EFFECTIVE STRATEGIES
OF SOCIO-EDUCATIONAL INTERVENTION WITH ADOLESCENTS IN SOCIAL RISK SITUATION

ESTRATEGIAS EFICACES DE INTERVENCIÓN
SOCIOEDUCATIVA CON ADOLESCENTES EN RIESGO SOCIAL[1]

ESTRATÉGIAS EFICAZES DE INTERVENÇÃO
SÓCIO-EDUCATIVA COM ADOLESCENTES EM SITUAÇÃO DE RISCO

Miguel Melendro Estefanía, Ángel Luis González Olivares
y Ana Eva Rodríguez Bravo
Universidad Nacional de Educación a Distancia, Spain

ABSTRACT: Although the characterization of teenagers and young population at risk of social exclusion has been thoroughly investigated, that's not the case of the intervention strategies used. This article refers to a research performed between 2011 and 2012 which advances on the description, categorization and study of effective intervention strategies, so they can be used as an information source for good professional performance, reproducible and useful to improve the situation of teenagers at risk.

From a research-action approach, the contributions from the professionals working with this population, collected from about a hundred tests and seven discussion groups, are a direct and well-documented source of knowledge. This information is useful in order to underline the most relevant elements of this intervention, as well as the obstacles, limitations and practices that can be improved in this field of work.

Part of the results and the discussion about them are, among others, the proposals of effective intervention in conflictive familiar dynamics, the worrying and increasing violence, teenagers migratory grief and its effects of risk and marginalization, the limited and weak participation of teenagers in their own life decision making and the important educational needs of the group of people working with this population.

Furthermore, relevant strategic elements are shaped as the base of the intervention with teenagers at risk situation. Among those elements we find the flexibility to deal with uncertain situations, the link, empathy and affective proximity as necessary tools in socio-educational action, the contextualization of intervention in conflict situations and the debate about resilience and its contributions to the field of Social Pedagogy.

KEYWORDS: Teenager; high risk group; social education; research-action; intervention; educator.

RESUMEN: Si bien la caracterización de la población adolescente y juvenil en riesgo de exclusión social ha sido ampliamente investigada, no lo ha sido tanto la intervención que se realiza con ella. Este artículo hace referencia a una investigación que, realizada entre los años 2011 y 2012, avanza en la descripción de estrategias eficaces de intervención, en su tipificación y estudio, de forma que sirvan como banco de información para una buena práctica profesional, reproducible y útil para mejorar la situación de los adolescentes en riesgo.

Desde los planteamientos de la investigación-acción, las aportaciones de los profesionales que trabajan directamente con esta población, recogidas a través de cerca de cincuenta cuestionarios y siete grupos de discusión, son una fuente de conocimiento directa y bien documentada, útil para destacar los elementos más relevantes de esta intervención, así como los obstáculos, limitaciones y prácticas mejorables en este ámbito de trabajo.

Entre otras cuestiones, forman parte de los resultados y la discusión en torno a ellos las propuestas de intervención eficaz sobre las dinámicas familiares conflictivas, la preocupante y cada vez más presente violencia ascendente, el duelo migratorio adolescente y sus efectos de riesgo y marginación, la escasa y frágil participación de los adolescentes en la toma de decisiones sobre su propio proyecto vital y las importantes necesidades formativas del colectivo que trabaja con esta población.

Se perfilan así mismo relevantes elementos estratégicos como base de la intervención con adolescentes en riesgo, entre ellos la flexibilidad para abordar situaciones inciertas, el vínculo, la empatía y la proximidad afectiva como herramientas necesarias en la acción socioeducativa, la contextualización de la intervención en situaciones de conflicto y el debate en torno a la resiliencia y sus aportaciones en este ámbito de la Pedagogía Social.

PALABRAS CLAVE: Adolescencia; grupo de alto riesgo; educación social; intervención; investigación acción; educador.

RESUMO: Embora a caracterização de adolescentes e população jovem em risco de exclusão social tem sido exaustivamente investigada, que não é o caso das estratégias de intervenção utilizadas. Este artigo refere-se a uma pesquisa realizada entre 2011 e 2012, que avança sobre a descrição, categorização e estudo de estratégias de intervenção eficazes, de modo que possam ser utilizados como fonte de informação para o bom desempenho profissional, reprodutível e útil para melhorar a situação dos adolescentes em situação de risco.

A partir de uma abordagem de pesquisa-ação, as contribuições dos profissionais que trabalham com esta população, coletados a partir de cerca de uma centena de testes e sete grupos de discussão, são uma fonte direta e bem documentada do conhecimento. Esta informação é útil para sublinhar os aspectos mais relevantes desta intervenção, bem como os obstáculos, limitações e práticas que podem ser melhorados neste campo de trabalho.

Parte dos resultados a discussão sobre eles são, entre outros, as propostas de intervenção eficaz na dinâmica familiar de conflito, a violência preocupante e crescente, adolescentes luto migratório e seus efeitos de risco e da marginalização, a participação limitada e fraca de adolescentes em sua tomada de decisão própria vida e as necessidades educacionais importantes do grupo de pessoas que trabalham com essa população.

Além disso, os elementos estratégicos relevantes são moldados como a base da intervenção com adolescentes em situação de risco. Entre esses elementos, encontramos a flexibilidade para lidar com situações incertas, a ligação, empatia e proximidade afetiva como ferramentas necessárias em ação sócio-educativa, a contextualização de intervenção em situações de conflito o debate sobre resiliência e suas contribuições para o campo da Pedagogia Social.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Adolescente; grupo de alto risco; a educação social; a investigação-acção; intervenção; educador.

Introduction

Given its peculiarities and characteristics, adolescence is an evolutionary stage in which special attention to risk situations and social exclusion are needed, as to say, of a huge relevance for the development of prevention actions and future situations treatments from a socio-educational prospective.

There are some recent researches defining teenagers at social risk situation characteristics, also describe the context where indicators, risk factors, protection or resilient factors are developed (Lahire, 2007; Rees et al, 20120; Yergeau, Pauzé and Toupin, 2007).

