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THE INFLUENCE OF THE FAMILY ON THE CHILD'S
NORMATIVE DEVELOPMENT IN PRESCHOOLERS

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Abstract

The purpose of the present study is to identify the extent to which the family influences the development features of the child and to delineate his normative development in the preschool years. The conventional boundaries of the child's normative development are determined by the family and socio-cultural and socio-psychological background. Viewed in the context of a kindergarten, normative development is considered to be the child's optimal state for its full-fledged adaptation to the conditions of a preschool institution and acquisition of the educational program. When rendering psychological and pedagogical support to the parents, pupils and teachers of the kindergartens of Yekaterinburg, it has been revealed that it is possible to classify families in terms of their perception of a child's development. Those are socially adaptive families, families expecting too much from a preschool child, and families with the indifferent attitude to the peculiarities of the child's development. The children of the last two family groups often encounter psychophysical health problems, difficulties in communicating with peers and adults, various behavioral disorders and personality development challenges. Such families need psychological-pedagogical support in raising the parental psychological culture to optimize their liaison with the child. Lectures, seminars and trainings as well as individual and group consultations and discussions can be ultimately useful to them. Kindergarten teachers assume that the child's normative development is promoted by a "normative" family. In this, active, friendly and supportive parents are interested in the development of their child, while understanding the particulars of the child's age and personality.

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1. Introduction

1.1. What is normative development?

An age-specific normative model of development is interpreted by pedagogues in terms of the psychological concept of the development norm. Developmental situations typical of preschool children are attributed to the liaison system in the communication between children and adults that becomes the child's hierarchy of motives and worldview rudiments. The type of behaviour of the child at this age forms under the influence of patterns of adults' relations to each other and to the substantive world at large (Isayev, 2017).

The normative situation as a unit of culture is a situation of social interaction with explicitly-defined social behaviour rules. The preschool child's normative behaviour may include obedience as conformity to adult expectations, safety as behaviour for maintaining health, including interaction with strangers, self-service as compliance with self-care, and self-control as the child accurately fulfills the assigned tasks, hereby also controlling emotional reactions (Bayanova et al., 2015).

The familial, socio-cultural, ethnic, socio-psychological situation in which a child is brought up and develops determines the conventional boundaries of the child's normative development: "The family as a reference group meets two main functions – normative and comparative. The fulfillment of these functions is important both for society and family members, contributing to the satisfaction of social needs" (Aptikieva et al., 2014, p.186).

In the context of a kindergarten, the child's normative development is often viewed as a multifaceted characteristic. For example, it is the optimum state for the child and his comprehensive adaptation to the conditions of a preschool institution, when maturing in the acquisition of the general educational program. The majority of teachers perceive "normal child" and "normal family" to have no deviations from the "ideal" image formed during the kindergarten period. Many educational psychologists of preschool educational institutions perceive the child's normative development as a set of positive features pertaining to the established age norms (Shabas, 2014).

1.2. What is the role of the family in the development of a preschool child?

The family is the child's primary educator. It plays a leading role in shaping a person's identity. The child's cornerstone qualities, worldview and attitude to the surrounding world, other people as well as himself are laid down in the family. The relevance of the study of the modern family of a child attending a preschool educational institution is associated with significant changes that occur in child-parent relations.

Currently, the Russian Federation legislates the responsibility of parents for the upbringing and development of their child. Pursuant to the *Education Act*, parents have the preferential right over other persons to raise their children, and the *Family Code* asserts the direct responsibility of parents and the nature of parental educational influence. Thus, the upbringing of a child becomes a socially-significant activity of parents who should use conditions and instruments of upbringing that meet the requirements of the time (Vasyagina, 2013).

The problem of the formation of a child's personality under the influence of the family as the child's primary institution of socialization is widely represented in modern psychological-pedagogical scientific literature. Thus, it is noteworthy that the formation of the child-parent relationship is influenced by the

family type, the position taken by adults, relationship patterns and the role attributed to the child in the family. Various forms of interaction of the child with parents, especially the mother, influence the formation of strategies for the interaction of the child with peers as well as the development of characteristic traits of the child's joint activities with peers. "Through interaction in the family, in which the child first acquires social experience. The child independently highlights those rules and norms inherent to his social environment, which guide him" (Venza, 2015, p. 45).

The maturity of stylistic characteristics of parental upbringing and well-being in the emotional interaction can act as factors contributing to the favourable adequate personal development of a child at preschool age (Golovey, 2016).

The child's self-perception, self-esteem, and self-image as personality cores are the most sensitive to the effects of family troubles. Since the satisfaction of his needs is absolutely dependent on the parents, the child's self-perception and self-image are largely related to the parents' attitude towards it, their perception and understanding as well as the nature of parental attitudes and the quality of attachment (Nikolayeva, 2013).

2. Problem Statement

The study shows that if a family employs socially-acceptable methods of upbringing, a child, fully supported by, it develops adequately in line with his age specifics.

