (Sytuacja na rynku pracy osób z lekkim stopniem niepełnosprawności umysłowej po ukończeniu nauki w szkole zawodowej)*, „Niepełnosprawność i Rehabilitacja” 2014, No. 2, pp. 95–106.

<sup>12</sup> PFRON's report, *Research on the impact of the direction and level of education on the professional activity of disabled persons. The perspective of persons with mental retardations (Badania wpływu kierunku i poziomu wykształcenia na aktywność zawodową osób niepełnosprawnych. Perspektywa osób z upośledzeniami umysłowymi)*, <https://www.pfron.org.pl/download/1/7782/RaportCZESC6z6Numyslowafinal.pdf> [access: 5.07.2017].

the same way that peers do), adulthood, independence and decision-making ability; all of these characteristics are commonly not associated with adults with intellectual disability. However, the results of research show that the possibility of self-determination and deciding on themselves by these persons, also in the context of professional work, is one of the key indicators of the quality of their life<sup>13</sup>. The undertaking of professional activity by persons with intellectual disability results in a change of their position from a social point of view. They are no longer only recipients (e. g., of support); they fulfil the highly validated role of a professionally active person. This leads to favourable changes in the perception of this person and his/her importance in the community<sup>14,15</sup>.

## Transition from education onto the labour market

Assuming the development perspective, the main tasks of early adulthood – i.e., the period during which graduates of special vocational schools confront the labour market – are actions aimed at starting a family and taking up a job<sup>16</sup>. Undertaking professional work after the completion of education is described today as *transition* from education onto the labour market<sup>17</sup>. Each transition is an

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<sup>13</sup> M. L. Wehmeyer, B. H. Abery, *Self-determination and choice*, 'Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities' 2013, No. 5, pp. 399–411.

<sup>14</sup> S. Kowalik, *The psychology of rehabilitation (Psychologia rehabilitacji)*, Wydawnictwa Akademickie i Profesjonalne. Warszawa 2007.

<sup>15</sup> D. Kobus-Ostrowska, *Instruments of professional activation of disabled persons in Poland – the condition and needs (Instrumenty aktywizacji zawodowej osób niepełnosprawnych w Polsce – stan i potrzeby)*, „Prace naukowe Akademii im. Jana Długosza w Częstochowie”, 2013, No. 7, pp. 99–112.

<sup>16</sup> J. Trempała, *The psychology of human development (Psychologia rozwoju człowieka)*, PWN, Warszawa 2011, p. 295.

<sup>17</sup> B. Rożnowski, *The psychological situation of young people entering the labour market in the perspective of career counselling (Sytuacja psychologiczna młodzieży wchodzącej na rynek pracy w perspektywie doradztwa zawodowego)*, [in:] *Training for work, career consultancy and the entrepreneurship of young people (Nauka pracy, doradztwo zawodowe*

important moment in human life, including the life of persons with intellectual disability<sup>18</sup>. This event is regarded as a developmental transition by E. H. Erickson<sup>19</sup> and defined in the subject literature as something that may potentially cause a crisis<sup>20</sup> and confusion in young people, particularly if this process is not supported<sup>21</sup>. Transition is perceived here as a process that encompasses not only the acquisition, but also maintenance of a job. Such an interpretation of this phenomenon clearly suggests that, depending on their individual characteristics and skills, young people entering the labour market need adequate support so that this period could be a favourable experience and proceed successfully.

Each kind of transition can be seen as the result of the process of preparation for it. In the case of transition from education onto the labour market, the preparation process encompasses the entire earlier education, including vocational education, of the person with intellectual disability. Education is certainly one of the pillars of vocational rehabilitation, and its appropriateness and effectiveness

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*i przedsiębiorczość młodzieży*), ed. A. Biela, Kancelaria Senatu RP, Warszawa 2007, pp. 75–88.

<sup>18</sup> W. Otrębski, G. Wiącek, E. Domagała-Zyśk, B. Sidor-Piekarska, *I am an adult – I want to work. The programme of support of young people with intellectual disability in the process of transition from education onto the labour market (Jestem dorosły – chcę pracować. Program wspierający młodzież z niepełnosprawnością umysłową w procesie przejścia z edukacji na rynek pracy)*, *Europerspektywa*, Lublin 2012, p. 127.

<sup>19</sup> B. Rożnowski, *The transition of young people from the education system onto the labour market in Poland (Przechodzenie młodzieży z systemu edukacji na rynek pracy w Polsce)*, Wydawnictwo KUL, Lublin 2009, p. 39.

<sup>20</sup> A. Bańka, *The knowledge of professions, career consultancy: psychological methods and strategies of helping the unemployed (Zawodoznawstwo, doradztwo zawodowe, pośrednictwo pracy: psychologiczne metody i strategie pomocy bezrobotnym)*, Wydawnictwo Stowarzyszenie Psychologia i Architektura, Poznań 2016, p. 104.

<sup>21</sup> B. Rożnowski, *The psychological situation of young people entering the labour market in the perspective of career counselling (Sytuacja psychologiczna młodzieży wchodzącej na rynek pracy w perspektywie doradztwa zawodowego)*, [in:] *Training for work, career consultancy and the entrepreneurship of young people (Nauka pracy, doradztwo zawodowe i przedsiębiorczość młodzieży)*, ed. A. Biela, Kancelaria Senatu RP, Warszawa 2007, pp. 75–88.

will determine how a young person will cope on the labour market and whether he/she will obtain and maintain a job. As reported by Gajdzica<sup>22</sup>, for the entire period of participation in education, including primary education, learning should prepare a person for participation in social and cultural life and for work according to individual possibilities and socio-economic needs of the country. From the beginning, education is aimed at gaining knowledge about professional reality, obtaining information about work and recognising one's professional interests and abilities in order to make a smooth choice of the profession and the path of vocational education and then to take up a job.

