

# Obilježja prekida partnerske zajednice roditelja sa simptomima emocionalno nestabilne ličnosti

## */ Characteristics of Intimate Partnership Breakups in Parents with Symptoms of Emotionally Unstable Personality Disorder*

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Osobe s emocionalno nestabilnom ličnosti imaju značajne poteškoće u partnerskim odnosima. Njihovi odnosi su nestabilni i burni, obilježeni nepovjerenjem, razdobljima prekidanja i mirenja, ali i visokom stopom razvoda. Prekid partnerske zajednice, zbog osjetljivosti na odbijanje i straha od napuštanja, potencijalni je okidač koji može dovesti do aktivacije postojeće emocionalno nestabilne ličnosti roditelja, intenziviranja njegovih simptoma, a posljedično i do različitih oblika neprikladnog i manipulativnog ponašanja. Svrha ovog rada je dobiti uvid u obilježja prekida partnerskih zajednica roditelja sa simptomima emocionalno nestabilne ličnosti. U radu su prikazani rezultati kvalitativnog istraživanja obilježja prekida bračne i izvanbračne zajednice roditelja sa simptomima emocionalno nestabilne ličnosti u kojem je sudjelovalo 12 socijalnih radnika i psihologa iz Odjela za zaštitu djece, obitelji i braka centara za socijalnu skrb na području grada Zagreba i Zagrebačke županije. Istraživanje je provedeno metodom polustrukturiranog intervjua. U obradi podataka korištena je tematska analiza. Prema rezultatima istraživanja prekidi partnerske zajednice roditelja sa simptomima emocionalno nestabilne ličnosti obilježeni su visokom razinom sukoba među roditeljima, nemogućnošću postizanja sporazuma oko ostvarivanja sadržaja roditeljske skrbi, manipulativnim ponašanjem i manipulacijom djetetom, drugim roditeljem (bivšim partnerom), stručnjacima i sustavom. Najčešći oblici manipulacije su onemogućavanje susreta i druženja djeteta s drugim roditeljem i članovima njegove obitelji, ocrnjivanje drugog roditelja i članova njegove obitelji pred djetetom i stručnjacima, neutemeljene prijave protiv drugog roditelja, učestali prigovori i prijave protiv postupanja nadležnih socijalnih radnika i drugih stručnjaka.

*/ Persons with emotionally unstable personality disorder have significant difficulties in intimate partnerships. Their relationships are unstable and intense and are marked by distrust, periods of temporary breakups and reconciliation, and a high rate of divorce. Breakups are, due to sensitivity to rejection and fear of abandonment, a potential trigger that can lead to the activation of existing emotionally unstable personality disorder in the parents and increase in the intensity of their symptoms, consequently leading to different forms of inappropriate and manipulative behavior. The goal of this study was to achieve insights in the characteristics of breakups in parents with symptoms of emotionally unstable personality disorder. The present article describes the results of a qualitative study on the characteristics of dissolution of marital and non-marital partnerships of parents with symptoms of emotionally unstable personality disorder, with the participation of 12 social workers and psychologists from the Department for the Protection of Children, Family, and Marriage of social welfare centers in the area of Zagreb and Zagreb County. The study was conducted in the form of semi-structured interviews. Data processing consisted of thematic analysis. According to the results of the study, breakups in parents with symptoms of emotionally unstable personality disorder are marked by a high level of conflict among the*

parents, inability to reach an agreement about organizing parental care, manipulative behavior, and manipulation of the child, the other parent (i.e. the ex-partner), social care professionals, and the system as a whole. The most common forms of manipulation are preventing the child from meeting and spending time with the other parent and members of their family, disparaging the other parent and members of their family in front of the child and social welfare professionals, unfounded accusations and reports against the other parents, and repeated complaints and reports against the conduct of social workers and other experts.

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## UVOD

Osobe s emocionalno nestabilnom ličností<sup>1</sup> imaju značajne poteškoće u partnerskim i bliskim odnosima. Njihovi odnosi su burni i nestabilni, obilježeni nepovjerenjem, strahom od napuštanja, impulzivnim ponašanjem, kretanjem između krajnosti idealizacije i podcjenjivanja (1), razdobljima prekidanja i mirenja te visokom stopom razvoda (2-4). Nestabilnosti odnosa pridonosi polariziran, ali promjenjiv pogled koji se očituje u sagledavanju druge osobe kao isključivo dobre ili loše (1) što u situacijama kada ponašanje bliske osobe narušava idealiziranu sliku te osobe može rezultirati intenzivnim i primitivnim gnjevom (5) i impulzivnim ponašanjem koje se očituje u sklonosti suicidalnim pokušajima, samornjavanju, riskantnim životnim stilovima (1,6),

<sup>1</sup> Prema MKB-10 sustavu, koji se službeno koristi u Hrvatskoj, emocionalno nestabilna ličnost obuhvaća nestabilno raspoloženje, nepredvidljivo ponašanje, impulzivnost i problematične emocionalne odnose (F60.3). U DSM klasifikaciji taj sesindrom naziva granični poremećaj ličnosti (engl. *borderline personality disorder*).

## INTRODUCTION

Persons with emotionally unstable personality disorder<sup>1</sup> have significant difficulties in intimate partnerships and other close relationships. Their relationships are intense and unstable, marked by distrust, fear of abandonment, oscillation between extremes of idealization and disparagement (1), periods of temporary breakups and reconciliation, and a high rate of divorce (2-4). The instability of their relationships is exacerbated by a polarized, but changeable perspective that manifests as perceiving the other person exclusively as either good or bad (1), which can result in intense and primitive rage in situations where the behavior of the partner disrupts the idealized image of them (5) or in impulsive behavior that manifests in a tendency towards suicide attempts, self-harm, and risk-prone lifestyles (1,6), yelling, aggressive behavior, running away, etc.

<sup>1</sup> According to the MKB-10 system which is in official use in Croatia, emotionally unstable personality disorder comprises emotional instability, unpredictable behavior, impulsivity, and problematic emotional relationships (F60.3). DSM classifies this syndrome as borderline personality disorder.

vikanju, agresivnom ponašanju, bježanju i sl. (4). Sukladno tome smatra se da brojni simptomi emocionalno nestabilne ličnosti proizlaze iz poteškoća u interpersonalnim odnosima, hipersenzibilnosti i intenzivnog straha od napuštanja i odbacivanja (7) koji korespondira s panikom, emocionalnom nestabilnosti, dugoročnom napetosti, manipulacijom, ljutnjom i impulzivnosti (4,8).

Agresivno i nasilno ponašanje često je povezano s emocionalnom nestabilnosti, pristranosti emocionalne obrade, stilovima privrženosti, osobito s anksioznim i izbjegavajućim stilom privrženosti, zluporabom sredstava ovisnosti i impulzivnosti (9). Sukladno tome, veća vjerojatnost izražavanja agresivnog ponašanja prisutna je kod osoba koje doživljavaju višu razinu anksioznosti i izbjegavanja u partnerskim ili intimnim odnosima, ljutitost i razdražljivost povezane su s osjećajem tjeskobe zbog odnosa, a izbjegavanje sa samoranjavanjem (10). Zbog osjetljivosti na dinamiku odnosa i straha od napuštanja neke osobe s emocionalno nestabilnom ličnosti mogu koristiti agresiju i emocionalne ucjene s ciljem kontrole druge osobe i izbjegavanja napuštanja, neke kako bi izbjegle bliskost i na taj način minimalizirale rizike napuštanja, a neke kako bi agresijom pokazale svoju moć i važnost (6,10-12). Ovi simptomi ukazuju na unutarnji konflikt između potrebe za bliskosti i straha koji osobe s emocionalno nestabilnom ličnosti osjećaju u interpersonalnim odnosima. One mogu istovremeno željeti bliskost i intimnost i biti nepovjerljive i u strahu (npr. da će biti povrijeđene, napuštene i sl.). Sukladno tome, izraženiji simptomi emocionalno nestabilne ličnosti povećavaju vjerojatnost doživljaja bračnog stresa, obiteljskog nasilja i razvoda (3,4).

Za razumijevanje straha od napuštanja i osjetljivosti na odbijanje važna je teorija privrženosti. Začetnik teorije privrženosti John Bowlby već je 70-ih godina prošlog stoljeća istaknuo važnost razumijevanja unutarnjih radnih mo-

(4). It is therefore believed that many symptoms of emotionally unstable personality disorder stem from difficulties in interpersonal relationships, hypersensibility, and an intense fear of rejection and abandonment (7) that corresponds to panic, emotional instability, long-term tension, manipulation, anger, and impulsivity (4,8).

Aggressive and violent behavior is often associated with emotional instability, biased emotional processing, some attachment styles, especially anxious and avoidant attachment styles, abuse of addictive substances, and impulsivity (9). Consequently, there is a higher likelihood of expressing aggressive behavior in persons who experience a higher level of anxiety and avoidance in partnerships or intimate relationships, while anger and irritability are associated with the feeling of anxiety due to the relationship, and avoidance is associated with self-harm (10). Due to their sensitivity to the dynamics of the relationship and the fear of abandonment, some persons with emotionally unstable personality disorder can use aggression and emotional blackmail as an attempt to control the other person and avoid abandonment, to avoid intimacy and thus minimize the risk of abandonment, or to use aggression to demonstrate their power and importance (6,10-12). These symptoms point to an inner conflict between the need for intimacy and the fear that persons with emotionally unstable personality disorder feel in interpersonal relationships. They might simultaneously yearn for intimacy and be distrustful and in fear (e.g. of being hurt, abandoned, etc.). Therefore, more pronounced symptoms of emotionally unstable personality disorder increase the likelihood of marital stress, family violence, and divorce (3,4).

Attachment theory is crucial to understanding fear of abandonment and sensitivity to rejection. Attachment theory was originated by John Bowlby in the 1970s, who pointed out the importance of understanding the inner working models of attachment in the context of explaining different modes of emotional anxiety

dela privrženosti u kontekstu objašnjenja različitih oblika emocionalne uznemirenosti i poremećaja ličnosti. Smatrao je da se formirana privrženost u djetinjstvu nalazi u pozadini sposobnosti ostvarivanja emocionalnih odnosa te cijelog niza poremećaja u odrasloj dobi uključujući bračne probleme, probleme s djecom, poremećaje ličnosti i neurotične simptome (13). Većina osoba s emocionalno nestabilnom ličnosti u djetinjstvu doživjela je traumu, najčešće neki od oblika zlostavljanja (14-17) što povećava vjerojatnost razvijanja negativnog unutarnjeg radnog modela i poremećaja privrženosti. Sukladno tome, osobe s ovim poremećajem ličnosti zbog doživljenog nasilja i zlostavljanja u djetinjstvu, imaju veću vjerojatnost da će sebe percipirati kao osobe koje nisu vrijedne pažnje i ljubavi, koje nisu sigurne ni sposobne, a druge kao opasne i prijeteće osobe kojima se ne može vjerovati. Posljedično, zbog internalizacije zlostavljanja i zanemarivanja u obliku relacijskog predloška s potencijalom da se u budućim odnosima očekuju zlostavljanje i odbacivanje, mogu razviti nesiguran stil privrženosti (10,17-19). Osim nesigurnog stila privrženosti, kod osoba s emocionalno nestabilnom ličnosti zabilježene su preokupirana, neriješena (17,19,20), odbijajuća (17,20,22,23), anksiozna (24,25) i tzv. CC privrženost (nemogućnost klasificiranja stila privrženosti)(17).

Na teoriju privrženosti nadovezuje se teorija mentalizacije Fonagyja i sur. prema kojoj se smanjena sposobnost mentaliziranja nalazi u pozadini interpersonalnih poteškoća, afektivne nestabilnosti i smetnji identiteta koje su karakteristične za emocionalno nestabilnu ličnost (26-28). Teorija mentalizacije osmišljena je s namjerom da se objasni psihopatologija graničnog poremećaja ličnosti. Prema ovoj teoriji mentaliziranje se odnosi na proces pomoću kojeg određujemo smisao svojih i tuđih subjektivnih stanja i mentalnih procesa. Pri tome se razumijevanje ponašanja drugih i njihovih vjerojatnih misli i osjećaja smatra

and personality disorders. He believed that the attachment formed in childhood is at the foundation of the ability to form emotional relationships and a whole series of adult disorders that includes marital problems, problems with children, personality disorders, and neurotic symptoms (13). Most persons with emotionally unstable personality disorder experienced a trauma in childhood, usually some form of abuse (14-17), which increases the likelihood of developing a negative inner working model and an attachment disorder. Due to the violence and abuse experienced in childhood, persons with this type of personality disorder have a greater likelihood of perceiving themselves as unworthy of love and attention and as unsure and incompetent, while perceiving others as dangerous and threatening persons who cannot be trusted. They can consequently develop an insecure attachment style by internalizing the abuse and neglect as a relationship template that potentially leads them to expect abuse and abandonment in future relationships (10,17-19). Other than the insecure attachment style, persons with emotionally unstable personality disorder exhibit preoccupied, unresolved (17,19,20), dismissive (17,20,22,23), anxious (24,25), and the so-called CC attachment (cannot classify) style (17).

