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PREVENTIVE MEASURES AGAINST DEVIANT PARENTHOOD IN INCOMPLETE FAMILIES

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Keywords: deviant parenting, single-parent family, parent-child relations.

ABSTRACT

The relevance of studying the problem of preventive measures against deviant parenthood in incomplete families is predetermined by the necessity to minimize the risks of various difficulties that aggravate the unfavourable tendencies in fulfillment of parent functions (maltreatment of the child, hypo- and hyperprotection etc.).

The objective of the paper is to describe the innovative experience of a psychological and pedagogical support of incomplete families under conditions of a preschool educational organization to settle the problems of preventing deviant parenthood.

The specific nature of the problem under study required to use the experiment as the leading method that provides a possibility to reveal the specific nature of child-parent relationships in incomplete families, and also to justify the peculiarities of a psycho-pedagogical support of single parents within the frameworks of activity of a family club "You and Me - a Happy Family."

Based on the generalized experience of activities of the family club, a conclusion was made concerning the necessity to correct the parental attitudes, help to elaborate the optimal strategies of the parent's behaviour with due account for the individual features of a child and form a positive experience of a joint creative activity of children and adults. A specific feature of arranging cooperation of a preschool educational organization and an incomplete family is an individual approach based on making their socio-pedagogic characteristic, and solution of a problem of incomplete families through joining the efforts of different specialists from a preschool educational organization and its social partners.

The materials of a paper can be useful for teachers and psychologists working in a system of preschool education.

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INTRODUCTION

The number of incomplete families grows in our country every year. Every tenth preschooler and every seventh child of a school age according to the data of A.G. Volkov (1986) is brought up in incomplete families. The papers of V.A. Ivanchenko provide the statistical data according to which in major Russian cities the number of children that are brought up in incomplete families exceeds 25% (2011).

Whatever is the reason of an incomplete family (divorce, death of one of the spouses, children born out of wedlock etc.) it should be taken into account that such phenomenon has a negative impact on the mind of a child. According to data of M.C. Angel Castillo, M.T. Herrera (2008), and A.M. Mityaeva (2015) the changes in the family structure precondition the occurrence of alienation, rudeness, disaffection and rush to do everything in spite and against the will of those around among children, they have health problems more often.

It was established in the papers of E.V. Kukanova (2015) that not only children have severe problems but also their parents who undergo various difficulties that aggravate the unfavourable tendencies in fulfilling parent functions and in some cases cause deviant parenthood manifestations (maltreatment of the child, hypo- and hyperprotection etc.).

METHODS

In this regard the goal of experimental activity was to elaborate and test the technology of preventing deviant parenthood in incomplete families under conditions of a preschool educational organization.

Research objectives:

1. Reveal peculiar features of child-parent relationships in incomplete families.
2. Elaborate and test a technology for cooperation of teachers and incomplete families aimed at prevention of deviant parenthood.

In order to achieve the set goal the following methods were used on different stages of the experiment implementation: the method of R.V. Ovcharova "Predstavleniyaobidealnomyroditele" ("Image of an ideal parent") (2006), the questionnaire by V.V. Stolin, A.Ya. Varga (2001), projective technique "Family Drawing," and pedagogical experiment. The innovative project involved 84 children at the age of 5.5 – 7 years old attending the "Center for Child's Development – Kindergarten No. 39" in the city of Orel and their parents.

RESULTS

The first stage of establishing cooperation consisted in diagnostics aimed to reveal peculiarities of child-parent relationships in incomplete families. Parents were offered to take part in the testing (methods of R.V. Ovcharova "Predstavleniyaobidealnomyroditele" (Image of an Ideal Parent) (2006), the questionnaire by V.V. Stolin, A.Ya. Varga (2001). As for preschoolers, the diagnostics was conducted using the projective technique "Family Drawing." The testing involved 35 complete and 49 incomplete mother-parent families.

Incomplete families consisted of 35% of divorced and 65% of those born out of wedlock.

The analysis of the data obtained by the method of R.V. Ovcharova "Predstavleniyaobidealnomroditele" (Image of an Ideal Parent) (2006) enabled to reveal the peculiar features of ideas about an ideal parent among mothers who bring up their children in complete and incomplete families.

Comparing the images of an ideal father and mother makes it possible to conclude that both parents according to all participants of the testing shall have positive features that can be combined in one person depending on the situation. This data confirm the conclusions of other researchers who specified the tendency of the recent years concerning similarity of an ideal image of father and mother as a flexible parent. It is important to note unanimity of the married and single (including those divorced) women in their ideas regarding what an ideal parent feels and does. According to married women an ideal parent is more shy, dependent, cooperating and altruistic as compared to the ideal image of a parent revealed from respondents who bring up a child in an incomplete family. They imagine an ideal parent to be more straightforward and aggressive.

We did not reveal any significant discrepancies between the type of real inter-personal relationships of a parent and the type of inter-personal relationships in the image of an ideal parent. At the same time the data of the testing testify that single mothers do not identify such an important issue as pedagogical and psychological readiness to parenthood. The answers only specify what parents should be like with respect to their children. They do not specify what personal features should one develop, how to work on oneself and whether it should be done at all in order to become a good parent. These answers reflect narrow ideas of single mothers regarding parenthood, and psychological unreadiness to it.

At the same time single mothers imagine the parenthood to be hard and responsible process that requires considerable time and efforts. They believe they will require such qualities as patience, will, understanding, trust and kindness. They will have to take great care about their children and suffer financial hardship in order to secure material welfare for their children. Mothers who bring up a child in a complete family consider that parenthood will require from them the expression of love, but they will also in their turn receive it from their children. They should be strict as mothers but fair, authoritative but not skeptical.

