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## Conditions for Ensuring Psychological Health of Family and Child

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**Abstract.** The article discusses the outcomes of the current child development environment survey: socio-demographic and cultural characteristics of the family, leisure activities of the family, involvement of young students in the virtual environment. In total, at different stages the survey was participated by 206 families with preschool children, 138 primary school children aged 9-11 years and their parents. The data obtained in the course of study were processed with the statistical data and Pearson correlation analysis carried out with SPSS.17.0 software. The study showed that in the presence of favourable socio-demographic and cultural factors, the leading condition for the optimal development of children is the nature of parent-child relations and the pedagogical impact of the parents. At the present moment, the dominating communication style is still authoritarian-monologic, when parents do not fully acknowledge the interests, inclinations and needs of the child. The style of upbringing, communication between the parents and the child is one of the factors contributing to the involvement of the children in the virtual world. The main conditions for ensuring psychological health of the family and the child are improving psychological and pedagogical culture of parents, their parenting competence, together with supporting conscious parenthood. The efforts should be systematic, involving both propaedeutic activities at the stage of future parents' upbringing, and psychological and pedagogical support of the by school and family psychologists. The practical significance of the study is to highlight the technological complex of professional actions to ensure the psychological health of children and adults.

**Keywords:** modern childhood, child, parents, psychological health, information environment, psychological support, direct communication, family, preschool age, primary school age.

Research area: development psychology, acmeology.

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## Introduction

Children's health is normally listed among the underlying values of the modern society and education system. The detected disorders of the children's psychological health are normally referred to as anthropogeny.

The psychological health problem was set a long time ago by such outstanding humanitarian researchers, as G. Allport, A. Maslow, C. Rogers. They described the psychological health parameters that look like a domain of maturity in the modern context. Studying the psychological health of children and teenagers, I.V. Dubrovina (2009) claims psychological health to underlie personal individuality development, and declares that the essence of psychological health is the growing person's gradual acknowledgment and acceptance of his or her own mental development, personality and individuality. Studying the concept of psychological health in the unity of biological, psychic and social contexts, V.A. Anan'ev (2000) comes to the conclusion that psychological health implies a stable, adaptive functioning of a person at the vital, social, and existential levels of being. O.V. Khukhlaeva and G.S. Nikiforov consider psychological health in the context of adaptation approach, where a healthy person is the one able to successfully adapt to and support well-balanced relations with the people around. According to Khukhlaeva O.V. understanding psychological health as a dynamic balance between the individual and the environment, harmony between the person and the society should be taken as its basic criterion.

At the present moment, there are some established criteria for the psychological health development for various age categories of children: preschool, younger schoolchildren and teenagers. Together with that, being a condition for psychological health support, family context of the child development appears to be an essential component of the study. The researchers agree that the subjective state of the child is directly connected to the environment the child

lives in. Based on a number of researches carried out in various countries of the world, experts of the World Health Organization (WHO) declared mental health disorders to be much more common for children living in disturbed relations with adults.

The academic novelty and advantage of this research is highlighting relevant indicators and conditions of the modern children's development, ensuring the development and conservation of their psychological health. The practical relevance of the research is outlining a technological set of professional activities intended to support the psychological health of children and adults.

## Conceptual basis of the research

The studied phenomena are considered in the context of the systemic and anthropological psychology regarding an individual as an open self-organizing psychological system capable of self-movement and self-determination (Klochko, 2005, 2007), interacting with the environment based on the "correlation between needs of the system and satisfaction of such needs outside the system" principle within the framework of subjective activity approach (Antsyferova, 1980; Klimov, 1996, 2006; Petrovskiy, 1992 etc.) as a manifestation of the selective and purposeful activity of the individual concerning his or her own development. The conducted research is based on the theoretical provisions on the specificity of mental development (L.S. Vygotsky); psychological and pedagogical concepts of personal development (B.G. Anan'ev, D.I. Fel'dshteyn, V.S. Merlin, R. Burns), theoretical provisions on family environment (A. Adler, A.Ia. Varga, A.A. Bodalev, S.S. Spivakovskaia), and its psychological functions (E.K. Vasil'eva, N.V. Maliarova, A.V. Shuvalov, N.A. Iurkevich); modern research of virtual environment (O.V. Lutovinova, E.Iu. Krylov, E.V. Smyshliaeva, A. Zhichkina, E.A. Ignat'eva), children's personal development, mental and psychological health studies data (V.M. Bekhterev, B.S. Bratus', V.I. Brut-

man, A.Ia. Varga, D. Winnicott, A.I. Zakharov, V.N. Miasischev, S.L. Rubinshteyn, G.G. Filipova).

