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PROMOTING HEALTHY LIFESTYLE AND LIFE SKILLS IN STRESSED ADOLESCENTS

Abstract: *The article explores the causes of stressful situations, such as bullying, cyberbullying, changes in residence and school, interpersonal conflicts, and unsuccessful first romantic relationships, which lead to the emergence and encouragement of forms of self-destructive behavior in adolescence. It considers the relevance of the problem of healthy lifestyle promotion and life skills formation in teenagers. Furthermore, it discusses the preventive, corrective, and advisory services provided by school psychologists, social teachers, and class teachers in addressing this issue. Conditions contributing to enhancing the efficiency of this work are also considered.*

Keywords: *adolescence, stress, healthy lifestyle skills, life skills, physical and mental health.*

Introduction. The increasing demands of the social environment lead to the emergence of psycho-emotional tension and an increase in various types of self-destructive behavior in adolescents, including suicide, alcohol and tobacco use, and psychoactive substance abuse.

According to a study conducted by the American Psychological Association, the stress level in teenagers corresponds to that of adults. Additionally, the results of this study indicate that adolescents not only have difficulty identifying when their stress levels are above normal but also

underestimate the effects of stress on their mental and physical health [1, 6-12].

Conflict with peers is identified as one of the main sources of stress for students. Generally, the opinions of others, especially peers, are crucial for teenagers during the period of personality formation. Peer evaluations and attitudes serve as additional sources of negative experiences. Adolescents are often compelled to step out of their comfort zones to establish and maintain friendships with others.

Bullying, including incidents at school, and other aggressive behaviors are not

uncommon among teenagers [2]. Additionally, a difficult period of life is associated with facing interpersonal conflicts and experiencing first romantic feelings, among other factors. According to conducted studies, this inability, namely the child's inability to establish relationships with other students, remains the main stressor for adolescents. As a result of this situation, students experience strong emotional responses, leading to decreased performance and changes in behavior. Adults often fail to notice these changes, and in most cases, they cannot assist teenagers in finding their place within their peer groups. Neither teachers nor parents typically observe shifts in peer relationships during adolescence. It is during this age that teenagers require the support of adults.

Another cause of stress is environmental change. It is challenging for teenagers to adapt to new schools, rules, teachers, classmates, and neighbors, and in some cases, to another country or culture. The adaptation process is difficult both for individual students and for the class as a whole, impacting students' psychological well-being [3].

Another source of stress for students is conflict situations with teachers, an aggressive and emotionally unfavorable environment, as well as conflicts between parents and the school. Many individuals worry about their academic performance, fearing they will not meet parental and teacher expectations and fearing falling behind their classmates. Inefficient time management, the inability to prioritize, and managing multiple tasks further contribute to the stress associated with school life.

Everything that happens with family members also affects the mood of the teenager. Unrealistic expectations, parental problems, intense conflicts between siblings (sibling bullying), illnesses of close relatives, and financial difficulties in the family - all of these can dramatically

increase the level of stress in the life of a teenager [4]. The death of a family member or friend, accidental events, illness, or prolonged emotional or physical abuse, as well as sexual harassment, can have a profound effect on a teenager's stress level.

Theoretical analysis. Today's teenagers are often not ready to cope with the negative consequences of stressful situations in ways that are safe for their health. In this regard, modern society is particularly concerned about the need to take preventive measures to save the lives of children and adolescents, as they are closely related to the development of human capital and education.

Educators, psychologists, and doctors emphasize that harmonious development of an individual is possible only in conditions of stable psychological and physical health. Additionally, there is a connection between the child's general health condition and their success in the educational and learning process. Taking into account all these factors, by explaining the main aspects of adolescent growth and increasing the level of attention, the potential for forming a healthy and whole personality with an active, creative stance in schoolchildren is enhanced. Therefore, the formation of healthy lifestyle and life skills in teenagers is important and necessary in addressing this issue.

Life skills are adaptive and positive behavioral abilities that enable people to effectively deal with life's demands and challenges. This concept is also referred to as psychosocial competence. The specifics of the topic vary depending on the social norms and expectations of the community, but skills that promote well-being and help individuals become active and productive members of their communities are considered life skills. This definition is utilized by UNESCO and the World Health Organization and aligns fully with the concept of "21st-century skills" [5].

In 1999, the World Health Organization identified the following key cross-cultural areas of life skills:

- decision-making and problem-solving;
- creative and critical thinking;
- communication and interpersonal skills;
- self-awareness and empathy;
- assertiveness and seriousness;
- resilience and emotion regulation, stress management [6].

Research methods and organization.

The initiative to form a healthy lifestyle and life skills in teenagers was implemented at the branch "International School of Astana" of the autonomous educational organization "Nazarbayev Intellectual Schools". Since the 2023-2024 academic year, 7th and 8th-grade students have been participating in the experiment, which is planned to continue until 2026. The experimental work is carried out by the entire pedagogical team of the school, with particular emphasis placed on the school psychologist, social teacher, and class leaders.