The data obtained by the method of V.V. Varga, A.Ya. Stolin (2001) showed that single mothers demonstrate the pursuance of symbiosis to a greater extent than parents from complete families. They control their children more, guard from difficulties but pay less attention to failures of a child. At the same time single mothers use the communication style "a little unfortunate" rarer but are more apt to control the conduct of children.

The results of the test “Family Drawing” testify that children from incomplete families are more sociable as compared to children from complete families. Not every child from an incomplete family can imagine who is father and why does he need him. It is important to note that girls are apt to compensate for the absence of a father by a close relationship with a grandfather, whereas boys often find themselves in a situation of an emotional isolation and experience a severe shortage of affection to adults (Andriesh, Bubnova, 2014).

On the basis of the obtained data a programme of the family club “You and Me - a Happy Family” was elaborated and tested. The activity of the family club was implemented in 4 directions: organizational, consultative, constructive and leisure (Andriesh, Bubnova, 2016). Not only single mothers were offered to take part in the meetings of the family club but also other relatives including fathers who do not live together with a child after the divorce.

The organizational direction implied informing the families concerning the results of diagnostics of child-parent relationships, as well as concerning the goals, objectives and scope of activities of the family club that were implemented within the frameworks of the organizational meetings with a common name “In search for a Family Harmony.”

Activities with parents within the framework of a consultative direction implied raising pedagogical culture of adults. For this purpose the plan of activities of the family club included lectures “Peculiarities of Development of a Child’s Personality in an Incomplete Family,” workshop “The Role of Parental Support in an Incomplete Family,” and discussion “Can a Father be Replaced? By Whom and How?”

A constructive direction in cooperation with incomplete families consisted in conducting a pedagogical training aimed at teaching family members an efficient parental behaviour in the process of a daily communication with a child (“Understand Me,” “Learn to be Angry Correctly,” “One Mind is Good, and Two Minds are Better,” “I was Born!,” “We are All Different: Adults and Children”). A special place among the events of this direction had meetings with parents in the “Literature Sitting-Room.” A subject of discussion for parents was the content of literary texts that emotionally and vividly described the reaction of adults to ambiguous in moral terms actions of children (L. Tolstoy “Kostochka,” N. Nosov “Ogurtsy”) and also the impact of the nature of child-parent relationships on the development of personal traits of a child (a Nenets fairytale “Aioga,” V. Oseyeva “Lekarstvo,” “Synoviya”) (Stavtseva, 2015).

The forth direction of activity of the parent club implied arranging family leisure in the form of joint productive activity of children and adults under conditions of a preschool educational organization: “Kapustnyeposidelki” (cabbage get-togethers) in the music sitting-room, creative competition “Novogodnyayaigrushka” (New Year Toy), cooking class “Rozhdestvenskiepryaniki” (Christmas gingerbread).

On the final stage there was fulfilled a family project on making posters on the theme “Thank you, mother, for happy childhood!” Its essence consisted in making photo-posters that reflect the most touching, funny and interesting moments of family life. This event helped single mothers to realize their role

in the life of a child, evaluate oneself as a parent, and also think about the question “What am I like for a child?”

Implementing a programme of activities of the family club “You and Me – a Happy Family” helped to harmonize the child-parent relationships in incomplete families which is proved by the data of the final diagnostics. Specifically, the number of single mothers who suffer from disobedience of their children, complain about aggression of sons, and are displeased with the failures of children upon mastering the educational programme of the preschool educational organization reduced. It should be noted that the number of single mothers that recourse to punishment pertaining to their children, shouts, and deprivation of pleasures also reduced. Women explain it by the fact that their children became different: more obedient and responsive. A change in parental attitudes of single mothers is noted, they strain after cooperation with their children not symbiosis any more. Consequently, a reduction of the number of incomplete families that infantilize or excessively control their children can be noted.

The analysis of children’s drawings on the theme “My Family” testifies that the relation of children to their mothers improved; and the authority of a father in the eyes of sons in divorced families grew (the father has become a significant person, an object of emotional affection, still without being a source of support and confidence). Moreover, a repeated diagnostics revealed a tendency towards compensating the absence of a father in life of children born out of wedlock by other relatives; and improving emotional state of preschoolers on the whole.

DISCUSSION

The results presented in the paper do not claim to be the final and unambiguous solution of a problem of preventing deviant parenthood in incomplete families. In particular, the issue concerning the scope of directions of joint activities of specialists from a preschool educational organization with this category of parents, as well as about conditions that secure the successful harmonization of child-parent relationships in incomplete families is debatable. Taking into account the small number of selected testees, the peculiar features of interaction of children and parents in incomplete families, as well as the factors that develop manifestations of deviant parenthood should be clarified.

CONCLUSION

The experience of the family club “You and Me – a Happy Family” enabled to reveal some peculiarities of arranging cooperation of a preschool educational organization and an incomplete family in the course of preventive measures against deviant parenthood and harmonization of child-parent relationships. First of all, they include the involvement of immediate family members in bringing up a child and rendering the required assistance to single parents. An important peculiarity is to correct the parental attitudes, help to elaborate the optimal strategies of the parent’s behaviour with due account for the individual features of a child and form a positive experience of a joint creative activity through family projects, master-classes etc. A specific feature of arranging cooperation of a preschool educational organization and an incomplete family is an individual approach based on revealing families of

this category and making their socio-pedagogic characteristic, and solution of a problem of incomplete families through joining the efforts of different specialists from a preschool educational organization and its social partners.

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