THE USE OF EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGIES FOR THE PREVENTION OF LONELINESS AMONG STUDENTS: INNOVATIONS AND FEATURES OF PRACTICES

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Abstract:

This article is aimed at studying educational technologies that are effectively used to prevent feelings of loneliness among teenagers. As a research method, the questionnaire method was used, which allows to effectively identify the features of teenagers' ideas about loneliness and the features of socio-psychological prevention of loneliness in adolescence. The authors of the article have described the educational technologies used to prevent feelings of loneliness in adolescence, developed recommendations for the use of the film therapy in working with teenagers. The authors for the first time revealed the idea of teenagers about loneliness. It is revealed that adolescents identify the concepts of loneliness with the lack of communication and close people. It is shown that teenagers say that the lack of leisure, the lack of an active life position, the lack of best friends are their actual life problems. The authors show that most children consider the extracurricular organization of their leisure time by teachers not interesting and boring. Educational technologies of socio-psychological prevention of the negative consequences of psychological problems among adolescents – increased aggressiveness, distrust of people, a sense of loneliness – are: preventive conversation, interviews, information, socio-psychological trainings and methods of art therapy. It is shown that in order to achieve the desired effect when using art therapy for the prevention of loneliness among adolescents, the following requirements are: a trusting atmosphere; the need to touch meanings and symbols that are significant for the viewers; the correspondence of films to the age characteristics of adolescents, their individual characteristics; the need to choose films in accordance with the emotions that teenagers would like to experience.

Keywords: educational technologies, innovations, teenagers/adolescents, loneliness, educational technologies, art therapy.

Introduction

In the modern world, loneliness is one of the social problems that needs to be solved. A social problem is a contradictory situation existing in reality, in life around us, having a class character and affecting the interests of large social groups, social institutions or society as a whole (Mogge-Grotian, 1999; Hilgartner & Bosk, 2000; Yasaveev, 2004). The symptoms of loneliness are expressed in a persistent fear of social situations and actions. Over a certain period of time, this feeling becomes a familiar state and quite ordinary, in relation to which it is necessary to carry out social prevention.

Often, originating even in childhood, loneliness in adolescence can become extremely acute and, in turn, be the origin of many other personality problems, in particular, lead to suicide (Solodkaya & Loginov, 2014; Aleynikova, 2005; Batkin, 2000; Mailenova, 2002). It should be taken into account that childhood is not only an age characteristic. Therefore, it is unacceptable to characterize the "children" age group exclusively as an age group whose members have similar biological and mental traits. Age is partly a social concept. The traditional attitude to childhood as a certain phase of preparation for independent and adult life is complemented by the historical and cultural characteristics of the society in which children live (Vygotsky, 1984; Elkonin, 1971; Erikson, 2000).

In modern society, there is a serious transformation of both the concept of childhood and the status of the child. One of the trends within the concept of the social history of childhood is the statement of the fact of increasing the distance between the world of a child and the world of an adult, positioning childhood as an autonomous region. The isolation of childhood leads to the understanding of it as an independent phenomenon, and this, in turn, generates adults' interest and their perception of children's space as a certain field. This leads to the fact that, on the one hand, there is an increased interest in the study of childhood, and on the other hand, it generates the attempts to control children's practices. Age boundaries are determined by the historical conditions and the level of development of society. For example, the technological progress and the subsequent industrialization removed children from work. Work are considered as the sphere of activity of an adult. In addition, working in the field of high technologies demands the high level of knowledge and skills. The number of lonely teenagers, according to the sociological surveys, is increasing, and this requires increased attention of specialists of helping professions to the prevention of loneliness and determines the relevance of the research (Batishchev, 1995; Peresheina, 2000; Abdrakhmanova, 2019; Vinogradova, 2004).

According to a number of Russian and foreign scientists, the sharp predominance of the need for privacy is an alarming sign (Vinogradov, 1999; Enikeev, 1997; Herbert, 2008; Zenkovsky, 1996; Frankl, 1990; Sennet, 2002). The following levels of social prevention can be distinguished (Figure 1).
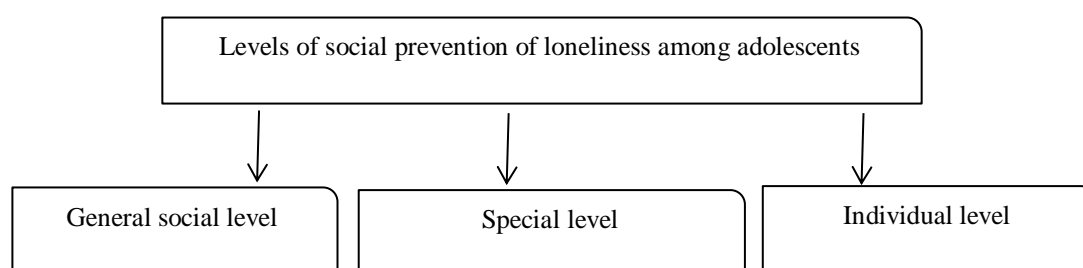