Researches on "unsuccessful paths" of the more vulnerable populations should be   taking into account; either by delving those paths recognisance (Fernández del Valle, 1998; García Barriocanal, Imaña and De la Herrán, 2007; Inglés, 2005); or by setting out the restructuration necessity for social attention politics (Du Bois-Reymond & López Blasco, 2004; Bendit & Stokes, 2004; Machado & Pohl, 2004; Cachón, 2004).

At the same time, it is also necessary to bear in mind those researches compiling the European public institutions concern over the low educational performance that today teenagers have, the high early school withdrawal and how those factors are conditioning the labour market (Casas & Montserrat, 2009; Simon & Owen, 2006), along with the necessity to deepen into the institutional support to them by means of "transitional politics", social politics bearing in mind its characteristics and necessities (Bendit & Stokes, 2004; Du Bois-Reymond & López Blasco, 2004).

The context complexity in which teenagers at risk of social exclusion and the various environments –centres for minors guarded from protection systems, risk family groups, penitentiary centres… -are key elements for the understanding of the "socio-educational" complexity and are indicators of the flexibility required. This flexibility will serve either to effectively reach their realities or to continue the socio-educational action, and to prepare and guide them through their future adulthood.

"Socio-educational" intervention can be understood as a social and educational action, meaning "to answer a complex structure of individual social needs, establishing and enhancing the educational daily life opportunities both for individuals and for social groups" (Caride, 2005, p.57). Moreover, we underline our perception of this intervention as praxis, as a constant interaction between action and thought, as an "action discipline pushed to manage uncertainty, risk, and assume the human being random performance" (Meireiu 2001, p.109).

In open and complex systems, Edgar Morin (2005) underlined the necessity to act sometimes without using programs but strategies. In that line, an action program is essential in order to establish a sequence of ideas to be followed constantly: in the case of important and constant variations on the external conditions (where programs get stuck, action is bureaucratised and standard solutions are taken) we prefer to use strategies. Nonetheless, we should decide which strategies to use and how. This study has made progresses describing the more effective strategies for socio-educational professionals when dealing with teenagers at risk of social exclusion, deepening in its study and categorization. We want them to be an information database for a good professional performance, reproducible and useful to improve teenagers at risk situation.

In order to make progresses in the categorization and application of the strategy concept, we have move from a previous definition of *effective strategies* (Melendro 2007, 2010), which defined them as: *intervention and decision making processes on the short and mid term –not just intentional reformulations- creating well-defined actions, capable for systems mobilization.*

In the end, we revised and analysed both search contributions and results on intervention strategies with teenagers at risk of social exclusion. Amongst them there are ***researches related to integral politics*** (Aguado, 2005; Brullet & Gómez-Granell, 2008; Guasch & Ponce, 2005; Lamarca & Barceló,

2006; Pantoja & Añaños, 2010; Parazelli, 2000; Rivard, 2004; Roldán & Moñivas, 2001), *stetegies from prevention, school and family education* (Biehal, 2005; Catalano, Haggerty, Harachi & Abbott, 1998, 2005, 2009, 2010; Iglesias, 2008; Hicks & Stein, 2010; Lila, Buelga & Musitu, 2006; Rudduck & Flutter, 2007), **strategies from the context of protection and attention to population at high risk of social exclusion** (Balsells, 2006; García Barriocanal, Imaña & De la Herrán, 2007; Harwood, 2009; Minore & Hopkins, 2003; Montserrat & Casas, 2010) and those related to **strategies for the transition to adulthood** (Fernández del Valle, 1998, 2007, 2009; Goyette et al., 2007; Melendro, 2007, 2010).

1. Methodology

The aim of this research has been to move forward in the effective intervention strategies knowledge for teenagers at risk: contrasted strategies, ratified and that can be repeated in different intervention contexts. In this sense, the study has two main objectives:

1. Optimise, using research-action processes, the socio-educational intervention in young people and teenagers at risk of social exclusion.
2. Contribute with relevant information over effective and contrasted intervention strategies, helping to its inclusion on the daily work of socio educational teams.

Given the variety of factors intervening over the socio-educational attention for teenagers at risk of social exclusion and the complexity of its design, we identified the Action Research (AR) and the Grounded Theory (GT) approaches as the most accurate for this research.

From the AR prospective, some approaches have been useful, as: its interest in solving particular problems on its own contexts and implying –in a collaborative way- investigators, professionals and other interest groups (Cohen & Manion 1994); in opposition to traditional research, this one studies the social situation to improve its action quality (Elliot, 1993); and the main part of its intervention program is to organize its performing strategies, as well as to identify the more effective socio-educational actions at a micro and mesosystem level (Belsky, 1993; Bronfrenbrenner, 1979).

The GT (Grounded Theory) has been the main methodological foundation to design, elaborate and develop the different parts of the research process. It is a methodology used on several disciplines, from medicine to anthropology, psychology, sociology or even education. Thus, in this study the investigation stages have followed recommendations from Glasser and Strauss (1965) and its adaptions from Andreu, J., García-Nieto, A. and Pérez Corbacho, A.M. (2007) and Trinidad, A., Carrero, V. and Soriano, R.M. (2001), the theoretical sampling, selective and theoretical data categorization –until saturation- and the categorization process, that produce the results showed on this study.

The main subjects for this study had been professionals working with teenagers at risk of social exclusion, from 12 to 16 years old, helped by social services.

A mixed methodology has been used to design the techniques and tolls and the information management; using a quantitative approach to allow a good context definition and the contrast of the performance efficiency, and the qualitative to help in the results deepen and triangulation.

The interview has been used as a quantitative collecting data technique, with a semi-structured interview with open-ended and closed-ended questions. In the physical area of this research, Comunidad de Madrid, 43 surveys have been collected. The data analysis has been managed using frequencies, distributions and relations between the relevant variables for the analysis, using the program SPSS (19th version).

Furthermore, the technique used for the qualitative data gathering has been the discussion group. Eight discussions sessions were organized for fifteen professionals. The discussions content analysis has been made with the Atlas-ti, version 6.2, according to the *Grounded Theory* method.

