



## **Pedagogical Support of Families and Adolescents in a Difficult Life Situation**

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### **Authors' contributions**

*This work was carried out in collaboration between both authors. Both authors read and approved the final manuscript.*

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### **ABSTRACT**

The goal of the research is to determine the conditions of effective pedagogical support of families and adolescents in a difficult life situation. The research used the following methods: the terminological analysis of definitions on the research problem; the analysis of the websites and publications on a research subject; interviewing and questioning of teenagers, their parents, teachers; testing; supervision; method of an expert assessment; statistical, high-quality and quantitative processing of results and experimental work. The paper suggests conditions for preventing the social orphanhood. The technique of determining the social profile of a family based on signs of family problems is presented. One of the most important conditions is defined as the pedagogical support of teenagers and their families in difficult life situations. The authors examine a pedagogical support as a special sphere of activity of a teacher in which stages of adolescents' socialization run consecutively. The article describes the socialization of adolescents in a difficult life situation as a process that occurs under influence of a particular set of factors, the main of which is a family. As a result, the research investigated the causes and factors of family maladjustment that affect socialization of young people. It proposed a form of rehabilitation work with families in difficult life situations.

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## **TYPE (METHOD/APPROACH)**

*Theoretical method: A terminological analysis of definitions of conceptual apparatus on the research problem; an analysis of sites and publications on the research topic;*

*Empirical method: Interviewing and questioning the adolescents, their parents, teachers; testing; surveillance; the method of peer review; participant observation; experimental work;*

*•Statistic method: Statistical, qualitative and quantitative analysis of the experimental work results.*

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

Changes in the socio-economic situation in Russia over the past decade have led to negative consequences in various spheres of life, which reflected in the socialization of children and adolescents. A negative trend in society is the crisis of the family institution. The implication of this process is a growing number of orphans, child neglect, crime. An analysis of data shows that crisis in economic sphere and social environment have the negative influence on family problems.

The goal of this research is to determine conditions of effective pedagogical support of adolescent socialization in a difficult life situation and identify conditions to prevent a negative public phenomenon of social orphanhood.

The research used the following methods:

- Theoretical: A terminological analysis of definitions of conceptual apparatus on the research problem; an analysis of sites and publications on the research topic; an analysis of philosophical, psychological, pedagogical, and sociological literature on the subject;
- Empirical: Interviewing and questioning the adolescents, their parents, teachers; testing; surveillance; the method of peer review; participant observation; experimental work. Basics of research were child care specialized institutions of social protection of the population of the Kemerovo region: "The Social and Rehabilitation Center for Minors" of Kemerovo; "The Social and Rehabilitation Center for Minors" (city Berezovsky); "The Social and Rehabilitation Center for Minors" (city Mezhdurechensk); "Center of the Social Help to a Family and Children" (city Kemerovo). In the research 877 children, 738 families, 226 teachers took part in it;
- Statistical: Qualitative and quantitative analysis of the experimental work results.

The theoretical basis of the research were the works of leading domestic and foreign scientists in the field of philosophy, psychology, pedagogy, culturology, sociology, sociocultural activities. Among these theories: a pedagogical support of a person (I.A. Lipsky, M.I. Gubanova); pedagogical mechanisms of socialization (V.I. Zagvyazinsky, L.V. Mardakhaev, A.V. Mudrik); self-actualization (A.P. Belik, R. Burns, A. Maslow); personality (A.G. Asmolov, L.I. Bozovic, A.V. Petrovsky); cooperation of microsocium subjects in social environment (V.N. Gurova, P. Natorp, L.I. Rozhkov, E.I. Kholostova).

Discussion of the research includes an actual problem of modern Russian society, spread of a negative phenomenon of social orphanage. In Russia, more than 1,400 specialized institutions for juveniles operate with the 80% of children and adolescents from families in which parents shirk their responsibilities towards minors.

The Federal Law "On Principles of Prevention from Neglect and Juvenile Crime" No. 120-Ф3 allocates a group of minors in a difficult life situation; these are children who have experienced the threat to life and health without parental care; orphans; neglected; at risk of a social circumstance; children of immigrants; children from families who survived the force majeure [1].

Currently, the mass of the apprentices in social rehabilitation institutions are teenagers 12 to 15 years old, whose parents are deprived of parental rights. Social orphanhood is a phenomenon caused by the presence in society of children left without parental care as a result of deprivation of parental rights, incapable, untraceable parents. Patients of rehabilitation centers tend to have a different range of disorders, abnormalities in the development of various aspects of personality disorders, emotional and volitional, various forms of violations of social behavior. Researches show that the number of orphans and children left without parental care is growing. This applies particularly to social orphans [2].

