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# THE RISE OF INTRA-FAMILY TENSIONS FOR CHILDREN DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

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**Silvia Fotea<sup>1</sup>, Gabriela Calcan<sup>2</sup>, Gabriela Elena Vâlcu<sup>2</sup>,  
Raluca Ecaterina Tanase<sup>2</sup>, Simona Dana Caramfil Mitincu<sup>1</sup>,  
Cela Beatris Stan<sup>1</sup>, Maria Magdalena Enache<sup>3</sup>,  
Eva-Maria Elkan<sup>1</sup>**

<sup>1</sup> Faculty of Medicine and Pharmacy, Dunarea de Jos University of Galati;

<sup>2</sup> Emergency Clinical Hospital for Children "Sfântul Ioan" Galati;

<sup>3</sup> "Mă bucur de Viață/I Enjoy Life" Association, Galati;Romania

✉ [silvia\\_ghimpu@yahoo.com](mailto:silvia_ghimpu@yahoo.com)

**ABSTRACT** — The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on family life is asymmetric. The effect of patients' illness has multiple and varied effects on all devices and systems. The mental impairment can occur through direct and / or indirect mechanisms. The premise of restricting activities, income, social contacts and extended family support puts families into difficulty, but these issues are not always correlated with income, social status or education of family members. These inaccuracies are increasingly common in families where there are fewer mechanisms to compensate for these losses felt by society as a whole. The need for acceptance, understanding, appreciation is greater than ever and the examples where each family member can evolve and validate are fewer and fewer. The family should be studied in dynamics in terms of relationships, exercise of tolerance and communication between members within the same family. Acceptance of reality is also very important, acceptance of existential problems in the family. We want to unravel the mechanisms that lead to the rise of intra-family tensions, especially in terms of disrupting the lives of minors who are part of the changing family and preventing the effects to provide the best opportunities for education and development of children. Due to the pre-extended restrictions imposed by the pandemic, permanent fatigue sets in, the emotional abandonment of family members, each member taking refuges in his own world (possibly even virtual) that offers them more freedom and sometimes power. It was also observed that if the family works in a smaller physical space, there may be elements of aggression, rejection, abuse even among family members, these elements can be prevented with appropriate programs.

**KEYWORDS** — intra-family tensions; interventions; pandemic; e-learning.

## INTRODUCTION

Both the parental couple may develop older dysfunctions that become more pronounced and the roles of other family members are disrupted. There are also happy situations in which families take advantage of these moments (difficult for all mankind) to

readjust, reset, and refresh (and reinvent) as is naturally effective for its members and for its proper functioning (Luca et al., 2020; Grigoras & Ciubara, 2021). The closure of schools has been taken as measure and other pandemics such as the flu pandemic, based on the idea that children are stronger vectors of transmission of infections from child to child, according to epidemiologists this measure could have reduced the peak of a pandemic by 40%. The measures are not effective if they are not doubled by a responsibility of each family by educating each individual to adhere to the idea of protecting themselves and others (Apostu, 2020; Assante & Candel, 2020; Loue & Lamb, 2020; Robu, 2017). On the other hand, school closure itself can generate other crises and can cause anxiety, disorientation, controversy, differences and distortions between different regions in the education process (Afolabi, 2018, pp. 59–96).

## METHODS

**Objectives:** We want to unfold the mechanisms that lead to the rise of intra-family tensions especially in terms of disrupting the lives of minors who are part of the changing family due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

A tension that occurs in all individuals in society is the opposition between good and personal needs to those of society as a whole, and the moral dilemma of individuals anchored in society get other nuances during the pandemic, these interests becoming more opposite and often almost incompatible, which leads to a higher tension both intra-psychically and between individuals (Afolabi, 2018, pp. 59–96).

