

ADAPTATION DIFFICULTIES IN PRESCHOOL CHILDREN: AN ANALYSIS OF SOCIAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL ROOTS

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Annotation. This article analyzes the underlying social and psychological roots of adaptation difficulties experienced by preschool children upon entering early childhood educational institutions. The transition from a familiar family environment to a structured social setting often triggers psychological stress and emotional instability. The study explores how external social factors—such as family dynamics, parenting styles (e.g., hyper-parenting), and maternal anxiety—intersect with internal psychological determinants, including the child's temperament and attachment style. Furthermore, the paper highlights the effectiveness of modern pedagogical interventions, particularly gamification and art therapy techniques, in mitigating emotional tension, facilitating smooth socialization, and ensuring the psychological well-being of young children during the adaptation phase.

keywords: preschool children, adaptation difficulties, social roots, psychological determinants, family environment, psychological stress, early childhood socialization, pedagogical interventions.

A preschool child's transition from the care of their parents to joining a preschool educational institution for the first time is considered one of the most responsible and complex transitional periods in their social development. This process is directly characterized by a sharp change in the child's lifestyle, daily routine, circle of communication, and emotional environment. In most cases, this period coincides with the three-year crisis, during which the child's process of self-awareness becomes highly active, further increasing the psychological burden of adaptation. Scientific observations show that during the period of adjusting to new social conditions, children often

experience negative states such as anxiety, fear, loss of appetite, sleep disturbances, and even an increased susceptibility to psychosomatic illnesses. To successfully mitigate these difficulties, it is first and foremost necessary to deeply analyze the social and psychological roots that cause them on a scientific basis and find practical solutions.

Among the social roots of adaptation difficulties, the parenting style and the moral and psychological climate within the family occupy the most important place. A child's social skills are initially formed within the family circle. The hyper-parenting style widely used by parents today—that is, being overprotective of the child and keeping their every action under strict control—seriously undermines the child's independence. A child who lacks elementary self-care skills feels extremely helpless when confronted with the collective rules and routines of a kindergarten. Furthermore, a lack of social communication experience is also a serious barrier. Children who have not interacted sufficiently with their peers before entering preschool do not know basic communicative rules, such as sharing toys, reaching an agreement in conflict situations, or waiting for their turn. As a result, they struggle to establish communication within the group and withdraw into their own shell. Additionally, neurotic anxiety in the mother is directly transmitted to the child. If a mother hands her child over to the institution with distrust and apprehension, the child subconsciously perceives the place as a dangerous environment.

The psychological roots of the problem are directly explained by the child's individual nervous system characteristics, temperament, and established attachment style. For example, for children with a melancholic or phlegmatic temperament, where inhibitory processes predominate, a noisy environment among a large number of peers serves as a strong stress factor. They tire more quickly than sanguine or choleric children when absorbing new information and transitioning to rapidly changing activities. The excessive strain on the nervous system manifests itself in the form of apathy or

capriciousness. At the same time, the feeling of anxious attachment formed in a child from an early age turns separation from the mother into a severe emotional state. Such children cannot easily see a reliable support figure in the educator and require long-term individual approaches to feel secure in the institution.

Traditional educational methods may not always yield the expected results in overcoming these socio-psychological problems and optimizing the adaptation process. During such a transitional phase, the effective use of modern psycho-pedagogical correction methods is of paramount importance. The systematic introduction of gamification, or various play technologies, into the educational process serves to divert the child's attention from separation grief to engaging activities in their surroundings. Children feel much freer within the framework of game rules, making it easier for them to engage in social interaction and form a sense of belonging to the group.

The unique potential of art therapy is invaluable in neutralizing a child's inner turmoil, subconscious fears, and accumulated aggression. In particular, drawing therapy allows the child to put emotions onto paper that they cannot explain with words. Through the choice of colors and the movement of lines, a pedagogue can diagnose the child's mental state and provide adequate assistance. Similarly, clay therapy, by engaging finger motor skills, relaxes the tension in the central nervous system, creating an opportunity for the child to materialize their emotions and release negative feelings. With the help of these approaches, it is possible to ensure the child's smooth transition to a new lifestyle and help them view their surroundings with confidence. In conclusion, it should be noted that adaptation difficulties in children are not accidental but have deep social and psychological causes, which can only be effectively overcome through mutual cooperation and empathy between parents and educators, as well as the application of modern psycho-correctional approaches.

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