The vocational development of the human being is defined in literature as a 'focused process of transformation of individual awareness that are created as a result of the interdependent relationship between the subject and the object in looking for one's own place in the division of work, the creative transformation of oneself and one's own material, social and cultural environment'<sup>23</sup>. The vocational development process can be characterised through its successive stages. The first of them is the vocational pre-orientation period (till 11 years of age), which encompasses: observations and imitation of professional activities, the accumulation of knowledge about professions and professional activities, the use of sources of knowledge about professions and activities, and childhood dreams concerning professions. The second stage is called vocational orientation (12–15 years) and refers to making and fulfilling decisions concerning the choice of a profession and school. The third stage

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<sup>22</sup> Z. Gajdzica, *The influence of the contents of education on the choice of the profession by pupils with a mild degree of mental retardation (Wpływ treści kształcenia na wybór zawodu przez uczniów lekko upośledzonych umysłowo)*, [in:] *Young people vs. adults. Tensions between socialisation and upbringing (Młodzi a dorośli. Napięcia między socjalizacją a wychowaniem)*, ed. R. Kwiecińska, M. J. Szymański, Instytut Nauk o Wychowaniu Akademii Pedagogicznej w Krakowie, Kraków 2001, pp. 390–401.

<sup>23</sup> K. M. Czarnecki (ed.), *Basic concepts of the knowledge of professions (Podstawowe pojęcia zawodowości)*, Oficyna Wydawnicza „Humanitas”, Sosnowiec 2008, p. 198.

encompasses the learning of a profession (16–25 years). The next stage, which lasts approximately to 60–70 years of age, is the time of professional activity of adults. The last stage occurs after retirement and is called the period of professional reminiscence of pensioners, during which they recollect and summarise their social and professional life from the past<sup>24</sup>.

When analysing the process of changes in vocational counselling and the approach to related issues, Bańka<sup>25</sup> suggests that it is necessary to notice that the current trend of overlapping of the theory of personality, the theory of individual development in the life cycle and the theory of career counselling is an encouragement to look at the vocational development of the human being and to give personalised support adapted to the needs, goals and specific contexts of the development and activity of the given person. These principles should apply both to able-bodied and disabled persons.

In addition, Gajdzica<sup>26</sup> stresses that, in the case of persons with intellectual disability, the whole education process should be directed towards vocational preparation. He indicates that vocational pre-orientation in initial grades of primary school, vocational orientation in older grades of primary school and vocational training in vocational schools should be conducted both for able-bodied pupils and for pupils with mental disability.

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<sup>24</sup> K. M. Czarnecki, *The theoretical fundamentals of professional development of the human being (Teoretyczne podstawy zawodowego rozwoju człowieka)*, „Zeszyty Naukowe Wyższej Szkoły Humanitas” 2007, No. 2, pp. 37–50.

<sup>25</sup> A. Bańka, *New trends in career counselling, employment exchange, training courses (Nowe trendy w doradztwie kariery, pośrednictwie pracy, szkoleniach)*, [in:] *Modern career counselling, employment exchange, forms of training of young people (Nowoczesne doradztwo kariery, pośrednictwo pracy, formy szkolenia młodzieży)*, ed. Cz. Noworol, OHP Komenda Główna, Warszawa 2010, pp. 32–47.

<sup>26</sup> Z. Gajdzica, *The influence of the contents of education on the choice of the profession by pupils with a mild degree of mental retardation (Wpływ treści kształcenia na wybór zawodu przez uczniów lekko upośledzonych umysłowo)*, [in:] *Young people vs. adults. Tensions between socialisation and upbringing (Młodzież a dorośli. Napięcia między socjalizacją a wychowaniem)*, ed. R. Kwiecińska, M. J. Szymański, Instytut Nauk o Wychowaniu Akademii Pedagogicznej w Krakowie, Kraków 2001, pp. 390–401.



Particularly important suggestions for the process of transition of intellectually disabled young persons from school onto the labour market are contained in the interactive model of vocational rehabilitation of persons with mental disability based on ICF's premises<sup>27</sup>. It indicates two key elements: the person being rehabilitated and the closer (situations) and broader (social surroundings) environment of vocational rehabilitation. In this case, the qualitative change of professional functioning occurs through an increase of the level of professional competence of persons with mental disability as a result of the interaction of these elements. Considering the fact that the subject literature specifies parents as the main source of vocational preparation, life orientation and vocational orientation of children and young people alongside the school environment<sup>28,29,30</sup>, the family environment must be treated as a necessary and important part of the vocational rehabilitation practice for persons with mental disability<sup>31</sup>.

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<sup>27</sup> W. Otrębski, *An interactive model of rehabilitation of persons with mental retardation (Interakcyjny model rehabilitacji osób z upośledzeniem umysłowym)*, Wydawnictwo KUL, Lublin 2007, p. 56.

<sup>28</sup> J. Stankaitytė, N. Janonytė, J. Muriniene, A. Paszkowska-Rogacz, *Stages of a child's development and choice of professional career (Etapy rozwoju dziecka i wyboru kariery zawodowej)*, [in:] *My child chooses professional career (Moje dziecko wybiera karierę zawodową)*, ed. A. Paszkowska-Rogacz, Społeczna Wyższa Szkoła Przedsiębiorczości, Łódź 2008, p. 9.

<sup>29</sup> M. Grigal, A. Deschamps, *Transition education for adolescents with intellectual disability*, [in:] *Handbook of adolescent transition education for youth with disabilities*, ed. M. L. Wehmeyer, K. Webb, Routledge/Taylor & Francis Group, New York 2012, pp. 398–416.