### Problem setting

Among the psychological health conditions, the present article considers family environment including the one expanding in the sociocultural space in the process of leisure activities of the family, and virtual environment as an underlying concept of modern children's development.

### Methodology

The research of the sociodemographic and cultural properties of families as a context of preschool children development was carried out in the years 2017-2018. The survey was participated by 120 families with preschool children, who attend municipal preschool education institutions of the city of Krasnoyarsk and the Krasnoyarsk Territory (Krai). The survey was provided by the specialists of the Higher School of Economics Scientific and Research Institution. The objective of the survey was to make up a modern family portrait and to describe the lifestyle of a family with children of preschool age. The empiric outcomes were processed with the correlation analysis methods using statistic data processing software.

For the family leisure study, an anonymous questionnaire was developed to find out the nature, essence and peculiarities of the leisure of modern urban preschool children. 86 parents of preschool children were surveyed; the share of fathers was 27%. The questionnaire included questions intended to reveal the peculiarities of joint leisure activities organized for children by their parents as well as individual leisure activities of the children.

The questionnaire was designed to identify:

- parents' idea of the role and concept of children's leisure;
- popular leisure activities participated by parents;
- demand for different kinds of children's leisure activity;
- peculiarities of independent leisure activities of preschool children;

– parents' opinion on the specificity and quality of family leisure events and activities offered by municipal and regional bodies, including private establishments.

The research of involvement of younger schoolchildren into the virtual environment covered 138 children of younger school age, 73 boys and 65 girls aged 9-11, and their parents. The diagnostic procedure involved a questionnaire intended to study the virtual communication peculiarities, the "Computer Addiction Screening" method by L.N. Iur'eva and T.Iu. Bol'bot (2006), the "Seven-Colour Flower" method for the study of predominating values, the "Ladder" self-esteem study method by A.I. Lipkina, the "Communicative and Organizing Competence" (COC) method by V.V. Siniavsky, V.A. Fedoroshin, the school anxiety test by Phillips and a sociometric procedure. To study the parents' influence on the children, the "Family relations analysis" questionnaire (E.G. Eydemiller, V.V. Iustitsky) and "Parents' attitude questionnaire test" (A.Ia. Varga, V.V. Stolin) were used. The research outcomes were analysed with the statistical data processing method and Pearson correlation analysis carried out with SPSS.17.0 software.

### Discussion

#### Family environment characteristics

In structure, the surveyed families are predominantly two-parent families with one child or two-parent families with two children. The share of single-parent families among the 120 surveyed is 6.72%. The families of 5 and 6 people constitute 1.68% each.

The predominant age of mothers is 33-35 years old (born in 1982, 1983). The predominant age of fathers is 35-37 years old (born in 1980, 1977).

The education background of the parents is mostly higher education (mother: higher education degree / father: higher education degree (31.93%) or mixed (mother: higher education degree / father: no higher education degree (12.61%). The majority of parents do not speak a foreign language (evaluate their foreign language command as unsatisfactory).

The analysis of employment and professional occupation of mothers and fathers revealed that among the mothers 46% are professionally occupied. The rest are on a long-term (8.4%) or a short-term (0.84%) job-protected leave. 5.88% of mothers are unemployed. Among the fathers, 58.82% are employed, being mostly public servants (7.56%), executives (administrators, managers, senior employees) (7.56%), industrial employees with good experience and tenure (7.56%). A half of the surveyed regularly attend advanced training courses; 31.93% systematically improve their professional skills and 34.45% do not do it on a regular basis.

The monthly income of the families is: 16-20 thousand roubles (22.69%), 21-30 thousand roubles (21.95%), 11-15 thousand roubles (16.81%), 8-10 thousand roubles (10.92%), 51-60 thousand roubles (5.04%), under 7 thousand roubles (2.52%), 71 thousand roubles and more (2.52%), 41-50 thousand roubles (0.84%). 9.24% were undecided about identification (calculation) of their monthly family income. 63.03% of children have their own rooms. 87% of the surveyed families own a car; 13% do not. Families with preschool children were found use social services on a regular basis (67% of the surveyed families). The most popular services are: ready-to-eat food delivery (44.54%), courier delivery of goods (29.41%), house cleaning services (4.2%), grocery delivery (2.52%), babysitting (1.68%). As their last family holiday, the families mentioned: staying at a summer cottage (dacha) (29.41%); visiting other regions of Russia (28.57%); staying at home, within the hometown (24.37%); travelling around the region (21.1%); travelling abroad (13.45%); travelling in CIS countries (4.2%).