3. Research Questions

1. What does the normative development of a preschool child imply?
2. Does the family affect the normative development of a child?
3. What psychological-pedagogical support should be rendered to the family to promote the child's normative development in kindergarten?

4. Purpose of the Study

The study focuses on identifying the influence of the family on the normative development of a preschool child in kindergarten.

5. Research Methods

The present study is the result of the analysis of a long-term psychological liaison with families of preschool children attending kindergartens. The experimental study of child-parent relations make use of interviews, observation, questionnaires, expert assessments, self-assessments and adapted standard diagnostic techniques. The study draws on attachment theory and the system approach, whereby the system is viewed as a set of interdependent elements whose interaction yields certain integrity.

5.1. Subjects (cases)

The subjects under test were the parents, pupils and teachers of the kindergartens of the Leninsky District of Yekaterinburg.

5.2. Procedure

The study was carried out during the render of psychological-pedagogical support to families and preschool children attending the kindergartens. The results of the observations, individual and group consultations as well as various psychological surveys as a part of the activity of a preschool educational psychologist were analyzed. The views of the teachers and specialists on that how the family influenced the development of the child were examined

6. Findings

As a result of the study of the influence of the family on the child's normative development, the following groups of families were identified:

- I. Socially-adaptive families:
 - adhere to social-normative styles of child-parent relations;
 - possess an adequate system of upbringing and development of the child ;
 - have established positive relationships with teachers throughout the educational process;
 - their child is in psychophysical health and personality development corresponding to its age.
- II. Families with the overestimated level of the expected development of their preschool child:
 - pose high demands on a child in the child-parent relationship;
 - are consistent in their overestimated expectations from their preschool child;
 - are often in conflict with teachers and specialists, while posing too high requirements for their child to master the general educational program of the kindergarten.
- III. Families with the indifferent attitude to the developmental characteristics of their child :
 - have a permissive style of child-parent relations or lack of care;
 - show no interest in their child's successes or problems;
 - are unwilling to interact with kindergarten teachers, or get annoyed when asked to contact them.

It was found that children from families belonging to the second and third groups often have psychophysical health problems, difficulties in communicating with adults and peers, a high level of anxiety, various behavioural disorders and difficulties in mastering abilities, skills and knowledge appropriate to their age.

Based on the findings of the psychological and pedagogical support rendered to families with a preschool child, the psychological culture of the parents must be raised. To this end, the kindergarten educational psychologist regularly holds lectures, seminars, and briefings covering a wide range of topics on child-parent relations, including the following: *“Encouragement and Discipline of Preschool Children”*, *“How does one become a Good Parent?”*, *“A Child and Difficult Family Situation”*, *“Early Prevention of Child's Addictions”*, *“Why does my Child Speak Poorly?”*, *“Age-Characteristics of a Preschooler”*, *“Psychological Aspects of the Development of Speech Skills”*, *“Family in the Life of a Preschool Child”*, *“Causes of Behaviour Deviations of a Preschool Child”*, *“How to Educate Boys and How to Educate Girls”*, *“Psychosexual Development during the Preschool Age”*, *“When a Grandmother is the Head of the*

Home...”, “*Critical Periods of Development of a Preschool Child*”, “*Development of Imagination and Creativity during the Preschool Age*”, “*We are Expecting the Second Baby*”, etc.

Below are the aspects that are raised in individual/group consultations and dialogues:

- the shaping of the parents’ notions of ways to adequately influence the child’s behaviour;
- on the development of children's self-care and self-control skills appropriate for their age;
- about the characteristics of the emotional sphere of a preschool child.

All efforts of kindergarten teachers to promote better interaction with the family are dedicated to making the parents feel like active participants in the upbringing and educational process and to evoke a positive perception of their child.

When interviewed as part of the study, the kindergarten educators expressed their opinion that the child’s normative development was basically the merit of a “normative” family. After analyzing the teachers’ opinions, the *Portrait of the “Ideal Parent” of a Preschool Child* was thus outlined to have the following features:

1. Understanding. A parent who understands what is happening with their child in kindergarten, as well as what role the family has to play in the child’s upbringing and educational process.
2. Active. A parent who is ready to help teachers and their child to make their activities in the kindergarten joyful and comprehensive.
3. Friendly and calm, smiling, ready for positive and respectful interaction with their child and other children, teachers, the administration and other parents.
4. Listening and approving the opinion of teachers and specialists, ready to make contact to solve problems arising in their child’s life.

Interested in the life and health of their child, communicating with their child, participating in the child’s development and upbringing

7. Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study, we can conclude that the family is the main prerequisite for the normative development of a child attending a kindergarten. The empirical evidence obtained indicates that negative changes within a family and in child-parent relations increase the number of children who encounter problems in their behaviour and development, and when socializing with adults and peers. Families demanding too much from the child’s at preschool age and families with the indifferent attitude towards their child’s development must be provided with psychological-pedagogical support. Preschool educational institutions should provide for a better interaction with the families of pupils. It might increase the psychological culture of parents for an easier and more fruitful interaction with their children, because such interaction is the main prerequisite for the child’s comprehensive development.

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