2. Intervention scenario characterization. Quantitative analysis results

The working reality of a professional is a relevant source of information for this study; this reality reveals daily expectations and motivations, creating an enriched framework over situations requiring a closest study and valuation. Once the information is gathered by a semi-structured interview, several leading questions were analysed in order to contextualize socio-educational intervention in professional teams working with teenagers at risk.

Those professionals represent social organizations and public institutions working with teenagers at risk of social exclusion. The sample is composed of 43 persons, mainly women (65.1%) and (34.9%) of men. The majority (80%) represents specialized organizations with large experience on this intervention method; the rest are public institution professionals, mainly of socio-educational services. A 95.3% of those professionals have mayor university studies and specialized education. They hold degrees in Psychology (23.3%), Social Education (16.3%), Pedagogy (11.6%) and Social Work (11.6%).

The semi-structured interview was composed by 30 items about teenagers' characteristics, their families and particular aspects of the socio-educational intervention performed with them. Given the statistical descriptors, hereunder the more relevant assessments for the interview items are presented. It has been taking into consideration the professionals' degree of agreement-disagreement from 0-10, where 0 is the lowest level of agreement and 10 the highest. (Table 1)

Thus, the better-valuated items are the ones related to the high level of teenagers' school failure (20th item, x=8.32, ds. 1.254) and the negative consequences of the school failure over their trajectories (21st item x=8.34, ds. 1.47). Professionals are concerned about the teenagers' failure trajectory and school dropout, considering this to influence seriously their future.

We also find with a high average rate (x= 8.24, ds. 1.35) the 10th item about the design of flexible professional itineraries made by professionals with teenagers' help, adapted to their necessities and possibilities. It is revealed that professionals working with this group have a strategic and participative view of its own performance, providing more accurate orientations and modifying them in accordance with teenagers to reach a better professional and social development. This professionals' particular sensibility and its professionalism is reflected here, with an ad-hoc intervention for the teenager.

On the contrary, the lowest punctuations are for 18th and 19th items. In the 18th item professionals said (x=4.83) that apart from institutions, teenagers do not have a social supporting network when facing problems. Here a mode of 6 and a ds=1.773 describe a slight deviation in professionals' opinions, but they agree on the lack of accurate social supporting networks. A similar pattern occurs with 19th item, about teenagers' interest in studying and improving their education –according to professionals. We have found answers close to "strongly disagree" (x=4.76, mode=4) but there is not unanimity on item (ds= 1.655) which is not very relevant.

Among the answers located in the middle (5 out of 10), items where professionals are not able to choose neither agreement nor disagreement, we can underline 22nd item (x=5.10, ds. 1.446), about social responsible behaviour of teenagers at the beginning of the socio-educational intervention, and the 13th item about a systemic and frequent professionals education, with an average rate of (x=5.20), a mode of 7, which is relevant given its ds=1.978, one of the highest of this research.

Table 1. Professional survey statistical descriptors

Ítems - Variables	Mín.	Máx.	Average	ds.
Related to professionals that work with teenagers				
9. You have an excellent knowledge of:				
9.a Social context	3	9	6,93	1,506
9.b Family context	5	10	7,76	1,261
9.c Scholl context	6	10	8,07	1,191
9.d Institutional context	3	10	7,46	1,645
9.e Labour itinerary	6	10	7,98	,935
10. Design and develop of flexible professional itineraries				
11. Coordinate and interdisciplinary working.	2	10	7,83	1,745
12. Have sources, strategies to face unexpected situations.	3	9	7,10	1,499
13. Frequent and systemic professional education.	1	9	5,20	1,978
In relation with socio-education intervention				
14. Effective socio-educational intervention helping teenagers' social inclusion.	3	10	7,88	1,488
15. Socio-educational intervention reduces school absenteeism.	3	10	7,46	1,518
16. The socio-educational intervention lowers the school failure.	3	10	6,78	1,651
17. Assessment criteria for socio-educational intervention are well established.				
17.a Diagnostic assessment	3	10	6,39	1,686
17.b Process assessment	3	10	6,61	1,563
17.c Result assessment	3	10	6,73	1,633
Related to the teenagers you work with				
18. They have a social supporting network when facing problems.	2	9	4,83	1,773
19. They are interested in studying and improve its educational level.	1	8	4,76	1,655
20. They have a high level of school dropout.	5	10	8,32	1,254
21. School dropout influences their trajectories.	4	10	8,34	1,477
22. At the beginning of the socio-educational intervention show a responsible behaviour.	2	8	5,10	1,446
23. They show a responsible behaviour at the end of the socio-educational behaviour.	5	9	7,00	1,132
24. After getting into the mature age they are in a situation of social exclusion.	2	9	6,22	2,019
25. They participate in decisions over their social, personal and labour future.	3	10	7,44	1,689
26. They volunteer to centres and programs of socio-educational intervention.	3	10	7,49	1,551
27. They are motivated, active and participative during socio-educational intervention.	4	9	6,68	1,011
28. They show empathy and confidence towards professionals.	4	10	7,49	1,306
29. Accurate socio-educational intervention with their family groups are performed.	3	9	6,17	1,657
30. Families collaborate and participate in the actions performed	2	8	5,34	1,591

On the other hand, there are some variables showing that there highest variability index, aspects that professionals do no agree with, with several different answers. The first of them answer the question about the teenagers' facing an exclusion situation when getting into the mature age (24th item, x=6.22, ds=2.019). Even if the average agrees, values vary from 2 to 9, justifying this variability with its standard deviation. The majority of professionals foreseen that teenagers at risk will face a social exclusion situation when reaching the adulthood.

On the contrary, the less fluctuating items with a lower variation are 9c and 27th. The 9c refers to the excellent knowledge of their itinerary and labour prospective in professionals working with teenager (x=7.8), with a variation from 6 to 10, ds=0.935 and a mode of 8. This is to say, that professionals assume to know how to deal with them in a labour context, and a vast majority have it into account.