Therefore, around a half of the surveyed families may be identified as families with pos-

itive social and material conditions: a two-parent family, well-educated and professionally occupied parents working on improving their professional skills, enjoying satisfactory financial conditions, able to use social services to save time for leisure, and to afford travelling on holidays

Together with that, the Internet as a means of support and organization of leisure plays an important role in the family lives. The Internet was found to be used for the following purposes (Table 1).

As we can see, the parents are active Internet users, creating the grounds for children to get involved in the virtual environment at an early age.

The families spend their personal leisure in the following areas (Table 2).

It should be remarked that leisure activities of the parents are very diverse, and many of them can be shared with children. A positive finding is the inclination of the families to a healthy lifestyle, outdoor activities, self-development using the services provided by the education and culture bodies. All in all, it may be concluded that the parents are setting a positive example for their children.

The surveyed parents find it important and necessary for children to do some household duties. Among such, they list: self-service (cleaning up the toys (9.24%), keeping clothes in order (7.56%), brushing teeth (2.52%), making bed (2.52%), helping about the house (washing up (10.92%), watering flowers (2.52%)). In general, the listed duties are appropriate for the age of the children.

Among methods of punishment, the parent use verbal reprimands (10.08%), sending to the naughty corner (7.56%), raising voice (5.04%), forbidding to watch TV (2.52%). 15.13% of parents prefer not to punish their children at all.

Table 1. Internet use purposes

Everyday service	Purchase and order of goods (78.99%), payment for purchased goods (50.42%)
Self-education	Reading and downloading books (47.06%), watching video lessons (42.86%), video conferences (10.08%)
Entertainment	Online video games (44.54%), social media (24.37%), blogging (6.72%)
Social activities	Charity donation (20.17%), signing petitions (8.4%), project donation (0.84%)

Table 2. Personal leisure areas

Open air, outdoors	Park, forest, countryside (89.2%), summer cottage (dacha) (85.71%), outdoor activities (43.7%), zoos (34.45%)
Shopping	Shopping malls (84.03%), bookstores (31.09%)
Socialization	Visiting friends and relatives (67.23%)
Entertainment	Cafes/restaurants (53.78%), children's entertainment centres (38.66%), reality quests (5.04%)
Culture, art	Cinemas (65.55%), museums (34.45%), classical music concerts/ballet (33.61%), theatre (15.13%), club gigs (14,29%), circus (10.92%)
Self-care	Bath house / sauna (52.1%), beauty salons (47.06%)
Education	Trainings (19.33%), children's education centres (18.49%)
Sports	Fitness club (26.89%), billiards (5.88%), sport matches (5.04%)

Table 3. Correspondence of additional classes attended and desired by children

Attended	Desired
Sports (24.37%)	Volleyball (1.68%), football (1.68%), hockey (0.84%), sport in general (0.84%), judo (0.84%), alpine skiing (0.84%)
Dancing (19.33%)	Dancing (5.04%), choreography (2.52%), dance sport (0.84%), ballroom dancing (0.84%)
Preparation for school (18.49%)	-
Art (11.76%)	Art (2.52%), ceramics (0.84%)
Singing (9.24%)	Singing (0.84%)
Swimming (7.56%)	Swimming (9.24%)
Speech therapy (5.88%)	Speech therapy (0.84%)
English (1.68%)	English (1.68%)
Technical classes (1.68%)	Technical classes (2.52%)
Drama (0.84%)	Theatre (1.68%)
	Model school (0.84%)
	Travellers' Club (0.84%)

It is delightful to find no physical punishment in the list, but raising voice and exercising forbiddances, limiting the freedom of the child may be classified as negative punishment options just like total absence of such. Therefore, a certain incompetence of the parents in upbringing of children may be found.

Almost two thirds (63%) of the surveyed families replied that their children attended some additional classes besides their preschool education institution. At that, 75% of the parents believe in the importance of extra-curriculum activities. The additional classes attended by children outside their preschool education institution are distributed as follows (Table 3).

There are some mismatches found in the preferable and actually attended classes, mostly involving singing, preparation for school, art and dancing. It may be stated that choosing activities for their children, the parents are mostly guided by their own ideas. It may be explained by the domination of the authoritative-monologic type of communication over the dialogic one. L.I. Gabdullina (2007) writes that self-determination of the person is an axiological choice based on the mechanisms of dialogue. For this reason, it may be supposed that if such attitude of the parents remains unchanged, the children may suffer self-determination difficulties in the future.

