

METHODOLOGICAL SUPPORT FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE OF PRESCHOOL CHILDREN

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Summary

Emotional intelligence is a basic human life competence that needs to be developed from preschool childhood. The article reveals the content of methodological support that will promote the development of emotional intelligence of preschool children. The age-related peculiarities of children's emotional development, which contribute to the formation of emotional intelligence and are the main guideline for methodological support, are determined. The pedagogical conditions for the development of preschoolers' emotional intelligence are considered: enrichment of children's knowledge about emotions, development of teachers' emotionality, organization of a system of developmental classes, enrichment of the appropriate emotional and developmental environment, emotionality of the content of educational and didactic materials, partnership interaction of participants in the educational process, psychological and pedagogical support for children.

The methodological support for the development of emotional intelligence of preschool children is considered as the creation of a holistic methodological system consisting of an effective arsenal of pedagogical methods, techniques, tools, sources, guidelines, resource and didactic support, which create an effective field for familiarizing children with the emotional world, provide an opportunity to express their emotions and learn about the emotionality of other people.

The directions of methodological support carried out by preschool teachers in the system of preschool education are revealed, the practices of partnership interaction between parents and children on the research problem are characterized.

Key words: methodology, preschool children, emotions, preschool education, emotional development, preschool education institutions.

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1. Introduction

Preschool age is a period of intensive emotional development of a child, which is ahead of intellectual development. Children expand and enrich their emotional experience, form an emotional attitude towards themselves, other people and the surrounding reality in general,

which is reflected in the peculiarities of emotional behavior in the process of social interaction and communication with other children and adults. The task of teachers and parents is to teach children to recognize and manage their emotions, i.e. to lay the foundation for the further development of emotional intelligence (EQ). Specially organized methodological support will help to systematize the interaction between an adult and a child, specify goals, and identify the most effective methods and techniques for the emotional development of preschoolers.

The purpose of our study is determined by the need to determine the pedagogical conditions and content of methodological support for the development of emotional intelligence of preschool children.

2. Analysis of research and publications

Many scientific studies have been devoted to the problem of developing the emotional intelligence of preschool children (S. Bader, K. Borysenko, O. Hryshko, V. Zaika, L. Klevaka, N. Melnyk, O. Polovina, M. Shpak, etc.), which indicates its relevance. Researchers have studied the peculiarities of children's emotional development, the means of developing EQ, and the impact of emotional intelligence on success in further schooling.

Within the framework of our study, the work of V. Lazarenko is interesting, who defines theatrical activity as an effective means of developing the emotional intelligence of preschool children, since during theatrical games, pupils develop the ability to understand and realize their feelings and emotions, name them, the ability to express them through various verbal and non-verbal means, the ability to restrain and control them, as well as to show empathy skills. The researcher identifies four stages of preparing middle-aged children for theatrical activities, taking into account the peculiarities of EQ development: setting up for effective cooperation; familiarizing children with the content of a literary work; working with the content of the work; dramatizing a selected work or plot (*Lazarenko, 2019*).

The work of M. Shpak is also noteworthy. Studying the social intelligence of senior preschoolers, the author argues that at this age, emotional intelligence is socialized, which is expressed in the child's emotional focus on other people rather than on certain objects or things, the ability to empathize develops, although it is not yet stable enough, but the child is already able to show empathy, compassion, which ensures the development of interpersonal emotional intelligence (*Shpak, 2016*).

The analysis of scientific papers and studies has shown that methodological support for the development of emotional intelligence has not been in the field of view of researchers in the pedagogical and psychological fields. The study of this area will allow preschool teachers to develop common approaches to the development of children's emotional intelligence in the educational process of preschool education.

3. Age peculiarities of emotional development of preschool children

The ability to recognize and constructively manage emotions is a key cross-cutting skill common to preschool and primary education, which begins to form in preschool age. The Basic Component of Preschool Education of the country (State Standard) (BCPE) includes emotional intelligence and the ability to manage behavior as characteristics of a preschooler's life competence. Developed emotional intelligence allows a child to build ecological communications with adults and peers; control their feelings and behavior, and effectively focus on tasks. Children who understand their own and other people's emotions are more responsive, socially

adapted, and are more likely to be chosen by the group. However, for a child, recognizing and communicating emotions is a rather complicated process that requires certain knowledge and a certain level of development.