Attachment theory spurred the development of mentalization theory by Fonagy et al., according to which reduced ability to mentalize is at the core of interpersonal difficulties, affective instability, and identity disorders characteristic for emotionally unstable personality disorder (26-28). Mentalization theory was created with the goal of explaining the psychopathology of borderline personality disorder. According to this theory, mentalization is a process through which we determine the meaning of subjective states and mental processes in ourselves and others. Understanding the behavior of others and their likely mental states and emotions is considered a developmental achievement that stems from the child-caregiver relationship (26), i.e. the caregiver's "marked consistent represen-

razvojnim postignućem koje proizlazi iz odnosa djetete-skrbnik (26), odnosno skrbnikovog (majčinog) „obilježenog dosljednog predočavanja“ (zrcaljenja) djetetovih unutarnjih stanja u kontekstu sigurne privrženosti, a obuhvaća majčino zrcaljenje emocionalnog stanja djeteta, njezinu re-prezentaciju i ispravno tumačenje djetetovih osjećaja i potreba. Tako djetete razvija doživljaj vlastitog unutarnjeg svijeta i svijest o mogućnosti da svojim osjećajima izazove promjenu u majčinom ponašanju (29). Sukladno tome poremećaji ranih odnosa privrženosti, traumatična iskustva, zlostavljanje, neosjetljivost i neempatičnost skrbnika mogu negativno utjecati na djetetovu sposobnost mentaliziranja (29-31). Deficiti u mentaliziranju (funkcioniranja na predmentalizacijskim i nementalizacijskim razinama razmišljanja) povezuju se s modelima nesigurne privrženosti, a iskustva osobe su tada prekonkretna, potpuno beznačajna ili je razumijevanje motiva za ponašanje potpuno fizičko (29).

## VISOKOKONFLIKTNI RAZVODI

Postojeća emocionalno nestabilna ličnost roditelja zbog straha od napuštanja i osjetljivosti na odbacivanje, može se aktivirati i doći do izražaja tijekom i nakon prekida partnerske zajednice te rezultirati neprikladnim i manipulativnim ponašanjima. Osobe s ovim poremećajem ličnosti mogu se obećati partneru, prijetiti samoubojstvom ili pokušati samoubojstvo (4,32). Prijetnje samoubojstvom ponekad su poziv u pomoć, a ponekad posljedica emocionalnog kraha. Procjenjuje se da 10 % osoba na kraju izvrši samoubojstvo. U takvim situacijama partneri ponekad dobivaju oprostajno pismo s porukom da su oni „krivi“ zbog počinjenog samoubojstva (4). Zbog osjećaja usamljenosti neke osobe pažnju usmjere na djecu (2) kako bi na taj način umanjile osjećaj usamljenosti. Ponekad stvaraju nezdrav i ovisan odnos s djecom koja mogu biti zamjena za partnera. Također,

„mirroring“ (mirroring) of the child’s inner states in the context of secure attachment, and comprises the mother’s mirroring of the child’s emotional state, her representation and correct interpretation of the child’s feelings and needs. The child thus develops a mental image of their own inner world and becomes conscious of their ability to change the mother’s behavior through their feelings (29). Disorders in early attachment relationships, such as traumatic experiences, abuse, and insensitivity and lack of empathy in the caregiver can negatively influence the child’s ability to mentalize (29-31). Mentalization deficits (functioning at the pre-mentalization and non-mentalized levels of thought) are associated with insecure attachment models, and the experiences of such persons are too concrete, completely insignificant, or their understanding of motives for behavior is completely physical (29).

## HIGH CONFLICT DIVORCES

Due to the fear of abandonment and sensitivity to rejection, a dormant emotionally unstable personality disorder in a parent can be activated and manifest during and after the dissolution of an intimate partnership, resulting in inappropriate manipulative behavior. Persons with this personality disorder can threaten or commit suicide (4,32). Threats of suicide are sometimes a call for help and sometimes the consequence of an emotional breakdown. It is estimated that 10% of such threats ultimately result in suicide. In such situations, partners sometimes receive farewell letters indicating that the suicide is their “fault” (4). Some persons focus their attention on children (2) to reduce the feeling of loneliness. They sometimes create an unhealthy and dependent relationship with the children who serve as a replacement for the partner. They also have a tendency to use the children to blackmail and punish the ex (bad) partner (4). This is most common in high conflict divorces that are marked by highly

sklone su djecu koristiti kako bi ucjenjivale i kažnjavale bivšeg (lošeg) partnera (4). Najčešće je riječ o tzv. visokokonfliktnim razvodima koji se javljaju u situacijama obilježenim snažno izraženim sukobom koji je posljedica nesuglasica koje roditelji (bivši bračni partneri) ne mogu riješiti i zbog kojih kreću u „rat“ koji se odražava na njih, njihovu djecu, ostatak obitelji, prijatelje, ponekad čak i zajednicu (33). Procjenjuje se da je oko jedna trećina svih razvoda obilježena visoko izraženim konfliktom koji se kod 8-12 % roditelja nastavlja i nakon razvoda braka. Riječ je o roditeljima koji su emocionalno uznemireni, manje stabilni te s više poteškoća u funkcioniranju ličnosti (33,34).

Kao obilježja trajnog sukoba prije razvoda braka Johnston (34,35) navodi izražavanje izrazite ljutnje i nepovjerenja partnera, kontinuirano verbalno zlostavljanje, povremenu tjelesnu agresiju, teškoće u komunikaciji s djecom, teškoće supružnika u komunikaciji oko odgoja djece te ometanje odnosa roditelja s djetetom od drugog roditelja koje, također, možemo pokušati razumjeti u kontekstu emocionalno nestabilne ličnosti. Osobe s emocionalno nestabilnom ličnosti sklone su verbalnoj (9,36) i fizičkoj agresiji (3,9,31,38,39), obiteljsko okruženje karakterizira visoka razina sukoba i niska razina kohezije (6), postoje broje poteškoće vezane uz izvršavanje roditeljske uloge, uključujući nemogućnosti postizanja sporazuma oko odgoja djece i izvršavanja roditeljske skrbi, stoga možemo zaključiti da emocionalno nestabilna ličnost roditelja povećava vjerojatnost pojave trajnog sukoba prije i nakon razvoda, odnosno prekida izvanbračne zajednice.

## MANIPULATIVNA PONAŠANJA I MANIPULACIJA

Manipulativna ponašanja roditelja često se javljaju u situacijama visokokonfliktnih razvoda i prekida izvanbračne zajednice, a obuhvaćaju niz različitih ponašanja, verbalnih i

prominent conflicts that are the consequence of disagreements which the parents (previously partners) cannot resolve and over which they go to “war”, affecting them, their children, the rest of the family, friends, and sometimes even the community as a whole (33). It is estimated that about a third of all divorces are marked by high levels of conflict, which continues even after the divorce in 8-12% of the parental couples. These happens for parents who are more emotionally agitated, less stable, and have more functional difficulties in their personalities (33,34).

Johnson (34,35) identifies expressing anger and distrust towards the partner, continuous verbal abuse, intermitted physical aggression, difficulties in communicating with children, communication difficulties between partners on how to raise the children, and disrupting the other partner's relationship with a child as indicators of long-lasting conflict before divorce, all of which we can attempt to understand through in the context of emotionally unstable personality disorder. Persons with emotionally unstable personality disorder are more prone to verbal (9,36) and physical aggression (3,9,31,38,39), their family environment is characterized by a high level of conflict and low levels of cohesion (6), and they tend to have numerous difficulties in performing parental care and raising children, which allows us to conclude that emotionally unstable personality disorder in parents increases the likelihood of long-lasting conflict before and after the divorce or cohabitation dissolution.

## MANIPULATIVE BEHAVIORS AND MANIPULATION

Manipulative behaviors in parents often manifest during high conflict divorces and cohabitation dissolution and comprise a number of different behaviors and verbal and non-verbal messages to the children that paint a negative picture of the other parent, with the goal of excluding them from the child's life and alienating the child from

neverbalnih poruka roditelja koja djetetu šalju negativnu poruku o drugom roditelju s ciljem njegova isključivanja iz života djeteta i otuđivanja djeteta od roditelja bez postojanja razloga koji proizlazi iz odnosa roditelj – dijete. Kod roditelja koji živi s djetetom manipulativna ponašanja manifestiraju se otežavanjem ili onemogućavanjem susreta i druženja djeteta s drugim roditeljem, što u kombinaciji s negativnim porukama i kvalifikacijama roditelja s kojim dijete živi o roditelju s kojim dijete ne živi može dovesti do djetetove nevoljkosti i odbijanja susreta s roditeljem s kojim ne živi. S druge strane, roditelj s kojim dijete ne živi može koristiti susrete s djetetom kao prigodu za slanje negativnih poruka o drugom roditelju (roditelju s kojim dijete živi), komentiranje odgojnih zahtjeva koje drugi roditelj postavlja pred dijete u negativnom kontekstu te prikupljanje informacija o drugom roditelju uz negativno komentiranje čime se dijete stavlja u nepovoljan položaj, zlouporabljuje pravo na susrete s djetetom i potiče otpor djeteta u odnosu na roditelja s kojim živi.

Neutemeljene prijave zlostavljanja i zanemariivanja djeteta usmjerene protiv drugog roditelja poseban su oblik manipulativnih ponašanja (40) pri čemu je važno razlikovati nedokazane optužbe od namjerno proizvedenih. Nedokazane optužbe mogu biti rezultat dobre namjere roditelja koja proizlazi iz sumnjive ozljede djeteta, njegovog čudnog ponašanja, pogrešno protumačene izjave djeteta, nedovoljnog poznavanja djetetove reakcije na razvod i njezinog pogrešnog tumačenja te publiciteta spolnog zlostavljanja koji može rezultirati preosjetljivošću roditelja na mogućnost i simptome potencijalnog zlostavljanja. S druge strane, namjerne optužbe imaju za cilj manipulaciju pravnim, zdravstvenim i socijalnim sustavom radi dobivanja skrbnitva i osvete bivšem partneru (41).

Lažnim optužbama sklone su majke s histrionskom strukturuom ličnosti, strukturuom ličnost

that parent without a valid reason to exclude them from the life of the child stemming from the parent-child relationship itself. In parents living with the child, the manipulative behaviors manifest as attempts to hamper or prevent the other parent from meeting and spending time with the child, which in combination with the negative messaging directed towards the child regarding the parent they are not living with can lead to reticence or refusal on part of the child to meet that parent. On the other hand, the parent not living with the child can use meetings with the child as an opportunity to send negative messages about the other parent (with whom the child is living) and comment on the parental demands placed on the child by the other parent in a negative way, putting the child in an unfavorable position and abusing the parental right to meet the child as well as encouraging resistance towards the parent the child is living with.

Baseless reports of abuse and neglect of the child directed at the other parent are another form of manipulative behavior (40), where it is important to differentiate unproven accusations from intentionally fabricated ones. Unproven accusations can be made in good faith as a result of suspicious injuries, uncharacteristic behavior, misunderstood statements, and insufficient understanding of the child's reaction to the divorce and consequent interpretation of this behavior, as well as the general publicity of sexual abuse, all of which have the potential to create oversensitivity in the parent to the possibility and symptoms of potential abuse. On the other hand, intentionally fabricated accusations are made with the goal of manipulating the legal, healthcare, and social welfare system in order to gain custody and achieve revenge against the ex-partner (41).

Mothers with a histrionic personality structure are prone to false accusations, i.e. the "righteous avenger" personality structure, as are mothers with emotionally unstable personality disorder, which is characterized by a highly dysfunctional mode of behavior in divorces that includes

„pravedna osvetnica“ (varijacija histrionske ličnosti) te emocionalno nestabilnom ličnosti koju karakterizira visoko disfunkcionalan način funkcioniranja u situacijama razvoda, gubitak dodira s realitetom, osebujni i bizarni opisi događaja iz prošlosti koji su nemogući i nemaju veze s realnošću (41,42). Muškarci s emocionalno nestabilnom ličnosti skloniji su nasilnom ponašanju i pokretanju sudskih sporova zbog čega je njihovo ponašanje lakše uočiti, dok su žene sklonije manipulativnom ponašanju i kontroli zbog čega njihovo ponašanje nerijetko ostaje neprepoznato kao takvo. Primjerice, majke često neće odgovoriti na telefonske pozive i pisma očeva u vezi dogovora zajedničkog vikenda ili godišnjeg odmora oca s djetetom, a ako se otac samo jednom ne složi s majčinim zahtjevom vezanim uz njezino provođenje vremena s djetetom, ona će se odmah obratiti nadležnim stručnjacima i stvoriti sliku oca kao osobe koja odbija suradnju, s kojom nije moguće postići dogovor i koja se nije spremna prilagoditi. Također, sklone su lažno optužiti očeve za različite oblike nasilja, uključujući fizičko i seksualno nasilje s ciljem dobivanja skrbništva nad djetetom (5).