Therefore, at the present time family remains the main underlying factor for the development of the child. In a positive sociodemographic and cultural environment, the main condition for optimal development of the children is the nature of parent-child relations and the system of pedagogical techniques practiced by the parents. Parenthood psychology is a new branch of study adjacent to various fields (interdisciplinary nature), characterized with a systematicity of approach. Despite the existing demand, in practice parenthood psychology is at the early stage of development, with many practical methods requiring theoretical substantiation. To make the family environment ensure truly developing conditions for the child, the psychological and pedagogic culture of the parents may be promoted through the "Parenting University" programme carried out close to the places of family residence or the children's studies and designed as an interactive platform for discussion of parenthood issues and for development of constructive communication skills.

#### ***Family leisure survey results***

Culture of leisure is known to be a part of the general personal culture. The interest to the essence and forms of leisure is rising, as leisure is a powerful tool for socialization, development and breeding a personality; it is a means of moral, mental, and physical development.

The children's leisure is specific for being organized by surrounding adults, who have the authority to choose the type and nature of leisure activities for their children. A special and critical role in the development of a child, especially a preschool child, is the family that provides conditions for various activities of the child, including leisure. Selecting leisure activities, children make up the social requirements of the community and the demand for children's leisure. This is why it is so important to understand the way the parents see the role of leisure in their children's life, to study their ideas concerning organization of leisure, to identify the leisure preferences of parents and their children. All these provide a basis for evaluating children's leisure as a resource for mental and physical development.

Various researches have numerously underlined that there is no unified definition for leisure. In the context of a preschool child upbringing, leisure is considered as a part of free time when the child is free to choose an activity. It connects leisure to the presence of free time and underlines the active nature of leisure.

The analysis outcomes yield the following conclusions.

1. Parents are genuinely interested in organizing leisure for their preschool children, realize its importance in socialization of the children and believe that proper leisure "helps children develop". At all that, 91% of parents mention the lack of free time, which directly indicates some deficiencies in their parenting.

2. Among popular children's leisure activities organized by municipal and private institutions of Krasnoyarsk, there are: a) visiting living nature exhibitions (89%), b) music events for children organized in the city (76%), c) children's sport events (69%). As a family leisure activity, visiting cinemas with preschool children, though practiced by some parents, may not be classified as popular (21%). Going to the theatre with children is extremely seldom.

One third of the families (34%) practice regular attendance of developing clubs, studios, classes for children. In the recent years, the share of such families and such service providers in the city is rapidly growing.

3. Quite often (66%) the leisure of children is organized by grandparents, provided that they live in Krasnoyarsk.

4. Children's leisure activities may be classified into those shared with adults and those freely selected by children. Determination of the share of such activities does not appear possible at the present moment.

5. Parents' survey makes it possible to give a qualitative evaluation of the leisure shared by children and adults. E.V. Sokolov listed the following kinds of leisure: recreation, entertainment, contemplation, celebration, creation, education. It should be taken into account that the borders between them are very conventional and all of them are closely interconnected. The results made it possible to divide the leisure shared by children and adults into two main groups. The majority of them belong to en-

tertainment and celebrations (76%), which includes participation in various events, meeting friends and relatives, walking, doing sport activities. Thus, the parents consider it entertaining for their children (and, obviously, for themselves as well) to visit relatives and friends. This kind of leisure is very popular among the surveyed adults (39%).

Taking part in local events and festivals (exhibitions, competitions, concerts, going to the cinema or theatre) constitutes 27%.

Joint walks, sport activities and outdoor games make up 34%. The latter manifests the current inclination of the society to healthy lifestyle.

It should be clarified that the given proportion may significantly vary depending on the proximity of the family residence to a large city centre. Moreover, the family leisure choice is influenced not only by the family culture (which is often also determined by neighbourhood peculiarities). Leisure activities are strongly regulated by the financial and social capacity of the family.

The other group of leisure activities is associated with creation and education. Unfortunately, it constitutes only 34% of the total volume of leisure shared by children and their parents. This group includes: reading books, joint creative activities, playing developing table games, regular attendance of various additional education clubs and studios.

The facts prove that within the family environment, the leisure of children is dominated by entertainment, not creation or enlightenment. Indeed, even entertainment gives a child some opportunities for emotional development, new forms of socialization and building social relations, a potential for moral and aesthetic growth, development of the communication competence. However, the culture of leisure is shaped in the early childhood under the influence of family environment. It makes it so important for the parents to understand the necessity of shaping up the interests of their children.

