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## **Pedagogical Conditions to Correct the Consequences of Child Abuse / Педагогические условия коррекции последствий жестокого обращения с детьми**

**Шик Сергей Владимирович**

кандидат педагогических наук

доцент, кафедра социальной педагогики и социальной работы, Красноярский государственный педагогический университет им. В.П. Астафьева

660077, Россия, Красноярский край, г. Красноярск, ул. Взлетная, 20, ауд. 311

✉ [shik.krsk@mail.ru](mailto:shik.krsk@mail.ru)



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**Аннотация:** Предметом исследования являются педагогические условия коррекции нарушений общения у детей, подвергшихся жестокому обращению в семье. В основу исследования легло предположение о том, что тревога и враждебность являются доминирующим в сознании таких детей. Своевременная работа с эмоциональной сферой ребенка, исправление сферы общения могут корректировать негативные влияния. Автор подробно рассматривает реализацию педагогических условий: проведение специальных занятий с детьми с целью преодоления тревожности в процессе общения; вовлечение детей в досуговую деятельность, направленную на снижение враждебности по отношению к взрослым; участие детей в выездных мероприятиях, направленных на развитие позитивных эмоций. Новизна исследования заключается в том, что

экспериментально проверены педагогические условия коррекции нарушений общения. Автор приходит к следующим выводам: 1. Проведение специальных занятий с детьми с целью преодоления тревожности в процессе общения помогает выразить свои чувства, активизировать общение ребенка с взрослым, сформировать различные средства общения, развить диалогическую речь. 2. Вовлечение детей в досуговую деятельность, направленную на снижение враждебности по отношению к взрослым; позволяет проявиться взрослому как помощнику и защитнику, с которым можно без боязни общаться, совместно достигая намеченных целей. 3. Участие детей в выездных мероприятиях, направленных на развитие позитивных эмоций, позволяет увеличить социальный контекст общения ребенка, расширить круг взрослых, с которыми бы взаимодействовал бы воспитанник.

**Ключевые слова:**

жестокое обращение, педагогическая коррекция, педагогические условия, нарушение общения, тревожность, враждебность, социальное учреждение, специальные занятия, досуговая деятельность, выездные мероприятия

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**Introduction**

*Children are the most vulnerable social group.*

Modern childhood is full of risks and dangers for children and our society's future. Cases of child abuse are becoming more frequent, and there are more and more children who have had traumatic experiences with their families.

Socio-economic instability, a decrease in living standards, bad habits, stress, and unemployment lead to an increase in family problems and often to parents' inability to educate the younger generation. This inability can manifest itself in the form of domestic violence.

Abuse of children in the family is an acute social problem that leads to serious consequences, causes significant harm to their physical, mental, and moral health, and causes serious developmental abnormalities, including communication disorders. The consequences of violence require urgent comprehensive work, including pedagogical correction.

In this regard, the problem of child abuse is increasingly becoming the subject of research by foreign and domestic scientists.

In the West, this topic has been the object of close attention since the 1960s, when battered child syndrome was first described: the detection of unexplained natural causes of injury [5]. Today, the state and causes of child abuse are being studied, and therapy programs are being developed. An important point of many studies includes the analysis of cases [17,18]. J. Webb and J. Lindon note that abuse leads to children doubting themselves and the reliability of adults, causing distrust in them. They point to the importance of an adult's ability to listen and hear a child as a condition for successfully correcting consequences [18; 228-229].

Domestic researchers—teachers, psychologists, sociologists—also show interest in this topic.

O.A. Besedina explores the abuse of children as learned in childhood, special primitive educational practices that have not found reflection in the public consciousness [4].

E.N. Volkova and co-authors consider child abuse a complex problem in the context of broad social attitudes and attitudes of an individual in relation to violence and countering violence. They pay special attention to the study of the spread and identification of this phenomenon [10,11].