Based on the analysis of scientific sources, the emotional intelligence of a preschool child can be defined as the ability to navigate, distinguish, express emotions, readiness to focus on another, take into account his or her emotional state in interpersonal interaction, and their own actions. That is, it is the child's ability to realize his or her feelings and emotions at an accessible level, to express them, and to manage them.

Scientists identify the following functions of emotional intelligence: stress-protective, adaptive, reflective, and regulatory (*Shpak, 2011; 286*).

There are four interrelated components in the structure of a preschooler's emotional intelligence:

- the ability to distinguish and express a specific feeling;
- comprehension of emotion (understanding);
- the ability to regulate emotions;
- assimilation of emotions with thought processes.

The emotional intelligence of a preschool child has its own characteristics:

- from 0 to 1 year old. At birth, a child has three innate emotions: fear (when there is a threat, such as hunger), anger (when the child does not have freedom of movement), and dissatisfaction (if the child does not receive signals that he or she is protected). These emotions are expressed through crying and are aimed at self-defense and development. They are all negative. Positive emotion appears with the revitalization complex about 1 month after birth, when the baby shows joy at seeing the mother. Later on, emotions become the main guide in the world: the child looks for approval of his or her intentions and actions in the mother's facial expression, trusts only kind smiling people, and recognizes hostile intonation. At 5 months, the baby is able to feel disgust. At 7 months, he already shows his mood, which usually depends on his mother (or the closest person). At 9 months of age, joy is already consciously distinguished from positive emotions, and at 11 months, affection is manifested;

- from 1 to 2 years old. This period is the «golden age» of a child's emotional life. Communication with others occurs mainly at the level of feelings and emotions, the child begins to perceive communication with loved ones through intonation, facial expressions, gestures, and voice expression. At 18 months of age, a child may have an emotion such as resentment. At the age of two, social emotions appear: jealousy, envy, surprise, responsiveness. There is a lack of empathy;

- 2 to 4 years old. A child is very emotional, he or she can show all emotions, but they are not constant, it is easy to be distracted and switch from one emotional state to another. Emotions are the motives for behavior, which explains their impulsiveness and instability. He/she is able not only to read the mood of parents, but also understands how it can be used to achieve his/her goals. The development of the emotional sphere is combined with the formation of a plan of ideas. The images imagined by the child become emotional, and in the process, all activities become emotionally intense. The child has the first attempts to restrain his feelings, for example, tears, although it is still poorly managed.

- 4 to 5 years old. An "emotional breakthrough" occurs, the range of emotions and feelings expands: they can experience not only joy or fear, but also jealousy, sadness, pity, anger, cheerfulness, tenderness, shyness, surprise, and pleasure. The child can already express feelings using different intonations and facial expressions. A sense of humor is developing. The baby loves to be naughty and make people laugh. Compassion and empathy appear. He begins to

understand that others also have feelings, notices when another child is sad or offended. He or she learns the skills of expressing emotions in the unity of verbal and non-verbal means. The child is much better at talking about his or her feelings and controlling emotions, and is better able to cope with tantrums and impulsive behavior.

- from 5 to 6 years old. During this period, the child's emotional world is developing rapidly. He or she is ready to perceive others at the level of understanding their feelings and experiences and, thanks to them, learns to distinguish and learn the names of emotions. Basic skills of interaction during emotional situations are developed, and the child becomes able to identify the emotions of another person by their language. In addition to standard emotions, additional emotions appear, including annoyance, delight, and surprise. Deep positive and negative emotions arise, related to both the present and the future. A child has a wide range of emotions, can empathize with people, plants, and animals around him or her, and thus learns to master complex forms of communication. The child learns to show emotions following the example of adults, with the help of postures, looks, intonations and facial expressions. He can say what he feels, provided that he is talked to about emotions and feelings. Begins to manage the expression of emotions by influencing himself with words. However, emotions related to physiological needs, such as hunger or thirst, are still difficult for the child to restrain, they make him act impulsively. Emotional anticipation is manifested (the child tries to predict the future outcome and how it will be evaluated). Affective reactions are observed. The development of emotional intelligence is realized through familiarization with the names of existing emotions, the formation of the ability to identify them in oneself and others.