6. Similar tendencies are found in independent leisure activities of the children. They normally prefer entertainment kinds of leisure (78%): watching cartoons, playing videogames, playing with toys. Nowadays children rarely

prefer creative or educating activities in their free time. Modern children hardly ever draw; they do not often read or play any developing games. It may be explained by their parents' not positioning leisure as a means for developing their cognitive needs and aspirations. As it may be concluded from the parents' survey results, the fact of absence of any substantial interests does not bother the parents.

The adults should pay attention to developing the interest of their children in the substantial aspect of leisure. According to A.F. Volovik, interest for leisure activity as such acts as a dominating motive. Leisure activeness or passiveness of the child is only determined by the presence or absence of interest in such.

7. Analysis of the survey results unveiled a mismatch in the parents' answers concerning the interests of the child and his/her independent free time activities. This fact proves that the parents do not connect the interests of the child to his/her leisure. On one hand, it may manifest the low awareness of the parents of their children's interests. On the other hand, it would be appropriate to assume that the family does not provide the conditions for the child to exercise his/her interests in the leisure activities.

It is obvious that parents should be more careful about the interests of their children to facilitate their development by providing proper conditions and facilities.

8. Parents express their wish to diversify the leisure of their children, but at the same time they prefer to address this wish to various social institutions. This way the parents shift the responsibility for organizing leisure of their children to the municipal bodies and education institutions. They do not see any leisure resources within the family environment. For instance, parents are not aware of the advantage of using joint household activities as a leisure activity for their children. Little ones are well-known for their interest for such household activities as cooking, interior design or needlework, but very few parents mentioned these activities in the survey.

9. The deficiency of organized leisure for preschool children is mostly seen in the families bringing up boys. It is proven by insuffi-

cient participation of fathers in leisure activities, poor substantial content in boys' leisure, low share of activities associated with men's work. Thus, modelling or handcrafts are hardly seen in boys' leisure. In general, parents tend to ignore gender peculiarities of boys in organizing their leisure.

The results of the parents' survey revealed the deficiencies in organization of social kinds of children's leisure.

- lack of sport facilities and playgrounds for preschool children, inconvenient working hours of leisure facilities for preschool children, low quality of service and incompetence of specialists working with young children, uncomfortable infrastructure;

- lack of children's events of the city and district scale;

- poor advertising of municipal children's events. Parents claim that they hear about some events from media after they are over and cannot get any information in advance.

The identified needs of the parents help the authority bodies organize leisure for the population, improving communication between the social institutions involved in the new generation upbringing.

There is no doubt that the task of the teachers is to draw attention of the parents to the need for organized leisure, to explain its peculiarities, to unveil the diversity of leisure activities and their developing potential, to provide professional support to the parents at all stages of the children's development.

***Results of the research of involvement of young schoolchildren into the virtual environment.***

The studies of children's development in a virtual environment are getting more and more relevant, since as the child is growing up and mastering new communication technologies, he or she tends to spend more and more time in the virtual space for various reasons: for studies, communication, entertainment, self-affirmation, or just for getting distracted from the problems they face in the real world (Shakhmartova, Nedoshivina, 2012). At the same time, the amount, and more importantly, the substantial content of the time spent in the virtual envi-

ronment is hardly ever controlled and directed by the parents for many reasons, including the obvious ones.

A research intended to study the distinctive features of virtual communication of young schoolchildren, to draw a psychological portrait of the children involved in virtual communication, to assess the risk of developing computer addiction for children greatly involved in virtual communication and to analyse the factors facilitating the immersion of the child into the virtual environment was carried out.

Among the criteria used to assess the degree of involvement into the virtual space, there were: number of forums and social media used for communication, amount of time spent in the virtual environment, number of virtual friends and preferred type of communication.

The analysis of the "Virtual Communication" survey carried out with a two-years' interval revealed that in the year 2015 70% of children (boys – 38% and girls – 32%), and in the year 2017 96.3% of children (boys – 60.4% and girls – 35.9%) used social media for communication. Almost 100% of children were involved in virtual communication, and the greatest growth rate was created by boys as more active users.

On the average, every school student has accounts in 2-3 social media. Moreover, 5.9% of children use more than 3-4 social media, with 66.7% of them being boys and 33.3% being girls. Children with no accounts in the social media comprised, in the year 2017, 3.7% (boys – 1.85% and girls – 1.85%). The major websites used by children are: vk.com and mail.ru, less frequently Odnoklassniki, YouTube, Blaber, Facebook, Skype, and Twitter.