In several practically oriented works, the features of providing psychological, pedagogical, and legal assistance to children are spoken about (L.S. Alekseeva [1], V.V. Deryabina [6], T.M. Zhuravleva, T.Ya. Safonova, E.I. Tsymbal [7], G.A. Ilyina [8], D.V. Legenchuk [9] and others), including in specialized social institutions (S. S. Balgai [2], T.M. Barsukova [3], A.A. Nesterova [12], L.N. Timeryanova [14], A.F. Fazlyeva [15] and others). It should be noted that correctional work in social institutions is described primarily as a pedagogical impact on a child without considering the emotional sphere and the peculiarities of communication of such children. Thus, A.A. Nesterova reveals the rehabilitation stage as a system of unilateral pedagogical requirements for a child: clarification, information, suggestion, a system of punishments and rewards, etc. [12; 160].

Correcting the most difficult cases of abuse and rehabilitating children with emerging disorders is carried out in institutions that promote the social protection of children. The system of state institutions for children includes family and children's centers, social rehabilitation centers, and social shelters that provide various social and pedagogical assistance. Children who run away from their families due to abuse often end up here.

At the same time, despite the research conducted and practice being implemented, the ways of restoring the child as a full-fledged subject of communication and working with the feelings of children who have been abused through family have not been sufficiently developed.

In this regard, developing pedagogical conditions for correcting communication disorders in such children is relevant.

*Communication is one of the most important factors in children's social development, the most important factor in their personality formation, and one of the main types of human activity aimed at cognition and self-assessment through the medium of other people.*

Empathy arises in communication. Sympathies and antipathies are formed. Communicating with another person, we learn the peculiarities of their character and behavior, advantages and disadvantages. Through communication, we make friends, get the necessary information, and engage in joint activities.

Children who grow up in an unhappy family environment with rudeness and violence, as a rule, experience difficulty in communication, which is associated with the underdevelopment of forms and means of communication [16]. Such children are more likely to be rejected by their peers; they have worse communication skills, and their social isolation increases over time. In other words, the lack of interested attention (empathy) to the child from relatives and abuse ruins their self-esteem, forms a distrust toward adults, causes a sense of danger, causes inadequate emotional reactions, and leads to communication disorders.

L.M. Shipitsyna, describing the communication disorder in orphaned children, identifies two symptom complexes (a set of interrelated manifestations): anxiety and hostility toward adults [\[16\]](#). In our opinion, these manifestations also apply to children subjected to harsh treatment in the family.

The first symptom complex reflects the child's anxiety and uncertainty and is manifested by the inability to interact constructively with an adult. Anxiety can manifest itself in different ways depending on the child's individual characteristics. Most often, the child's anxiety and uncertainty are expressed either in isolation or avoidance of an adult or in excessive talkativeness, empty chatter, or "sticking" to an adult.

The second symptom complex indicates various forms of rejection the child has experienced through adults: impatience, anger, aggressiveness, suspicion, and actions "out of spite." From this symptom complex, violence against their own children will grow in the future.

The consequences of abuse—anxiety and hostility—are dominant in the child's mind, disrupt the normal flow of communication, aggravate the child's experiences, and leave a negative scenario for future life. This behavior characterizes many children in specialized social institutions. Therefore, timely work with the emotional sphere of the child and correction of the sphere of communication should be the main content of pedagogical correction.

We assume that correction of communication disorders would be possible if the following pedagogical conditions were created:

- conducting special classes with children to overcome anxiety in the process of communication;
- involvement of children in leisure activities aimed at reducing hostility toward adults;
- participation of children in field events aimed at developing positive emotions.

Experimental work was conducted based on the Regional Center for Family and Children in Krasnoyarsk. The practical part of the work was carried out jointly with T.V. Rebezova.

The experimental work involved 27 children of primary school age from 7 to 9 years old who had experienced abuse in the family.

