**Efektywność strategii rozwiązywania konfliktów rówieśniczych**

**w inkluzyjnym oddziale przedszkolnym - systematyczny przegląd badań**

**Effectiveness of peer conflict resolution strategies in an inclusive preschool unit- a systematic review**

*Autorzy deklarują brak konfliktu interesów.*

**Wprowadzenie:** Okres przedszkolny to czas, w którym dzieci mają wiele okazji do rozwijania umiejętności społecznych i głębszego ich rozumienia. Typowe w tym czasie jest występowanie konfliktów rówieśniczych, które odpowiednio rozwiązane mogą stanowić impuls rozwojowy dla kompetencji poznawczych i społeczno-emocjonalnych. Świadome nauczanie mające na celu wspieranie interakcji rówieśniczych przez nauczyciela zwiększa umiejętności dzieci w tym zakresie. Dzieci niepełnosprawne, które mają niższe kompetencje społeczno-emocjonalne, a tym samym gorzej radzą sobie w sytuacjach konfliktowych, mogą potrzebować specjalnego wsparcia. Wynika to z ich trudności w nazywaniu i rozumieniu emocji, a także odczytywaniu intencji rówieśników. Stosowanie przez nauczycieli skutecznych strategii rozwiązywania konfliktów może znacząco wpłynąć na ich rozwój relacji rówieśniczych i proces włączania tych dzieci do grupy.

**Cel badań:** Celem artykułu jest analiza skuteczności strategii stosowanych przez nauczycieli w celu rozwiązywania konfliktów rówieśniczych wśród dzieci w inkluzyjnych oddziałach przedszkolnych.

**Metoda badawcza:** Przeprowadzono systematyczny przegląd wyników badań opublikowanych w bazach czasopism naukowych Scopus, Web of Science, EBSCO i Google Scholar w latach 2000-2024, stosując schemat PRISMA. Przeanalizowano 9 pełno tekstowych artykułów spełniających wszystkie kryteria włączenia i wykluczenia.

**Wyniki:** Wyniki wskazują na to, że najbardziej skuteczne były programy rozwijające kompetencje społeczne dzieci niepełnosprawnych, w tym umiejętności rozwiązywania konfliktów. Tylko w dwóch artykułach podano wielkość efektu, przy czym wynik był niejednoznaczny; w jednym badaniu efekt był duży, w drugim mały.

**Wnioski:** Przegląd wskazuje na potrzebę dalszych pogłębionych badań w tym obszarze, spełniających wysokie standardy metodologiczne, ze szczególnym uwzględnieniem skuteczności strategii rozwiązywania konfliktów rówieśniczych wdrażanych przez nauczycieli w przedszkolnych oddziałach włączających.

**Słowa kluczowe:** przedszkole integracyjne/inkluzyjne, konflikt rówieśniczy, strategie rozwiązywania konfliktów.

**Abstract**

**Introduction:** The preschool stage is a time when children have many opportunities to develop social skills and deeper comprehension thereof. The occurrence of peer conflicts is typical during this time, which, when properly resolved, can provide a developmental boost to children’s cognitive and social-emotional competencies. Intentional instruction to support peer interactions by the teacher increases children’s skills in this area. Children with disabilities who have lower social-emotional competencies, and thus perform less skillfully in conflict situations, may need special support. This is due to their difficulties in naming and understanding emotions, as well as reading the intentions of peers. The use of effective conflict resolution strategies by teachers can significantly affect the development of peer relationships and the process of integrating these children into the group.

**Research Aim:** The purpose of this article is to analyze the effectiveness of peer conflict resolution strategies in an inclusive preschool unit.

**Method:** a systematic review of the results of studies published in the databases of scientific journals such as Scopus, Web of Science, EBSCO and Google Scholar between the year 2000 and 2024 was conducted using the PRISMA scheme. Nine full-text articles meeting all inclusion and exclusion criteria were analyzed.

**Results:** The results indicate that the most effective programs were those that developed the social skills of children with disabilities. Only two articles reported the effect size, in one study the effect was noticeable while in the other, little, with the result being inconclusive.