The 27th item, about the relation between professionals and teenagers, which are motivated, actives and participative during the socio-educational intervention, is close to those values. Even if professionals' answers varied (minimum punctuation of 4 and maximum of 9, ds=1.011), technicians have a positive impression, describing teenagers as participative and interested on the intervention. Motivation and participation have an average rate of 6.68 and a mode of 7.

If we analyse and classify the table's values, we will find a series of aspects that more positively appreciate by professionals (punctuated with 7 or above), some others with a moderate satisfaction (punctuated with 6 or above), some that can be improved (punctuated around 5) and others that need to be improved (punctuated under 5).

More positive valuated aspects: professionals state to have accurate information over family related items, teenagers' escolar and institutional context knowledge (9b, 9c and 9d items), along with itinerary and labour prospective comprehension (9e). Some items are assessed as strongly accurate like the related to the design of personal adapted itineraries (10th item), to the characteristics and circumstances of teenagers, the interdisciplinary coordination (11th item), having resources and strategies to face unexpected situations (12th item). In relation with the socio-educational intervention, they state that if effective it will help the teenagers' inclusion (14th item) and lower the scholar absenteeism (15th item). Teenagers' they work with, have an elevated scholar failure (20th item), influencing its life trajectory (21st item). Although them show a responsible social behaviour after interventions (23rd item) while keeping their autonomy by participating in their future decisions (25th item), volunteering in socio-educational centres and programs for intervention (26th item) and showing a high level of empathy and confidence towards the socio-educational professionals (28th item).

Moderately satisfactory aspects: professionals believe to have accurate knowledge of teenagers' social context (9a item). On the other hand, in relation to the socio-educational intervention they think that it lowers the school failure in a moderate way (16th item); on the same line, in the diagnostic assessment they think that some criteria have been established over the intervention process (17 a, b and c item). In relation to the teenagers they work with, they foreseen that they will face a social exclusion after the mature age (24th item). They state that teenagers are motivated and participative during the intervention (27th item) and in relation to families, accurate socio-educational interventions are developed with them (29th item).

Aspects that can be improved or that may influence intervention: professionals describe some answers as closed to the average agreement and disagreement, as the teenagers at risk's education (13th item), that needs to improve. The teenagers' participation at the beginning of the intervention (22nd item) needs to be revised, as their lonely feeling for the lack of family group collaboration on the planned actions.

Aspects that need to be improved or that impede the intervention: there is a strongly professional disagreement in relation to the lack of social supporting networks to teenagers at risk (18th

item), apart from the institutional and administrative resources. Moreover, they state that teenagers do not have interest in study or improve their educational level (19th item), which lead them to think about the urgent need to modify their perception towards and from society.

Those arguments give us a closest and more real knowledge of the teenagers' at risk of social exclusion socio-educational context and particularly the prospective of technicians and professional, which gives us valuable information of their priorities and suggestions to improve intervention.

3. A complex intervention. Qualitative analysis results

Along with the previous quantitative analysis, a qualitative analysis over the information from a group of professional experts on socio-educational intervention in teenagers at risk has been done. Divided into two discussion groups, fifteen professionals, eleven educators and four psychologists, from socio-educational teams have participated on it. Their initial education is related to psychology (47%) and social education and social work (33%); nine of them were women and six men. It was done over eight sessions –four in each group- dealing with several dimensions of the socio-educational intervention in teenagers at risk of social exclusion. All of them fulfilled the previously described questionnaire.

The transcription of the work done by each group is an initial document, that once codified, have helped with the creation of central categories, social basic processes and the fundament of theoretical hypothesis of the studied phenomena's.

The first task was to define the **concept of "effective strategy"** from prior definition (Melendro, 2007, 2011), because it was a central item for future discussions and for the research.

Another key concept was the **socio-educational intervention**, which refers to an eco-social and procedural approach, strongly linked to interactions with and into the teenagers' different contexts. However, sometimes professionals describe it as a broad, generic, difficult to precise and that even recurs to something wrong to locate it theoretically.

From this previous conceptualization work, questions over main research dimensions were discussed over the sessions: adolescences, risk contexts and protection, intervening professionals, intervention sense and socio-educational strategies for teenagers and their context. Those last three dimensions were the more discussed, especially the related to results, which are presented on the follow **conceptual network.** (Graph 1)

This network presents **three main categories**, strongly linked: teenagers' leading role, creation of a link and the intervention complexity.

The first one refers to the **leading role of the teenagers**, the necessity of having them implicated and being prominent. Without that, the rest of items are much less effective.

The second central category related to the **creation of a link** between the professional and the teenager, is both a necessary consequence and a complex task in the socio-educational intervention. It is even more complex because, as professionals state, **teenagers' do not feel the intervention as required at the beginning.**

> *E5: some boys do not need us, they do not want anything from us and sometimes we have to discover their necessities just by staring at them, and some others do not want to have anything to do with us (M_GDP2_S3)*[2]

And they are **not used to an active participation** or decision-making in this context.

> *E4: the social worker tell them what to do, and we, the family educators, here at high school, so there is too many people giving their opinions and they don't do it, so they are very automatic when you ask them "what do you think…" they stay like…blocked, they find it difficult even in creativity workshops "tell me what to do, it's easier for me". So boosting participation is complicated. (M_GDP1_S3)*