Speaking of the number of virtual friends, 31.4% (boys – 18.75%, girls – 81.25%) of the respondents communicate with 1-10 friends; 41.2% of children (boys – 85.7%, girls – 14.3%) claim to have from 11 to 30 friends, and 27.4% of the surveyed (boys – 85.7%, girls – 14.3%) have over 30 friends. It may be concluded that girls are more selective about their circle of friends and tend to limit it unlike the boys who eagerly expand the network of their contacts. The virtual friends of young schoolchildren are of various age: the majority of them are peers,

9-12 years old (60%), but there are some older ones, aged from 11 to 30 years old (32%), and sometimes interlocutors aged over 30 years old are found (%). This virtual partner age diversity sets the task for an additional research of online communication motives of children.

Another important indicator of involvement into virtual communication is the time spent in social media. In 2015, there were 7% of children who did not spend any time online at all or did it just several minutes a day or even a month. In 2017, there were no such children at all. 29.4% of the surveyed children use social media for communication 1-2 hours 3-4 times a week (40% of boys and 60% of girls); 54.9% of junior school children socialize online for 2-3 hours 3-5 times a week, and in this category there are almost 3.5 times less girls than boys (21.4% and 78.6% correspondingly), and 15.7 of the respondents spend in the social media over 3 hours daily (62.5% of boys and 37.5% of girls).

15.7% of the respondents (boys – 12.5%, 87.5% – girls) claimed to spend from 1 minute to 30 minutes for one online communication session; 66.7% of children (boys – 73.5%, girls – 26.5%) said one session lasted from 30 minutes to 2 hours, and over 3 hours are spent for one session by 17.6% of the surveyed children (boys – 77.8%, girls – 22.2%). We see that over a half of children (54.9%) are involved into virtual communication from 6 to 15 hours per week, which forces us to acknowledge it as a new socialization venue for children. At that, it is worth noticing a greater activeness of boys, which, together with their poor selectivity of contacts, brings up the importance of teaching them the basics of safe Internet behaviour.

Teaching children the basis of safe virtual communication and Internet behaviour is also one of today's relevant issues due to the distinctive features of interaction practiced by children in social media discovered by the recent research.

1) children set the bar of critical attitude to websites, videos and games lower than adults; they are more gullible and positive about the content they find in the Internet;

2) unlike adults, children tend to perceive random interlocutors in the Internet as

“friends” and trust virtual conversations; they are open to new contacts and, at the same time, get more emotional about any negative communication experience;

3) children are not always aware of the danger or inappropriateness of some video, audio materials, website contents and games;

4) Internet addicted students live with the permanent feeling of danger; they have difficulties communicating with their peers in reality (Kuznetsova, Chudova, 2009, 2011).

According to 51.9% of the respondents, the main topics for online conversations of young schoolchildren are games (boys – 69.2%, girls – 30.8%); 25.5% of the surveyed discuss school life experience (boys – 46.2%, girls – 53.8%), 17.6% of students discuss their out-of-school lives (boys – 66.7%, girls – 33.3%), and 5.9% have no preferences, talking “about everything” (100% boys).

The respondents were offered choosing virtual or real communication as a more preferable option for them. In 2015, live communication was chosen by 30% of the surveyed, virtual was preferred by 29%, and 11% said they wanted to combine both, with the approximately equal proportion of boys and girls in each category. In 2017, the received replies were the following: 52.9% of the respondents (boys – 81.5%, girls – 18.5%) chose live communication, 25.5% of the surveyed (boys – 38.5% and girls – 61.5%) marked virtual communication as the most preferred option, and 21.6% of children (boys – 54.5%, girls – 45.5%) aspired to combine both. It reveals an interesting paradox: normally less active in the virtual space, girls involved into online communication tend to get overwhelmed and prefer it to live communication. On the opposite, though boys are active online, they still tend to choose live communication. It is delightful that the inclination of the children to reality or to at least to combining virtual communication with real one is growing. To our mind, one of the tasks of parents and school is stimulation of the emotionally positive and intensive communication in the real world accompanied with the development of IT and computer competence of children.

The answers of children describing the emotions they experience in online commu-

nication are of special interest. The most frequently mentioned emotions are: pleasure, joy, confidence, fury, and fear – by 60.8 of all respondents (boys – 71%, girls – 29%); joy, fury and curiosity are experienced by 21.5% (boys – 45.5%, girls – 54.5%); anxiety and boredom were mentioned by 11.8% of children, with equal proportion of boys and girls; boredom and indifference are the main emotions of 5.9% of the respondents, boys only. As we can see, virtual communication evokes a wide range of emotions, both positive (pleasure, joy, confidence) and negative (anxiety, boredom, indifference). Remarkably, there are only 17.7% of children who feel anxiety, boredom and indifference in virtual communication. It brings up the motivation issue: children may get online for various reasons, including satisfaction of needs, paying a tribute to today's fashion or the desire to "fit in".