**Conclusion:** The review indicates the need for further in-depth research, meeting high methodological standards, in this area, with a particular focus on the effectiveness of peer conflict resolution strategies implemented in preschool inclusion units.

**Key words:** inclusive preschool, peer conflict, conflict resolution strategies.

**Introduction**

Conflict is a natural context for children to develop socially, morally and cognitively (Chen et al. 2001; Kozłowska, 2014). In Piaget’s theory, conflict is central to cognitive development; it supports both the child’s individual and social competencies (Hay & Ross, 1982). As children grow older, they learn to understand social situations and emotional conditions, which leads to learning and using positive conflict resolution strategies (Cao et al., 2023). This is more evident in girls than in boys (Madrid & Kantor, 2009; Pieng & Okamoto, 2020) and in children who have friendship relationships (Hartup et al., 1988).

Conflicts are potentially bi-directional. They can be developmental in nature, contributing to the optimization of a child’s social competence, as well as destructive, causing a range of negative consequences (Cywińska, 2003). Strycharz-Banaś et al. (2020) note that when viewed as exchanges occurring within a spectrum of other interactions, conflict or conflict-like interactions can contribute to children’s broader relationship structure and overall development, including their negotiation of belonging to a new community, as well as testing and (re)negotiating different aspects of their identity. For many children, kindergarten is a new environment in which they have to find themselves in a group of peers who present desires, feelings and interests different from their own. Consequently, kindergarten is a key place where children learn how to navigate, manage and avoid conflict in negotiating their social worlds (Moore, E., & Burdelski, M., 2020). The ability to resolve conflict and celebrate peace is recognized as an important value in early childhood education in many countries (Gunnestad et al. 2022). The acquisition of pro-social behaviors used in conflict is linked to mutually beneficial resolution and peaceful interaction after the conflict situation has ceased (Spivak, 2016).

However, conflict also has negative consequences. Donner et al. (2022) found that when negotiating the roles of play participants or the use of a toy, conflict can arise and result in the exclusion of the participant through passive resistance (ignoring or neglecting). A child excluded from play experiences disrespect and so engages in a struggle for recognition (Quinones et al, 2024). Children with limited cognitive and communication skills may be particularly vulnerable to experiencing bullying, peer rejection, and victimization (Mishna, 2003; Son, 2014), even in inclusion settings (Luciano and Savage, 2007), as they have lower competencies to deal with them successfully. Children with language difficulties struggle to understand emotions, peers’ intentions and resolve conflict situations (Lloyd-Esenkaya et al., 2021).

Chen et al. (2019) showed that children with disabilities were less likely to interact with peers in their play networks compared to children who were developing normatively, but there were no differences between children with and without disabilities in terms of their participation in conflict networks. Moreover, they were segregated in both play and conflict networks by their disability status, interacting more frequently with peers with disabilities than without.

Children with autism spectrum disorders (ASD) are a special group. Autistic traits and externalizing problems negatively affect young children’s peer relationships (Sari et al. 2021). According to a study by Linimayr et al. (2023) sometimes children with ASD were assigned negative roles by peers in the inclusion unit, causing other peers to reject them, fear them or ignore their presence. Children with ASD are about 20 times more likely to be socially excluded, leaving them vulnerable to social isolation without adequate support (Humphrey 2008).

Ren et al. (2023) show that some teachers were unable to resolve peer conflicts that arise during play with peers. Silver and Harkins (2007), on the other hand, found that teachers were more likely to use cessation than mediation in dealing with conflicts of preschool children. Killen and De Waal (2000) note that it is more effective to support children in resolving conflicts on their own by acting as a facilitator and mediator rather than as an instructor. If adults teach children the art of negotiation and compromise, conflicts fade away. However, for children with cognitive and communication skills difficulties, support from the teacher in the form of using effective strategies (Odom et al., 1993; Malloy & McMurray, 1996) to resolve peer conflicts is advisable.