Kao posljedica manipulativnih ponašanja roditelja kod djeteta se može razviti sindrom otuđenja od roditelja. Riječ je o psihološkom stanju djeteta koje je uvjetovanom manipulacijom od roditelja koji ima skrbništvo, odnosno s kojim dijete živi, i koji intenzivno nastoji okrenuti dijete protiv drugog roditelja potičući kod djeteta mržnju prema drugom roditelju (43). Krnić (44) razlikuje sindrom otuđenja od roditelja i sindrom zlonamjernog roditelja. Za sindrom otuđenja od roditelja karakteristična je djetetova opsjednutost negativnim aspektima jednog roditelja pri čemu su djetetove optužbe ili netočne ili djelomično točne, ali s velikim pretjerivanjem. Kod djeteta je prisutan osjećaj trajne krivnje tijekom kontakta s roditeljem s kojim ne živi, a koji je posljedica ponašanja drugog roditelja. Za sindrom zlonamjernog roditelja

losing touch with reality and idiosyncratic and bizarre descriptions of past events that are impossible and have nothing to do with reality (41,42). Men with emotionally unstable personality disorder are more prone to violent behavior and to starting court battles, making their behavior easier to spot, while women are more prone to manipulative and controlling behavior, often resulting in their behavior going unrecognized for what it is. For example, mothers will often ignore letters and phone calls from the father attempting to arrange spending a weekend or vacation with the child, but if the father ever disagrees with the mother's requests regarding her spending time with the child she will immediately report him to the relevant authorities and create an image of the father as a person who is refusing to cooperate, with whom an agreement cannot be reached, and who is not willing to compromise. They are also prone to falsely accusing fathers of various types of violence, including physical and sexual abuse, with the goal of winning custody over the child (5).

Manipulative behaviors in the parents can lead to the development of parental alienation syndrome. This is a psychological state in the child that is conditioned through manipulation on part of the parent with custody, i.e. the parent the child is living with, when the manipulation is an intensive attempt to turn the child against the other parent and encourage hatred towards them (43). Krnić (44) differentiates between parental alienation syndrome and malicious parent syndrome. Parental alienation syndrome is characterized by the child's obsession for the negative aspects of one parent, where the child's accusations are either incorrect or partially correct but severely overblown. A constant feeling of guilt is present in the child during contact with the parent with whom they do not live, which is the consequence of the behavior of the other parent. Malicious parent syndrome is characterized by one parent becoming obsessed with (maliciously) punishing the other parent, which manifests as attacks on the other parent



karakteristična je opsjednutost jednog roditelja (zlonamjernog) kažnjavanjem drugog roditelja koja se očituje napadima na drugog roditelja i/ili njegovu imovinu, ocrnjivanjem drugog roditelja, manipulacijom drugim ljudima pa i kršenjem zakona, odnosno lažnim optužbama za spolno zlostavljanje djece od drugog roditelja, krađom dokumenata drugog roditelja i sl.

U opisanim situacijama stručnjaci centara za socijalnu skrb (CZSS) imaju važnu ulogu u zaštiti dobrobiti maloljetne djece i postizanju sporazuma među roditeljima oko ostvarivanja sadržaja roditeljske skrbi, međutim, nerijetko su i oni žrtve manipulativnih ponašanja roditelja. Roditelji u slučaju lažnih optužbi o spolnom zlostavljanju na pitanja stručnjaka često odgovaraju općenito, navodeći kako ne znaju što se je točno dogodilo, istovremeno dajući informacije na koje stručnjaci, prema profesionalnoj dužnosti, moraju reagirati i sukladno tome, prijaviti zlostavljanje mjerodavnim institucijama (41). Iskustva iz prakse pokazuju da su korisnici usluga i prava u sustavu socijalne skrbi, osobito roditelji tijekom postupka razvoda i odlučivanja o roditeljskoj skrbi, skloni učestalim (neopravdanim) prigovorima i prijavama protiv postupanja nadležnih socijalnih radnika i drugih stručnjaka.

## CILJEVI I ISTRAŽIVAČKA PITANJA

U ovom radu usmjereni smo na obilježja prekida partnerske zajednice roditelja sa simptomima emocionalno nestabilne ličnosti što je dio opsežnijeg istraživanja upoznatosti stručnjaka iz centara za socijalnu skrb s emocionalno nestabilnom ličnosti i poteškoćama koje imaju u radu s korisnicima sa simptomima ovog poremećaja ličnosti.<sup>2</sup> Sukladno tome, postavljena su sljedeća istraživačka pitanja:

<sup>2</sup> S obzirom da je ovaj rad dio šireg istraživanja svrha i ciljevi rada, istraživačka pitanja, uzorak, postupak prikupljanja podataka, metodološka ograničenja i dio postupka obrade podataka opisani su na sličan način kao u radu Maljuna, Ajduković i Ostojić (45)

and/or their property, denigrating the other parent, manipulating other people, and even breaking the law such as making false accusations of child sexual abuse on part of the other parent, stealing documents from the other parent, etc.

In these kinds of situations, experts working in social welfare centers (SWC) have an important role in protecting underage children and achieving an agreement between parents on how to provide parental care, but they themselves can sometimes become victims of the manipulative behavior on part of a parent. When making a false accusation on sexual abuse, the parent will often give general answers in response to the expert's questions, claiming that they do not know what happened exactly but still providing sufficient information for the experts to be professionally required to react and report the abuse to the responsible institutions (41). Experience has shown that those availing themselves to the services and rights within the social welfare system, especially in the case of parents in divorce or custody proceedings, are prone to repeated (unwarranted) complaints and reports against the social workers and other experts involved in the process.

## GOALS AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

In this article, we focus on the characteristics of parental partnership dissolution in parents with symptoms of emotionally unstable personality disorder, which is part of a larger study on the awareness of social welfare center professionals with emotionally unstable personality disorder and difficulties they face when working with those who exhibit symptoms of this disorder.<sup>2</sup> Therefore, the following research questions were posed:

<sup>2</sup> Given that this article is part of a larger study, the aim and goals, research questions, sample, data collection procedure, methodological limitations, and part of the data processing are described in similarly to Maljuna, Ajduković, and Ostojić (45).

1. Koje simptome emocionalno nestabilne ličnosti roditelja stručnjaci Odjela za zaštitu djece, braka i obitelji pri centru za socijalnu skrb prepoznaju u situacijama ugrožene dobrobiti djeteta?
2. U kojim situacijama prema mišljenju stručnjaka Odjela za zaštitu djece, braka i obitelji simptomi emocionalno nestabilne ličnosti roditelja dolaze do izražaja?
3. Koje intervencije poduzimaju stručnjaci Odjela za zaštitu djece, braka i obitelji prema roditeljima kod kojih su prisutni simptomi emocionalno nestabilne ličnosti u situacijama ugrožene dobrobiti djeteta?
4. S kojim poteškoćama se susreću stručnjaci Odjela za zaštitu djece, braka i obitelji u radu s roditeljima kod kojih su prisutni simptomi emocionalno nestabilne ličnosti?
5. Koje su potrebe stručnih djelatnika Odjela za zaštitu djece, braka i obitelji koji rade s roditeljima kod kojih su prisutni simptomi emocionalno nestabilne ličnosti?

1. Which symptoms of emotionally unstable personality disorder does the staff of the Department for the Protection of Children, Family, and Marriage at the social welfare center recognize in situations in which the welfare of the child is endangered?
2. In which situations do the symptoms of emotionally unstable personality disorder in parents manifest, in the opinion of the staff at the Department for the Protection of Children, Family, and Marriage?
3. Which interventions does the staff at the Department for the Protection of Children, Family, and Marriage employ when symptoms of emotionally unstable personality disorder manifest in situations in which the welfare of the child is endangered?
4. Which difficulties does the staff at the Department for the Protection of Children, Family, and Marriage face in working with parents who present with symptoms of emotionally unstable personality disorder?
5. What are the needs of the staff at the Department for the Protection of Children, Family, and Marriage working with parents who present with symptoms of emotionally unstable personality disorder?

## METODOLOGIJA ISTRAŽIVANJA

### Uzorak

Istraživanjem je obuhvaćeno 12 socijalnih radnica i psihologinja zaposlenih na Odjelu za zaštitu djece, obitelji i braka pri centrima za socijalnu skrb na području grada Zagreba i Zagrebačke županije. Odabir sudionika temeljio se na načelima kompetentnosti, dobrovoljnosti i motiviranosti za sudjelovanjem u istraživanju. Sudionik istraživanja trebao je biti dobar informator, zaposlen kao socijalni radnik ili psiholog na Odjelu za zaštitu djece, obitelji i braka pri centru za socijalnu skrb. Raspon dobi sudionika kreće se između 30 i 60 godina (prosječna dob je 45 godina). Svi sudionici istraživanja su ženskog spola. Od ukupnog broja sudionika, 9 sudionika su socijalne radnice, a 3 sudionika psihologinje. Prosječno trajanje ostvarenog

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

### Sample

This study included 12 female social workers and psychologists employed at the Department for the Protection of Children, Family, and Marriage at social welfare centers in the area of Zagreb and Zagreb County. Participant selection was based on the principles of competence, voluntary participation, and motivation for participation in the study. Study participants had to be good informants and be employed as a social worker or psychologist at the Department for the Protection of Children, Family, and Marriage in a social welfare center.

ukupnog radnog staža u struci sudionika je 18 godina (od 2 do 35 godina), a radnog staža na Odjelu za zaštitu djece, obitelji i braka 8 godina (od 1 do 10 godina). Uzorak je namjerni.

## Postupak prikupljanja podataka

Podatci su prikupljeni metodom polustrukturiranog intervjua<sup>3</sup> temeljem suglasnosti ravnatelja CZSS, u sklopu aktivnosti programa „Sustavna podrška obiteljima s djecom: Procjenjivanje i smanjivanje rizika za dobrobit djece“ UNICEF-a, Društva za psihološku pomoć i Ministarstva za demografiju, obitelj, mlade i socijalnu politiku. Prije svakog intervjua ispitaniku je objašnjeno tko provodi istraživanje, u koju svrhu i s kojim ciljevima. Navedeno je očekivano trajanje intervjua te da će intervjui, uz njihovu prethodnu suglasnost, biti sniman aplikacijom diktafona na mobilnom uređaju. Sudionicima istraživanja zajamčena je dobrovoljnost, povjerljivost, anonimnost, pravo na odustajanje od razgovora tijekom intervjua te pravo ne odgovaranja na pojedina pitanja. Intervjui su u prosjeku trajali 31 minutu. Devet intervjua provedeno je u prostorijama centara za socijalnu skrb, a tri intervjua u ugostiteljskom objektu (kafiću). Postupak prikupljanja podataka trajao je od travnja do srpnja 2019. godine.

## Postupak obrade podataka

Dobiveni zvučni zapisi su transkribirani uz minimalno jezično uređivanje. U obradi podataka korištena je kvalitativna analiza podataka koja je provedena postupkom tematske analize, a koja ima eksplorativni karakter. Teme se definiraju kao dijelovi u cjelini prikupljenih podataka koji su važni za istraživačka pitanja te predstavljaju obrasce određenog sadržaja. Pomoću tematske analize moguće je opisati, ali

<sup>3</sup> Predložak s pitanjima za polustrukturirani intervjui može se dobiti na upit od prve autorice teksta.

The age range of participants was between 30 and 60 years of age (average age 45). All participants were women. Nine participants were social workers, and 3 participants were psychologists. Average total work experience in the field for the participants was 18 years (between 2 and 35 years), and employment at the Department for the Protection of Children, Family, and Marriage was 8 years on average (between 1 and 10 years). Sampling was purposeful.

## Data acquisition

Data was acquired via a semi-structured interview<sup>3</sup> approved by the director of the SWC, as part of the “Systematic Support for Families with Children: Assessing and Reducing Risk to Child Welfare” program by UNICEF, the Society for Psychological Aid, and the Ministry of Demography, Family, Youth, and Social Policy. Prior to each interview, each participant received an explanation of who was conducting the study and of its goals and purpose. The expected duration of the interview was indicated, and the participant was informed that the interview will be recorded with using a mobile phone recording application. Participants in the study were guaranteed voluntary participation, confidentiality, anonymity, the right to terminate the conversation during the interview, and the right to decline to answer individual questions. Interviews lasted 31 minutes on average. Nine interviews were conducted in the offices of the social welfare centers, and 3 were conducted in a coffee shop. The data acquisition process lasted from April 2019 to July 2019.

## Data processing

The acquired recordings were transcribed with minimal language editing. Data analysis used exploratory qualitative analysis using thematic

<sup>3</sup> The template for the semi-structured interview is available upon request from the first author of this article.

i dodatno interpretirati različite aspekte istraživog konstrukta (46).

U ovom radu bit će prikazane tematske cjeline „Situacije u kojima do izražaja dolaze simptomi emocionalno nestabilne ličnosti roditelja“ s naglaskom na prekide bračnih i izvanbračnih zajednica i – „Manipulativna ponašanja“.

