

WORK WITH CHILDREN AND YOUTH WITH COUPLED DISABILITY

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METES**Motivation - Education - Trust - Environment - Safety 2020**

ABSTRACT

The presented article is a review. It presents the issue of a child with coupled disability in the context of education. It presents the typical behavioral characteristics of people with multiple disabilities. It introduces the reader to the organization of educational activities for students with multiple disabilities, along with the system of assessing and motivating students.

Keywords: *coupled disability, education, influence, educational and revalidation assessment*

Introduction

Every individual has the right to development. Every child has the right to education in a peer group. We meet situations in which development and education need special support, without which it is such need is limited or even impossible. Working with a student with a complex disability is not a standard work. Depending on the disability and individual characteristics of children and adolescents, it is necessary to individualize work with the student and adapt to educational activities.

Definitive approach to coupled disability

It may seem that coupled disability is a new phenomenon, but people with multiple disabilities have functioned in society since the dawn of human history. People with multi-range disabilities, despite the fact that they stayed in many institutions, were not of interest to both theoreticians and practitioners[1]. In the 1960s Poland, due attention was paid to them. Due to the lack of clear views on the issue of coupled disability, various terms are used. In Poland, among others, the following are used: complex, multi-range, multiple, coupled, synergistic. In France, the term - plurihandicapes is used, in Germany - mehrfachbehindert, in English-language literature - multiply handicapped, in the Benelux countries - polyhandicapes [1]. For the needs of Polish education, the term "coupled disability" is primarily used. In the *Dictionary of Special Pedagogy*, coupled disability is defined as: "a coexisting, complex, multiple disorder constituting a separate form of disability. Coupled disability is the result of the occurrence in a child of: deafness or hard of hearing, blindness or visual imparity, motor disabilities, mental retardation or autism, at least one of the above-mentioned disabilities, caused by one or more endo- and / or exogenous factors acting jointly or sequentially at different stages of a child's life "[2]. Generally, we can summarize that we deal with multiple disabilities when we find more than one damage to the anatomical structures of the body in a child or an adult [3].

Typical behavioral characteristics of people with coupled disability

People with coupled disability are often characterized by non-standard behavior. This behavior is perceived as "strange" by outside observers. However, we should be aware that stereotypes, self-

stimulation or self-destructive behavior are signals by which a person lets us know that they have not yet developed their own exchange strategy with their animated and inanimate surroundings, as well as with their body. Moreover, students with coupled disability are often characterized by apathy and hyperactivity, which are two opposite poles towards which the child's activity may deviate. In terms of perception and motor skills, we must remember that perception is always closely related to the ability to move, our perception abilities depend entirely on the ability to perform purposeful research movements, focused on seeking stimuli, thanks to which we gather information in various sensory spheres (therefore, to learn about the object - we manipulate it to smell it - we bring closer to the nose); in the case of multiple disabilities, these possibilities are very limited; children who have limited motor skills also have limited perception [2].

Organization of educational activities for students with coupled disability

It is assumed that education should fulfill the idea of unity in differentiation. This means creating conditions in which - while recognizing the individual needs and possibilities of children and young people - joint education is ensured for all pupils, with particular emphasis on pupils with special educational needs [4]. The basic educational goals are: adaptation of the individual to future functioning in society and preparation for professional life. Coupled disability is a condition that affects the entire personality and its symptoms change with the age of the child. The educational system should be adapted to these changing needs. The current solutions allow a pupil with coupled disability to fulfill their schooling obligation in a mainstream school, an integration department (integration school) or a special school. A disabled pupil may, therefore, be educated in a class team with able-bodied peers, or perhaps in a smaller unit gathering pupils with similar disabilities. In a special school at classes for students with synergies [2]. We believe that the majority of educators will agree that from the developmental and adaptive point of view, education provided in special schools or special educational centers is more beneficial for students with coupled disability.