<sup>30</sup> A. Holwerda, S. Brouwer, M. R. de Boer, J. W. Groothoff, J. J. L. van der Klink, *Expectations from different perspectives on future work outcome of young adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities*, 'Journal of Occupational Rehabilitation' 2015, No. 1, pp. 96–104.

<sup>31</sup> W. Otrębski, G. Wiącek, E. Domagała-Zyśk, B. Sidor-Piekarska, *I am an adult – I want to work. The programme of support of young people with intellectual disability in the process of transition from education onto the labour market (Jestem dorosły – chcę pracować. Program wspierający młodzież z niepełnosprawnością umysłową w procesie przejścia z edukacji na rynek pracy)*, Europerspektywa, Lublin 2012, p. 235.

In the foreign literature of the subject it has also been stressed very strongly for many years that the success of transition from education onto the labour market depends on the characteristics of the disabled person, the characteristics and specific features of functioning of family, school experiences and support from the school environment after the completion of education<sup>32,33,34,35,36,37</sup>.

### Parents as a group supporting the transition process

Assuming that every parent wants the best things for his/her child and wants it to be happy and able to fulfil its potential, we must notice that the birth and upbringing of a child with intellectual disability is a huge challenge for the family system. Abnormal development, educational challenges, special and justified concern

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<sup>32</sup> J. Blackorby, A. Knokey, M. Wagner, P. Levine, E. Schiller, C. Sumi, *What makes a difference? Influences on outcomes for students with disabilities*, SRI International, Menlo Park, 2007, p. 159.

<sup>33</sup> S. Jekielek, B. Brown, *The transition to adulthood: Characteristics of young adults ages 18 to 24 in America (Report from the Annie E. Casey Foundation, Population Reference Bureau, and Child Trends)*, <http://ilscertification.com/resources/transitiontoadulthood.pdf> [access: 1.10.2017].

<sup>34</sup> C. K. Papay, *Best Practices in Transition to Adult Life for Youth with Intellectual Disabilities: A National Perspective Using the National Longitudinal Transition Study-2*. Theses and Dissertations, Lehigh University, <http://preserve.lehigh.edu/etd/1128/> [access: 10.09.2017].

<sup>35</sup> C. K. Papay, L. M. Bambara, *Best Practices in Transition to Adult Life for Youth With Intellectual Disabilities*, 'Career Development and Transition for Exceptional Individuals' 2014, No. 3, pp. 136–148.

<sup>36</sup> A. M. T Prince, J. Hodge, W. C. Bridges, *Predictors of Postschool Education/Training and Employment Outcomes for Youth With Disabilities*, 'Career Development and Transition for Exceptional Individuals' 2017, No. 2, pp. 77–87.

<sup>37</sup> J. M. Keel, L. S. Cushing, J. M. Awsumb. *Post-School Visions and Expectations of Latino Students With Learning Disabilities, Their Parents, and Teachers*, 'Career Development and Transition for Exceptional Individuals' 2017, No. 2, pp. 88–98.

about the child's future – these are only selected difficulties that parents must face<sup>38</sup>.

In the situation of parents of children with intellectual disability, this concern has a special dimension and is filled with the awareness that the active participation of parents in the life of their child will be presumably more intense and long-lasting than in the case of able-bodied persons<sup>39</sup>. This concern refers also to the situation of professional activity.

In order to fulfil its tasks in the process of support of the young person with disability in his/her vocational preparation and fulfilment of professional activity, his/her family environment must have a certain kind of 'strength' itself and realise that its role in this task is very important. The dynamics of daily upbringing of children with mental disability seems to be so huge that many parents may perceive such elements of the child's future as professional work, professional activity or earning money as too unreal and distant and, consequently, ignore and attach minor importance to them. Experiencing the need to accompany their child almost at every moment of its life often leads their parents to determine that their children are not able to undertake any kind of professional activity and live independently because of their disability. Those who present such an approach do not even try to create a favourable atmosphere, climate or space helping the child and then the young person to recognise his/her professional preferences and to

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<sup>38</sup> A. Żyta, *Problems of families bringing up a child with intellectual disability (Problemy rodzin wychowujących dziecko z niepełnosprawnością intelektualną)*, [in:] *Families of persons with intellectual disability in the face of the challenges of modern times (Rodzina osób z niepełnosprawnością intelektualną wobec wyzwań współczesności)*, ed. A. Żyta, Wydawnictwo Edukacyjne Akapit, Toruń 2010, pp. 7–14.

<sup>39</sup> K. Ćwirynkało, *The present and future of persons with mild intellectual disability in opinions of their parents (Teraźniejszość i przyszłość osób z lekką niepełnosprawnością intelektualną w opiniach ich rodziców)*, [in:] *Families of persons with intellectual disability in the face of the challenges of modern times (Rodzina osób z niepełnosprawnością intelektualną wobec wyzwań współczesności)*, ed. A. Żyta, Wydawnictwo Edukacyjne Akapit, Toruń 2010, pp. 55–70.

develop his skills for real, realising that his/her professional activity is possible<sup>40,41</sup>.

Faced with social expectations that they should provide very versatile support to their child, including preparation for fulfilment in the professional sphere, parents of children with intellectual disability may also perceive this as a burden and another task that they must carry on their shoulders, in addition to being severely experienced by their child's disability as such. Undertaking this activity may be even more difficult due to the feeling that investing in the vocational development of a child with intellectual disability does not make much sense because there are few job offers for these persons and employers do not regard them as particularly attractive employees<sup>42</sup>. Thus, parents may feel that they expend energy in vain, without conviction that this may bring any favourable result. In this context, the manner of perceiving the intellectual disability of one's own child becomes a key issue. It turns out that parents who subjectively perceive their child's disability as less serious are more inclined to notice positive qualities of their children, for example self-control skills. Perceiving one's own child not only from the perspective of its limitations, but also from the perspective of its possibilities strongly supports seeing the child in roles similar to those fulfilled by its peers<sup>43</sup>.