Podatci o tematskim cjelinama „Situacije u kojima dolaze do izražaja simptomi emocionalno nestabilne ličnosti roditelja“ i „Manipulativna ponašanja“ dobiveni su analizom odgovora sudionika istraživanja na slijedeće pitanja iz predložka za intervju: *„Sjetite se i opišite jedan Vaš slučaj u kojem su, prema Vašem mišljenju, kod roditelja postojali simptomi emocionalno nestabilne ličnosti ili je bila postavljena dijagnoza emocionalno nestabilne ličnosti. Kako su se, prema Vašem mišljenju, u ovom slučaju kod roditelja manifestirali simptomi ovog poremećaja ličnosti? Jeste li u nekim drugim slučajevima uočili neke simptome emocionalno nestabilne ličnosti kod roditelja? Ako da, u kojima?, „Što Vam predstavlja izazov/teškoću u radu s roditeljem kod kojeg su, prema Vašem mišljenju, prisutni neki simptomi emocionalno nestabilne ličnosti?“*

Svatom sudioniku istraživanja dodijeljena je zasebna oznaka koja se sastoji od slova i brojanog zapisa (npr. S1) te se nalazi uz izjave sudionika. Na taj način osigurana je anonimizacija prikupljenih podataka.

## Metodološka ograničenja istraživanja

Ovo istraživanje ima određena metodološka i spoznajna ograničenja koja su najviše povezana s organizacijskim poteškoćama. Zbog prostornih uvjeta rada, nekoliko intervjua provedeno je u prisutnosti druge osobe (kolegice koja sa sudionikom istraživanja dijeli ured) što dovodi u pitanje povjerljivosti koju smo jamčili sudionicima istraživanja prilikom traženja usmenog informiranog pristanka za sudjelovanje u istraživanju, ali i otvara pitanje međusobnog utje-

analysis. Themes were defined as parts in the totality of the gathered data that were relevant to the research question and represented patterns of specific content. Thematic analysis allows both the description and the additional interpretation of different aspects of the analyzed construct (46).

The present article describes the theme “Situations in which symptoms of emotionally unstable personality disorder in parents manifest” with an emphasis on divorce and cohabitation dissolution and the “Manipulative behaviors” theme.

Data on these themes were acquired by analyzing the responses of the study participants to the following questions from the interview template: “Recall and describe one of your cases in which, in your opinion, parents presented with symptoms of emotionally unstable personality disorder or had an established diagnosis of emotionally unstable personality disorder. In your opinion, how did the symptoms of this personality disorder manifest in the parents in this case? Did you notice some symptoms of emotionally unstable personality disorder in other cases? If yes, in which?” and “What represents a challenge/difficulty for you when working with parents who, in your opinion, present some symptoms of emotionally unstable personality disorder?”

Every study participant was assigned a code based on a letter and numeral (e.g. S1) that accompanies the responses of the participants. This assures the anonymization of the acquired data.

## Methodological limitations of the study

This study had certain methodological and epistemological limitations, mostly related to organizational difficulties. Due to location, some interviews were conducted in the presence of another person (the colleague with whom the participant shared the office), which threatens the confidentiality we guaranteed the participants during acquisition of oral consent but may have also caused undue influence between

caja sudionika u onim situacijama kada su obje kolegice sudjelovale u istraživanju. Također, tri intervjua provedena su u ugostiteljskom objektu. Iako su intervjui provedeni u dijelu ugostiteljskog objekta u kojem u trenutku provođenja istraživanja nije bilo drugih gostiju, postojali su distraktori (npr. glazba u pozadini, zvonjenje mobitela) koji su se možda negativno odrazili na pažnju sudionika.

## REZULTATI

Sukladno postavljenim ciljevima i istraživačkim pitanjima dobiveni su sljedeći rezultati teme „Situacije u kojima dolaze do izražaja simptomi emocionalno nestabilne ličnosti roditelja“.

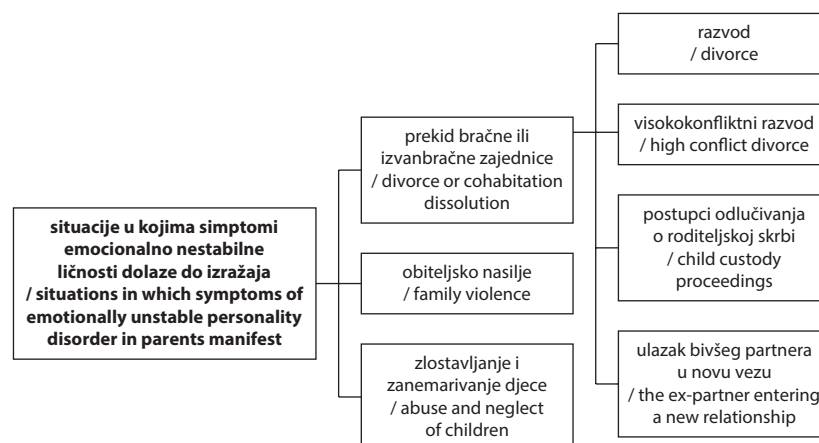
Simptomi emocionalno nestabilne ličnosti roditelja prema iskustvu stručnjaka, najčešće se očituju u **situacijama narušenih partnerskih odnosa** „kada Centar prvi puta reagira, daleke na njihovu svađu.“ (S2), „kod bračnih odnosa koji dođu u fazu da moraju potražiti savjetovanje“ (S6), „ili kad krenu učestali sukobi“ (S10), **prekida bračne ili izvanbračne zajednice** „Kad je žena odlučila otići, onda se to u njemu probudilo...“ (S4), „Znači u trenutku prekida zajednice“ (S10) koji nerijetko imaju obilježja **visokokonfliktnih razvoda** „Evo mog početak sa slučajem du-

participants in situations where both colleagues took part in the study. Furthermore, three interviews were conducted in a coffee shop. Although they were conducted in areas where there were no other guests at the time, some distractions were present (e.g. background music, phone ringing) that may have adversely affected the concentration of the participants.

## RESULTS

Based on our study goals and research questions, the following results were obtained for the topic “Situations in which symptoms of emotionally unstable personality disorder in parents manifest”.

According to the opinions of our participants, symptoms of emotionally unstable personality disorder most commonly manifest in **situations in which the relationship between the partners has deteriorated**, “when the Center first reacts, i.e. after they have had a fight.” (S2), “in marriage relationships that get to the point where they have to seek counselling” (S6), “when the constant fights start” (S10), **divorce or cohabitation dissolution** “When the woman decided to leave, that was when this woke up inside him...” (S4), “So at the point when they broke up”



**SLIKA 1.** Situacije u kojima simptomi emocionalno nestabilne ličnosti roditelja dolaze do izražaja. U ovom radu prikazani su rezultati koji se odnose na situacije prekida bračne i izvanbračne zajednice.

**FIGURE 1.** Situations in which symptoms of emotionally unstable personality disorder in parents manifest. This article presents the results pertaining to situations related to divorce and cohabitation dissolution.

gotrajnog razvoda braka. To je bio jedan konfliktan razvod.“ (S4) *“Najčešće, meni se čini, u tim razvodima braka koji su baš izrazito konfliktan to ispliva na površinu.”* (S3) i **postupcima odlučivanja o roditeljskoj skrbi**,...*to se dosta često ovdje očituje u situaciji razvoda ili odlučivanja o roditeljskoj skrbi...*“ (S1), *“Došli su trenutku prekida te zadnje vanbračne zajednice radi dogovora oko roditeljske skrbi.”* (S3), *„i kad su u tijeku postupci donošenja odluke s kojim roditeljem će dijete živjeti pa su najintenzivnije te njihove osobine ličnosti i ta njihova ponašanja“* (S10). Prema iskustvu stručnjaka, okidač može biti i **ulazak bivšeg partnera u novu vezu** *„Vrlo često bude aktivirano u situacijama kada bivši partner nađe novog partnera pa se tu javljaju opet nekontrolirana ponašanja...“* (S8).

Druga tematska cjelina koju ćemo prikazati u ovom radu odnosi se na obilježja prekida partnerske zajednice roditelja sa simptomima emocionalno nestabilne ličnosti - „Manipulativna ponašanja“.

Prema iskustvu stručnjaka prekidi partnerskih zajednica osoba kod kojih su prisutni neki simptomi emocionalno nestabilne ličnosti obilježeni su manipulativnim ponašanjem i manipulacijom djetetom, drugim roditeljem, stručnjacima, policijom, pravosudnim, socijalnim i zdravstvenim sustavom. O manipulaciji zdravstvenim sustavom detaljnije pišu Maljuna, Ajduković i Ostojić (45).

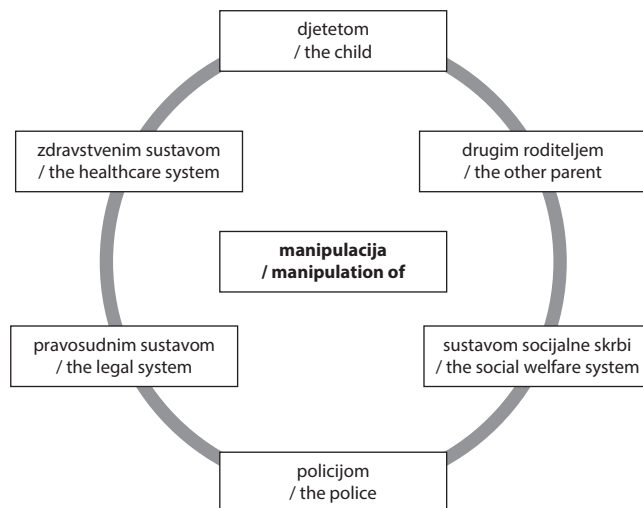
**Manipulacija djetetom** uskom je povezana sa **manipulacijom drugim roditeljem**, osobito kada je riječ o **onemogućavanju kontakta i druženja djece s drugim roditeljem** *„zbog onemogućavanja susreta djece i oca...“* (S1), *„sprječavanje kontakta, susreta i druženja djeteta s ocem“* (S2), *“Ta majka vrlo lijepo razgovara, vrlo lijepo prikazuje svoj odnos s djetetom, stoji na raspolaganju tom ocu, a djetetu šalje poruke pa nemoj s njim, ti imaš pravo odlučiti, imaš sada druge obveze i posla, pa ljepše nam je da idemo teti, strini i tako dalje.”* (S10), **kupovanju narkomanosti i ljubavi djece** *„Sa skupim poklonima ih je pokušavao pridobiti, ono kupovao je dječ-*

*(S10) that often have characteristics of **high conflict divorce** “Well I can start with the case of a lengthy divorce. It was a divorce full of conflict”* (S4) *“Usually, I’d say, it’s in these divorces that really have a lot of conflict that this rises to the surface.”* (S3), and **during child custody proceedings**, *“...here that’s pretty common in divorces or during child custody proceedings...”* (S1), *“They came at the point where their cohabitation ended and they had to agree on child custody”* (S3), *“and when child custody is being decided so these aspect of their personality and those behaviors are most pronounced”* (S10). According to participant experience, a trigger can also be **the ex-partner entering a new relationship** *“This can very often trigger when the ex-partner finds a new partner, so these uncontrolled behaviors manifest again...”* (S8).

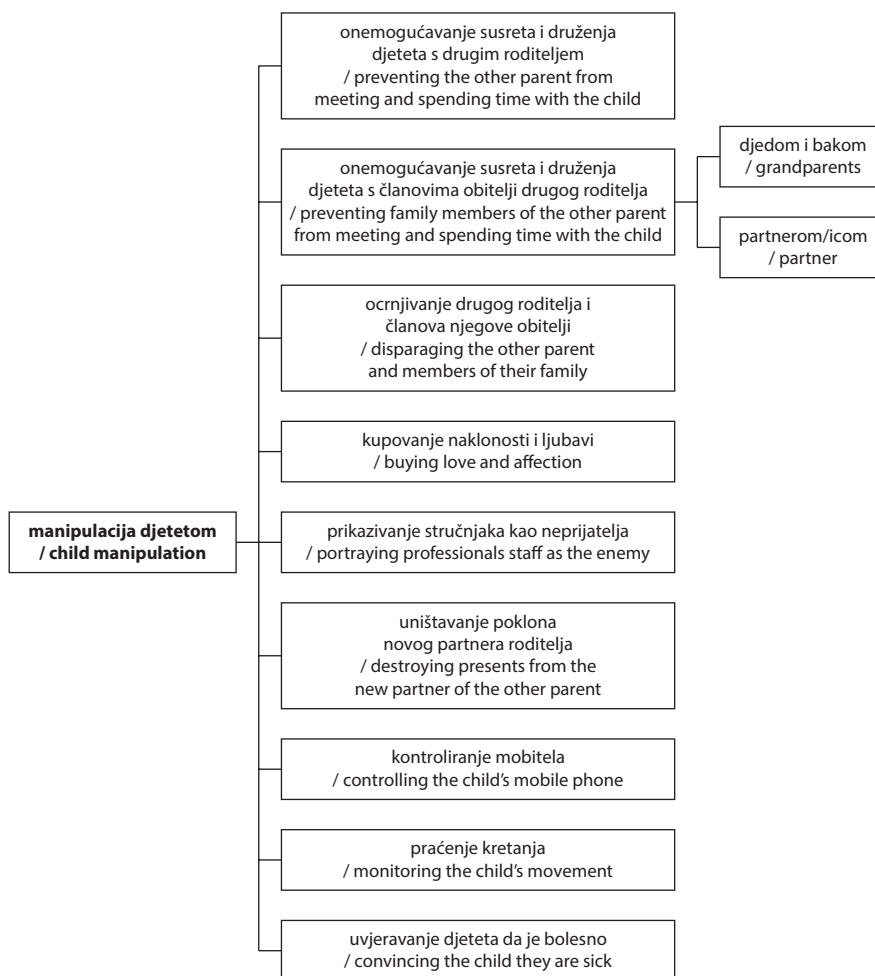
The second theme we will describe in this article relates to “Manipulative behavior” in characteristics of partnership dissolution in parents with symptoms of emotionally unstable personality disorder.