Polish legislation stipulates that educational and revalidation activities for students with coupled disability are carried out at the request of the child's parents, based on the decision on the need for special education. The application is submitted in writing and should be signed by both parents. Classes may be organized by public kindergartens and schools, as well as special schools located closest to the child's place of residence or stay. The type of lessons and the method of assessing a student with coupled disability depends mainly on the level of intellect. A student with a mild co-occurring mental disability follows the core curriculum for general education and is subject to classification and promotion, similar to a non-disabled student. A student with a more severe coupled intellectual disability follows the core curriculum for general education for students with moderate or severe intellectual disability, is also subject to classification and promotion, but the assessment is descriptive at all educational stages [2]. The core curriculum of general education for students with moderate or severe intellectual disability in primary schools assumes that the main educational goal for a student with intellectual disability is to acquire the skills to communicate with the environment in the fullest way, verbally or non-verbally using known means of communication (also augmentative and alternative communication methods - AAC); gaining maximum independence in meeting basic life needs; acquisition of resourcefulness in everyday life, adequately to the individual level of fitness and skills, and a sense of self-dignity and self-determination; learning to participate in various forms of social life on an equal basis with other members of a given community, assuming knowledge and observance of generally accepted norms of coexistence, and at the same time maintaining the right to one's individuality; learning to understand the surrounding social and natural phenomena to the best of their abilities; acquiring skills and learning activities useful in future adult life; having a real self-image based on positive self-esteem and the ability to recognize one's own strengths and weaknesses [5].

The educational and revalidation impact should cover all spheres and levels of functioning of a disabled person at various stages of their life. Therefore, it is necessary to mention the following

dimension: physical, i.e. physical improvement so that it is possible for a disabled person to perform activities related to everyday life; mental, i.e. acceptance of one's own disability, shaping a positive attitude towards oneself and the social environment; social, i.e. inclusion in the stream of social life, preparation for fulfilling social roles and participation in culture; professional, that is, preparation for work and coping with the labor market [2]. The aforementioned core curriculum for general education for students with moderate or severe intellectual disability in primary schools assumes that it is within the scope of the school's tasks to create conditions necessary to ensure a sense of security for the student, strengthen self-esteem and acceptance, and psychological comfort in the process of integration with the environment. while supporting activity and participation in class and school life; Making a multidisciplinary assessment of the student's functioning level and, on its basis, developing and modifying an individual educational and therapeutic program; providing the student with participation in the necessary revalidation classes, resulting from their needs and recommendations contained in the decision on the need for special education. In revalidation classes, it is desirable to connect students with similar developmental problems. It is important to ensure conditions for achieving the goals of education and revalidation [5].

Focusing on child does not only mean working with them individually. On the contrary - let us remember that science is first and foremost a social activity. Children enjoy contact with their peers, being together, playing and learning. It is important for the teacher, when planning classes, to remember about: motivating active participation in classes; verbally strengthening and encouraging intellectual effort; developing forms of classes attractive to the student with the use of multimedia, drama, music, computer technology, etc. [6].

For a student with coupled disability, on the basis of the decision of a psychological and pedagogical counseling center, documentation should be developed, including: Multispecialist Assessment of the Student's Functioning; Individual Educational and Therapeutic Program; revalidation work program [2]. The documentation is prepared by a team of specialists, consisting of teachers working with the student, specialists - pedagogue, psychologist, speech therapist, parents (or guardians) and (if necessary) representatives of a psychological and pedagogical counseling center or other specialist counseling center. In the case of documentation, there are also doubts by practitioners and specialists who are part of the teams, regarding the validity of developing IPET (Individual Educational and Therapeutic Program) for the educational stage, i.e. three years. With regard to a child with such severe developmental deficits as resulting from coupled disability, we are talking about directions of development rather than achievements, and we are usually able to plan them in a short time [6].

Assessment system and student self-assessment

The motivational role of assessment plays an essential role in education. Also for students with intellectual disabilities. Formative assessment, i.e. ongoing, frequent and repeated assessment, which supports the learning process and constantly accompanies children, places them responsible for their learning progress. Students become more independent, they understand better what they are learning and for what, they are more involved in the learning process and speak openly if they do not understand something or do not know, and are more willing to ask questions. They are also able to assess their efforts and work put into a given lesson or a specific task, and listen to the opinions of other people - classmates or teachers - about their involvement and contribution to the class. It is important that the teacher's assessment of student achievement relates to their strengths in order to increase their self-esteem. Providing feedback in the group forum builds mutual respect of students and their understanding for the difficulties of their colleagues. Assessment concerns not only the knowledge and skills of the student, but also includes their social and emotional development. The overriding goal of the intra-school assessment system, in which students also make systematic self-assessment, is to develop the autonomy of a child with coupled disability [6]. Students with

intellectual disabilities with synergies are very eager to take part in sports competitions and contests. They like competition. The received recognition motivates them to further actions.

Summary

The article presented above is a review. It presents the issue of a child with coupled disability in the context of education. It presents the typical behavioral characteristics of people with coupled disability. It introduces the reader to the organization of educational activities for students with coupled disability, along with the system of assessing and motivating students

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