Graph 1. Conceptual research network
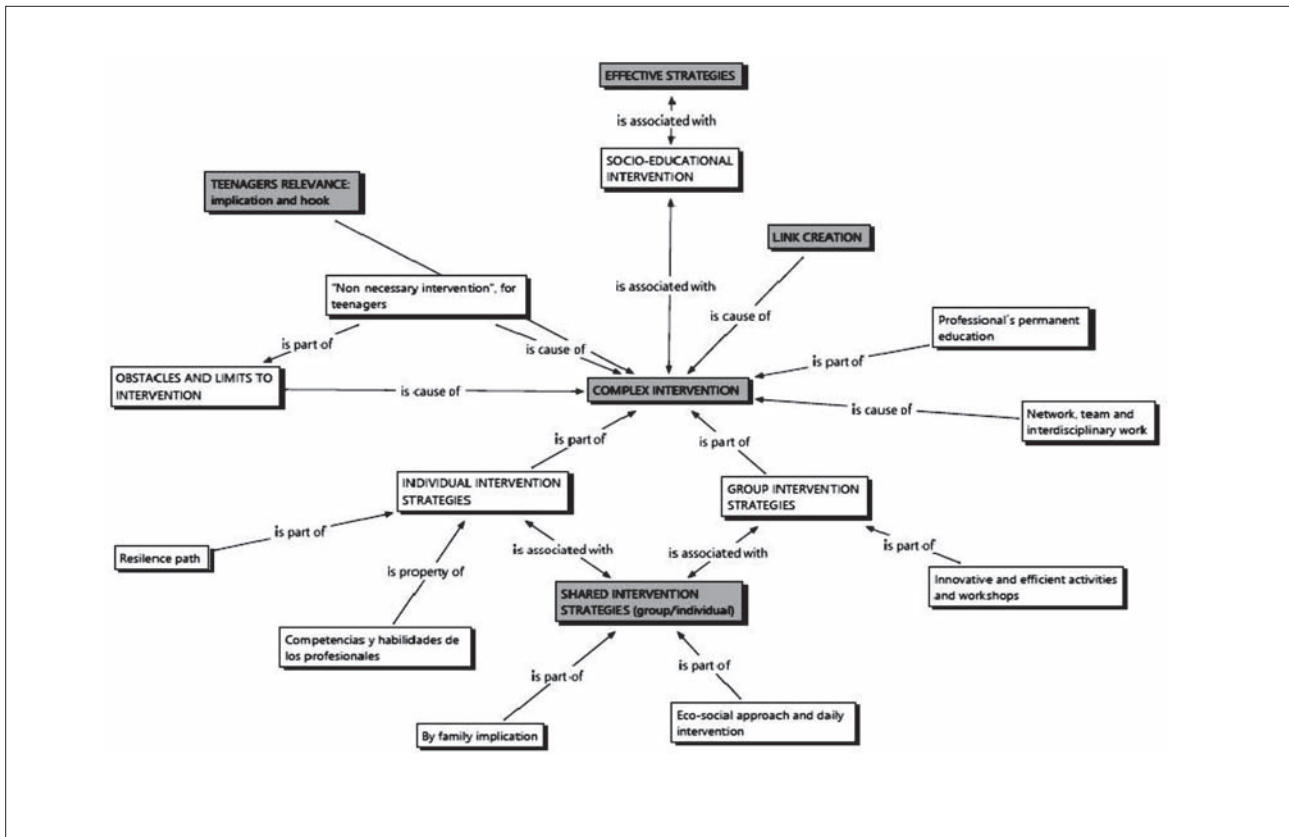
Source: Eurostat

The third central category has to do with the **intervention complexity**. As shown in the conceptual network (graph 1), this category refers either to the previous as to other relevant categories that will be described hereunder: flexibility in the strategic planning; basic intervention methods –individual and in groups-; the network work and the continuous training of professionals.

One of the prominent items, either quantitative or qualitative speaking, for discussion teams contribution, refers to the necessity to make teenagers' strategic planning more flexible. At the beginning they were summarize in the **"flexible strategy"** category, generating actions subjugated to socio-environmental conditions (at times and places), personal characteristics, resources or intervention network.

Along with this flexible planning, there are two intervention methods that are combined in both time and place, individual and group intervention, those are characteristics of the socio-educational work with teenagers and their development shows its complexity when dealing with this population once again.

We are going to begin with a series of common strategies for both methods of intervention (individual and group).

The first line is related to the previous mention **eco-social approach** of the socio-educational intervention. It reveals the importance of the educator proximity and his presence at the closest context, in the teenager's daily life in order to help him to create essential questions for his life, sometimes in moments or situations that apparently are non-relevant but highly emotional or full of competences.

This approach to daily life can just be done from the respect to each teenager pace and beat, respect to their **"vital project", unique and unrepeatable**, and respect to professionals whose inter-

vention is very limited in relation to human being's vital project. The professional has a limited position on times, moments and places of intervention that can be shared with institutions and responsibilities that are involving and will involve the transition to teenagers' adulthood. One of the educators said in a discussion group:

...you will disappear from his life, that is the worst thing. I think that we are sometimes selfish on that point. At the beginning I think that it was because you enter his life, remain for a year and leave, you go out and you have your house, family and work, or whatever, right? But the kid stays, remains with his problem, with a terrible familiar dynamic, with an schizophrenic mother, still there, you have helped him at some stage of his life but believe that you are going to change that... (M_GDP1_S3)

There is a second common line for individual and group intervention – in groups of mothers- that has to do with **family implication**. The implication starts in the teenagers' needs where they are the leading roles, and helps to eliminate one of the more important obstacles for this population intervention "labelling".

E6: I think that one of the things we do with this job is breaking schemes... They suddenly come here sometimes in a case of ascendant violence and the first thing you ask is "do you like playing football?" or "which are your hobbies?" "How do you feel?" There you break his scheme and he thinks "I'm not labelled anymore", and now I'm not the same, with this disorder, with this behaviour, they are looking for something else on me" I think that this attract their attention and hook them. (M_GDP1_S2)

Regarding **individual intervention strategies**, in the discussion group several working lines stand out, as it can be seen in the conceptual network (graph 1). One of them has to do with the develop of a particular professional series of competences related to the ability to analyse with the teenagers the meaning of their vital questions, and prior to that, how to detect and valorise them fairly. Along with these competences, stands out some repeatedly required personal attributes and abilities to its implementation as active listening, sincerity, transparency, communication skills, humour management and to adapt to the teenagers' language, flexibility and adaptation skill, creativity, tolerance to frustration, empathy, educational consistency, and to summarise them all, the willingness to face personal change that implies this job.

E7: what I see is something like been ready to change yourself. You work with people that need to change but you also face situations where you have to be more patient, and tolerate the frustration. You also need to be willing to see your mistakes, and to develop or reinforce them.