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<sup>40</sup> B. Gumienny, *The functioning of adults with profound intellectual disability – opinions of parents (Funkcjonowanie dorosłych osób z głębszą niepełnosprawnością intelektualną – poglądy rodziców)*, „Niepełnosprawność – zagadnienia, problemy, rozwiązania” 2016, No. 3, pp. 92–112.

<sup>41</sup> PFRON's report, *Research on the impact of the direction and level of education on the professional activity of disabled persons. The perspective of persons with mental retardations (Badania wpływu kierunku i poziomu wykształcenia na aktywność zawodową osób niepełnosprawnych. Perspektywa osób z upośledzeniami umysłowymi)*, <https://www.pfron.org.pl/download/1/7782/RaportCZESC6z6Numyslowlowafinal.pdf> [access: 5.07.2017].

<sup>42</sup> M. D. Davies, W. Beamish, *Transitions from school for young adults with intellectual disability: Parental perspectives on “life as an adjustment”*, ‘Journal of Intellectual and Developmental Disability’ 2009, No. 3, pp. 248–257.

<sup>43</sup> E. W. Carter, K. L. Lane, M. Cooney, K. Weir, C. K. Moss, W. MacHalicek, *Self-Determination among Transition-Age Youth with Autism or Intellectual Disability:*

In addition, parents and guardians may feel that they have to take care of everything that concerns their child and they do not receive sufficient support from institutions, schools and organisations<sup>44,45,46</sup>. This is another factor that builds a sense of high burden, often overburdening, with the care of the child, also during its adulthood, and may lead to an experience of strength burnout<sup>47</sup>.

Understanding transition as an important part of vocational and social rehabilitation of a young person with intellectual disability, we can notice the absence of carefully considered systemic solutions to this issue; although certain steps are taken in this area, there is no coherent and uniform conception concerning the specific characteristics of recipients and their actual needs in this respect<sup>48</sup>. This situation concerns not only Poland, which is shown by research being

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*Parent Perspectives*, 'Practice for Persons with Severe Disabilities' 2013, No. 3, pp. 129–138.

<sup>44</sup> Z. Kazanowski, S. Byra, *Opinions of parents of young people with mild intellectual disability on aid provided to families (Opinie rodziców młodzieży niepełnosprawnej intelektualnie w stopniu lekkim na temat pomocy udzielanej rodzinie)*, [in:] *Current problems of social support of disabled persons (Aktualne problemy wsparcia społecznego osób niepełnosprawnych)*, ed. G. Kwaśniewska, A. Wojnarska, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Marii Curie-Skłodowskiej, Lublin 2004, pp. 137–148.

<sup>45</sup> A. P. McDonnell, C. Nelson, *Parent and family involvement*, [in:] *Successful transition programs: Pathways for students with intellectual and developmental disabilities*, red. J. McDonnell, M. L. Hardman, Sage Publications Inc, Thousand Oaks, 2010, pp. 115–145.

<sup>46</sup> B. Szczupał, *The subsidiarity principle in the system of care of families with children with intellectual disability – assumptions vs. reality (Zasada pomocniczości w systemie opieki nad rodziną z dzieckiem z niepełnosprawnością intelektualną – założenia a rzeczywistość)*, [in:] *Families of persons with intellectual disability in the face of the challenges of modern times (Rodzina osób z niepełnosprawnością intelektualną wobec wyzwań współczesności)*, ed. A. Żyta, Wydawnictwo Edukacyjne Akapit, Toruń 2010, pp. 85–99.

<sup>47</sup> M. Dąbrowska, *The phenomenon of burnout among mothers of disabled children (Zjawisko wypalenia wśród matek dzieci niepełnosprawnych)*, Oficyna Wydawnicza „Impuls”, Kraków 2005, p. 38.

<sup>48</sup> D. Becker-Pestka, *The social and professional activation of disabled persons – problems and challenges (Aktywizacja społeczna i zawodowa osób niepełnosprawnych – problemy i wyzwania)*, „Colloquium Wydziału Nauk Humanistycznych i Społecznych” 2012, No. 4, pp. 29–50.

conducted in Australia<sup>49</sup> or China<sup>50</sup>, where solutions are sought to similar issues concerning transition with the participation of teachers and parents of young people with intellectual disability.

'The family and the social environment plays a vital role in the formation and establishment of attitudes of disabled persons to their own work. A disabled child requires significant support, particularly at higher stages of education'<sup>51</sup>. For persons with intellectual disability, the family is often the only social group that supports them and is also decisive for their activity and participation<sup>52,53</sup>.

In consideration of the above information, particularly the fact that parents are specified alongside school personnel and consultants as the main source of vocational preparation and life and vocational orientation of children and young people<sup>54,55</sup>, the aim of the

<sup>49</sup> M. D. Davies, W. Beamish, *Transitions from school for young adults with intellectual disability: Parental perspectives on "life as an adjustment"*, 'Journal of Intellectual and Developmental Disability' 2009, No. 3, pp. 248–257.

<sup>50</sup> T. Xu, I. Dempsey, P. Foreman, *Views of Chinese parents and transition teachers on school-to-work transition services for adolescents with intellectual disability: A qualitative study*, 'Journal of Intellectual and Developmental Disability', 2014, No. 4, pp. 342–352.