To the authors’ knowledge, there is a lack of review studies on peer conflict resolution strategies in inclusive preschool units. The only meta-analysis on peer conflict known to the authors covered the period 1900-1998 and dealt, to a limited extent, with conflicts involving children with special educational needs (Laursen et al., 2001). The purpose of this article, therefore, is to review the state of research on the effectiveness of peer conflict resolution strategies used in inclusive preschool units for the years 2000-2024.

**Method**

A systematic review of the results of studies published in the scientific journal databases Scopus, Web of Science (WoS), Ebsco and Google Scholar between 2000 and 2024 on peer conflict resolution strategies in an inclusive preschool unit was conducted. The review was conducted to answer the following research question: What is the effectiveness of peer conflict resolution strategies in an inclusive preschool unit?

The PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses) guidelines were used to develop the systematic review (Booth et al., 2016). The data search was structured according to the literature review methodology (Czakon, 2011; Orłowska et al., 2017; Mazur & Orłowska, 2018; Markowska, 2020). We also used the example of the review of special education articles by Rofiah et al. (2023). In line with PRISMA, the research work was carried out in three phases: identification, screening and inclusion.

Phase 1: Identification, carried out from February to March 2024, included a preliminary analysis of scientific articles in Scopus, Web of Science (WoS), Ebsco and Google Scholar databases published from January 2000 to March 2024. The databases were selected for their content. Scopus is the only database that collects a wide range of scientific literature in several fields. The other major bibliographic database is the Web of Science (WoS). EBSCO is a comprehensive, full-text database of research, while Google Scholar is a free and open-access search engine that contains the majority of the peer-reviewed literature in various fields. Publications in Polish and English, published in scientific journals from 2000 to 2024, presenting qualitative, quantitative and mixed research results were taken into consideration. Covidence software was used for the analysis. Articles were selected based on the following inclusion and exclusion criteria developed using the PICOC scheme (Population, Intervention, Comparison, Outcomes, Context; Booth i in., 2016) (Table 1). The following syntax pattern was used in the search command: peer conflict resolution AND inclusive AND preschool OR kindergarten OR early childhood education.

*Table 1. Inclusion and exclusion criteria*

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| PICOC scheme | Inclusion criteria | Exclusion criteria |
| Population | Children with disabilities and teachers from inclusive preschool units | Children without disabilities, students, adolescents, adults |
| Intervention | Peer conflict resolution strategies | Therapy, teaching strategies; child-adult conflict resolution strategies |
| Comparison | Studies indicating the results of strategy implementation, including experimental studies with an experimental and control group, pre and post-test; | Studies that do not show the results of using the strategy |
| Outcome | Effectiveness of strategies | No indication of strategy effects |
| Context | Inclusive preschool | School, special preschool or mainstream preschool without children with disabilities |

Phase 2: Screening - The results were retrieved using RIS tag from four databases Scopus, WoS, EBSCO and Google Scholar, and then the publications were exported to the Covidence web application, which allowed an efficient review of titles and abstracts, after excluding duplicates (Kellermeyer et al., 2018). A total of 2824 articles were collected, and 712 duplicates were removed. Both authors independently analyzed the titles and abstracts of 2112 publications for compliance with the inclusion criteria.

Phase 3: A total of 49 full-text publications meeting the criteria were selected for analysis. Finally, a total of 9 articles meeting all inclusion and exclusion criteria were analyzed (Figure 1).

*Diagram 1. Summary of the search and publication selection process on the PRISMA flow diagram.*

**References from other sources** **(n = 5)**

Citation searching (n = 3)

Grey literature (n =2)

**Studies from databases/registers** **(n = 2819)**

Web of Science (n = 2291)

EBSCO (n = 289)

Google Scholar (n = 196)

Scopus (n = 43)

**Identification**

**References removed** **(n = 712)**

Duplicates identified manually (n = 3)

Duplicates identified by Covidence (n = 709)

Studies excluded **(n = 2063)**

Studies screened **(n = 2112)**

Studies not retrieved **(n = 0)**

Studies sought for retrieval **(n = 49)**

**Screening**

**Studies excluded** **(n = 40)**

Wrong setting (n = 26)