Professional competences and abilities are related directly but not only with educational needs, as well as with the network performance, team and interdisciplinary work that has to be developed. In that sense, educational needs and the develop of their competences and abilities, as well as the ones that give them information and help them to overcome their limitations and obstacles like facing ascendant violence, absenteeism, school failure, gender differences or multicultural family groups are suggested as professional continuous training requirement.

Regarding the network, team and interdisciplinary work, groups discussed intensely some important problems as the multiple complex interventions coordination, sometimes with non-compatible resources. There were underlined the problems created for the fragmented attention to families, both during the intervention time as in the professional and institution from which the intervention is done; that give rise to several "family games" with professionals which can endanger the socio-educational performance. This is an example:

E6: Coordination between particular resources used with families and teenagers is an important obstacle in ascendant violence, or at least one of the main problems for us in some cases. Starting with the source that works with the family in a different way than us, and we say that we need to work in the same way, don't we? Later, when sharing the work we are all doing we see that we are not doing the same work...So, sometimes we have competences problems; it can happen that you are working on something and I'm doing the opposite so...we are messing up with the family, don't we? (M_GDP2_S2)

However, the general prospective is that network job is accurate.

E3: My experience with this coordination is good. Normally we work well, they want to coordinate themselves and they usually do their job. Of course, there are some exceptions, terrible ones, but generally speaking the work is coordinated. (M_GDP2_S2)

Other important line related to individual intervention strategies –even though this intervention method and its characteristics can never be separated, but only in a theoretical way- has to do with the **"resilient path"**. A path divided into subcategories, where some socio-educational actions stand out:
- Underline values in "resilient teenagers".
- Promote the effort and resistance to frustration.
- Help to create positive images, different to the predominant exclusion and risk.
- Boost significant intervention methods, clarifying mother and father resilience and form other family group members or similar.
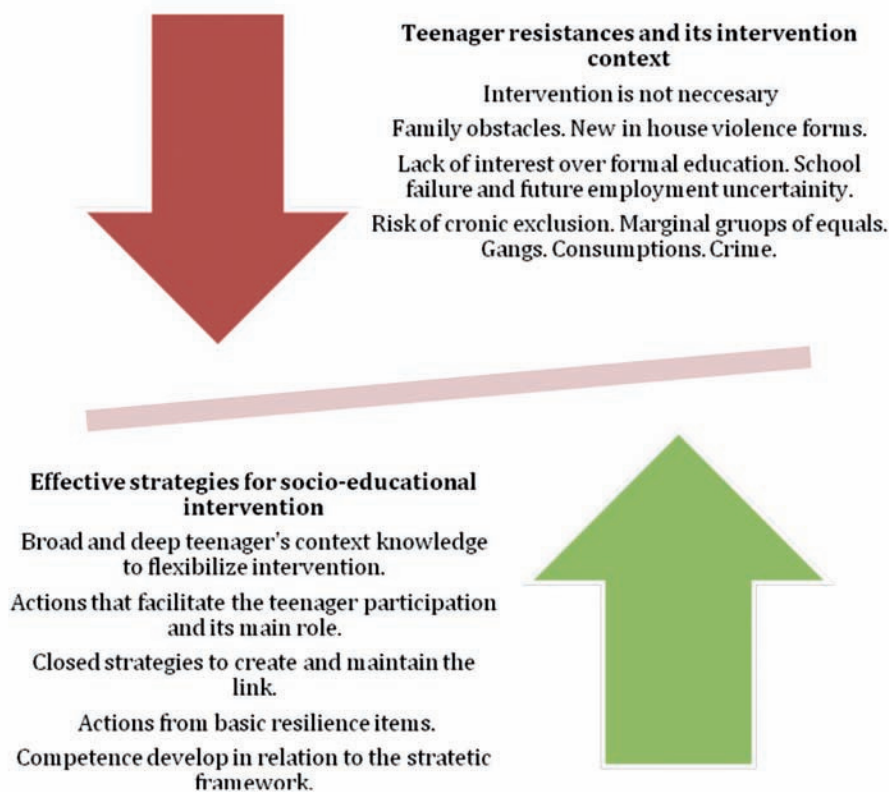- Overcoming its future plan troubles.

Finally, regarding intervention in groups of teenagers, professionals devoted long time to talk about those activities and workshops. Amongst those workshops, some were marked as innovative and effective as the related to Internet and social media (Twenty, Facebook,...) "mischief-makers and troubles" (about gender relations in group), "today's moms" (with adolescent mothers), a very attractive cooking workshop or the one called "freak-workshop" by educators:

E7: yes, I've done a very peculiar workshop. It was called "freak-workshop". It is known like that but reality is what it is... (laugh)...so, it was a modelling and miniature workshop and they do Warhammer statues. This was very attractive, and boosts their self esteem. They are very closed kids and that helps them to interact, and to relax.
E2: with a group of freaks, with no many friends, they stay at home with computer games, and stuff... it is a workshop for a reduce public but I think that we work on important things...as to say creativity, for our part it is needed to have loads of it for making one activity and then another and another different. (M_GDP1_S3)

Up to here the most relevant contributions to the qualitative analysis made, reflecting the concerns and proposals in daily socio-educational intervention with teenagers, explained and discussed by professionals with a large experience in this socio-educational aspect.

Graph 2. Effective strategies and its consequences over the teenagers' context resistance

Teenager resistances and its intervention context

Intervention is not neccesary

Family obstacles. New in house violence forms.

Lack of interest over formal education. School failure and future employment uncertainity.

Risk of cronic exclusion. Marginal gruops of equals. Gangs. Consumptions. Crime.

Effective strategies for socio-educational intervention

Broad and deep teenager's context knowledge to flexibilize intervention.

Actions that facilitate the teenager participation and its main role.

Closed strategies to create and maintain the link.

Actions from basic resilience items.

Competence develop in relation to the stratetic framework.

Discussions and conclusions

The research results provide several items to move forward an effective socio-educational intervention. We refer to an extremely complex intervention, whose effectiveness resolve around performing flexible strategies that begins with the real teenager prominence in their vital decision-making, which made the link creation an essential duty for professionals.