<sup>51</sup> J. Bartkowski, *Between stigmatisation and rejection. The school system vs. vocational preparation of disabled persons (Między stygmatyzacją a odrzuceniem. System szkolny a przygotowanie zawodowe młodych osób niepełnosprawnych)*, [in:] *The young disabled: professional activation and non-standard forms of employment (Młodzi niepełnosprawni – aktywizacja zawodowa i nietypowe formy zatrudnienia)*, ed. E. Giermanowska, Fundacja Instytutu Spraw Publicznych Warszawa 2007, p. 213.

<sup>52</sup> A. Ostrowska, J. Sikorska, B. Gąciarz, *Disabled persons in Poland in the 1990s (Osoby niepełnosprawne w Polsce w latach dziewięćdziesiątych)*. Instytut Spraw Publicznych, Warszawa 2001, p. 92.

<sup>53</sup> Ż. Stelter, *The adolescence of persons with intellectual disability (Dorastanie osób z niepełnosprawnością intelektualną)*, Wydawnictwo Naukowe SCHOLAR, Warszawa 2009, p. 61.

<sup>54</sup> J. Stankaitytė, N. Janonytė, J. Muriniene, A. Paszkowska-Rogacz, *Stages of a child's development and choice of professional career (Etapy rozwoju dziecka i wyboru kariery zawodowej)*, [in:] *My child chooses professional career (Moje dziecko wybiera karierę zawodową)*, ed. A. Paszkowska-Rogacz, Społeczna Wyższa Szkoła Przedsiębiorczości, Łódź 2008, p. 9.

<sup>55</sup> W. Otrębski, G. Wiącek, E. Domagała-Zyśk, B. Sidor-Piekarska, *I am an adult – I want to work. The programme of support of young people with intellectual disability in the*

study was to characterise direct and indirect methods of involvement of parents of persons with intellectual disability in the vocational preparation of their children (graduates of special vocational schools). The differentiation of the aforementioned impacts in respect of the sex of graduates was not analysed.

## Method and the sample group

The research was done with the use of the ASZ-S-R survey prepared by W. Otrębski and K. Mariańczyk. The structure of the survey covered the preliminary part (1), the essential part (2) and the part concerning sociodemographic data (3). The first of them contains a detailed instruction for filling in the survey for parents/guardians of graduates of special vocational schools. The second part contains a set of questions concerning direct and indirect methods of engagement of parents of graduates of special vocational schools in the vocational preparation of their children. On the basis of the subject literature<sup>56,57,58</sup>, indicators of parents' behaviour reflecting their involvement in the process of vocational preparation of their children were clarified in more detail. Direct indicators included: *conducting conversations about professional activities; supply of information about professions; support of vocational preparation; support in finding a job*. Indirect involvement consisted in the evaluation of

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*process of transition from education onto the labour market (Jestem dorosły – chcę pracować. Program wspierający młodzież z niepełnosprawnością umysłową w procesie przejścia z edukacji na rynek pracy)*, Europerspektywa, Lublin 2012, p. 235.

<sup>56</sup> E. W. Carter, K. L. Lane, M. Cooney, K. Weir, C. K. Moss, W. MacHalicek, *Self-Determination among Transition-Age Youth with Autism or Intellectual Disability: Parent Perspectives*, 'Practice for Persons with Severe Disabilities' 2013, No. 3, pp. 129–138.

<sup>57</sup> E. W. Carter, D. Austin, A. A. Trainor, *Predictors of Postschool Employment Outcomes for Young Adults With Severe Disabilities*, 'Journal of Disability Policy Studies' 2012, No. 1, pp. 50–63.

<sup>58</sup> J. L. Cmar, M. C. McDonnell, K. M. Markoski, *In-School Predictors of Postschool Employment for Youth Who Are Deaf-Blind*, 'Career Development and Transition for Exceptional Individuals' 2017, DOI: 10.1177/2165143417736057.

vocational preparation obtained by children of persons from the sample group during their school education and the evaluation of their situation on the labour market. The survey contained closed questions, but participants were allowed to include their own opinions in the 'Other' box if the given cafeteria did not provide any relevant answer. In the third part of the survey, parents/guardians provide sociodemographic characteristics.

Questionnaires were sent by post to parents of graduates with intellectual disability living in the Lublin Province. Out of 250 questionnaires sent, 73 were returned. Eventually, answers from 71 parents/guardians of graduates of special vocational schools were taken into account.

Mothers of disabled graduates of special vocational schools formed the largest sub-group of participants (84.5%). Fathers (11.3%) and legal guardians (4.2%) of graduates participated in the survey

**Table 1.** Frequency distribution (f) and percentage (P) of parents/guardians from the sample group in categories of sociodemographic variables

Variable	f	P
<b>Parent/Guardian</b>		
Mother	60	84.5
Father	8	11.3
Legal guardian	3	4.2
<b>Place of residence</b>		
countryside	27	38.0
City with up to 20,000 inhabitants	6	8.5
City with 21,000 to 100,000 inhabitants	20	28.2
City with more than 100,000 inhabitants	18	25.3
<b>Education</b>		
Primary	9	12.7
Vocational	36	50.6
Secondary (general/vocational)	17	24.0
Higher (vocational/master's studies)	9	12.7



to a considerably smaller extent. Most of the parents who took part in the survey live in villages (38%) and in cities with 20,000 to 100,000 inhabitants (28.2%). Parents of graduates living in big cities (above 100,000 inhabitants) account for 25% of the group, whereas parents living in small towns (up to 20,000 inhabitants) are the smallest group (8.5%). Half of parents from the sample group have vocational education, and nearly 25% of them are secondary school graduates. The sample group included two equinumerous sub-groups of parents with primary and higher education (each accounting for 12.7%) (Table 1).