Figure 1. Levels of social prevention of loneliness among adolescents

The means by which the goals of the activities of social work specialists are achieved, are considered in various works (Ermakova, 2006; Kiseleva, 2003; Puzanova,

1995). The importance of the means of social prevention can be found in the works of Russian scientists (Zadorozhnaya, 2004; Kurtiyan, 1995; Bozhovich, 2008). A number of authors distinguish the functions and classifications of social prevention tools (Lebedev, 2002; Myshko, 2003; Nikolaeva, 2005; Samoukina, 2004). The concept of loneliness is explained in a number of works in which the concepts of loneliness, isolation and solitude are separated (Andrienko, 2019; Romanova, Romanova & Drobysheva, 2003; Rozanov & Pomeranskaya, 1990; Nikolaeva, 2005; Zababurina & Semenova, 2017; Shelekhov & Fedchishina, 2013; Zuckerman, 1995). According to I. Cohn, loneliness is a sadness, a subjective state of obscurity, a feeling of an unsatisfied need for communication (Cohn, 2005).

Nowadays, the art-therapeutic approach can be considered as an educational technology – a progressive psychological support that forms a harmonious and creative personality, implementing in practice such functions of socialization of the individual as: adaptation, correction, mobilization, regulation, rehabilitation (Erikson, 2000; Feldstein, 2004; Rogova, 2005). The main technique of art-therapeutic influence is the technique of active imagination, which opens unlimited opportunities for the client to express himself and self-realization in creative products (Dubrovina, 2000; Makarova, 1996; Medvedeva et al., 2001; Mukhina, 1981; Kopytin, 2017; Kopytin, 2012; Anisimov, 2012; Kiseleva, 2009; Zhdakaeva, 2012).

Objectives and the Structure of the Research

To identify the features of the prevention of loneliness among adolescents, the following blocks of trainings were used. The first block of trainings used in school is aimed at forming an adequate idea of oneself. To work with self-esteem and awareness of one own body as part of the Self the group members study themselves, get personal experience, share their impressions. The structure of the training session contains three stages: introduction (introduction or greeting); the main part (exercises, tasks); reflection.

The second block is aimed at forming and correction of teenagers' communication skills with their peers.

To justify art therapy as a means of social prevention, it should be taken through the identification of the resources of this method.

In the pilot study, teenagers were asked the following questions:

− Tell me, please, how do you understand the word "loneliness"?

− What associations does the word "loneliness" evoke in you?

− Have you ever encountered a feeling of loneliness in your life?

− Have you ever experienced a feeling of loneliness in your life?

− Under what circumstances?

− How often does this feeling visit you?

− In your opinion, is this feeling peculiar to your friends?

− How often, in your opinion, does this feeling visit your peers?

− What means of preventing loneliness among adolescents are used in your school?

− Are you satisfied with these educational technologies?

− What educational technologies, in your opinion, are more effective for preventing a feeling of loneliness among adolescents?

− What educational technologies, in your opinion, are most interesting for teenagers to prevent a feeling of loneliness?

In addition, it is necessary to highlight the tasks of preventing loneliness among adolescents.

The tasks of primary prevention:

− development of factors of healthy and socially effective behavior and behavioral strategies among young people;

− formation of knowledge and skills in the field of countering the manifestation of deviant behavior;

–   determination of the means of social prevention in the representation of adolescents.

The means of social prevention can be a variety of methods, actions aimed at preventing unpleasant events, preventing possible social, psychological, pedagogical, legal and other problems and achieving the desired result. The means of social prevention of loneliness in adolescence are aimed at preventing the occurrence of a serious condition caused by the lack of a sufficient number of contacts and leading to deep emotional experiences.

The resources of art therapy as a means of social prevention contain four components:

–   creative;

–   methodical;

–   technological;

–   therapeutic.

Results

At the first stage of the research, since adolescents belong to the most dynamic socio-demographic groups, but at the same time they are also the most susceptible to changing conditions, new circumstances of life, contact and acquaintance with adolescents is established. At the second stage of the research, we tried to find out what problems teenagers encounter most often in everyday life. According to the research, 79% of the respondents name the lack of leisure time as an actual problem, lack of an active life position 13%, lack of best friends 13%. The majority of children consider the extracurricular organization of leisure activities by teachers uninteresting and boring (89%). Thus, we can say that it is necessary to find such a means of social prevention of loneliness, which will be primarily a form of organizing leisure time for teenagers.

