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Diagnostics of the level of school anxiety in children with special needs

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Mental health, or the state of psychological, physical and social well-being, is of great importance for a successful education of a teenager at school. Such situation becomes especially critical in a case when a child has some deviations in his development or a disease.

Alarm is an emotional state of the human being that appears in conditions of unexpected events both at the delay of pleasant situations, and - more often - at expectation of troubles.

School anxiety is a sign of emotional trouble of a child. Feeling of internal strain in an indefinite situation is known to everybody. This state is named alarm and considered normal under certain circumstances. However, permanent alarm - anxiety – is an individual feature. If it appears in the situations of interaction with an educational environment, we deal with school anxiety.

Anxiety is manifested as an increased disposition to uneasiness, amotivational expectation of failure. School anxiety can appear in a certain age period, and be leveled afterwards. However, the permanent state of alarm has negative effect on forming of child's personality, causing fearfulness, neurological sign etc. Anxious children usually grow passive, living by the principle "better to do nothing to prevent troubles".

When carrying out a thesis for obtaining the scientific degree of candidate of medical science on specialty 14.02.01 "Hygiene and occupational pathology" on the subject : "Psycho-hygienic assessment of adaptation of children with pathology of locomotor apparatus to conditions of education in the specialized educational establishment", the testing of pupils of 5th and 9th forms was carried out by means of Phillips' technique of school anxiety level diagnostics.

The aim of the technique (questionnaire) consists in the study of level and character of anxiety connected with school in children of junior and average school age.

Using Phillips' technique one can reveal the following factors of school anxiety: general anxiety at school; experiencing of social stress; frustration of requirement in achievement; fear of situation of examination; fear of non-compliance with expectations of surrounding people; low physiologic resistance to stress, as well as problems and fears in relationships with teachers.

The following results were obtained as a result of the study and assessment of each of the factors of anxiety. Level of anxiety for the pupils of the 9th form is higher (20.9%) in comparison with the pupils of the 5th class (9.5% of students have increased anxiety). One could also say that such factors as general anxiety at school and experiencing social stress take place in 75% of pupils of the 9th form, in contrast to the pupils of the 5th form (50%).

Using the results of the testing, it is possible to draw a conclusion that psychical and physical exhaustion because of fatigue is, most likely, the reason of an increased level of anxiety among the pupils of the 9th form, that in turn, is connected with examinations and necessity of self-determination and with a profession taking into account realization of their health state and potential.