Parents from the sample group still took care of their mentally disabled children, most of whom are persons with vocational education; only 7.1% of them finished their education on the level of primary school (job training school). Almost all graduates (98.5%) remain under the care of their parents. Only one graduate covered by the survey lives independently (Table 2).

**Table 2.** Frequency distribution (f) and percentage (P) for children of parents/guardians from the sample group (graduates of special vocational schools and job training schools) in selected categories of sociodemographic variables

Variable	f	P
<b>The graduate's education</b>		
Primary	5	7.1
Vocational	66	92.9
<b>The graduate lives</b>		
Independently	1	1.4
With parents	69	97.2
No data available	1	1.4

## Results

The results of research concerning the involvement of parents in the vocational preparation of their intellectually disabled children are presented in two parts. The first part shows the direct involve-

**Table 3.** Frequency distribution (f) and percentage (P) of presence of indicators of parents' involvement in the vocational preparation of their children in parents/guardians from the sample group within the scope

Indicators	f	P
<b>Conversations about professional activities</b>		
Yes	62	87.3
No	9	12.7
<b>These conversations began...</b>		
I have never talked about this	6	8.5
At the kindergarten age	2	2.8
At the primary school age	10	14.1
At the middle school age	33	46.4
At the vocational school age	17	24.0
No data available	3	4.2
<b>Providing information about professions by</b>		
Engaging the child in housework	39	32.5
Referring to acquaintances performing certain work	24	20.0
Watching and reading books about various works	9	7.5
Watching films and presentations	7	5.8
Talking about various professions with the child	39	32.5
In any other form	2	1.7
<b>Supporting vocational preparation by</b>		
Enabling the child to practice skills acquired in school at home	26	23.7
Expressing interest in the progress of education and achievements of the child in the acquisition of professional skills	49	44.5
Highlighting the adequacy of acquired skills for working in the profession	19	17.3
Securing the opportunity to exercise practical professional skills during the vacation period	13	11.8
No support	3	2.7
<b>Support in getting a job</b>		
I help my child to find job advertisements	29	40.3
I am not interested in this	15	20.8
I co-operate with my child by developing his/her social and professional skills	24	33.3
I don't want my child to work	4	5.6

ment of parents from the sample group in the vocational preparation of their children (Table 3). The second part shows indirect involvement, which is reflected by the evaluation of vocational preparation acquired in school and their situation on the labour market (Table 4 and Table 5).

The vast majority of parents from the sample group (over 87%) state that they talked with their children about various professional activities. The results show that nearly half of them (46.4%) did this only during the child's education in middle school, whereas nearly one fourth of them held such conversations only when their child attended vocational school. Unfortunately, 8.5% of parents never brought up such topics at home. Few talked with their children about this during the kindergarten and primary education periods (Table 3).

In questions concerning the method of giving their child information about various professions, supporting its vocational preparation and supporting it in finding a job, parents could choose a number of options at the same time.

According to the results, most parents (32.5% in each case) declare that they provided their child with information about professions by *talking about professions* and by *involving their child in various household activities*. 1/5 of parents communicated such information by *referring to their acquaintances performing certain work*. The smallest number of persons used the option: *watching and reading books about various works* and *watching films and presentations*. When asked straight about how they supported the vocational preparation of their child, parents most often state that they do this by: *expressing interest in the progress of education and achievements of the child in the acquisition of professional skills* (44.5%) and *enabling the child to practice skills acquired in school at home* (23.7%). Less frequent answers concerned: *highlighting the adequacy of acquired skills for working in the profession* (17.3%) or *securing the opportunity to exercise practical professional skills during the vacation period* (11.8%). Only less than 3% replied that they did not support the vocational preparation of their child in any way (Table 3).

When asked about how they support their child in finding a job, parents most often reply that *they help it to find job advertisements* (40.3%) and that *they co-operate with their child by developing its social and professional skills* (33.3%). 20% of parents are not interested at all in helping their child to find a job, whereas over 5% admit that they do not want their child to work professionally (Table 3).

In the context of presented results concerning direct forms of involvement of parents in the vocational preparation of disabled children, there is a question about the professional future of graduates and the parental evaluation of their vocational preparation and situation on the labour market.

**Table 4.** Frequency distribution (f) and percentage (P) of categories in variables concerning the professional activity of graduates of special vocational schools

The graduate's current place of work	f	P
Occupational Therapy Workshop	30	42.3
Supported employment enterprise	1	1.4
Safeguard job in an ordinary workplace	1	1.4
Ordinary workplace	2	2.8
No occupation	37	52.1

In the group of children (graduates) of parents from the sample group, 52.1% have no occupation after two or three years from the completion of their education. 47.9% are professionally active. The vast majority of them participate in an Occupational Therapy Workshop (42.3%). 5.6% of graduates have found a job in an Occupational Therapy Workshop and on the open labour market (Table 4).

In the context of analysed involvement of parents, there is also a question of evaluation of the vocational preparation of children of parents from the sample group in consideration of the needs of the labour market and the demand of graduates for support in this field.