Spending time in the web, young schoolchildren do not use it for communication purposes only: 45.1% of children play games (boys – 69.6%, girls – 30.4%), 41.2% of them listen to audio and watch video (boys – 61.9%, girls – 38.1%), 5.9% of students transfer files (boys – 66.7%, girls – 33.3%), and 7.8% attend various groups and communities (equal share of boys and girls). As we can see, the Internet is used by young schoolchildren mostly for entertainment, and less frequently for organization of other kinds of activities. On one hand, it sets the task of organizing attractive free time activities for children in real life; on the other hand, it requires teaching children the skills of using Internet as a source of development and a tool for organizing one's activity in the real world.

Summing up the survey results, we can divide the children into three groups based on the degree of their involvement into virtual communication.

The 22.7% children found to be deeply involved in virtual communication (girls – 37.1%, boys – 62.9%) tend to have a large number of online friends, over 50 people. Children spend over 5 days a week on forums and websites, spending 3 hours or more on one communication session and prefer virtual communication to live.

39.2% of children are classified as having medium involvement (girls – 22.5%, boys – 77.5%). They have fewer chatting partners, from 11 to 30 people. The children of this category spend 3-4 days a week on forums and websites, spending 2-3 hours for one communication session and prefer virtual and live communication to an equal extent.

37.8% of children of low level of involvement (girls – 46.6%, boys – 53.4%) communicate with a limited number of people, from 1 to 10, once or twice a week, with a conversation lasting from several minutes to one hour, and prefer live communication to virtual.

In the results analysis, some gender differences in the young students' behaviour was found. Girls tend to have smaller number of friends, from 1 to 10, while boys have many more. Girls are more selective in communication; they are trying to create an illusion of real relationships online, while boys appreciate having a wide range of contacts. Girls spend around half an hour for one communication session, while for boys it may last for three hours and more, and they get online more frequently than girls. However, boys claim to prefer live communication; virtual contacts for them do not replace real relationships, but supplement it. Girls find a replacement for real communication in the web; they build friendships online and prefer this style of communication, using it to compensate the absence of real social contacts.

For boys, online communication brings, besides joy and curiosity, boredom and indifference; perhaps, they turn to virtual communication to get rid of boredom, to find something to do. Boys use more opportunities of social media, playing games, transferring files, watching videos and listening to audio. Besides communication, they use the virtual environment to expand their opportunities. As noted above, girls tend to create a replacement for real relationships in the Internet, perhaps, to compensate the challenges they face in live interaction; it brings them bright and saturated emotions, such as joy, curiosity, fury. They may use the web to compensate something they lack in real life. In the virtual space, when your interlocutor does not hear or see you, and,

moreover, you can create a fictitious image of yourself, you can go beyond the limits of your common behaviour. In real life we are expected to comply with certain social regulations. Traditionally, girls are subject to more restrictions, and they care more about what others think of them, making more effort to make a good impression on others. It may be suggested that this is an opportunity to “safely try on another role” that makes virtual communication so attractive for girls.

Just like “streets” not so long ago, the web today may be regarded as a natural socialization institution; for this reason, it makes sense to suppose that the children active online may have some typical distinctive features. With a series of diagnostic methods, we succeeded in making up a generalized psychological portrait of young schoolchildren involved in virtual communication to a certain degree. We do not claim the Internet to make a direct impact on the development of children, but we assert the presence of certain tendencies.

Children with low involvement level have an adequate self-esteem. They are more confident and relaxed, they can fairly understand and evaluate themselves, have a clear vision of material and moral values. It is worthwhile noticing that children with low exposure to virtual communication have perfect communication skills and good organizational competence. Among them there is a small percentage of outsiders or leaders, they are generally preferred and rarely neglected by their peers. Internet addiction of such children either equals to zero, or they may use the Internet for a hobby. They do not enjoy the computer too much; a little time in the social media is enough for them. They can easily interrupt a computer session, which makes a good influence on their offline life, academic success and family relations. They may have different statuses, from an outsider to a leader, but the majority of them are clearly preferred or neglected. Internet addiction of such children can belong to any of the three stages: zero addition (mostly), interest, or first stage of addiction. Children from this group feel agitation and satisfaction when they find themselves in the social media. They often anticipate their time at the computer as a pleasure. They do not

need to spend much time online, but they often feel the need to get back to the computer. It is more difficult for them to interrupt a computer session on their own, which makes a negative impact on their academic success and family relations.