Wrong intervention (n = 8)

Wrong study design (n = 1)

No empirical studies (n = 2)

No peer reviewed paper (n = 2)

Wrong teacher/child population population (n = 1)

Studies assessed for eligibility **(n = 49)**

Studies included in review **(n = 9)**

**Included**

**Results**

During the period analyzed (2000-2024) 2824 literature items were found in four databases: (1) Web of Science (n = 2291), (2) EBSCO (n =289), (3) Google Scholar (n = 196) and (4) Scopus (n = 43) and other sources (n=5). Finally, based on the application of inclusion and exclusion criteria (Table 1), 9 articles were analyzed in depth. Table 2 characterizes the organization of the study considering: methods used, informed consent, ethics committee approval, fidelity check, clinical diagnosis criterion, and inter-observer agreement.

Analysis of the articles shows that four authors (Hanline and Correa-Torres, 2012, Recchia & Soucacou, 2006; Roseth et al., 2008; Tan & Perren, 2021) used a qualitative study, which may have been determined by the need to explore the phenomenon under study in its naturalistic setting (Hu et al., 2011). In the following four articles, an intervention was implemented in the form of programs to develop social skills in children, for which the authors used: a cluster-randomized controlled trial (Larose et al., 2020;), an experimental study (Maich et al., 2018; Szumski et al., 2019) and a quasi-experimental design (More et al., 2013). These methods provide children with opportunities to learn social skills in a naturalistic environment while promoting interaction with peers (Barry et al., 2003). One article used the research circle method (Linimayr et al., 2023), which was justified by the need to strengthen teachers’ resources in the context of using inclusive practices (Holmstrand et al., 2008).

Regarding ethical issues, in most of the studies informed consent was obtained either directly from the participants or from the children’s guardians. In half of the reviewed articles, the authors indicated that they had received ethics committee approval to conduct the study (Larose et al, 2020; Linimayr et al., 2023; Maich et al., 2018; Roseth et al., 2008; Szumski et al., 2019).

The fidelity check was implemented in different ways. Researchers pointed to the organization of training in the data collection method (Maich et al., 2018; Roseth et al., 2008), the use of selective monitoring (Larose et al., 2020; Recchia & Soucacou, 2006; Szumski et al., 2019), the completion of properly prepared worksheets (Szumski et al., 2019), and the use of a developed rubric to assess the reliability of qualitative data (Tan & Perren, 2021). Two articles indicated the criteria or tools adopted in the clinical diagnosis of the research group (Maich et al., 2018; Szumski et al., 2019). The required level of inter-observer agreement was achieved in four articles (Maich et al., 2018; More et al., 2013; Recchia & Soucacou, 2006; Roseth et al., 2008).

*Table 2. Organization of research articles on effective conflict resolution strategies in an inclusive preschool unit from SCOPUS, WoS, Ebsco and Google scholar databases, meeting inclusion/exclusion criteria*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| No. | Study | Study design | Informed consent | Ethical approval | Fidelity check | Diagnosis | Inter-observer agreement |
| 1. | Maich et al.  (2018) | Experimental design | Yes | Yes | Yes | 2 children - DSM-IV-TR, 1 child - DSM-IV-TR PDDNOS | 80%, 83% i 85% |
| 2. | Linimayr et al. (2023) | Research circle methodology | Yes | Yes | No | Not clear | Not clear |
| 3. | Recchia & Soucacou (2006) | Qualitative studies | Not clear | Not clear | Yes | Not clear | >80% |
| 4. | Larose &et al. (2020) | A cluster-randomized controlled trial | Yes | Yes | Yes | Not clear | Weak or moderate |
| 5. | Rosethet al. (2008) | Qualitative studies | Yes | Yes | Yes | Not clear | >80% |
| 6. | Szumski et al. (2019) | Experimental design | Yes | Yes | Yes | Clinical diagnosis | Not clear |
| 7. | Tan & Perren (2021) | Qualitative studies: case studies | Yes | Not clear | Yes | Not clear | Not clear |
| 8. | Moreet al. (2013) | Quasi-experimental design | Yes | Not clear | Yes | Not clear | 97% |
| 9. | Hanline & Correa-Torres (2012) | Qualitative studies | Not clear | Not clear | Yes | Not clear | Not clear |