**Table 5.** Frequency distribution (f) and percentage (P) of categories for indicators of satisfaction with the vocational preparation of children in parents/guardians from the sample group

	f	P
<b>Satisfaction with the graduate's vocational preparation</b>		
I have never thought about this	7	9.8
I am very unsatisfied	2	2.8
I am rather unsatisfied	5	7.1
I am rather satisfied	35	49.3
I am very satisfied	22	31.0
<b>Demand for the graduate's skills on the local labour market</b>		
Don't know	12	16.9
Very low	27	38.0
Rather low	16	22.5
Rather high	11	15.5
Very high	5	7.1
<b>How much did professional skills learned in school help the graduate to find a job?</b>		
Don't know	20	28.2
To a very limited extent	26	36.6
To a rather limited extent	19	26.8
To a rather large extent	3	4.2
To a very large extent	3	4.2
<b>Who engages in the acquisition or maintenance of the graduate's employment</b>		
Nobody	17	24.0
Only parents	33	46.5
Other institutions	21	29.5
<b>Degree of the parent's satisfaction with support received by the child in obtaining a job</b>		
I have never thought about this	26	36.6
I am very unsatisfied	11	15.5
I am rather unsatisfied	11	15.5
I am rather satisfied	19	26.8
I am very satisfied	4	5.6

More than half of parents declare that they are rather satisfied with the vocational preparation of their children. 31% of them declare a very high level of satisfaction with this preparation. Nearly 10% of parents state that they have never considered this issue. The proportion of parents who are rather unsatisfied or very unsatisfied with the vocational preparation of their children is 9.9% (Table 5).

In spite of quite good evaluation of vocational preparation, over 60% of parents estimate that the demand for skills acquired by their children in vocational school and on the local labour market is rather small or very small. An opposite opinion is expressed by over 22% of parents, who think that this demand is rather large or even very large (Table 5).

The vast majority of parents (over 63%) state that professional skills acquired in school helped the graduate to find a job to a very small or rather small extent. An opposite opinion is presented by only 8.4% of parents. It is also worth noting that nearly 1/3 of respondents replied 'I don't know' (Table 5).

Almost half of parents perceive themselves as the only persons who help their children to find a job. On the other hand, 24% of parents state that their child does not receive help from any source, whereas 29.5% inform that their children were helped by various institutions to obtain a job (Table 5).

However, this help is evaluated differently by parents. More than 30% of persons are rather unsatisfied or very unsatisfied with support provided to their children, and a similar proportion of parents declare that they are rather satisfied or very satisfied with it. Over 36% of parents declare that they have never considered this issue (Table 5).

## Final reflections

Professional work fulfils important functions in the life of persons with disabilities concerning income, rehabilitation or socialisation. Making it possible to satisfy various needs, it is an important part of the functioning of persons with intellectual disability.

According to Schalock, Gardner and Bradley, real social inclusion in the mainstream of life and genuine commitment to the quality of life of persons with mental disability must focus on activities that increase their possibilities of self-determination and self-control<sup>59</sup> and that take account of their physical, material, social and emotional well-being, personal development and activeness<sup>60</sup>.

In the case of young adults, particularly graduates of special vocational schools, these words are of particular importance. As the results of research presented in this study show, the difficulties faced by them in their transition process are huge, mainly due to the shortage of job offers for persons with intellectual disability, the shortage of adequate preparation for the needs of the local labour market, a certain kind of fictitiousness and “wasting” of their potential in the form of already acquired skills. For many parents, the lack of possibility of undertaking professional activity by their adult son or daughter with intellectual disability may be regarded as a failure or produce a feeling of hopelessness.

The importance of the participation of parents in professional rehabilitation in its broad sense was highlighted as early as half a century ago in recommendations of the International Labour Organisation. We can read there, among others, that ‘The fundamental purposes of vocational rehabilitation services for disabled children and young persons should be to reduce as much as possible the occupational and psychological handicaps imposed by their disabilities and to offer them full opportunities of preparing for, and entering, the most suitable occupations. The utilisation of these opportunities should involve co-operation between medical, social

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<sup>59</sup> R. L. Schalock, G. F. Gardner, V. J. Bradley, *Quality of Life for People with Intellectual and Other Developmental Disabilities: Applications Across Individuals, Organizations, Communities, and Systems*, American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities, Washington 2007, p. 37.

<sup>60</sup> D. Felce, J. Perry, *Quality of Life: Its Definition and Measurement*, ‘Research in Developmental Disabilities’ 1995, No. 1, pp. 51–74.

and educational services and the parents or guardians of the disabled children and young persons'<sup>61</sup>.

As a very important group of persons having an influence on the vocational preparation of their disabled children, parents are presented here as a group strongly committed to taking care of them, also during their adulthood. They provide care and maintenance. In part of the cases, parents are the only group that helps their disabled children to find a job. They do this mainly by searching for potential job advertisements. They sometimes seem to lack knowledge and certain orientation about other methods of looking for places of professional activity for children, e. g., through co-operation with employment agencies or non-governmental organisations. It is important that some parents engage in the vocational preparation of their children by talking to them or by encouraging them to become active. This potential of parents could certainly be utilised better if vocational preparation were the co-ordinated, planned and integrated result of joint activities of teachers and parents. Parents are very knowledgeable about things concerning their children, their lifestyle, daily activities, etc. At least some of them are certainly prepared for guiding and helping their children in the process of transition from education to employment.

Although most parents from the sample group are satisfied with the results of work of schools attended by their children, they are also disappointed to some extent because they regard the demand for occupations learned by them as minimal. It is a specific psychological situation: the effort put in learning that will probably bring no results and gratification in the form of employment. Such a frustrating situation may cause parents to lose hope and be unwilling to help the child in its successive attempts to find its place on the labour market. In the case of parents of disabled persons, this situation forms another potential difficulty that they must face in

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<sup>61</sup> Recommendation R99 adopted by the General Conference of the International Labour Organisation on 1 June 1955, Internet source, [http://www.dialog.gov.pl/gfx/mpips/userfiles/\\_public/tom%20I.pdf](http://www.dialog.gov.pl/gfx/mpips/userfiles/_public/tom%20I.pdf) [access: 25.06.2017].



bringing up their child, which has an impact on their functioning, well-being and quality of engagement in support addressed to their child<sup>62,63</sup>.