One of the central psychological educational problems at the present stage is the search for new technologies, methods and forms aimed at providing the positive socialization of adolescents who find themselves in difficult situation. Despite the regulatory and legal framework, problems of socialization of these teenagers still exist. Juvenile crime sharply increased. Particularly alarming are socially neglected teenagers whose learning skills are poor, who have chronic backlog of academic subjects and are resisting the pedagogical persuasion; professionally disoriented, they do not have learning skills and any sphere of interest. They don't follow the family and school rules, they are very much influenced by "their society", i.e. anti-social, criminogenic teenage groups, assimilation of group norms and values that lead to deformation of consciousness and values. The socially neglected teenagers are characterized by serious social deviations (vagrancy, drug addiction, alcoholism, crime, prostitution, etc.).

In this context, the **problem** of creating a set of conditions for positive socialization of adolescents in a difficult life situation is becoming of particular importance. An analysis of the researched question in the pedagogical theory and practice has shown that the problem cannot be resolved within the traditional paradigm of edification. Such sphere of the teacher's activity as support becomes all the more vital.

As the theory and practice show, pedagogical support is directed to overcoming the difficulties of the two main groups in the socialization of adolescents in a difficult life situation:

- Complex social difficulties (housing and amenities, aborted social skills, lack of positive social relationships and, most importantly, the lack of positive life plans);
- A complex of psychological difficulties (the distorted formation of the "ego," concept, lack of confidence in people, difficulty in drawing up the professional plans, deprivation, carrying the negative experience of relations in parent family to their own family, low self-sufficiency in solving the vital problems).

Considering the problem of the family as one of the most important factors of socialization of adolescents, we found that many families are not comfortable for the teens, they do not always create the necessary environment for their communication.

Therefore, various aspects of family life, connections and relationships among its members, personal and social consequences, determining the state of this important social phenomenon, have been the subject of our research.

Family is the most important factor of socialization, which is a personal environment of human life from life to death [1,3,4]. The quality of the environment is determined by a number of parameters:

- Sociocultural (depending on the education of family members, their participation in society, interest in culture and the arts);
- Socioeconomic (defined by property characteristics and employment of its members at work and studies);
- Technical and hygiene (living conditions, availability of a personal environment of a child);
- Demographic (family structure: nuclear or large, full - incomplete, few - many children).

Modern families are very diverse, and it depends on what kind of personal environment of the child they are, what content of socialization is in them. According to statistics published in the report "Children of Kuzbass" (2014), 25% of households in Russia are not able to properly educate children and up to 15% of them form the offenders. Some of these families have hereditary degeneration, which manifests itself in mental illness, leading to social maladjustment [3].

An important factor in social maladjustment is the teenager's realization of his insignificant role in the family, the fact of being "unnecessary," his uncertainty in their need. This experience is naturally associated with the formation of the child's psychological basis for further moral development, including the establishment of mechanisms of responsibility and will, dignity and self-confidence.

Child begins the socialization in families, in social and educational institutions (kindergartens). Unfortunately, the social and educational institutions even in the 1980s (e.g. in Kemerovo region) suffered from overload (overworking), low qualification of employees, weak material base, poor health care and lack of interest in high-qualified specialists. The situation in the 1990s has worsened: closed dozens of kindergartens and other preschool institutions because of the

inability of the State to continue to fund their work, and because of the unwillingness of parents to shoulder the material costs. Reducing the number of child care centers in Kuzbass was the negative trend of social development and one of the factors contributing to social maladjustment of adolescents.

According to the Department of Social Security of Kemerovo region, since the beginning of 2014 the number of orphans in the region fell by 21%, amounting to 4817 people. 22.5% of the total acquired new families during this period (in 2014 - 8%) [4,5]. The number of children adopted by foreign nationals has decreased: in 2014 families adopted 12 people, in 2013 it was 77, the Press Service of the Council of People's Deputies informed us. Citizens of Russia have adopted in the current year 273 children, that is 96 people more than the same period last year.

Total currently in adopting families and foster care in Kemerovo region over 14 thousand children are being raised. On January 1, 2014, the figure was less by a thousand people [3].

Despite the positive trend, the situation of children, potential social orphans, still remains alarming. Sociological data of management professionals of Kemerovo Education Administration for 2013-2014 showed that the level of emotional and intellectual development of children who are brought up in boarding schools is significantly lower than that of children in a family. The loss of a parent, even troubled, often has a negative impact on the further development of an individual child [6].

The analysis of the survey of school students (age 13 years) in Leninsky district of Kemerovo, conducted by experts of the Center for Social Assistance to Families and Children in 2014, shows that out of 500 respondents 37% (of those surveyed) often do not know what is a "good family." Basically, they use the term "ordinary family" ("drink only on holidays," "do not beat," "feed," "sometimes conflicts" and others.).

