

Initiator and advocate of children's rights - Dr. Emil Paravina

Dr. Emil Paravina, long - time secretary of the Union of Societies „Our children“ Croatia, actively participated in writing the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

He contributed to the creation of articles that related to children's play and leisure time.

Participating in the work of expert groups that prepared from 1985 to 1988 the proposal of the text of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child our Emil started to think how to shape a new children's activity with the contents of the rights of the child and education for peace.

He said that in children we need to encourage interests, habits and tastes for the constructive and cultural free time. He taught me how play is an essential part of life, very important for child development. How everyone who loves life, nature and games.

The rights of the child are an extremely important area, placed in the context of the world current issue of human rights. They imply the quality of life of modern man, the child of whom they are assumptions realization of the idea of peace in the world and education for mutual understanding and international cooperation.

In order to draw wider attention to children's rights, Emil, in early 1989, prepared selected material which, thanks to the Union of SOC Croatia as a publisher, was published together with the text of the Convention, on the day of its adoption at the United Nations, November 20, 198 in the book "Exercising the rights and needs of the child".

In the late 1990s, he encouraged the establishment of the Union of SOC Croatia for the Rights of the Child Committee. It was the first organized group of experts in this field in Croatia.

The Committee sent the first vote of protest against the suffering of children arguing the causes and forms of child suffering and violations of the rights of the child in the war against of our country.

Having received full support and incentives, in the summer of 1991, he began direct development ideas of possible organized action and children's activity program - Children's Forum.

Considering that these are valuable and interesting contents, our Emil approached the professional, pedagogical, psychological and sociological shaping of the conception of this new children's activity which was adopted by the Executive Board of the Union of SOC Croatia and Union of SOC Croatia Board for the Rights of the Child in 1991.

Shortly afterwards, the then Ministry of Education was introduced to the Children's Forum, Institute for Education and other competent bodies in the Republic of Croatia.

An activity through which children will learn about their rights and obligations, a project through which children learn more about the lives of their peers in the world, the actions and activities they will take contribute to the creation of peace and tolerance both in our environment and across the border of our beautiful.

In 1992, the first seminar for children's forum mentors was held at the Union of SOC Croatia Summer School. The first ten mentorss, as Emil often pointed out, were right after the seminar in mid-October 1992 founded in their cities and municipalities the first 17 Children's forums in Croatia.

Children's rights and children's obligations! It sounds dry and hard to understand, but our playful Emil he devised a handful of games, puzzles and stories to interest both young and old.

For a child, play is a basic need, an essential part of his growth and development, just like food, health, care and education. One of the basic rights of every child is his right to play. The game is endless imagination and great children's creativity, because everything is possible in the game. It is the best school for gaining understanding, tolerance and friendship, for adopting the right to diversity, to accept cooperation through the communion of diversity.

That is what we, for more than twenty years, have been teaching children in Children's Forums.

The forerunner of the meetings of the Children's Forums, in 1993 and 1994, were the Children's Friendship Camps which Emil designed with the aim of encouraging socializing and carrying out joint activities of children different nationalities based on the ideas of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Socializing, friendship, exchange of knowledge and experiences we have all experienced together for years at Children's Forum meetings. Every year I prepared and rejoiced with my forum members at the end of the summer because it meant that I would meet my fellow presenters in Selce, Rab or Zagreb, and the children formed their friends and of course, our Emil who organized, prepared and met the meetings followed with a watchful eye what we do with children in the field of children's rights.

Emil was looking forward to the preparations for the meeting of forum members with members of parliament in Croatia. Arranged topics with children and facilitators, wrote summaries that were later published and sent to MPs to remind them of the topics their children were talking about.

Our Association has published numerous of Emil 's works, professional books, publications, methodical instructions and materials to introduce children and adults to the rights of the child.

My favorite book is, as I call it, the Children's Forum Bible, the Children's Forum suggestions for establishment and work program.

Children's rights, active children's participation or children's participation were the magic words of ours Emil. Messages from children to adults, meetings with mayors, mayors, prefects, MPs, children's public gatherings, children's forums, children's municipal and city councils these are all forms of active child participation that the Union of SOC Croatia promotes and nurtures already for years.

When designing the action Cities and municipalities friends of children, he advocated that children's rights and active children's participation in guidelines and questionnaires is given an important place.

The children's voice is a voice that must be heard!, he often spoke.

He guided me, directed me, advised me, taught me high ethical and professional principles.

It helped me lay a solid foundation on which to continue working. His joy of life, strength and will, enthusiasm and dedication have simply left me speechless many times.

He was skilled in communicating with others, calm, calm, creative and persistent.

His life motto was "Love children first" and I will remember it for that. Thank you Emil for everything what have you taught me! I will try to continue on your path in my midst. Nothing is possible without you also."

Sanja Škorić, secretary of SOC Opatija

Vice President of the SOC of Croatia