Thus, the insecurity of difficult living conditions and/or insufficient food resources for the family poses the risk of shelling of any form but also of neglecting the child in their own family to grow. Tener et al. (2020). The child represents the hope that the family and a community place in the future. It has become a priority to protect the child during the pandemic (Spraker, 2012). A child can decompensate in adolescence from falling in love, excessive use of stimulants, overuse of insufficient rest with fragmentation of sleep and nights lost either by browsing social networks or internet games or parties between young people, experiencing strong sensations such as practicing dangerous sports or incorrect training (at the gym, track, bicycle) or due to severe organic decompensation of

severe diseases (tumors, leukemia, lymphoma that due to specific footprints age may be omitted) (Marchini, et al., 2020). An additional stressor can affect the child already vulnerable by the aforementioned factors. WHO proposes a family intervention that includes attitudes that need to be educated to cope with the pandemic, but also the courage to express fear of their own children, and the courage of the adolescent to express his fears, fears related to COVID-19) (Silva et al., 2020). Table 1 summarizes the causes and intervention in family tensions.

**Table 1.** Causes and intervention in family tensions

Causes	Family functioning	Interventions
Death of a family member	Reorganization of the family after death Hard-to-consume mourning	Family support by the extended family
A parent with a mental / somatic illness Pre-existing personality disorders of family members interacting in a pandemic	Costly treatment of a family member, exhaustion of other family members	Resumption of the family social survey, support through NGOs but also through outpatient services provided by the state Health education programs Telephone lines for crisis interventions to compensate a family member
Loss of a family member's job	Reorganization of the work schedule of a family member Financial losses Distrust Demotivating family members	Work Scholarship Online support programs Education for individual readjustment and mutual support in the family
Couple	Couple discussions Unadjusted now couple Anxiety about the future Competition between spouses The subconscious desire for revenge on a family member for the child's fault to be born Neglect Poor communication between family members	Coping strategies Couple therapy Psychiatric consultations as needed Collaboration with the police and social assistance in case of domestic violence
The social dimension of the family	Inadequate living space Substance use of a family member Isolation Feeling useless Little relatives Leaving by friends Renegotiating power relations in the family Achieving new poles of power both at work and within the family Elderly people who feel excluded from social life Using vices in the same family Changing routines and behavioral repertoire in family members Differences in the perception of reality by members of the same family Reduction of adolescents' contacts with those of their age	Social housing programs Limiting consumption or stopping it for the affected family member (alcoholics anonymously group therapies) Identifying as an employer the vulnerable risk groups during the pandemic and making the work schedule more flexible for the affected members where possible or supporting transportation to the workplace, long distance work (long distance to work, large family problems from which the employee comes)
Unforeseen life events	Stressful events related to life Anger repressed or manifested between siblings or a family member. Unforeseen life events (fire, accident, conflict, etc.)	
Resilience deficit	The need for approval and understanding Renegotiation of family roles Family members let it go	Acceptance Confidence in the future Generating new values The multilevel model of education in schools

According to (Calvano et al., 2021; Carlucci et al., 2020; Guessoum et al., 2020; Smiri et al., 2020)

## RESULTS

A reinforcement plan for children has been drafted.

1. Development of new artistic values, volunteering, capitalization of internal or family resources.
2. Development of methods specific to online education for children with special educational needs.
3. Anchoring children online to interact with the school and teachers.
4. Outdoor housekeeping activities for parents with children on the perimeter of their home.

5. The approach of grandparents to grandchildren during the period of isolation (and parents who are overwhelmed by worries may leave children in the care of grandparents and the food and work provider may go to work).
6. Plans to be concrete, setting deadlines for small family reunions, a fixed schedule, deadlines for small tasks and projects.
7. Reorganization of the sleeping space of family members so that differences in the schedule of different activities can lead to irritation, tensions.
8. Discussion of ethical issues regarding the pandemic with adolescents, making creative activities in schools (making posters, slogans).
9. Discussing the marital problems that occurred in the parents' couples due to the pandemic.

## CONCLUSION

The rise of intra-family tensions can be prevented by careful observation and guidance of the family as a whole and each member with his individuality, needs and projections. This helps to reduce psychiatric morbidity and psychological disorders and avoid severe somatic pathologies. Therefore, the medical body of the family is an end in itself to provide a better quality of life for children and their families in times of the pandemic.

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