The question "Would you repeat the attitude of their parents in the family?" was answered as follows: 45% of respondents would not like to repeat the attitudes of their parents in the family, 16% could not answer the question and only 39% said that they would like to repeat relationships of their parents.

Answering the question "Who would you prefer to spend your free time with?" 73.3% of teens said that they prefer to spend their free time outside of home, namely among friends 18.3%;

5.6% at school; in a gym, stadium, tourist hikes of 10.9%; to "get-togethers" 30.5%; other 8.1%.

Our data indicate that the school ceased to be the center of adolescents' leisure. Only 5.6% of students spend at school spare time. As it is clear from responses the need to communicate with their parents satisfies only 26.7% of respondents.

The results of answers to the question "What is the atmosphere in your family?" show that less than half of surveyed teens note the sincerity and trust in the family, but, apparently, it looks like teenagers' wishful thinking. The questionnaires of teens say they have in families the atmosphere of concern (12%), depression (11%), and sometimes anger (28%). Of these, 40% say about the conflict between the parents, 27% - a misunderstanding between family members. Only 45% of respondents say about trust relationships; goodwill in relations between family members is 43%.

The analysis of the questionnaires confirms the generally accepted idea of children in the family as performers and objects of work, care for them in terms of food and morals. This, of course, affect the fact that the "house," "family" for children, especially for teenagers, cease to be a source of joy, unexpected and pleasant discoveries, the subject of affection and reverence.

Only 30% of the surveyed adolescents know little genealogy of their families, 35% were not interested in it, only 2% know the family tree, and the rest did not answer the question.

Most families lost concepts such as "family tradition" (stereotype answers are: "New Year celebration", birthdays, etc.), and, last but not least - "heirlooms" (only photo albums). There is a significant age-related rift in multigenerational households, almost disappeared role of the "grandmothers" and "grandfathers" institution, the transfer of experience, tradition, good relationships and respect. Respondents who indicated those who understand them, 45% of adolescents indicated the mother, 42% friends, 11% grandparents and only 2% fathers. As the results of the survey, families significantly reduced the role of men in the family, although there are some positive features.

The questionnaire can be found following teens' answers to the question "What are your parents?" "Mom is kind, caring; dad is ordinary,"

"mom is kind, sincere; dad screams for nothing,"  
"mom is warm, sympathetic; dad does not drink."

The analysis of the responses describing the psychological state of adolescents shows that more than 45% of respondents exposed to anxiety due to problems in the environment, 87% do not believe in its future. Most comfortably teens feel among friends (46%) and only 22% of them feel comfortable with their parents.

Thus, many families are not comfortable and interesting, not always make the necessary environment for children's socializing, where they understand, listen, forgive, respect their opinions and value their aptitude.

For our research, it is of particular importance the impact of family maladjustment factors on a teenager, as the most of pupils of institutions for children without parental care are social orphans. In order to explore this issue, the categories of families of juveniles admitted to the social rehabilitation center for minors in Kemerovo were analyzed. During the 2004-2014 period 8,275 families with minors were served. Of these, 52.2% were poor families; 15.6% asocial families; 14% conflict families; 22.4% families as defined in the category of others, that are not fit under any of the above categories (guardianship, pedagogically unsound, etc.).

The most of minors entering the Center, were raised in poor families. Difficult financial situation in the family, usually generates conflicts, alcoholism of parents and, as a result, social orphanhood. A large percentage of students among the teenagers from the center is from pedagogically bankrupt families. This type of family is characterized as a heightened conflict on the basis of authoritarian attitudes towards children, misunderstanding among family members, as well as excessive kowtowing to a child, carrying out any of his whims, and in case of refusal, the explosion of negative emotions on the part of the teenager, demonstrative behavior and, as a rule, leaving home [7].

The organization of effective pedagogical support for the families in a difficult life situation was necessary to eliminate intra-conflict and return the child home. To this end, we have developed a method of determining the social profile of the family based on indicators of family troubles. This technique makes it possible not only to diagnose problems, but also to predict the direction and shape of the rehabilitation potential of the family.

The rehabilitation potential of a family we understand as presence of family members desire to overcome the crisis and to change their social status. Given the level of social exclusion of the family in a difficult life situation, we have identified three rehabilitation groups of families characterized by various rehabilitation potential [8,9].