The eco-social approach in the socio-educational intervention is key when dealing with teenagers. As we have already stated the importance of the educator proximity and his presence at the closest context, in the teenager's daily life in order to help him to create essential questions for his life, sometimes in apparently non-relevant moments or situations but highly emotional or full of competences (Lahire, 2007). This global approach that makes our research unique, come along with several items that are partially related to previous researches mentioned at the beginning of this study.

Thus, there are some contributions related to the link creation focussed on highlighting "resilient teenagers" values and among other identification methods, to promote the effort and the resistance to frustration as tolls to overcome future plan difficulties or to help the creation of positive images, alternative for the exclusion and risk dominance, along with the comments of Tisseron (2007), Cirulnik (2002) or Barudy and Dantagnan (2005).

Other researches (García Barriocanal, Imaña & De la Herrán, 2007; Goyette 2004, 2007), state as we do, that intervention has to be based the construction of a strong relation of the socio-educational teenagers teams, making the education a mayor role for them. Teenagers do feel this intervention as necessary, as professionals have said repeatedly (Rees, et al, 2010).

On the other hand, professionals are highly concerned about the high levels of teenagers' school failure, and its negative consequences over their trajectories. All in all with the teenagers low interest

on studying and improving their educational level, move us to work on the improvement of their family relations (Biehal, 2005; Lila, Buelga & Musitu, 2006) and in the creation of socio-affective relations outside their families or equals (Yergeau, Pauzé & Toupin, 2007) as well as the efficient global preventive intervention by means of affection and compromise between community members and the intensive transformation of scholar entourages (Catalano, Haggerty, Harachi & Abbot, 1998, 2005, 2009, 2010).

Teenagers should take their own vital decisions, both individual and group, either for more or less important choices (Rudduck & Flutter, 1998, 2001, 2007).

Finally, it is important to underline the necessity of improve social politics and professionals education, both in relation to accurate competences for this interventions (Bautista-Cerro & Melendro, 2012) and for building the cohabitation of intervention's paradigms by using networks and interdisciplinary work (Goyette, 2004; Melendro, 2007).

Once these prominent aspects of our investigation and its relation to prior researches in intervention with teenagers at risk had been revised, we come back to the research's basic methodological differences, Research-Action (RA). Given the professionals, researchers and institutions implication on this study, it is important to persevere on the necessity of a combined thought and the design of educational and planning actions assimilating these socio-educational proposals for daily life performance of teenagers. The main objectives of the develop task are its feedback and the creation of a quality attention to this group, which are the base for future researches on this field.

References

Aguado, P. (2005). Programa de prevención y control del absentismo escolar en el ayuntamiento de Madrid. *INDIVISA. Boletín De Estudios e Investigación*, 6, pp. 249-257.

Andreu, J., García-Nieto, A. & Pérez Corbacho, A.M. (2007). *Evolución de la Teoría Fundamentada como técnica de análisis cualitativo*. Madrid: CIS (Centro de Investigaciones Sociológicas).

Balsells, M. Á. (2006). Québec y Cataluña: Redes y profesionales para la acción socioeducativa con familias, infancia y adolescencia en situación de riesgo social. *Revista Española De Educación Comparada*, 12, pp. 365-387.

Bautista-Cerro, M.J. & Melendro, M. (2011). Competencias para la intervención socioeducativa con jóvenes en dificultad social. *Educación XX1*, 14, pp. 179-200.

Belsky, J. (1993). Etiology of child maltreatment, a developmental-ecological analysis. *Psychological Bulletin*, Vol. 114 (3), pp. 413-434.

Bendit, R. & Stokes, D. (2004). Jóvenes en situación de desventaja social: políticas de transición entre la construcción social y las necesidades de una juventud vulnerable. *Revista de Estudios de Juventud*, 65, pp. 11-29.

Biehal, N. (2005). Working with adolescents at risk of out of home care: the effectiveness of specialist teams. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 27, 10, pp. 45-59.

Bronfenbrenner, U. (1979). *La ecología del desarrollo humano*. Buenos Aires: Paidós.

Brullet, C. & Gómez-Granell, C. (2008). (Coord.). *Malestares: infancia, adolescencia y familias*. Barcelona: Graó.

Cachón, L. (2004). *Las políticas de transición: estrategia de actores y políticas de empleo juvenil en Europa*. Madrid: Instituto de la Juventud.

Caride, J. A. (2005). *Las fronteras de la Pedagogía Social. Perspectivas científica e histórica*. Barcelona: Gedisa.

Casas, F. & Monserrat, C. (2009). Sistema educativo e igualdad de oportunidades entre los jóvenes tutelados: estudios recientes en el Reino Unido. *Psicothema*, 21 (4), pp. 543-547.

Catalano, R. F., Park, J., Harachi, T. W., Haggerty, K. P., Abbott, R. D., & Hawkins, J. D. (2005). Mediating the effects of poverty, gender, individual characteristics, and external constraints on antisocial behavior: A test of the social development model and implications for developmental life-course theory. In D. P. Farrington. (Ed.). *Advances in criminological theory: Vol.14. Integrated developmental and life-course theories of offending* (pp. 93-123). New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction.

Cohen, L. y Manion, L. (1994). *Métodos de investigación educativa*. Madrid: La Muralla.

Du Bois-Reymond, M. y Lopez, A. (2004). Transiciones tipo yo-yo y trayectorias fallidas: hacia las políticas integradas de transición para los jóvenes europeos. *Revista de Estudios de Juventud*, 65, pp. 11-29.

Elliot, J. (1993). *El cambio educativo desde la investigación acción*. Madrid: Morata.

Fernández del Valle, J. (1998). *Y después... ¿qué? Estudio de casos que fueron acogidos en residencias de protección de menores en el Principado de Asturias*. Oviedo: Consejería de Servicios Sociales del principado de Asturias.

García Barriocanal, C., Imaña, A. & De la Herrán, A. (2007). *El acogimiento residencial como medida de protección al menor*. Madrid: Defensor del menor en la Comunidad de Madrid.

Glasser, B. & Strauss, A. (1967). *The Discovery of Grounded Theory: strategies for qualitative research*. New York: Aldine de Gruyter.