*A typical example. Sasha M., 8 years old. Police officers found him at the train station and brought him to the Center. The boy has a mother, stepfather, and three brothers. The stepfather systematically beat the children. They did not find protection from the mother. After another brutal beating from his stepfather, Sasha ran away from home. The boy got to the Center 20 days after his escape. He moved by train from place to place. He does not show affection for his family.*

*He is afraid of his stepfather and treats his mother indifferently. He graduated from the first grade. He doesn't want to go to school. His expressed fears were noted from the age of 5.*

*While at the Center, he experienced high anxiety, isolation, unwillingness to cooperate with adults, and hostility. He starts the day hard, wakes up at night, and sometimes screams. To assess the depth of communication disorders, T.Y. Safonova's modified technique, "Test for detecting the level of sociability," was used, revealing anxiety and hostility toward adults and children [\[13\]](#).*

The analysis of the results showed that these children are characterized by serious

communication disorders: 81.5% were diagnosed with a high level of violations, 18.5% of children had an average level, and children with a low level were absent. Therefore, we found it possible to test a set of hypothetically selected pedagogical conditions that were implemented simultaneously. The work was carried out for six months, two to three times a week. Let's consider each pedagogical condition in more detail:

1. Conducting special classes with children to overcome anxiety in the process of communication.

Since anxiety is associated with passivity, unconstructive communication, the inability to seek help from an adult, speaking about their emotional state, etc., our main task was to show that an adult can listen, support, and empathize with the child.

We have developed special remedial classes aimed at helping children and adults express emotions and activate communication, forming various means of communication, and developing dialogic speech. The classes included various topics: communication in a person's life, understanding the speaker/listener's emotions, determining self-esteem, what positive communication is, overcoming barriers in communication, the ability to listen to each other, conflict, its roots and consequences, and others.

Various classes were used: conversation, didactic and role-playing games, elements of visual activity, and motor exercises that helped children reveal the patterns of communication and share their impressions.

In the first classes, almost all the children were very anxious and worried. There was anxiety toward the adult. Some children sought to isolate themselves from others, shut themselves in, showed autistic traits, reluctantly came into contact, and spoke monosyllabically and sullenly; communication with them was extremely difficult. On the contrary, other children tried to attract attention by being mobile. At the same time, they could, for no apparent reason, express a sharp protest reaction in response to a benevolent demand of an adult.

During the lessons, it turned out that almost all children perceived information poorly, often did not understand the meaning of tasks, did not know how to listen to each other, and demanded individual attention. Most of the children were afraid to express their opinions, spoke quietly, with long pauses, could not clearly formulate a thought or express an emotional state with words or gestures, and experienced anxiety when answering questions. Therefore, we used the techniques of active listening and empathy, and we supported and helped children to speak out. In addition, we encouraged the children's success and their desire to participate in our meetings and analyze mistakes. If the children wanted to share their personal experiences with us, we offered to meet them alone after class and listen to them.

At the beginning of classes, the children were quite passive; in this regard, they were offered only the simplest tasks that created motivation and an atmosphere of ease. By 5–6 classes, the children could already perform more complex exercises, perform outdoor games with pleasure, enter into discussions, and remember the games held at previous meetings. Gradually, the children began to talk more; they became interested in classes and expressed their opinions, but they still could not express their thoughts in detail and hardly listened to others. To solve this problem, it was useful to use various drawing tasks, which made it easier to include children in activities and contributed to expressing emotions. The children commented on each of their drawings and then listened to the opinions of their peers and adults.

As a result of the group lessons, the children's self-esteem increased, and many established contact with each other and established friendly relations. The children could listen attentively to the speaker, express their emotions and feelings, and begin to express their opinions independently using complex expressions. When performing game exercises, children learned to interact with each other and adults, without fear of being rejected, to maintain a conversation on a certain topic. Children's anxiety levels have decreased. Autistic children began to behave in a more relaxed manner, and children with protest behavior were calmer and more conformal.

## 2. Involving children in leisure activities aimed at reducing hostility toward adults.

Hostility signals not just aggressiveness and children's bad manners but a kind of call for help and understanding. So our main task was to demonstrate that the children can cooperate with an adult during joint activities, that they are not dangerous, can be of assistance and defenders, and that they can communicate productively with him, achieving common goals.

The reduction of hostility in the communication process was carried out jointly with the music director and the labor instructor, respectively, in the classes of the "Music Studio" and the labor training circle "The Warmth of our Hands."