4. Conditions for the development of EQ of preschool children

Determining the main conditions for the formation and development of EQ in preschoolers will allow teachers and parents to direct partnership interaction with children, to determine the main directions of joint work.

For the development of emotional intelligence of older preschool children, there is a need for systematic, purposeful work on the part of adults in this direction, because it is still difficult for a child to recognize the causes of their own emotional states, effectively regulate emotions and build an adequate model of behavior with others based on the emotions they demonstrate (*Borysenko, Bader, 2021; 50*).

We define the following pedagogical conditions:

- *enriching children's knowledge about emotions*, emotional balance and confident behavior, its importance in life and effective means of development through interesting and accessible information that broadens their understanding of emotional traits in general and emotional traits as important personality traits in particular;

- *development of teachers' emotionality* as role models for children: to present new material emotionally; to read a work of art, conveying the full range of feelings described; to master and appropriately use the full range of non-verbal communication tools - gestures, facial expressions, gaze; to notice, recognize, "read", understand children's emotions, and respond adequately to them;

- *organizing a system of developmental classes* and interesting practices aimed at developing certain skills and abilities of a child to be aware of their emotions and the emotions of other people, to manage their emotions and the emotions of other people (soft skills);

- *creation and enrichment of an appropriate emotional and developmental environment* based on a favorable environment both in the group and in the preschool education institution.

This environment should correspond to the BCPE concept and take into account all educational areas. The main component is an atmosphere of emotional comfort: friendly, tolerant, supportive relationships in the children's group, acceptance of the child as he or she is, understanding of his or her needs, interests, and tolerant attitude to peculiarities. The main principles by which the environment is created are: accessibility, richness, transformability, multifunctionality, variability, affordability, safety;

- *Ensuring emotional content of educational and didactic materials*: using material that contains interesting facts, vivid examples, meets the needs and interests and age of children, evokes appropriate emotions and feelings, reflects real events, describes practical experience that can be applied; unusual presentation of material; predicting the emotional effect and emotional response of children.

- *partnership interaction of teachers, parents and children* in a triad with equal opportunities, taking into account the individual trajectory of the child's development, ensuring the variability of educational and partial programs, creating a single space for the child's development. Such interaction makes it possible to meet basic interpersonal needs, master little-known ways of acting, model behavior, and solve problems together;

- *psychological and pedagogical support for children* in resolving conflicts and difficult situations, which consists in the interaction between an adult and a child to create emotional comfort, mutual understanding, and acceptance of the child.

5. Directions of methodological support of preschoolers' EQ development

We consider methodological support as a set of forms, methods, techniques, technologies and activities that make up a certain system of pedagogical activity, which leads to the achievement of a pre-planned result (*Ivanchuk, Stiahunova, 2022*). We define methodological support for the development of preschool children's emotional intelligence as the creation of a holistic methodological system consisting of an effective arsenal of pedagogical methods, techniques, tools, sources, guidelines, resource and didactic support that create an effective field for familiarizing children with the emotional world, provide an opportunity to express their emotions and learn about the emotionality of other people.

The main directions of methodological support for the development of preschoolers' EQ include the following:

- development of the emotional intelligence of the teacher, as he or she is a role model for children. Formation of the ability to manage one's own emotions, i.e. to be able to determine the determinants of the appearance of a particular emotion and the likely consequences and expediency of its manifestation in a children's group, to find ways to regulate emotional states. Improving the ability to recognize children's emotions, predict the consequences of their manifestations and prevent undesirable ones;

- Formation and development of children's emotional intelligence through gradual familiarization with their own emotions and the emotions of others, taking into account their age characteristics:

- *in early childhood groups*, through imitation games and looking at illustrations to fairy tales, to introduce children to such emotions as joy (How happy the cat was, he is smiling! Show how happy you are!), grief (The cat was sick, he was grieving, he was crying! Show me how you cry when you are sad); to form positive emotions with the help of a smile (What a cheerful song, you are smiling, you are having fun); to encourage children to do things and actions that bring joy (Let's cheer up the doll, she will not be sad, dance for her);