It was important for the research that teenage students expressed a desire to help in the preparation of any event (83%). Along with such well-known areas of socio-psychological work as art therapy, book therapy, fairytale therapy, dance therapy, it is necessary to distinguish such an area as film therapy. In this regard, it became possible to prepare for the film screening. It was necessary to find out what teenagers understand by loneliness, and when, in their opinion, such a feeling may appear.

It is revealed that adolescents identify the concept of loneliness with the lack of communication and close people. It is necessary to identify such a means of socio-psychological prevention which involves communication. The lack of desire to participate in the training was demonstrated by almost half of the group of teenagers (46%). All teenagers, having received information about art therapy, expressed surprise at the existence of such activities. Here are examples of teenagers' statements:" I have never thought that with the help of reading, singing, music and cinema one can treat a person or try to prevent something", "Indeed, when you watch a good and interesting film, you want to act like the characters, or, conversely, looking at them, not to do so", "I probably would like to see more films that make you think about important things".

Thus, the analysis of the results of the survey conducted among school teenagers allows us to move to film therapy as a means of preventing loneliness among adolescents.

In this regard, it is possible to conduct film therapy and offer the following recommendations for the use of film therapy as a means of socio-psychological prevention of loneliness in adolescence.

The means of social prevention of the negative consequences of psychological problems of a teenager, such as increased aggressiveness, distrust of people, a sense of loneliness, are: preventive conversation, interviews, information, trainings and methods of art therapy.

Discussion

Social prevention is close to the avoiding or alleviating social problems. Primary prevention is a system of measures aimed at forming of positive stress-resistant behavior with simultaneous changes in maladaptive, already formed behavior.

The goal of primary prevention is to reduce the number of people with deviant behavior. The

tasks of primary prevention are the formation of motivation for effective socially supportive behavior among adolescents (the formation of a social support network). Development of factors of healthy and socially effective behavior and behavioral strategies among young people. Formation of knowledge and skills in the field of countering the manifestation of deviant behavior.

Secondary prevention is a complex of social, educational, medical and psychological measures aimed at people with deviant behavior. As part of secondary prevention, a specialist identifies risk groups and works with this category.

Tertiary prevention is a complex of measures aimed at preventing relapses of deviant behavior. A specialist conducts activities that contribute to the restoration of personal and social status.

Thus, the educational institution carries out its preventive activities on the basis of various cultural and leisure activities. The educational institution mainly uses two blocks of trainings. The first block is aimed at forming an adequate idea of oneself, at working with self-esteem and awareness of one own body as part of the Self. The group members study themselves, get personal experience, share their impressions. The second block is aimed at the formation and correction of teenagers' communication skills with their peers. The survey revealed the special relevance of watching movies in the adolescent environment as the most preferred pastime for teenagers. Film therapy is one of the methods of art therapy.

Conclusions

The specifics of social prevention of loneliness in adolescence are related to the socio-psychological characteristics of this age. The tasks of preventive work in this case are the timely identification of emerging problems, the identification and elimination of their causes, ensuring the prevention of various kinds of negative phenomena, deviations in people's behavior and their communication and, due to this, maintaining a healthy social macro-environment.

Thus, the tasks of preventive work in relation to people who are faced with the problem of loneliness are to identify the causes leading to loneliness, as well as to take timely measures to prevent this problem. At the same time, a specialist should offer different ways for getting out of a difficult life situation, working on changing this particular situation and not on changing personalities.

The main means of social prevention of loneliness, from the point of view of the interviewed adolescents, can be highlighted: preventive conversation, information, training, social advertising, methods of art therapy.

In order to achieve the desired effect when using art therapy for the prevention of loneliness among adolescents, the following requirements were set. It is necessary to create a trusting atmosphere in a group of teenagers. It is necessary to make a list of films that touch meanings and symbols that are significant for the viewers: love, friendship, change of mood. It is necessary to find out what meaning teenagers put into these concepts after watching the film. The movie should correspond to the age characteristics of teenagers, their individual characteristics. It is necessary to choose a film in accordance with the emotions that teenagers would like to experience. Laughter can move away from the problem and increase a sense of well-being; it also reduces the level of stress hormones. Movies that make us cry can stimulate the emotional release we need. This can improve the mood and allow to look at the problem from different sides. In moments of despair and helplessness, films that begin with hopelessness and end with gaining strength of spirit can give hope. Most likely, skills used in the films are familiar and accessible to teenagers themselves. A shift in teenagers' life will occur after he or she realizes the possibilities of his (her) resources. It is necessary to watch the film in advance in order to avoid unexpected reactions from teenagers. Select the time intervals between watching and discussion. Make a list of movies for each age category. It is necessary to take into account the individual typological characteristics of teenagers, the peculiarities of their temperaments when organizing preventive work.

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