*Table 3 Characteristics of the studies*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| No. | Study | Research aim | Population | Conflict resolution strategies | Description of sessions | Method of  recruitment | Results |
| 1. | Maich et al. (2018) | To examine potential change in perceived social skills for the target children by the involved educators | 3 boys aged 4-6 with ASD; 8 teachers from inclusive early years settings in Ontario, Canada | A peer-mediated social skills program—Stay, Play, and Talk | Data collection occurred twice weekly, in three 10-minute intervals across two hours per day, and during pre-arranged situations in which opportunities for social interaction skills existed; more specifically, during either structured activities (e.g., games or center-based activities with educator- assigned goals), informal interactions with peers (e.g., snack time), or child-directed play. | Direct contact through community-based consultants working with these individuals with ASD | Results of Penn Interactive Peer Play Scale results on Play Interaction (PIPPS-T) subscale (including of “helps settle peer conflict”) showed increases in play interaction (d = 0.89) and disruption (d=0.46), and decreases in play disconnection (d = 0.42), with a large effect size for increases in play interaction. |
| 2. | Linimayr et al. (2023) | To explore teachers’ perspectives on the barriers and facilitators to supporting peer play between children with ASD and their typically developing peers. | 8 teachers working with 5 boys and 5 girls with ASD aged 4-5.9 years old | Preventive strategies: time for movement (e.g. jumping on a trampoline), calming activities (e.g. massage activities), or individual tools (e.g. waiting for a bag with favorite toys, picture cards to calm down); creating personal play space with a play carpet, reading a specific book about conflicts among peers, and the use of glove puppets in circle time to talk about feelings. | Four research circle meetings where teachers discussed their experience | An information letter was distributed via email to six inclusive early education institutions and 14 local counselling service provider. | The findings support the hypothesis that teachers play an important role in supporting peer-play. However, the results also confirm that obstacles to the inclusion of children with ASD remain in mainstream education. This study shows the need for institutional support. Finally, the research circle method proved useful in promoting knowledge formation, sharing and learning with colleagues. It supports the involvement of teachers in the research process and can contribute to further research implementation in practice. |
| 3. | Recchia & Soucacou (2006) | Examine the social behavior of children and teachers in diverse and complex contexts. | Female teacher from inclusive preschool unit; a boy aged 4.2 with Pervasive Developmental Disorder (PDD­ NOS) and 1 normative child; 2 special units | Teachers spoke and modelled for the children in order to explain their behaviors to others; diverted conflicts by helping children find more appropriate ways to interact with their peers (i.e. sharing an object); found ways to scaffold appropriate social responses through structured tasks in the classroom (i.e. X collects the books today) | The observations took place in the morning, when young children were most engaged. Observers began by conducting two 2-hour visits to each classroom, observing the context and getting to know the teachers and children. The focus child was observed for two 1­hour sessions on two separate occasions during daily classroom activities; 10-­14 hours per classroom observing both individual children as well as the whole group. | Three classrooms were selected from the original sample to represent a range of populations and settings, including two self­contained preschool special education classrooms and one inclusive preschool classroom, each of which served children between 3 and 5 years old with a variety of disabilities. Two children were selected from each classroom. | The findings revealed a variety of strategies and behaviors used by early childhood special education teachers and their assistants to respond to conflicts among children in their classrooms. Children managed to resolve conflict with teacher's assistance. |
| 4. | Larose &et al. (2020) | To test  the impact of a social skills training program, delivered  by childcare educators, on children’s disruptive and prosocial  behaviors and examined whether children’s  sex and family SES moderated the impact of the program. | Intervention group: n=163 children (including 10 with developmental diagnosis) and 22 educators. Control group: n=162 children (including 7 children with developmental diagnosis) and  21 educators. | The Minipally curriculum is delivered by each teacher to his/her own children's group using a puppet. The puppet is presented as a loyal and enthusiastic friend who visits the CCC to model prosocial behavior and social inclusion by talking and playing with his friends (other puppets) and children. | 16 play sessions over a period of 8 months. | 38 public Child Care Centers in the Montreal region were invited to participate in the survey. | In the period prior to intervention, no difference between disruptive and prosocial behaviors was observed between experimental conditions. After intervention, there was a significant interaction between sex and intervention (β intervention by sex = − 1.19, p = 0.04), indicating that girls in the intervention condition showed fewer disruptive behaviors than girls in the control condition (f2 effect size = 0.15). There was no effect of intervention for boys |