– *in early childhood groups*, teach children to recognize and name emotions such as joy, sadness, anger, and fear. No separate classes are held; it is advisable to use «Mood Screens», «Mirror of Emotions» to help children identify their emotions and fiction, various puppet theaters, and theatrical games to identify the emotions of other people. The main thing is to name emotions, because children have limited understanding of them. Effective means: fiction (folklore, fairy tales, poems), drawings, story pictures, various types of theater (finger, table, toy, flannelboard, bibabo, picture, mask theater);

– *In groups of middle preschool age*, the work is aimed at mastering the means of emotional expression: intonation, facial expressions, gestures, postures, gait. They develop the ability to convey feelings of joy, grief, humor, compassion, and empathy. When conducting games, the teacher should emphasize the child's emotions in the process of performing the game action. For example: in the game «Who Lives in the House» or «Magic Bag» (recognizing objects of different textures by touch: hard, soft, smooth, prickly), the child shows his/her emotions through facial expressions. Games such as «Tasty Not Tasty» (mimetic expression of taste sensations with closed eyes), «So Many Smells Around» (imitates the reflection of pleasant and unpleasant smells with closed eyes) are also played.

In the process of play, it is appropriate to develop the child's emotional expression, its mechanisms: non-verbal (facial expressions, pantomime, gestures) and verbal (words, sounds, phrases). Emotional and expressive games (children's embodiment of various situations from the life of animals, their habits; transfer of emotional states of fairy-tale characters through personification) are effective, which will contribute not only to the formation of the basis for the expressiveness of external emotional manifestations, but also to the creativity of preschoolers: «The Zoo», «The Cat and the Kittens», «There were bunnies», «Two Cockerels», «The Hen», «The Wolf and the Hares», etc.; use of musical images to develop the ability to express emotions through basic figurative and pantomimic movements.

By familiarizing children with their own emotions and the emotions of other people, it is appropriate to replenish their emotional vocabulary. This happens through the use of words that denote mood, state (surprise – to be surprised, fear – to be afraid, anger – to be angry, sadness – to be sad, fun – to laugh); the use of phrases that reflect shades of mood (not very angry, not at all scared, very sad); through learning to select synonyms (joyful – cheerful, happy; sad – upset, sad, saddened), finding words that specify the emotional state (angry – unkind, unpleasant; cheerful – happy, smiling); through understanding emotional characteristics presented in the form of phraseological units (Irinka-confused, Vaselinka-cheerful, bunny-cheerful). Effective practices for familiarizing children with the emotions of other people are the use of voice power and intonation (the educator says any sentence cheerfully, sadly, surprised, angry). It is appropriate to use emotional massage – based on the pairing of contrasting moods, it regulates the emotional states of children.

The synthesis of different types of art helps a child to feel, think, and experience more deeply. Fiction and music are effective tools. Listening to fiction, a child identifies the main character and himself or herself, which allows the child to overcome trials and obstacles on the way to victory together with the hero, helps to understand and realize emotional states. Music encourages children to react emotionally, to reproduce emotions through non-verbal means.

To support the emotionally expressive manifestations of children (facial expressions, gestures, speech) in the process of interaction with sensory stimuli of different modality, intensity, and duration, theater activities help: finger theater, table theater, flannelboard theater, mitten theater, costume theater, etc;

– in older preschool age groups, children continue to expand their knowledge of their emotions (joy, sadness, anger, fear, surprise, calmness, shame, resentment, envy, pity) and learn different ways of expressing them (verbal and non-verbal). It is appropriate to set aside time for exercises on recognizing one's emotions during Morning Meetings or Evening Circle. Effective techniques include using a mirror, drawing and coloring self-portraits and emoticons, and playing «Fidget Spinners». The child can compare his/her emotions with fairy-tale characters, animals, natural phenomena, sculpt and draw. An appropriate technique is to combine the display of emotions on the face with facial expressions and gestures. Examining your facial expressions in front of a mirror will help strengthen the connection between facial expressions and the emotions experienced by the child. You can also conduct «facial dictation» in front of a mirror. A text with facial expressions, sound imitation, and pantomiming is read to the children.