According to the study participants, intimate partnership breakups in persons who exhibit some symptoms of emotionally unstable personality disorder are characterized by manipulative behavior and manipulation of the child, other parent, social welfare professionals, the police, and the legal, social welfare, and healthcare systems. Healthcare system manipulation is described in more detail by Maljuna, Ajduković i Ostojić (45).

**Child manipulation** is closely related to **manipulation of the other parent**, especially through attempts to prevent the other parent from meeting and spending time with the child *“due to the prevention of meetings between the father and the children...”* (S1), *“preventing the father from contacts, meetings, and spending time with the child”* (S2), *“This mother talks very nicely, describes her relationship with the child very nicely, she claims to cooperate with that father, but she sends messages to the child saying ‘don’t go with him’, ‘you have the right to decide’, ‘you have other work and obligations*



**SLIKA 2.** Obilježja prekida partnerske zajednice: *Manipulativna ponašanja*  
**FIGURE 2.** Characteristics of intimate partnership breakups: *Manipulative behavior*

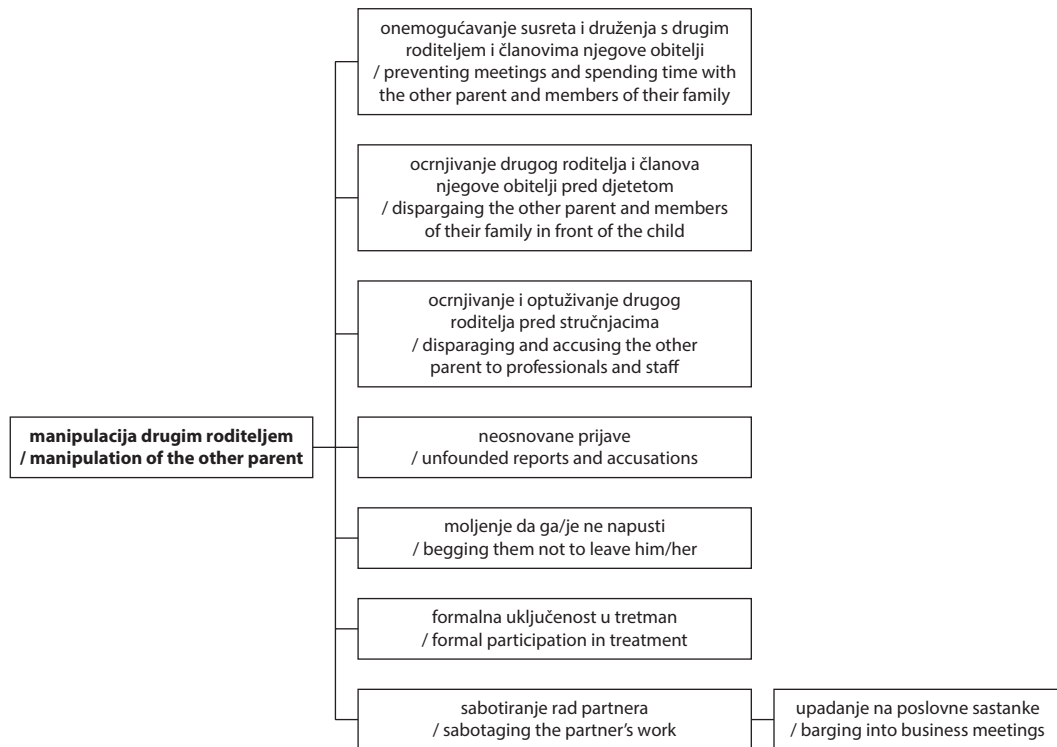


**SLIKA 3.** Manipulacija djetetom  
**FIGURE 3.** Child manipulation

ju ljubav zapravo.“ (S4), **ocrnjivanje drugog roditelja** „...obilato iznosila pred djecom niz, niz tih podataka o, iz njihovog partnerskog odnosa...“ (S1), „...oca je prikazivala u negativnom svjetlu pri čemu je zapravo koristila i uvredljive riječi i prenosila detalje sukoba s bivšim partnerom.“ (S10), **članova njegove obitelji** „ocrnjivanje njegovih članova obitelji“ (S2) i **novog partnera/ice** „...prikazivala je novu partnericu u negativnom svjetlu...“ (S10), **onemogućavanje druženja djeteta s djedom i bakom** „Kako često unutar obitelj postoje više članova, onda se tu znalo postupati i u odnosu na baku i dedu na način da im se brani viđenje na način da se djeci strogo zabranjivalo viđenje s bakom i djedom.“ (S10) te novom **partnericom drugog roditelja** „... i preko djece je majka imala informacije o očevom privatnom životu, odnosno o činjenici da je nova partnerica posrijedi. Dakle, ponašanje majke u odnosu na tu djecu je bilo na način da im je zabranjivala druženje s tom osobom.“ (S10). Roditelji kod kojih su prisutni simptomi emocionalno nestabilne ličnosti skloni su **uništavati poklone novog partnera/ice drugog roditelja** „Onda kad bi se djevojčica pohvalila da je dobila špangicu ili nešto drugo od te druge partnerice, majka je to znala agresivno čupati, trgati, bacati...“ (S10), **kontrolirati dječje mobitele** „...da se kontroliralo dječje mobitele...“ (S10), **pratiti kretanje djece** „da im se stavljao GPS kako bi se pratilo gdje djeca borave za vrijeme kad su kod tog drugog roditelja tako da je to zapravo sve skupa znao biti pritisak na djecu.“ (S10) i **prikazivati stručnjaka kao neprijatelja** „Tu su neka ponašanja roditelja koja su neprimjerena, pa nas dijete doživljava kao neprijatelja jer mu je to roditelj tako prezentiraju.“ (S12),. Jedna stručnjakinja navodi kako je majka kod koje uočava simptome emocionalno nestabilne ličnosti **uvjeravala dijete da je bolesno** „Obzirom da on nije bolestan, doista nije, mama mu stalno imputira da je nešto s njim i da nešto s njime nije uredu... On izrazito želi biti pilot i da mu mama i dalje priča da je on bolestan na srce i da ne može bit pilot.“ (S1).

now’, ‘we’ll have a nicer time if we go to our aunt, etc.’ (10), **buying the love and affection of the child** “He tried to get them on his side with expensive gifts, he was basically buying the children’s love.” (S4), **disparaging the other parent** “she would tell the children lots and lots of that stuff about, from their intimate partner relationship...” (S1), “...she would paint the father in a negative light where she would even use insulting words and talk about the details of the conflict with the ex-partner.” (S10), **disparaging members of the other parent’s family** “disparaging his family members” (S2) and **the other parent’s new partner** “...she would pain the new partner in a negative light...” (S10), **preventing the child from spending time with grandparents** “Since there are often several members in the family, sometimes the behavior was aimed at the granny and grandpa by preventing the from seeing the children by strictly forbidding the children from seeing their grandparents.” (S10), and **preventing the child from seeing the new partner of the other parent** “...and the mother would get information on the father’s private life through the children, i.e. the fact that he had a new partner. So, the mother’s behavior towards that children was such that she forbade them from spending time with that person.” (S10). Parents in whom symptoms of emotionally unstable personality disorder are present are prone to **destroying presents from the new partner of the other parent** “And then when the little girl proudly showed the hair pin or something that she got from the other partner, the mother would aggressively grab that, break it, throw it away...” (S10), **controlling the child’s mobile phone** “...that the child’s mobile phones were controlled...” (S10), **monitor the child’s movement** “that GPS was used to monitor where the children were staying while they were with the other parent so all of that really put a lot of pressure on the children.” (S10) and **painting professionals and staff as the enemy** “There were some behaviors from parents that are inappropriate, so the child sees us as enemies because the parents present us that way.” (S12). One participant said that a mother in whom she noticed symptoms





**SLIKA 4.** Manipulacija drugim roditeljem  
**FIGURE 4.** Manipulating the other parent

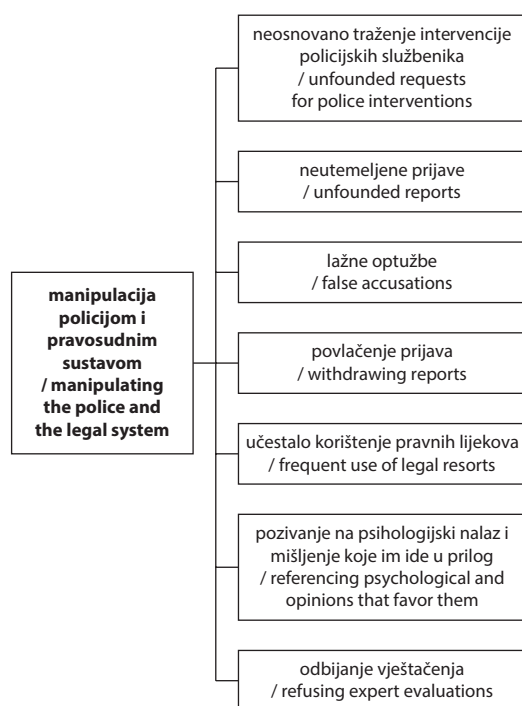
Stručnjaci izvještavaju o različitim **pokušajima manipuliranja ponašanjem partnera** „gdje žene manipuliraju s ponašanjem partnera...” (S2), „U odnosu s partnerom pokušava stalno manipulirati. U principu na djelu sam vidjela taj pokušaj utjecaja na partnera...” (S8) koji osim prethodno navedenih oblika manipulacije (npr. onemogućavanju susreta i druženja roditelja i članova njegove obitelji s djetetom, ocrnjivanje drugog roditelja i članova njegove obitelji pred djetetom i dr.) uključuju **moljenje partnera da ih ne napusti te formalno uključivanje u tretman** „Nemoj me ostaviti, ići ću na tretman...prividno su spremni na tretman da ispune obveze i utječu na partnera...” (S12), **sabotiranje rada** partnera koje ponekad uključuje **upadanje na poslovne sastanke** „On je išao toliko daleko da je znao njoj u njezinoj firmi upadat na sastanke, minirat njezin rad, tražit od nje ne znam, nisi mi poslala gaće za dijete, doslovce usred sastanka.“ (S4), **ocrnjivanje i optuživanje drugog roditelja/bivšeg partnera pred stručnjacima** „...tu

of emotionally unstable personality disorder attempted to **convince the child they were sick** “Since he wasn’t sick, he really wasn’t, but the mother was always telling him that there was something wrong with him... He really wanted to be a pilot and his mother kept telling him that he had a weak heart and couldn’t be a pilot.” (S1).