| 5. | Rosethet al. (2008) | To clarify the role of teacher intervention in preschoolers’ natural conflict resolution. | 19 preschool teachers from 5 classes, 91 children (43 girls and 48 boys, including 6 children with general developmental delays. | Direct intervention (stopping the conflict, telling the children to stop fighting, telling or directing what children should do, or removing the source of the conflict) and indirect intervention (helping the children to resolve their own conflict) | Children were observed for at least one hour during eight 3-week waves | University laboratory preschool located on the campus of a large Midwestern university. | Teachers’ interventions disrupt the conflict resolution cycle, especially in terms of ongoing interaction between pre-school children and the use of alternative solutions to temporary separation. |
| 6. | Szumski et al. (2019) | To assess whether the PT/ST and ICPS programs were effective in improving social skills of preschool children with ASD and their Theory of mind | 52 children with ASD from 10 preschools.  Intervention group:  14 children participated in the PT/ST program (10 boys and 4 girls), and 12 children participated in the ICPS program (8 boys and 4 girls). Control group: 26 children (18 boys and 8 girls). | “Play Time/Social Time” (PT/ST),  “I Can Problem Solve” (ICPS) | Sessions were conducted every weekday and held in a room with the necessary toys or games. Each session took no more than 20 min and was part of a daily routine. | Information about the survey was sent by e-mail to 55 Warsaw and sub-Warsaw kindergartens, of which 20 responded, while 10 inclusive kindergartens qualified. | Social interaction increased as a result of PT/ST (βSTDY = 1.48, p < .01). Problems in coping with difficult social situations decreased more as a result of PT/ST (βSTDY = - 1.65) than ICPS (βSTDY = - 1.18, p < .001). |
| 7. | Tan & Perren (2021) | To examine strategies teachers applied to promote peer interactions between children with and without Special Educational Needs (SEN) in an inclusive preschool. | 7 teachers, 176 children aged 3-6, including 2 with physical disability; 2 with autism; 2 with delayed development, 1 with social and emotional challenging behaviors. | Resolve conflicts skills embedded in the curriculum Examples: teacher observed how two children dealt with conflicts in the ‘small group’ activity and initiated a talk about the situation with the whole class, advocating children to communicate with one another or to take turns to share when a conflict took place; storytelling and asking children what the main character did to stop the conflict. | The general observation took place during the morning session from 8 to 12, The intensive observation held out-door lasted for five minutes per session. | Four classrooms of inclusive preschool in Shanghai | Both prevention and intervention strategies are identified at five different levels: collaboration with various social stakeholders; the level of the classroom environment; the level of the teaching plan; the level of activity design and the level of individual children with SEN. Implemented strategies promote children’s social development, including conflict resolution skills, thereby creating a more supportive social environment. |
| 8. | Moreet al. (2013) | To compare the effects of a social story-only intervention with the effects of a social story-plus practices session intervention as implemented with preschool age children with disabilities and without disabilities in an inclusive preschool setting. | 16 children with disabilities ( developmental delay- 11; ASD - 4, other health impairment -1) and 16 children without disabilities aged 3-6. | A social story-only intervention, a social story-plus practices session intervention | During each interval, the students were rated on whether they were observed engaging in the 15 behaviors described in the SIOS. In a 10- minute period, four one-minute intervals were coded. These one-minute intervals occurred at minutes 2, 4, 6 and 8 of the 10-minute play sessions for each group. | The students were selected from children attending two classrooms in a community-based inclusive preschool program located in a middle-class neighbourhood of a large city in the southwest USA | Interventions using social stories have not proven effective. |
| 9. | Hanline & Correa-Torres (2012) | To explore the nature of social interactions of preschoolers with severe disabilities educated in an inclusive early education settings. | 3 preschoolers with severe disabilities; 7 preschoolers without disabilities (4-5 years old, 4 girls, 3 boys); and 8 adults (4 teachers, 4 caregivers). | Modelling for peers the appropriate social interaction behaviors, physical actions to end the conflict | Observations took place during the morning activities of center activities, outdoor play, meals and snacks, and transitions. Each researcher observed at different days but observed approximately 12 hours each. | Children were selected by their teachers | Peers present positive conflict (taking the toy of the peer) resolution to child with disability. |