This endeavor is organized through preventive (prevention), counseling, and corrective (intervention) activities, which involve teaching students a healthy lifestyle and fostering responsible behavioral skills aimed at maintaining their physical and mental well-being. These efforts are often implemented through class sessions, psychology weeks, socio-pedagogical support, parent meetings, and seminars [7, 159-165].

Let's examine the content of preventive (prevention) efforts aimed at addressing stressful and crisis situations in teenagers:

- Increase adolescents' awareness of the biological and psychological changes occurring during their transition into adolescence, emphasizing the importance of successful navigation through developmental tasks for optimal growth;

- Enhance awareness, independence skills, decision-making ability, and accountability in the realm of individual development;

- Raise awareness about emotional intelligence, puberty, and the changes in family dynamics experienced by adolescents;

- Heighten awareness about the significance of setting life goals, developing a strategic vision for the future, and acquiring practical strategies and skills to pursue life plans effectively;

The content of counseling and corrective (intervention) activities for fostering healthy lifestyles and life skills in 7th and 8th-grade teenagers:

- 1) Understanding the physical, psychological, and cognitive changes in adolescents;

- 2) Familiarization with the unique developmental tasks of adolescence;

- 3) Comprehending the psychological aspects of self-care;

- 4) Learning effective communication skills to enhance communicative competence;

- 5) Providing information on psychological safety and self-defense mechanisms in challenging life situations;

- 6) Introducing teenagers to emotions and feelings, including the mechanisms of their emergence and processing;

- 7) Understanding the shifts in family dynamics, from teenagers' reactions to their parents to parents' responses to their teenagers' growth;

- 8) Understanding family dynamics and structurally revising "family rules";

- 9) Knowledge of psychological aspects of sexual development and physical capabilities to promote self-care during puberty and ensure a person's safety;

- 10) Raising awareness about psychological safety in cases of cyberbullying and introducing key self-help methods to address loneliness [8];

11) Fostering adolescent self-awareness and emotional stability;

12) Familiarization with personal values and determining individual life orientations;

13) Understanding the psychological aspects of self-esteem formation and behavioral role models;

14) Providing vocational information and psychological considerations for career choices;

15) Studying the decision-making process and assessing consequences for teenagers;

16) Promoting understanding of responsibility and independence as integral aspects of adult life;

17) Inform teenagers about possible psychological risks, caution them about manipulations of the mind when forming close relationships with the opposite sex, and provide methods for psychological safety to minimize risks;

18) Introduce teenagers to the importance of choosing life goals and help them understand which goals they want to achieve in the future;

19) Study the goal-setting and planning process to develop a strategic vision of one's life (in general, an image of the desired future) and plans for the near future;

20) Inform teenagers about practical tools for goal setting, planning, and achieving balance in various life domains;

21) Provide teenagers with knowledge of psychological self-help methods and requirements during the educational process, including preparation for national unified tests and managing educational issues;

22) Inform adolescents about psychological injuries and psychological safety in the context of "harmful" relationships with the opposite sex;

It is also possible to highlight conditions that enhance the effectiveness of

efforts aimed at promoting healthy lifestyles and life skills in teenagers:

1. Availability of knowledge about the harm of self-destructive behavior in adolescents, shifting attitudes towards negative behavior strategies, development of useful social-psychological skills, and establishment of behavioral patterns.

2. Well-trained teachers who serve as trusted mentors for teenagers.

3. Avoidance of sensationalist messages and scare tactics when informing teenagers, as these may raise doubts about the accuracy of the information.

4. Careful and honest presentation of information about the advantages and disadvantages of the phenomena under discussion, as adolescents may encounter alternative or contradictory facts in the future.

5. Active participation of teenagers in specially simulated situations and business games.

6. Regular training sessions.

It is recommended to use the following methods and approaches when organizing counseling and corrective activities: Notification, expanding the child's awareness (changing, correcting), providing examples from everyday life, referring to literary sources, scientific data, and other people's experiences, which can increase their psychological literacy in the discussed issues.

Metaphor (method of analogy). The essence of this method lies in the use of analogies - such as pictures, fairy tales, parables, situations from life, and proverbs - to describe the current situation or address specific topics and questions. Metaphor indirectly influences people's views, stereotypes, and opinions, allowing them to see the situation from an external perspective. Consequently, the subjective importance of the problem diminishes, and the false sense of its uniqueness dissipates.

Additionally, the tense atmosphere of counseling can be alleviated.

Establishing logical relationships. It is beneficial to determine the sequence of events with the child and identify the influence of internal (subjective) factors on the current situation, as well as their interrelationships. This method expands and clarifies the understanding of the problem and facilitates logical reasoning, enabling the exploration of various solutions and their consequences.

Self-disclosure. It is important to indirectly encourage the teenager to "be themselves." The teacher can share their personal experiences, demonstrate tolerance towards the child's words and feelings, and create an environment conducive to authenticity.

Real wishes. In this approach, specific methods of action are employed to address particular problems. However, such wishes should not absolve the teenager of responsibility; they are encouraged to make decisions, evaluate the suitability of proposed methods, and plan their implementation steps independently.