Our participant reported different **attempts to manipulate the behavior of partners** “where women manipulate the behavior of their partners...” (S2), “They constantly try to manipulate in their relationship with their partner. I’ve seen this attempt to influence the partner in practice...” (S8) that in addition to the previously indicated forms of manipulation (e.g. preventing a parent and their family members in meeting spending time with the child, disparaging the other parent and their families in front of the child, etc.) also include **begging the partner not to leave them and formal participation in the treatment** “Don’t leave me, I’ll go to treatment... they are seemingly prepared to go to treatment to fulfill their obligations and influence the partner...”

bi ona, znači pobrojavala niz njegovih nekakvih negativnosti.“ (S1) „...onda idu vrlo optužujući. Onda ih optužuje za koje kakve radnje, da su oni nasilnici, ovisnici ili da nisu prema djeci adekvatni da bi se onda to mišljenje mijenjalo za...“ (S7), „...a druga koja mi pada na pamet je davno razvedeni brak i nastojanje majke prikazati oca u negativnom svjetlu ne bi li ga onemogućila i u onom minimalnom obimu osobnih odnosa što ima s djetetom prikazujući ga sa svih aspekata nasilnim.“ (S10)

**Manipulacija policijom** očituje se u **učestalom neosnovanom traženju intervencija policijskih službenika** zbog neutemeljenih pritužbi na drugog roditelja „Znao je zvati policiju ženi ako djeca nisu bila točno u 6 sati pred zgradom nego je on morao sjediti u autu i čekat 5 minuta da žena s drugog kata siđe s dvoje male djece.“ (S4), „...prijavljivala ga policiji da ju je fizički zlostavljao, čak i da ju je silovao...“ (S5), “Ona je pozivala policiju tako radi, jer je smatrala da se netko miješa u njezin život, u njezin odnos sa djetetom, da otac ne brine dobro o djetetu pa mu je slala policiju doma.” (S6), ali i



SLIKA 5. Manipulacija policijom i pravosudnim sustavom  
FIGURE 5. Manipulating the police and the legal system

(S12), **sabotaging the partner's work** which sometimes includes **barging into business meetings** “He went so far as to barge into meetings in her firm, undermine her work, ask of her to I don't know, ‘you didn't send me underpants for the child’, literally in the middle of the meeting.” (S4), **disparaging and accusing the other parent/ex-partner in front of experts** “... this is where she would, so she would list a number of some kind of negative things about him...” (S1) “...and then the get very accusing. Then she accused them of all kinds of things, that they are violent, addicts, or that they are not adequate towards the children in order to change that opinion to...” (S7), “...and the other one that comes to mind is a marriage that ended a long time ago and the attempts of the mother to present the father in a negative light so as to prevent him from even the minimal range of personal relationships he has with the child by presenting him as violent in every aspect.” (S10)

**Manipulating the police** manifests in **repeated unfounded requests for police interventions** due to unfounded police reports against the other parents “He would call the police on his wife if they were not in front of the building exactly at six o'clock so he had to wait for 5 minutes in the car for the wife to come down from the second floor with two small children.” (S4), “...she reported him to the police, that he had physically abused her, even that he raped her...” (S5), “She called the police just because, because she believed someone was interfering with her life, in her relationship with the child, that the father wasn't taking good care of the child so she would send the police to his house.” (S6), but also in complaints against the work of social welfare center staff “She tried to manipulate me. She called the police to our meetings a few times.” (S6), and it is also associated with **manipulation of the legal system** through **false accusations** and **unfounded reports** against the ex-partner “...I don't know, like reporting violence against the children, so every time the children returned from contact with the father there would be some new experiences,

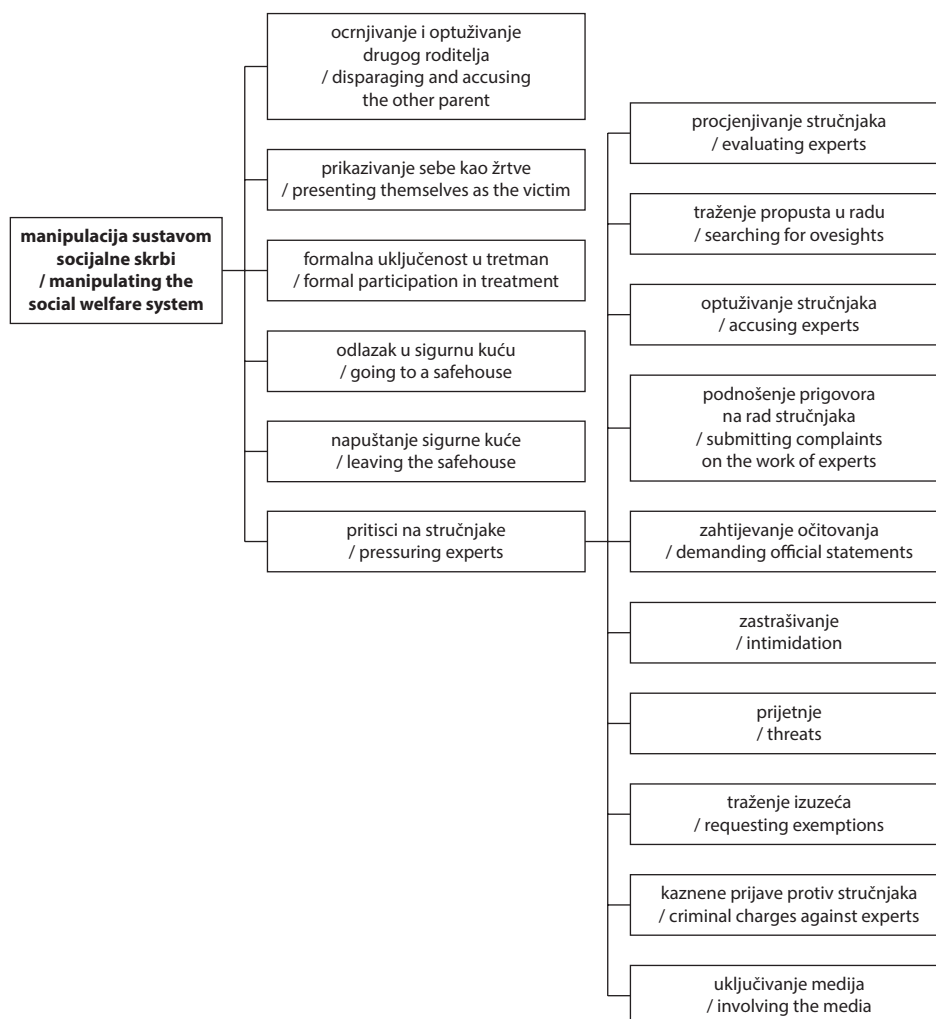
pritužbi na rad djelatnika centara za socijalnu skrb "Htjela je sa mnom manipulirati. Zvala je par puta na susrete policiju." (S6), a povezana je s **manipulacijom pravosudnim sustavom** kroz **lažne optužbe i neutemeljene prijave** protiv bivšeg partnera/ice „...ne znam prijava nasilja u odnosu na djecu, pa svaki put kad bi djeca se vratila s kontakta s ocem bi bilo nekakvih novih doživljaja, događaja zapravo, je l' za koje bi ona navodno saznala od djece... Prva prijava se odnosila na to da ju je silovao...“ (S1) „I tamo ste mogli vidjeti nekakve stvari gdje su dolazili prijavljivat nasilja koja su lažna, nasilja koja ne postoje, ali je naša dužnost da sve prijavimo, a onda kad na kraju vidite da od toga nema ništa...“ (S4), „...ali zapravo ona ima namjeru istisnuti toga oca iz života djeteta. Do sada je jedno četiri pet prijava protiv njega podnijela za nasilje. On je nama donio rješenje iz kojeg je vidljivo da je odbačena svaka takva prijava. Uredno funkcionira, uredno doprinosi i stvara uvjete za svoju djecu.“ (S10) i stručnjaka iz sustava socijalne skrbi (vidi „Manipulaciju sustavom socijalne skrbi“), **povlačenje prijave** „Da bi onda na kraju nakon par tjedana povukla sve te izjave, da su oni bili malo u sukobu, ali ljubav cvijeta.“ (S5), **učestalo korištenje pravnih lijekova** „...al doduše, i jedan i drugi roditelj su obilato koristili pravne lijekove. Znači obostrano bi se žalili na svaku odluku koja je bila donesena, u svakom postupku, a bilo ih je jako dugo.“ (S1), „Onda je išla tu sudska odluka na koju se je bunila...“ (S3), „I nakon što je bila odbačena prijava protiv mene, onda je drugostupanjskom tijelu Komore gospođa uložila žalbu, onda je i na drugostupanjskom tijelu komore isto to bilo odbačeno.“ (S10), **pozivanje na nalaze i mišljenja psihologa koji im idu u prilog** „...ali je ipak otišla kod privatnog psihologa koji je obavio nekakvo testiranje i tu je ona ispala nadprosječno inteligentna. S tim je ona mahala po svuda, po sudovima i govorila kako ona nije bolesna. Smatrala je da ako je ona inteligentna ne može, da ja ona sposobna za sve. I voditi brigu o djetetu i procjenjivanje.“ (S6) i **odbijanje vještačenja** „Sad je sud bio odredio

events rather, right, which she had allegedly found out about from the children... The first report was that he had raped her...“ (S1) “And there you could see things like people making reports of violence that were false, violence that was nonexistent, but it's our duty to report everything, and then in the end you could see that there was nothing to it...” (S4), “...but she actually wanted to push the father out of the child's life. She has made four or five reports of violence against him so far. He brought us a document which shows that each of these reports was dismissed. He functions just fine; he properly contributes and ensures good conditions for his children.” (S10) and against the staff of the social welfare center (see “Manipulating the social welfare system”), **withdrawing reports** “So in the end after a few weeks she withdrew all those statements, that they had a bit of a fight but now love was blooming.” (S5), **frequent use of legal resorts** “...however, both parents gratuitously used legal resorts. So they would both appeal every court ruling that was made, in every court process, and there were very many.” (S1), “And then there was that court ruling which she challenged...” (S3), “And after the report against me was dismissed, then she made an appeal at the higher court body of the Chamber, and then that higher court also dismissed it.” (S10), **referencing psychological evaluations and opinions that favor them** “...but she still went to a private psychologist who performed some kind of testing and there she turned out to be above-averagely intelligent. She would wave that around everywhere, in court, and would say she wasn't sick. She believed that if she was intelligent, that she couldn't, that she was capable of everything. Taking care of the child and assessments.” (S6) and **refusing expert evaluations** “Now the court had mandated an expert evaluation of that mother and her husband with regard to the youngest child because we put in a request for removal of the child. However, when these parents were summoned to appear to a judge for the expert evaluation, they appeared on the day, at the scheduled time and stated that they do not want to undergo the evaluation.” (S5).

postupak vještačenja te mame i tog njenog supruga u odnosu na najmlađe dijete jer smo postavili zahtjev za lišenje. Međutim, kad su ti roditelji dobili poziv da se jave sucu vještaku radi provođenja vještačenja, ono su se uredno odazvali na dan, na termin i izjavili da ne žele pristupiti vještačenju.“ (S5).

**Manipulacija sustavom socijalne skrbi i stručnjacima** zaposlenim ovom sustavu očituju se **ocrnjivanjem i optuživanjem partnera/drugog roditelja** „Znači kad sam pričala o ovom ocrnjivanju i ....i partnera odnosno oca djece, i izvlačenju svih tih negativnosti.. Znači samo bi nadograđivala tu svoju priču o njemu kao nasilniku. Znači samo bi slagala mozaik tih njegovih nedostataka i neadekvatnih

**Manipulating the social welfare system and experts** that are part of it manifest with **disparaging and accusing the partner/other parent** “So when I was talking about this disparaging and ...and the partner or rather the father of her children, and bringing out all that negative stuff... So she would just keep building up that story of hers of him as a violent man. She would just build a mosaic of his failures and his inadequate actions” (S1), “She would bring up and blame the father for some kind of mistakes in raising the child, some kind of neglect for the child’s health... that he wasn’t taking care of the child’s education, that he wasn’t including the child in some other forms of, I don’t know, afterschool activities, that he doesn’t spend time with him, that the child is alone all the time. This did not



SLIKA 6. Manipulacija sustavom socijalne skrbi  
FIGURE 6. Manipulating the social welfare system

njegovih postupanja“ (S1), “Iz toga je izvlačila i okrivljavala tog oca za nekakve pogreške u odgoju djeteta, o nekakvoj zdravstvenoj zanemarenosti...da ne vodi brigu o obrazovanju djeteta, da ne uključuje dijete u nekakve druge oblike, ne znam, vanškolske aktivnosti, da ne provodi s njim vrijeme, da je dijete stalno samo. To sve nije odgovaralo realitetu.” (S6) „Onda ih optužuje za koje kakve radnje, da su oni nasilnici, ovisnici ili da nisu prema djeci adekvatni da bi se onda to mišljenje mijenjalo za...” (S7), **formalnu uključenost u tretman** „...ovaj je čak išao na prijedlog naše psihologinje na KBT, kognitivno-bihevioralnu terapiju, to je išlo tek toliko da donese papir da je priloži u naš i sudski spis tek toliko da je bio...” (S4), „...ali onda su prividno spremni na tretman da ispune obveze...” (S12) i **prikazivanje sebe žrtvom** „...ona sebe svugdje gdje bi išla prikazivala s žrtvom, oštećenom, iznevjerenom, ostavljenom, financijski ugroženom...” (S1), „...i sebe je uvijek prikazivao ko žrtvu. Eto vidite ja sam kupio kuću u elitnom djelu grada, ja sam vidite zarađivao puste tisuće kuna i to nije bilo dovoljno...” (S4) pri čemu ponekad **traže smještaja u sigurnoj kući** „...ona je iz tog stana samostalno otišla u sigurnu kuću gdje je rekla da je on nasilnik, da je bio nasilan prema njoj. Mi za to nismo znali... U sigurnoj kući su je pitali da li želi da joj djeca dođu. Obično žene zlostavljane bježe s djecom, ona je otišla sama i nije htjela da joj djeca dođu.” (S2), ali i samostalno **napuštaju sigurnu kuću** „I kako je sama otišla u sigurnu kuću, tako je i sama izašla iz sigurne kuće.” (S2).