As can be seen from the above characteristics, the objectives of the studies reviewed focused on children’s social behavior. The studies that implemented intervention programs to develop social skills focused on analyzing their effectiveness (Larose et al., 2020; Maich et al., 2018; More et al., 2013; Szumski et al., 2019). The most frequently studied group was children with autism spectrum disorders, which may be due to the fact that these individuals are particularly prone to experiencing difficulties in social interactions (Baron-Cohen, 2014). With regard to conflict resolution strategies, four articles (Recchia & Soucacou, 2006); Roseth et al., 2008; Hanline & Correa-Torres, 2012; Linimayr et al., 2023) used teacher intervention, while the remaining studies used programs to develop social skills (More et al., 2013; Maich et al., 2018; Szumski et al., 2019; Larose & et al., 2020; Tan & Perren, 2021). The collection of empirical material was carried out during play/games time, carefully arranged activities, daily classroom activities and research circle meetings. The methods of recruiting participants varied, but the sampling was most often random.

These results emphasize the importance of the teachers’ role in developing the social skills of preschool children, including conflict resolution skills through the use of various strategies. Moreover, in three programs to develop social skills, a positive effect size of the implemented interventions was observed. The results of Maich et al. (2018) study proved the effectiveness of the “Stay, Play and Talk” intervention in developing pro-social behavior. They report an increase in the “Play interaction” subscale with a large effect size (Cohen’s d=0.89), an increase in the “Play disruption” subscale with a small effect size (d=0.46), and a decrease in the “Play disconnection” subscale with a small effect size (d=0.42). As Maich et al. (2018) suggest, the small increase in disruptive play may be due to the fact that the implemented program focuses on positive interactions between children. In contrast, Larose et al. (2020) found that the “Minipally” program affected only girls, who showed lower levels of disruptive behavior with a small effect size (d=-0.15). This may be since the participants exhibited high levels of pro-social skills prior to the intervention. Szumski et. al (2019) found that problems in coping with difficult social situations decreased more as a result of PT/ST (βSTDY = - 1.65) than ICPS (βSTDY = - 1.18, p < .001).

**Conclusion**

The systematic review presented here is based on the analysis of the results of research published in 9 articles on the effectiveness of conflict resolution strategies in an inclusive preschool unit, meeting the criteria adopted at the outset. Strategies for resolving peer conflicts in an inclusive preschool unit included prevention and intervention strategies used by teachers and programs to develop social skills. As suggested by Kliewer et al. (2004), teachers have a significant impact on the development of children’s social skills, including conflict resolution skills. They found that programs that develop the social skills of children with disabilities, including conflict resolution skills, were the most effective. Although only three articles reported the effect size, this is sufficient for the authors to recognise that a child’s social skills influence their ability to cope with difficult situations. These skills are considered a key indicator of school readiness and subsequent educational success (Brigman et al., 1999). The review points to the need for further in-depth research meeting high methodological standards with a particular focus on the effectiveness of strategies implemented by teachers, the acquisition of ethical approval, information on clinical diagnosis criteria and obtaining an adequate level of inter-observer agreement.

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