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## Introduction

Care is an integral part of human life. First, parents take care of their children by supporting their development, education and upbringing. They try to raise their children in the best conditions possible. As time goes by, the roles are reversed and it is the child who takes care about his or her elder parents. Sometimes, if parents are unable to provide their children with proper care, various institutions or organizations take this role. These institutions attempt to protect, educate and bring up such children in the best possible manner. And, by analogy, if adult children are not able to care about their elder parents, they ask proper institutions to protect and support them. These situations are not typical of modern times. Since ancient times children have been provided with various forms of institutional care. In the Middle Ages, upon the initiative of the Church, orphanages for homeless, ill or neglected children have been functioning in Europe. Such institutions provided children with financial, medical and spiritual care. The scope of their services has been evolving. In later centuries, new institutions or charity associations helped young people adapt to new conditions or life or obtain professional qualifications.

Pedagogues, who were interested in studying the issue of care, dealt both with theory and promotion of good educational practices.

That is why, the collection of works concerning care includes both theoretical ones, which explain, g. w. the term “care”, its scope, functions and tasks, and works that describe the activities of people or institutions which deal with care.

In the past, issues related to providing care were often discussed by the historians of education. Such historians analyse these issues today, too, as they express their interest both in institutional forms of supporting children, youth, elder people, neglected people or those who are “morally in danger” (Markiewiczowa 2002; Gołdyn 2013; Sosnowska 2020), and in the precursors of caring pedagogy who exerted a significant influence on the development of the education and pedagogy of care in Poland, e.g. Helena Radlińska, Janusz Korczak, Czesław Babicki, or Kazimierz “Grandpa” Lisiecki.

Care, as the main subject of study in caring pedagogy (Dąbrowski 1987, 2006), becomes the subject of interest in other areas of people’s social activity. In recent years, we have been witnessing the tendency to move the issue of care from the field of pedagogy to the area of social policy. This trend is also noticeable in the Polish legislation.

Please be invited to read the articles included in this issue of our journal. The articles are dedicated to the idea of care and education of children and youth in the spiritual, institutional and legal dimension.

## Bibliography

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