Skloni su činiti **pritiske na stručnjake** koji se očituju kroz **procjenjivanje stručnjaka** „...koji je, svaku riječ važe, glede tolke detalje da spominje način na koji ga gledate, način na koji sjedite. Bitno mu je, znači bitno mu je sve od neverbalne komunikacije do verbalne, do toga na koji način ste se obratili njemu, na koji ženi.” (S4), “Procjenjivala je nas stručnjake, nije imala povjerenja u nas i smatrala je da smo svi vezani koruptivno. Znači često je, stalno je ona procje-

fit the reality of the situation.” (S6) “Then she accused them of all kinds of things, that they are violent, addicts, or that they are not adequate towards the children in order to change that opinion to...” (S7), **formal participation in treatment** “...this one even went so far that he attended CBT, cognitive-behavioral therapy, at the advice of our psychologist, that was just to bring a document to add to our and the court’s archive just so he could prove he went...” (S4), “...but then they were seemingly prepared to go to treatment to fulfill their obligations...” (S12), and **presenting themselves as the victim** “...wherever she goes she presents herself as the victim, as harmed, betrayed, abandoned, financially threatened...” (S1), “...and he would always present himself as the victim. ‘So you see I bought a house in an elite neighborhood in the city, I made thousands of kunas and it wasn’t enough...” (S4) which sometimes includes **seeking shelter in a safehouse** “...she left that apartment of her own free will and went to a safehouse where she said he was violent, that he was violent towards her. We didn’t know about that... In the safehouse they asked her if she wanted her children to visit. Abused women usually run away with the children, she left on her own and didn’t want her children to visit.” (S2), but also **leaving the safehouse on their own** “So just like she went to the safehouse on her own, she also left the safehouse on her own.” (S2).

Parents in question are prone to **pressuring experts** which manifests as **evaluating experts** “...so he, he weighed every word, looked at things in so much detail he’d mentioned the way you looked at him, the way you sat. It was important to him, everything was important to him, from non-verbal communication to verbal communication, the way you addressed him and the way you addressed the wife.” (S4), “She would evaluate us the experts, she didn’t trust us and believed we were all tied together in a corrupt network. So she would often, she would evaluate our professional work all the time.” (S6), **searching for oversights in the work of experts** “...and then she would come here and say she got support somewhere else, how others noticed

njivala naš stručni rad.” (S6), **traženje propusta u radu stručnjaka** „...onda bi došla tu i ispričala kako je negdje doživjela potporu, kako su drugi zamijetili nešto drugo što mi nismo, tražila je, ajmo reč, nekako naše propuste tražeći potporu negdje drugdje...” (S1), **optuživanje stručnjaka** „I onda su tu neki koji optužuju za nemar, za idolopoklonstvo, za potpuno vjerovanje drugoj strani, naprosto puni su ideja kako vas mogu okriviti, osramotiti, blatiti...neradnici, foteljaši, ne radite ništa, ne razumijete ništa, ništa niste učinili da meni pomognete i tako dalje.” (S8), “U odnosu na stručne radnike Centra bi se to manifestiralo kroz vrlo agresivno ponašanje u smislu optužbi za pristranost...” (S10), **zahtijevanje očitovanja stručnjaka** „Spis koji je bio zatrpan mailovima, predstavkama odvjetnika, predstavkama gdje smo se mi morali očitovati svim mogućima instancama, njemu se očitovati, pobrojati sve kronološki što smo radili, objašnjavati sto puta jednu te istu stvar: vi ste roditelj, vi ste odgovorni.” (S4), **podnošenje prigovora na rad stručnjaka različitim institucijama** „I ovaj, opet smo ispali, opet je po nama da mi nismo shvatili da je on nju tukao, a on... čovjek je dolazio kod nas da pita gdje je ona, ne javlja se po tri dana, ne zna gdje je.” (S2), “Bilo je različitih prijava, pritužbi ministarstvu na naš rad i tako.” (S9) „Dakle, prijava predstavniku, prijava ravnatelju, prijava Ministarstvu, a onda i ove prijave policiji i tako dalje.” (S10), **podnošenje kaznenih prijava protiv stručnjaka** „Kazneno nas je prijavila.” (S8), “...čak i kaznenih prijava...” (S9) “... podnose kaznene prijave protiv djelatnika optužujući nas za pristrano ponašanje, za diskriminaciju po spolu, po nacionalnosti, po ne znam čemu.” (S10), “...reagirao je na način da se žalio na voditeljicu mjere, da ju je kazneno prijavio, naravno neosnovano.” (S12), **traženje izuzeća** „Mama je isti tren zatražila novog socijalnog radnika. Odmah, isti tren je htjela mijenjati.” (S2), “Tražio je izuzeće naše podružnice...” (S12), **prijetnje stručnjacima** „I onda je znao prijetiti iz pozicije moći je l’ vi znate ko sam ja, ja poznajem ministra Peru Perića, sad idem k njemu

something we did not, she was searching for, let us say, our omissions and looking for support elsewhere...” (S1), **accusing experts** “And there were some who accused us of neglect, of idol worship, of totally trusting the other side, they are just full of ideas on how to blame you, shame you, badmouth you... ‘lazy, couch warmers, you don’t do any work, you don’t understand anything, you never did anything to help me’ and so on.” (S8), “In relation to the staff of the center this would manifest in very aggressive behavior along the lines of accusations of bias...” (S10), **demanding official statements** “A file that was overflowing with mails, lawyer statements, documents in which we had to make official statements on all kinds of instances, make a statement to him, chronologically list everything we had done, explain the same thing a hundred times over: you’re the parent, you’re responsible.” (S4), **submitting complaints on the work of experts to different institutions** “And again, making us seem, again accusing us that we didn’t realize he was beating her, and he... the man kept coming to us to ask where she was, she wouldn’t respond for three days, he didn’t know where she was.” (S2), “There were different complains, complaints to the Ministry, and then those police reports and so on.” (S10), **filing criminal charges against experts** “She submitted a criminal charge against us.” (S8), “...even criminal charges...” (S9) “...they submit criminal charges against the staff accusing us of biased behavior, discrimination based on gender, nationality, on who knows what.” (S10), “...reacted by filing a complaint against the person in charge of the process, by filing criminal charges against her, of course completely unfounded.” (S12), **requesting exemptions** “The mother immediately requested a new social worker. Immediately, she wanted to switch right away.” (S2), “He asked for an exemption from our local office...” (S12), **threatening experts** “And then he would threaten from a position of power, ‘do you know who I am, I know minister Pero Perić, I’m going to go see him now’ – go ahead.” (S4), “That they would crush us, that they would sue us...” (S8), “...I mean what it we told now told you ‘we’re gonna kill ya’” (S8) and **involving the media** which

– odi.“ (S4), „Da će nas samljati, da će nas tužiti ...“ (S8), „...a kaj da mi sad vama kažemo mi vas bumo vubili...“ (S8) i **uključivanje medija** koje je poseban oblik manipulacije djetetom, stručnjacima i sustavom „Pred kućom naravno kako to ide, bile smo nas troje iz Centra, policija, sudac ovršitelj, mediji RTL, Nova, isti taj dan smo bili na televiziji. Mislim, to je stvarno bilo do te mjere izloženo takvim nepovoljnim utjecajima koji su se kasnije reflektirali na djecu, znate škola, prijatelji. Svi su to gledali, svi su to vidjeli.... Dakle puna kuća je bila žena iz Baba, ja uopće ne znam broja, ali sigurno 10-tak ljudi, 10-tak žena...“ (S1).

## RASPRAVA

Rezultati istraživanja pokazuju da stručnjaci Odjela za zaštitu djece, obitelji i braka u CZSS simptome emocionalno nestabilne ličnosti roditelja najčešće prepoznaju tijekom postupka razvoda i odlučivanja o roditeljskoj skrbi koji su obilježeni visokom razinom sukoba među roditeljima, nemogućnošću postizanja sporazuma oko ostvarivanja sadržaja roditeljske skrbi, manipulativnim ponašanjem i manipulacijom djetetom, drugim roditeljem (bivšim partnerom), stručnjacima i sustavom. Među najčešćim oblicima manipulacije su onemogućavanje susreta i druženja djeteta s drugim roditeljem i članovima njegove obitelji, ocrnjivanje drugog roditelja i članova njegove obitelji pred djetetom i stručnjacima, neutemeljene prijave protiv drugog roditelja zbog navodno počinjenog obiteljskog nasilja, zlostavljanja i zanemarivanja djeteta te učestali prigovori i prijave protiv postupanja nadležnih socijalnih radnika i drugih stručnjaka.

Aktivacija postojeće emocionalne ličnosti roditelja u situacijama prekida partnerske zajednice i postupcima odlučivanja o roditeljskoj skrbi može biti potencijalno povezana sa strahom od napuštanja i osjetljivosti na odbacivanje te kretanja između krajnosti idealizacije i podcje-

is a specific way of manipulating the child, the experts, and the system “In front of the house of course as it goes there were three of us from the Center, police, an enforcing judge, media from RLT and NOVA TV, we were on TV the very same day. I mean that was really under such bad influences that later reflected on the children, you know, school, friends. Everybody watched that, everybody saw it... so the house was full from women from the Baba organization, I don't know how many, but certainly 10 or so people, 10 or so women...” (S1).

## DISCUSSION

The results of our study show professionals at the Department for the Protection of Children, Family, and Marriage of SWCs usually recognize symptoms of emotionally unstable personality disorder in parents during divorce and child custody proceedings, which are characterized by a high level of conflict between the parents, inability to reach agreements on achieving parental care, manipulative behavior, and manipulation of the child, the other parent (ex-partner), experts, and the system. The most common forms of manipulation include preventing the other parent and members of their family from meeting and spending time with the child, disparaging the other parent and members of their family in front of the child and social welfare professionals, unfounded reports against the other parent for alleged family violence or child abuse and neglect, and frequent complaints and reports against the actions of social workers and other experts.

Activation of existing emotionally unstable personality disorder during breakups of intimate partnerships and child custody decisions can be associated with fear of abandonment and sensitivity to rejection as well as with oscillations between the extremes of idealization and disparagement. Persons with this disorder present a tendency towards impulsive behavior and dichotomization, which manifests as difficulties in synthesizing contradictory perceptions and

njivanja. Osobe s ovim poremećajem ličnosti pokazuju sklonost impulzivnom ponašanju i dihotomizaciji koja se očituje poteškoćama sintetiziranja suprotnih percepcija i osjećaja drugih i unutar sebe i crno-bijelom pogledu (1,6) zbog čega mogu imati značajnih poteškoća u sagledavanju partnera kao osobe koja ima svoje vrline i mane. One partnere najčešće vide kao isključivo dobre ili isključivo loše osobe što u situacijama kada ponašanje osobe narušava idealiziranu sliku te osobe, može rezultirati intenzivnim i primitivnim gnjevom (5). Sukladno navedenom, partnera mogu percipirati kao jedinog odgovornog i „krivog“ za prekid partnerske zajednice. U situacijama kada imaju dojam da stručnjaci brinu za njih i da su na njihovoj strani, mogu ih percipirati kao izvor podrške. S druge strane, u situacijama kada stručnjaci ukazuju na njihove propuste i na potrebu preuzimanja osobne odgovornosti, kao osobe koje ih kažnjavaju i koje su na strani bivšeg partnera što može dovesti do potrebe za osvećivanjem i manipulativnog ponašanja. Osim osвете, manipulativna ponašanja mogu za cilj imati sprječavanje separacije od djeteta i otuđenja djeteta od drugog roditelja. Neke osobe s emocionalno nestabilnom ličnosti nakon prekida partnerske zajednice svu pažnju usmjere na djecu razvijajući nezdrav i ovisan odnos s djecom (2,4).

Rezultate našeg istraživanja u određenoj mjeri možemo usporediti s rezultatima domaćih istraživanja. Hercigonja Novković i sur. (47) analizirale su 80 postupaka vještačenja provedenih tijekom 2009. i 2010. u kojima se tražila procjena roditelja i roditelja i djece u sudskim postupcima kada nije postignut dogovor između roditelja. Rezultati istraživanja ukazuju da je kod 37,5 % obitelji bilo prisutno manipuliranje djecom u obliku; onemogućavanja kontakta djeteta s drugim roditeljem, ocrnjivanja drugog roditelja, informiranja o drugom roditelju neprimjereno djetetovom uzrastu, traženju savezništva s djetetom postavljajući

feelings in themselves and others and consequently a black-and-white view of the world (1,6), which may result in significant difficulties in viewing their partner as a person with both virtues and faults. Such persons usually perceive their partners as either exclusively good or exclusively bad, which can result in intensive and primitive rage in situations when the behavior of that person goes against their idealized image (5). The partner can therefore be perceived as solely responsible and “guilty” for the breakup. When persons with the disorder are under the impression that professionals are taking care of them and are on their side, they can perceive them as a source of support. On the other hand, in situations where professionals point out their faults and the need to take personal responsibility, they may be perceived as someone who is punishing them and are on the side of the ex-partner, leading to a need for revenge and manipulative behavior. In addition to revenge, manipulative behavior can be employed with the goal of preventing separation from the child and alienating the child from the other parent. Some persons with emotionally unstable personality disorder focus all their attention on the children after a breakup, developing and unhealthy and dependent relationship with the children (2,4).