Classes in the "Music Studio" were timed to various events of the Center: "New Year's Tale," "Defender of the Fatherland Day," "Maslenitsa," "I and my friends are at the Samovar," "Spring Fairy Tale," "You are my native land," "I met you, war," "Our friendly family" and others. By learning songs, children acquire singing skills and verbal and non-verbal means of communication. They discovered a new adult—someone they could turn to with various requests and who could give them good advice. Children also found that an adult can be an organizer of communication, a source of their creative activity.

In the circle "The Warmth of Our Hands," pupils created collective works "Our Friendly Family," "Children of the Peoples of the North," "Flowers of Our Region," and others, accompanied by constructive communication between children and adults. Productive joint activities with adults, achieving a common result in the form of, for example, decorations for a holiday, paintings made of natural material and salted dough, and products using beads, created an atmosphere of mutual acceptance and agreement. The possibility of following general instructions, discussing work progress, and making their own suggestions and additions leveled hostility toward adults. It should be noted that from class to class, the children behaved more and more friendly toward adults, confidently addressing them and with a greater degree of trust.

## 3. Participation of children in field events aimed at developing positive emotions.

The work with negative experiences revealed in the first two pedagogical conditions is insufficient to correct communication disorders, as it is limited only by the institution's space. It is necessary to develop emotions in a broader social context, i.e., to expand the circle of adults with whom the pupil interacted. In this regard, we have held several field events. Our task was to show the children other adults outside the Center with whom they can communicate, gain life experience, and whom they can trust.

Field events were held in the following organizations: "House of Mercy," the old age center "Comfort," and the Department of Internal Affairs in the Kirovsky district of Krasnoyarsk. Outside the Center, the children gained a new experience of relationships with adults and met interesting people.

Children with great enthusiasm and creativity prepared for meetings with veterans of war and worked at the retirement centers "Comfort" and "House of Mercy." So, the "House of Mercy" visit took place during any free time the pupils had. Each group of children (4–5 people) looked after one older person. For the holidays, children made gifts with their own hands and prepared concert programs. The elderly gratefully accepted our help, and the children understood how nice it is to benefit someone and give at least a little joy to those who need it so much. This experience allowed children to expand their social circle, get to know adults, learn to talk and talk with them, and experience positive emotions.

In addition, visiting concert programs were organized to coincide with such holidays as March 8, Victory Day, Police Day, and Defender of the Fatherland Day. During the concerts, children learned not only to sing in the choir and solo, read poetry, and dance but also to talk to adults. They had positive emotions and feelings, and they wanted to continue communication.

In general, due to the implementation of pedagogical conditions, serious positive dynamics have emerged in the children, and the level of anxiety and hostility has decreased. They have become more open in communication, and interaction with adults has improved. After the formative experiment, a high level became characteristic of only 11.1%, an average level of 74.1%, and a low level appeared in 14.8% of children, which indicates the effectiveness of the work carried out.

*Conclusion: Summarizing the above, we can draw the following conclusions:*

1. Child abuse is rooted in social life itself. Therefore, it requires a long and comprehensive approach. Specialized social institutions deal with the most serious consequences of child abuse. Unfortunately, work in such institutions is based mainly on directive pedagogical requirements without sufficient consideration of children's individuality.
2. Pedagogical correction of communication disorders of children who have been abused in the family can be effective by implementing the following conditions: conducting special classes with children to overcome anxiety while communicating; involving children in leisure activities aimed at reducing hostility toward adults; and involving children in field activities aimed at the development of positive emotions.
3. Conducting special classes with children to overcome anxiety in the communication process helps them express their feelings, activates communication between a child and an adult, forms various means of communication, and develops dialogic speech.
4. Involving children in leisure activities aimed at reducing hostility toward adults allows an adult to manifest themselves as an assistant and defender with whom they can communicate without fear, jointly achieving their goals.
5. Children's participation in field events aimed at developing positive emotions increases the social context of their communication and expands the circle of adults with whom they interact.

Thus, pedagogical correction of communication disorders largely eliminates the consequences of child abuse in the family and seems to be a promising area of work. So, which of the studied pedagogical conditions have a greater or lesser corrective effect is of interest.

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