Paradoxical directive. Encouraging the child to persist in their current actions can stimulate protest and increase their activity level. This method involves repeating actions, thoughts, or behaviors at least three times.

Confidence. This method is best utilized in a balanced emotional environment, particularly when the teenager demonstrates developed figurative and abstract thinking and stable attention. By using arguments understandable to the teenager and employing specific methods or ideas, confidence can be instilled to affirm correctness.

Sharing emotional feelings. Social workers or psychologists can model emotional identification to establish a trusting relationship with the teenager and, subsequently, modify or correct their

emotional state, sharing positive emotions with them [9].

The next method to consider is the provision of informative material. The school pedagogue-psychologist or social pedagogue distributes special books among students at a general education school. After learning and mastering the information, teenagers organize group or individual discussions with other students.

Special literature can present different models of coping with difficult situations, offer conflict resolution strategies, teach stress management techniques, promote self-understanding, and increase awareness and psychological literacy among teenagers regarding current life situations and youth identity crises.

Research results and their discussion. The aforementioned activities should be organized for students, their parents, and teachers. Although the experimental work has only been carried out for half a year, its systematic and purposeful organization has had an impact on the growth of competencies among parents and subject teachers, as well as on raising awareness of children's mental health issues. Adolescents have begun to better understand their emotional states and know whom to turn to when necessary and with whom to discuss their problems. This has gradually led to adolescents seeking help from psychologists, social workers, or doctors on their own when feeling depressed or experiencing emotional difficulties. Not long ago, most teenagers could not properly assess their psychological condition and were hesitant to approach psychologists and doctors. Currently, this barrier is starting to diminish. Many teenagers have moved away from using demonstration or blackmail methods to draw attention to their psychological problems. Additionally, we are confident that systematic efforts to promote healthy lifestyles and life skills

will lead to a gradual decrease in the number of suicides among children and adolescents.

Conclusion. In summary, the purposeful and systematic efforts of the pedagogical team have enhanced adolescents' awareness of the formation of emotional intelligence, the development of their individuality, self-management skills, decision-making, and responsibility. Additionally, they have gained familiarity with the characteristics of puberty and an understanding of changes in family relationships. A social teacher, teacher-psychologist, and class teacher, through collaborative efforts, contribute to

increasing adolescents' awareness of the importance of defining life goals, forming a strategic vision of their future, and mastering practical strategies and skills for self-support in pursuit of life plans. Therefore, the primary objective of schools is to prepare children for adulthood and equip them with the ability to identify and resolve their own problems. Consequently, children should be taught to accurately evaluate various life situations, build resilience to stress, recognize their own and others' emotions, establish healthy relationships in society, and lead a healthy lifestyle.

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СТРЕССКЕ ҰШЫРАҒАН ЖАСӨСПІРІМДЕРДЕ САЛАУАТТЫ ӨМІР САЛТЫН ЖӘНЕ ӨМІРЛІК ДАҒДЫЛАРДЫ ҚАЛЫПТАСТЫРУ

Аңдатпа.Мақалада стресстік жағдайлардың себептері ашылады, мысалы: қорқыту, кибербуллинг, тұрғылықты жері мен мектептің өзгеруі, тұлғааралық қақтығыстар, жасөспірім кезіндегі өзін-өзі бұзатын мінез-құлық формаларының пайда болуына және

ынталандырылуына әкелетін сәтсіз алғашқы романтикалық қатынастар; жасөспірімдерде салауатты өмір салты мен өмірлік дағдыларды қалыптастыру проблемасының өзектілігі көрсетіледі; осы мәселені шешуде мектеп психологының, әлеуметтік педагогтың және сынып жетекшісінің профилактикалық, түзету және консультациялық қызметі қарастырылады; аталған жұмыстың тиімділігін арттыруға ықпал ететін жағдайлар айқындалады.

Тірек сөздер: жасөспірім, стресс, салауатты өмір салты, өмірлік дағдылар, физикалық және психикалық денсаулық.

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ФОРМИРОВАНИЕ ЗДОРОВОГО ОБРАЗА ЖИЗНИ И ЖИЗНЕННЫХ НАВЫКОВ У ПОДРОСТКОВ, НАХОДЯЩИХСЯ В СТРЕССОВОЙ СИТУАЦИИ

Аннотация. В статье раскрываются причины стрессовых ситуаций, такие как: буллинг, кибербуллинг, смена места жительства и школы, межличностные конфликты, неудачные первые романтические отношения, приводящие к возникновению и стимулированию форм саморазрушающего поведения в подростковом возрасте; рассматривается актуальность проблемы формирования навыков здорового образа жизни и жизненных навыков у подростков; описывается содержание профилактической, коррекционной и консультационной деятельности школьного психолога, социального педагога и классного руководителя в решении данной проблемы; рассматриваются условия, способствующие повышению эффективности указанной работы.

Ключевые слова: подростковый возраст, стресс, навыки здорового образа жизни, жизненные навыки, физическое и психическое здоровье.

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