The conducted research confirms the importance of the participation of parents in the process of professional development of their disabled children. Thus, the small number of attempts made by researchers to describe this subject is surprising. However, the PFRON's Report refers, among others, to the power of influence of parents on the educational and, consequently, professional future of their intellectually disabled children<sup>64</sup>. It stresses that guardians of disabled persons play the main role in the process of their education; in order to confirm this assumption, it refers to quite frequent examples of negative attitudes of guardians to the education of the disabled child, particularly in the case of persons with a significant degree of mental disability. It is also pointed out that in the group of disabled persons experiencing the most severe limitations in their functioning, decisions about the course of the educational path were made by guardians in a vast majority of cases, without active participation of the disabled person.

Even though some initiatives and programmes consider the participation of parents, there is a relatively small number of them<sup>65</sup>. The 'I am an adult - I want to work' programme supporting the

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<sup>62</sup> M. Dąbrowska, *The phenomenon of burnout among mothers of disabled children (Zjawisko wypalenia wśród matek dzieci niepełnosprawnych)*, Oficyna Wydawnicza „Impuls”, Kraków 2005, p. 38.

<sup>63</sup> M. Sekułowicz, *Mothers of disabled children faced with life problems (Matki dzieci niepełnosprawnych wobec problemów życiowych)*, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Wrocławskiego, Wrocław 2000, p. 71.

<sup>64</sup> PFRON's report, *Research on the impact of the direction and level of education on the professional activity of disabled persons. The perspective of persons with mental retardations (Badania wpływu kierunku i poziomu wykształcenia na aktywność zawodową osób niepełnosprawnych. Perspektywa osób z upośledzeniami umysłowymi)*, <https://www.pfron.org.pl/download/1/7782/RaportCZESC6z6Numyslowafinal.pdf> [access: 5.07.2017].

<sup>65</sup> K. K. Yamamoto, R. A. Stodden, E. D. R. Folk, *Inclusive postsecondary education: Reimagining the transition trajectories of vocational rehabilitation clients with intellectual disabilities*, 'Journal of Vocational Rehabilitation' 2014, No. 40, pp. 59-71.

transition of young persons with intellectual disability from education onto the labour market<sup>66</sup> takes up the challenge of organising optimal support for young people through co-operation and mutual aid between the pupil, parents and teachers in the vocational preparation process. This programme is addressed mainly to pupils attending special and mainstream secondary schools who have a mild degree or deeper (moderate, significant) degrees of mental disability. In practices described by Yamamoto and his collaborators, the participation of parents was considered to a small extent, and emphasis was put mainly on support from external support teams, such as rehabilitation experts or job coaches<sup>67</sup>.

McDonnell and Nelson argue that support should be provided also to families of intellectually disabled persons undergoing the transition process and recommend the services of temporary teams that provide help and support to the young person and his/her family during the period of transition between school and adult professional life. It may include helping parents to organise and coordinate services of various institutions and organisations; delivering practical solutions to problems; giving information; supporting the overcoming of barriers, the elaboration of plans and development in its broad sense<sup>68</sup>.

Kowalik stresses that working with the family of a child with intellectual disability should focus on building the independence of the young person, which will also manifest itself in independent

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<sup>66</sup> W. Otrębski, G. Wiącek, E. Domagała-Zyśk, B. Sidor-Piekarska, *I am an adult – I want to work. The programme of support of young people with intellectual disability in the process of transition from education onto the labour market (Jestem dorosły – chcę pracować. Program wspierający młodzież z niepełnosprawnością umysłową w procesie przejścia z edukacji na rynek pracy)*, Europerspektywa, Lublin 2012, p. 185.

<sup>67</sup> K. K. Yamamoto, R. A. Stodden, E. D. R. Folk, *Inclusive postsecondary education: Reimagining the transition trajectories of vocational rehabilitation clients with intellectual disabilities*, 'Journal of Vocational Rehabilitation' 2014, No. 40, pp. 59–71.

<sup>68</sup> A. P. McDonnell, C. Nelson, *Parent and family involvement*, [in:] *Successful transition programs: Pathways for students with intellectual and developmental disabilities*, red. J. McDonnell, M. L. Hardman, Sage Publications Inc, Thousand Oaks, 2010, pp. 115–145.

professional activity. As regards the concept of life settlement, vocational preparation and commitment to ensuring the favourable transition process should be aimed at allowing a disabled person to cope not only on the supported labour market, but also on the open labour market<sup>69</sup>.

The participation of parents in the preparation of the professional future of their disabled children is indisputably important and very necessary, although they seem to be not fully aware of this and do not make full use of their potential<sup>70</sup>.

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<sup>69</sup> S. Kowalik, *The life settlement of families with intellectually disabled children (Urządzenie się w życiu rodzin z dziećmi niepełnosprawnymi intelektualnie)*, [in:] *The influence of the association of families of persons with intellectual disability on the development of science and social life (Wpływ ruchu rodziców osób z niepełnosprawnością intelektualną na rozwój nauki i życie społeczne)*, ed. A. Wołowicz-Ruszkowska, Polskie Stowarzyszenie na Rzecz Osób z Upośledzeniem Umysłowym, Warszawa 2014, pp. 137-149.

<sup>70</sup> Z. Kazanowski, S. Byra, *Opinions of parents of young people with mild intellectual disability on aid provided to families (Opinie rodziców młodzieży niepełnosprawnej intelektualnie w stopniu lekkim na temat pomocy udzielanej rodzinie)*, [in:] *Current problems of social support of disabled persons (Aktualne problemy wsparcia społecznego osób niepełnosprawnych)*, ed. G. Kwaśniewska, A. Wojnarska, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Marii Curie-Skłodowskiej, Lublin 2004, pp. 137-148.

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