Goyette, M. & Turcotte, D. (2004) La transition vers la vie adulte des jeunes qui ont vécu un placement: un défi pour les organismes de protection de la jeunesse. *Revue Service Social,* 51, pp. 29-44.

Goyette, M, Chénier, G., Royer, M.N. & Noel, V. (2007) Le soutien au passage à la vie adulte des jeunes recevant des services des centres jeunesse. Éducation et francophonie. *Revue cientifique virtuelle,* 35 (1).

Guasch, M., & Ponce, C. (2005). Intervención psicopedagógica: Proyectos y programas de intervención en situaciones de infancia en riesgo social. Universitas Tarraconensis. *Revista de Ciències de l'Educació*, pp. 215-230.

Harwood, V. (2009). *El diagnóstico de los niños y adolescentes problemáticos. Una crítica a los discursos sobre los trastornos de la conducta*. Madrid: Morata.

Hicks, L. & Stein, M. (2010). *A multi-agency guide for professionals working together on behalf of teenagers*. Department for children, schools and families. Retrieved from: https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/ system/uploads/attachment_data/file/190250/00247-2010DOM-EN.PDF

Iglesias Galdo, A. (2008). *Educar e castigar. Unha historia do presente da xustiza de menores en Galicia*. Servizo de Publicacións, Universidade da Coruña.

Inglés, A., et al. (2005). *Aprendiendo a volar. Estudio para el análisis de los programas europeos Mentor 15 y Ulises dedicados al proceso de socialización de adolescentes y jóvenes tutelados que han alcanzado la mayoría de edad o están cerca de ella*. Murcia: Fundación Diagrama.

Lahire, B. (2007). Infancia y adolescencia: De los tiempos de socialización sometidos a constricciones múltiples. *Revista de Antropología Social*, 16, pp. 21-38.

Lamarca Iturbe, Í., & Barceló Galdácano, F. (2006). Personas menores en situaciones de especial vulnerabilidad: Retos para una intervención eficaz. *Revista de Psicodidáctica*, 11(1), pp. 25-36.

Lila, M., Musitu, G. & Buelga, S. (2006). *Programa LISIS: las relaciones entre padres e hijos en la adolescencia*. Madrid: Pirámide.

Machado Pais, J. & Pohl, A. (2004). Los dilemas del reconocimiento del aprendizaje informal. *Revista de Estudios de Juventud*, 65, pp. 83-98.

Meirieu, P. (2001). *La opción de educar. Ética y pedagogía*. Barcelona: Octaedro.

Melendro, M. (2010). *El tránsito a la vida adulta de los jóvenes en dificultad social*. Madrid: UNED.

Melendro, M. (Dir.) (2007). *Estrategias educativas con adolescentes y jóvenes en dificultad social. El tránsito a la vida adulta en una sociedad sostenible*. Madrid: UNED, Ayuntamiento de Madrid y Opción 3 Soc. Coop.

Minore, B. & H. Hopkins (2003). *Suicide Response Plans: A Comparative Cross-Jurisdictional Analysis*. Position paper prepared for the Government of Nunavut Task Force on Mental Health, Iqaluit, Nunavut: Centre d'excellence pour les enfants et adolescents ayant des besoins spéciaux et Santé Canada.

Montserrat, C. & Casas, F. (2010) Educación y jóvenes ex-tutelados. Revisión de la literatura científica española. *Educación XXI*, 13-2, pp. 117-138.

Morín, E. (1994). *Introducción al pensamiento complejo*. Barcelona: Gedisa.

Pantoja, L., & Añaños, F. (2010). Actuaciones socioeducativas con menores vulnerables, en riesgo, relacionados con las drogas. reflexiones críticas. *Pedagogía Social. Revista Interuniversitaria*, 17, pp. 109-122.

Parazelli, M. (2000). L'imaginaire familialiste et l'intervention sociale auprès des jeunes de la rue : une piste d'intervention collective à Montréal. *Santé mentale au Québec,* 25-2, pp. 40-66.

Rees, G., Gorin, S., Jobe, A., Stein, M., Medforth, R. & Goswami, H. (2010). *Safeguarding Young People: Responding to young people aged 11 to 17 who are maltreated. The children's society.* Retrieved from: *http://www.york.ac.uk/inst/spru/pubs/pdf/safeguarding.pdf*

Rivard, J. (2004) Des pratiques autour des jeunes / enfants des rues : une perspective internationale. *Revue Nouvelles Pratiques sociales,* 17-1, pp. 126–148.

Roldán, E., & Moñivas, A. (2001). Análisis comparativo de estándares de buenas prácticas para estrategias innovadoras de bienestar social ASIPS. Proyecto Leonardo da Vinci. *Cuadernos de Trabajo Social,* 14, pp. 371-380.

Rudduck, J. & Flutter, J. (2007). *Cómo mejorar tu centro escolar dando la voz al alumnado.* Madrid: Morata.

Simon, A. & Owen, C. (2006). Outcomes for children in care: what do we know? In E. Chase, A. Simon & S. Jackson: *In care and after: A positive perpective.* London: Routledge.

Trinidad, A., Carrero, V. y Soriano, R.M. (2001). *Grounded Theory: la construcción de la teoría a través del análisis interpretacional.* Madrid: CIS (Centro de Investigaciones Sociológicas).

Yergueau, E., Pauze, R. et Toupin, J. (2007). L'insertion professionnelle et l'adaptation psychosociale des jeunes adultes ayant reçu des services des centres jeunesse. *Revue Intervention,* 127, pp. 58-69.

Notes

Author' addresses

Miguel Melendro Estefanía, Ángel Luis González Olivares y Ana Eva Rodríguez Bravo. Universidad Nacional de Educación a Distancia. Departamento de Teoría de la Educación y Pedagogía Social. Facultad de Educación. C/ Juan del Rosal, 14. 28030 Madrid, (España).

E-mail: mmelendro@edu.uned.es; algonzalez@edu.uned.es; anaeva.rodriguez@edu.uned.es

How to cite article