An effective tool is the use of copying posters, coloring books depicting different emotions, board games such as «Cutaway pictures», «Puzzles», «Association cards», «Emotion calendar» (the child draws or chooses the «emotion of the day» every day), «Emotion lotto», etc. A variety of games – role-playing, active, communicative, theatrical, game exercises, elements of psycho-gymnastics, psycho-sketches, musical compositions – will make the process of learning about the emotional world interesting and easy for the child.

Fiction should be used to develop the ability to recognize the emotions of others. A selection of works with an emphasis on the emotional state of the characters should introduce both negative and positive emotions. Fairy tales and short stories by V. Sukhomlynsky (e.g., «Almost a Magical Conversation», «Even the Flowers Blushed with Shame», «How Nina Wasn't Afraid of the Goose» etc.); Ukrainian folk tales about animals («The Straw Bull», «The Goat-Dereza», «The Rooster and the Two Mice», «The Hen and the Rooster», «Mr. Kotsky», «The Little Fox Sister and the Wolf Pan-Brother», «The Sly Rooster», «About the Idle Yurko», «Wintering of the Animals», «The Wild Fox» etc.), household and magic fairy tales of both Ukrainian and world cultures («The Ugly Duckling», «Thumbelina», «Cinderella», «The Seven-Colored Flower», etc.) After the children are familiarized with the literary works, conversations are held during which, in order to form and expand knowledge about emotions and the causes of their occurrence, children are asked to determine what the characters felt and experienced and why it happened, and to recreate the characters' dialogues taking into account their emotions.

6. Directions of pedagogical interaction between parents and children for the development of EQ

- Developing your own emotional intelligence. This will allow you to become more attentive to yourself, your feelings, desires and needs, and at the same time, it will allow you to better understand children, feel their needs, motives, behavior and be an example for them.
- Collaboration with pedagogical staff of the preschool educational institution on the development of the child's emotional intelligence. It is necessary to realize that parents are directly involved in the development of the child's emotional intelligence. The main goal of the adult is to teach the child to live in harmony with himself/herself, to accept the whole range of feelings.
- Promoting the development of the child's emotional intelligence by familiarizing him or her with his or her own emotions. Continuous assistance will allow the child to identify what he or she is feeling. Talking to the child about his or her emotions, naming them, and describing them are effective. For example, when a child is angry and does not want to do something, you should tell him or her what emotion he or she is feeling: «You're probably angry now, like a

fierce lion». It is appropriate to use alternative questions: «Are you happy or sad?», «Are you worried or calm?».

- Enriching the child's verbal repertoire for denoting emotions, as well as forms of their expression, clearly show emotional manifestations through various games and conversations. It is worth using alternative questions.

- Helping your child understand the emotions and feelings of other people. This can be done by observing situations during walks together, watching movies with your child, and reading fiction. It is necessary to discuss everything you see or hear, focusing on the reactions and feelings of participants in real situations or fictional characters.

- Teaching children to show empathy and compassion for loved ones and family members, other people, and animals by developing the ability to recognize the feelings and emotions experienced by these people or animals, offering to compare feelings that are far from being meaningful (joy – sadness, sadness – fun, envy – admiration, hatred – love etc.) and feelings that are close in meaning (fun – joy, boredom – sadness, resentment – aggression, love – tenderness).

- Developing the child's practical skills in expressing emotions and behavior in a given situation by showing a model. It is worth remembering that by expressing their emotions, parents set an example for their child.

7. Conclusions

The development of children's emotional intelligence, starting from preschool age, is one of the important tasks of the education system. To realize this task, it is necessary to provide teachers and parents with certain theoretical and practical knowledge. Methodological support for the development of preschoolers' EQ depends on the emotional development of teachers and parents themselves, the level of their knowledge and ability to interact with children. It allows to create special conditions in the child's living space that are age-appropriate and that will promote attentiveness to oneself and others, and form tolerance.

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