1st rehabilitation group: families in which problems are minor and are a manifestation of the initial stage of distress:

- Families experiencing stressful situations and fallen into the category of the needy not for situational reasons beyond their control, temporarily unable to do without the positive social care and psychological support (relocated people, suddenly lost their breadwinners, divorced, etc.);
- Presence of minors' conflicts in a family, at school (school maladjustment, impaired interpersonal relationships with parents, peers);
- Families living permanently in a state of stress and social discomfort, but occupying the position of suffering and destitute, as they were forced, due to the fact that society does not give full protection and support functions (large low-income families, foster families, families with orphans, single mothers, and others.).

The level of rehabilitation potential of the first rehabilitation group families is high. The practice of working with this group of families has shown that after the socio-pedagogical rehabilitation under socio-protective institutions families of rehabilitation group 1 are able to independently cope with the crisis.

2nd rehabilitation group: families with manifestation of distress that has reached a critical level:

- Families adapted to their plight, with no intention to go out on their own from a difficult situation, preferring depend on support from outside and leading an antisocial way of life (episodic use of alcohol by one or both spouses as well as by minors, unemployed, homeless, begging, etc.);
- Families which do not exercise responsibilities on support and education of children.

The level of rehabilitation potential for families of second rehabilitation group is average. Families

of the group in the implementation of rehabilitation measures can cope with the situation of family trouble but the post-rehabilitation period requires social patronage.

3d rehabilitation group: Families with severe chronic problems that have lost all perspective in life, inert to their fate and the fate of their children.

Families in this group have low levels of rehabilitation potential, or do not have rehabilitation potential in general. As a result of the prevention services, a minor is usually removed from the family and addressed with the issue of his future living arrangements. The optimal solution of this issue is relocation of a minor in a replacement family.

Rehabilitation potential of a family consisted of the following criteria: social and legal, psychology and pedagogical, welfare, medical, psychological and emotional. These criteria characterized the main circle of a dysfunctional family. Definition of rehabilitation group, and also the assessment of efficiency of rehabilitation influences was given on the basis of a social profile of a family [10,11].

A social profile of a family included the following indicators: social status of a family; category of a family; especially, family education; the presence of positive life plans; pedagogical capability of a family; traditions and moral values in a family; the inner circle of a family; organization of family entertainment; health care and hygienic skills; psycho-emotional background of a family.

The analysis of families' social profile, which gave minors to the Center, allowed us to conclude that 80% of families belong to the second group of rehabilitation, characterized by a critical level of disadvantage and having an average level of rehabilitation potential. 20% of families belong to the third group of rehabilitation, characterized by severe chronic problems, inert attitude to their fate and children. The level of rehabilitation potential of these families is low.

The practical activities of the Centre have implemented the programs aimed at prevention of family problems, search for ways out of conflict situations, overcome of psychological barriers, establishment of favorable contacts between family members.

For the first rehabilitation group were provided: individual psychological counseling for children and parents to develop a psychological

resistance to stressful situations; psycho-pedagogical correctional work with juveniles and their family members to restore interpersonal relations; organization of the Weekend club "We are together!"; organization of work sewing workshop for mothers and girls, and much more.

For the second rehabilitation group: formation of the interest support group for a family (among relatives, friends, neighbors, colleagues); organization of counseling the parents on the benefits registration, allowances; assisting the needy families to receive in-kind assistance (coal, vegetable kits, and others.); organization of employment assistance; activities of "therapeutic community experts" to work with the crisis families; operation of the family support service.

For the third rehabilitation group: individual work with juveniles in order to assist in the aftermath of psycho-traumatic life experiences; organization of meetings with parents of a child, relatives, family; work with the child's immediate social environment on the organization of any form of substitute family (foster family, guardianship / custody, family educational groups) [12,13].

In research, the interim results of individual programs of socialization of children in a difficult life situation, and rehabilitation of their families were discussed at the medical, psychological and pedagogical consultation. The consilium has allowed to join efforts of social work professionals, teachers, psychologists, doctors and all the other subjects of the edifying process, interested in the success and development of the child and the full restoration of his family [14,15]. Following the rehabilitation, characteristic values of family troubles have changed in a positive way. The technology components of child abandonment prevention for the indicators "Psycho-emotional background of the family," "The state of health and hygiene skills," "The presence of positive life plans" and "Features of family education" were especially productive.

The result of this work lies in the fact that 86% of patients of the social rehabilitation center after undergoing rehabilitation return to their family, 12% of children in foster care and 2%, as a rule, are transferred to residential care [5,16].

## 2. CONCLUSION

The conducted experimental research allowed us to identify some indicators and generalized social profile family, based on signs of family problems.

Which made it possible in the process of assessing the effectiveness of pedagogical support use more differentiated forms and methods of work with children and families in difficult situations, in conditions of the Socio-rehabilitation Center.

## COMPETING INTERESTS

Authors have declared that no competing interests exist.

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