To an extent, the results of our study can be compared with the results of other Croatian studies. Hercigonja Novković et al. (47) analyzed 80 expert evaluation procedures between 2009 and 2010 that assessed parents and children in court proceedings where no agreement could be reached between the parents. The study results indicated that manipulation of children was present in 37.5% of the families, in the form of preventing contact between the child and the other parent, disparaging the other parent, providing the child with information on the other parent that was not age-appropriate, and attempting to create an alliance with the child by placing themselves in a position where the parent needed support from a child



se u poziciju roditelja koji treba podršku djeteta bez koje ne može živjeti. U 20 % slučajeva djeca su iskazivale izrazite teškoće koje nisu dozvoljavale separaciju od manipulirajućeg roditelja, a otpori prema bilo kakvim kontaktima s drugim roditeljem bili su izraziti, te su intenzivirali već prisutne poteškoće kod djeteta. Unatoč tome izostala je adekvatna intervencija sustava, a djeca su ostala živjeti s manipulirajućim roditeljem.

Uvidom u vještačenja Poliklinike za zaštitu djece grada Zagreba o prilagodbi djece na razvod roditelja utvrđeno je da je u 33,7 % slučajeva visokokonfliktnih razvoda bilo prisutno aktivno (od čega 82,1 % majke), a u 29 % pasivno ometanje kontakta i odnosa s drugim roditeljem od jednog ili obih roditelja. Neosnovane optužbe za zlostavljanje uvidom u slučajeve obrade u Poliklinici za zaštitu djece grada Zagreba sa sumnjom na spolno zlostavljanje djeteta znatno su veće tijekom postupka razvoda braka (47).

Navedeni podatci u skladu su s podacima Ministarstva za demografiju, mlade i socijalnu politiku za 2017. godinu. Tijekom ove godine 1826 djece nije ostvarilo pravo na susrete i druženje s drugim roditeljem ili ga je ostvarilo u manjem opsegu od onog određenog sudskom odlukom, a 284 djece bilo je izloženo manipulaciji od roditelja s kojim ne živi za vrijeme održavanja osobnih odnosa (48). Iako u ovim podacima nije fokus na roditeljima s dijagnozom i/ili simptomima emocionalno nestabilne ličnosti, s obzirom na rezultate našeg istraživanja, možemo pretpostaviti da su roditelji sa simptomima ovog poremećaja ličnosti u određenoj mjeri zastupljeni u populaciji roditelja čiji su razvodi obilježeni viskom razinom konflikta, manipulativnim ponašanjima i manipulacijom koja se očituje u onemogućavanju susreta i druženja djeteta s drugim roditeljem.

Navedeni oblici manipulativnog ponašanja oblik su emocionalnog zlostavljanja djeteta koje može imati značajne posljedice za djetete

without whom they could not live. In 20% of cases, the children expressed severe difficulties that did not allow separation from the manipulating parent, and resistance towards any contact with the other parent was pronounced and exacerbated the existing difficulties in the child. Nevertheless, there was no appropriate intervention on part of the system, and the children continued living with the manipulating parent.

Examination of the expert evaluations from the City of Zagreb Child Protection Polyclinic on adjustment of children to the divorce of their parents showed that in 33.7% of high conflict divorces there was active (of which 82.1% on part of the mother) and in 29% passive disruption of contacts and relationships with the other parent on part of one or both parents. Unfounded accusations of abuse, based on the cases with suspicion of child sexual abused processed at the City of Zagreb Child Protection Polyclinic, were significantly more common during divorce proceedings (47).

The data above is in agreement with data of the Ministry of Demography, Youth, and Social Policy for 2017. In that year, 1826 children did not achieve full visitation rights with one parent or visitation was reduced compared with the court decision, and 284 children were exposed to manipulation from the parent they do not live with during visitations (48). Although these data do not focus on parents with a diagnosis and/or symptoms of emotionally unstable personality disorder, based on the results of our study we can assume that parents with symptoms of this disorder are to an extent represented in the population of parents whose divorces are marked with a high level of conflict, manipulative behavior, and manipulation that manifests as preventing the other parent from meeting and spending time with the child.

These forms of manipulative behavior are a form of emotional child abuse that can have significant adverse consequences to the child's psychosocial development. Some study results indicate that

tov psihosocijalni razvoj. Rezultati nekih studija upućuju na snažniji utjecaj razvoda roditelja kod djece predškolske dobi, a neki na povezanost dobi djeteta u vrijeme razvoda s različitim tipovima razvojnih rizika. Utjecaj razvoda za većinu (2/3) djece proteže se na razdoblje od dvije godine, ali većina studija nalazi dugoročne posljedice (49).

Pod utjecajem manipulativnog roditelja koji potiče dijete da se okrene protiv drugog roditelja bez postojanja opravdanog razloga, može se javiti roditeljsko otuđenje koje je obilježeno djetetovim odbijanjem drugog (ciljanog) roditelja i priklanjanjem manipulativnom roditelju (50,51). Simptomi koji ukazuju na roditeljsko otuđenje su neprekidno ocrnjivanje drugog (ciljanog) roditelja, racionalizacija odbijanja drugog (ciljanog) roditelja, tvrđenje da otpor protiv odbijanog roditelja proizlazi iz vlastitog razmišljanja (tzv. fenomen neovisnog mislioca), nedostatak osjećaja krivnje zbog postupanja prema ciljanom roditelju, postojanje lažnih ili iskrivljenih opisa događaja koji uključuju ciljanog roditelja (tzv. posuđeni scenarij) i pokušaji utjecanja na stavove drugih o ciljanom roditelju (51,52).

Djeca čiji su roditelji razvedeni u odnosu na djecu čiji su roditelji u braku, postižu slabije rezultate na mjerama emocionalne, ponašajne, socijalne i školske prilagodbe te su češće slabijeg zdravlja, a utjecaj razvoda roditelja vidljiv je i u odrasloj dobi. Osobe čiji su roditelji razvedeni, češće navode bračne probleme, osjećaju manju bliskost s roditeljima, osobito s očevima, te su u većem riziku da se same razvedu (49).

Sukladno navedenom, važno je stručnjacima osigurati instrumente koji će im olakšati procjenu ugroženosti dobrobiti djeteta i manipulativnih ponašanja roditelja. Dobar primjer takvog instrumenta je „Lista za procjenu ugroženosti psihosocijalne dobrobiti djeteta u situacijama konfliktnog razdvojenog roditeljstva“ (53) koja se sastoji od tri dijela: (1) Opći podatci i okolnosti procjene ugroženosti psihosocijalne

the effects of divorce are stronger in preschool children, while some studies found an association between child age and different types of developmental risks. The influence of divorce lasts for two years in most (2/3) children, but most studies found long-term consequences (49).

The influence of a manipulative parent who encourages the child to turn against the other parent without a valid reason can result in parental alienation that manifests as the child's refusal of the other (targeted) parent and siding with the manipulative parent (50,51). Symptoms that indicate parental alienation are constant disparaging of the other (targeted) parent, rationalization for the rejection of the other (targeted) parent, insistence on part of the child that the rejection stems from their own thoughts (the so-called independent thinker phenomenon), lack of guilt for behavior towards the targeted parent, presence of false or distorted descriptions of events that include the targeted parent (so-called borrowed scenarios), and attempts to influence the opinions of others on the targeted parent (51,52).

Compared with children whose parents are married, children whose parents are divorced achieve poorer results on measures of emotional, behavioral, social, and educational adjustment and are usually in poorer health, with the effect of divorce observable even in adulthood. Persons whose parents are divorced are more likely to report marital problems, they feel less close to their parents, especially their fathers, and are at greater risk of divorce themselves (49).

Based on the above, it is important to provide social welfare professionals with instruments to facilitate evaluating danger to the welfare of the child is in danger and recognizing manipulative behavior in parents. A good example of such an instrument is the “List for the Assessment of Danger to Psychosocial Welfare of Children in High Conflict Parental Separation” (53) that comprises three parts: (1) General data and circumstances for the assessment of danger to the

dobrobiti djeteta, (2) Procjena neprikladnih i/ili manipulativnih ponašanja roditelja u situacijama konfliktnog razdvojenog roditeljstva i (3) Procjena ponašanja i funkcioniranja djeteta u situacijama konfliktnog razdvojenog roditeljstva.

S obzirom da roditeljsko otuđenje može dovesti do osjećaja izoliranosti, očaja, frustriranosti i psiholoških poteškoća nemanipulativnog (ciljanog) roditelja (44,47-49) važno je da stručnjaci navedeno uzimaju u obzir pri planiranju i provođenju psihosocijalnih intervencija. Također, važno je da pravosudni djelatnici manipulativna ponašanja i roditeljsko otuđenje prepoznaju kao oblik emocionalnog zlostavljanja djeteta i da takvo ponašanje sankcioniraju. Prema iskustvima nemanipulativnih (ciljanih) roditelja pravni sustav je spor, neučinkovit i pridonosi roditeljskom otuđenju (44,49). Sudski postupci traju od jedne do deset godina, a pravosudni djelatnici ne pokazuju razumijevanje roditeljskog otuđenja i njegovih posljedice (51,57). Sukladno navedenom potrebne su daljnje edukacije pravosudnih djelatnika o emocionalnom zlostavljanju djece uključujući roditeljsko otuđenje i njihovim posljedicama. S obzirom da su manipulativni i otuđujući roditelji često osobe s poremećajem ličnosti (npr. 41,51,58,59), izricanje mjere obveznog psihosocijalnog tretmana moglo bi doprinijeti redukciji simptoma poremećaja ličnosti i manipulativnog ponašanja, međutim konačni ishod u značajnoj mjeri ovisi o intrinzičnoj motivaciji osobe za sudjelovanjem u tretmanu i promjenom ponašanja.

## ZAKLJUČAK

Sukladno dosadašnjim spoznajama osobe s emocionalno nestabilnom ličnosti imaju značajne poteškoće u osobnom, partnerskom i roditeljskom funkcioniranju. Zbog straha od napuštanja i osjetljivosti na odbacivanje, prekid partnerske zajednice može biti okidač koji dovodi do aktivacije postojećeg poremećaja ličnosti.

psychosocial welfare of the child, (2) Assessment of inappropriate and/or manipulative behavior of parents in high conflict parental separation, and (3) Assessing the behavior and functioning of the child in in high conflict parental separation.

Given that parental alienation can lead to feelings of isolation, despair, frustration, and psychological issues in the non-manipulative (targeted) parent (44,47-49), it is important that social services professional take it into consideration when planning and implementing psychosocial interventions. Additionally, it is important that the courts are able to recognize manipulative behaviors and parental alienation as a form of emotional child abuse and reflect that in their rulings. The experience of the non-manipulative (targeted) parents is that the court system is slow, ineffective, and contributes to parental alienation (44,49). Court procedures last between one and ten years, and the courts do not appreciate the seriousness of parental alienation and its consequences (51,57). Therefore, further education is needed for court employees on the emotional abuse of children, including parental alienation and its consequences. Given that manipulative and alienating parents are often persons with personality disorders (e.g. 41,51,58,59), mandatory psychosocial treatment could contribute to reducing the symptoms of personality disorder and manipulative behavior, but the final result is significantly influenced by the person's intrinsic motivation for participation in the treatment and adjusting their behavior.

## CONCLUSION

Based on our knowledge so far, persons with emotionally unstable personality disorder have significant difficulties functioning in their personal lives, in relationships, and parental roles. Due to fear of abandonment and sensitivity to rejection, dissolution of a romantic relationship can be the trigger that leads to the acti-

nosti i različitih oblika manipulativnih ponašanja koja se nastavljaju postupcima odlučivanja o roditeljskoj skrbi.

Ako povežemo rezultate dosadašnjih istraživanja koji ukazuju na učestalost visokokonfliktnih razvoda i manipulativnih oblika ponašanja roditelja te na zastupljenost roditelja s poremećajem ličnosti među onima čiji su razvodi visokokonfliktni s rezultatima našeg istraživanja koji pokazuju da su prekidi partnerskih zajednica roditelja kod kojih su pristupni neki simptomi emocionalno nestabilne ličnosti obilježeni visokom razinom sukoba među roditeljima i različitim oblicima manipulativnih ponašanja koja su ugružavajuća za dobrobiti djeteta, ali i nemanipulativnog roditelja, važno je da stručnjaci prepoznaju simptome emocionalno nestabilne ličnosti i manipulativna ponašanja roditelja. Navedeno ukazuje na važnost edukacije stručnjaka iz sustava socijalne skrbi o poremećajima ličnosti i potrebu za instrumentima koji će stručnjacima olakšati procjenu ugroženosti dobrobiti djeteta i prepoznavanje manipulativnih ponašanja roditelja.

vation of an existing personality disorder and various forms of manipulative behavior that continue into the custody process.

Taken together with previous studies that show the frequency of high conflict divorces and manipulative behavior in parents and the prevalence of parents with personality disorders among those in high conflict divorces, the results of our study show that breakups in parents who exhibit some symptoms of emotionally unstable personality disorder are marked by a high level of conflict between the parents and different forms of manipulative behavior, representing a threat to the welfare of both the child and the non-manipulative parent, therefore emphasizing the importance of experts being able to recognize symptoms of emotionally unstable personality disorder and manipulative behavior in the parents. The above indicates the importance of educating social welfare workers on personality disorders and the need for instruments that will facilitate evaluating danger to the welfare of the child and recognize manipulative behavior in parents.

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