Children with high level of involvement have predominantly inflated or deflated self-esteem; focus on moral and material values is present; communication skills and organizational competence is below average. Among them, there are “leaders” and “preferred ones” as well as the “outsiders” and “misfits”. In this group, the first stage of Internet addiction dominates: these children feel pleasure, satisfaction and relief when they find themselves online, and away from computer they are tense and frustrated. They can hardly interrupt an online session; they need more and more time in the web. The need for the virtual world rises more and more often, destroying relations within the family, ruining communication with peers and academic activities.

As the research results demonstrate, virtual communication does not make a certain impact on the values of the children. Maybe it is explained by the earlier establishment of basic values by the parents, while the value priorities are developed later, in the teenage period, and the survey of this age group may reveal some significant differences. Children with different level of involvement into virtual communication do not show much variety in the status among peers. It should be noted, however, that the children preferring real communication are more adequate in their self-esteem; they are more confident, have better developed communication skills and organizational competence, and, therefore, their socialization and personality development run smoother.

The correlation analysis of the variables reflecting the psychological properties of the children and the variables characterizing the parents’ attitude and the family upbringing style, revealed the following tendencies with the certainty of 0.01:

Authoritarianism of both parents to the child develop the fear of not complying with the other people’s expectations. Such children struggle to please the adults regardless of their

own wishes, which in the future may bring them into co-dependent relationships or development of patience for benefit. A well-balanced parenting style distinctive with the faith in the child, co-operative relations, understanding their needs, may prevent the development of fear of not complying with the expectations of the others, and, therefore, warn the child against getting into addictions and co-dependence (negative correlation between “cooperative” upbringing and fear of not complying with the expectations of the others).

The figure of father plays a special role in the development of general anxiety and the symptoms constituting it: a rigid, strict behaviour of the father makes the child fear frustrating other people’s expectations and therefore makes up the risk of Internet addiction development. Insufficiency of punishment applied by the father is in a negative correlation with the fear of not complying with expectations of the others; stricter sanctions reduce the risk and prevent the development of Internet addiction. Excessive demands of the father positively correlate with general anxiety, which means that an excessively strict attitude of the father evokes anxiety in the child, causing addiction development. The more attention the father gives to the child, the less is the likeliness for the child to develop an addiction. The expansion of the parenting feeling of the father and upbringing him in the “adult” pattern reduces the anxiety of complying with other people’s expectations, and, therefore, reduces the risk of developing computer and other addictions.

Excessive attention of the mother, her reverential attitude and overprotection directly causes strong anxiety, pushing the child to addiction. Reduction of the anxious attention to the child and freedom, trust for the child’s deeds may prevent the development of general anxiety and reduce the Internet addiction risk. Excessive demands of the mother are in negative correlation with the wilful control of the child: the stricter requirements are set by the mother, the less capable is the child of organizing his or her leisure, the more is the risk of developing Internet addiction and likeliness of violations and offences.

Summing up the results of the analysis it may be concluded that parents of the children with a high Internet addiction development risk do not pay enough attention to the pedagogical performance of the family. Mothers often try to compensate the absence of the father with strict rules and attitude, increasing the anxiety of the child, which may (and does) cause a higher risk of Internet addiction. In two-parent families, fathers are often non-committal about bringing up the child, showing little care and attention and not setting enough demands, provoking the child to escape from the reality into the virtual environment. We suppose that further ignoring and permissive attitude to the child may not just affirm his or her need for additional activity stimulators and the escape from reality (where he or she may be not accepted, suffer from being forbidden, criticized or actually forsaken), but also get carried away with some more destructive addictions.

The high likeliness of having a young schoolchild absorbed into virtual communication transform into a teenager with developed addictions just 5-7 years later prove the need for running preventive psychological and pedagogical consultations for the parents to help them develop parenting competences and to bring up a psychologically healthy and socially successful child.

## Conclusion

Analysis of the research results yields the following conclusions:

1. At the present time, family still acts as an essential factor of the development of a child. In advantageous socio-demographic and cultural situation, the leading conditions for the optimal development are proper parent-child relationships and the pedagogical performance of the parents. For the time being, authoritarian-monologic communication style, with parents underestimating the interests, inclinations and needs of the child, is dominating.

2. Aware of the significance of expanding the socialization space of the child, the parents show more interest for organizing leisure of their children. But the lack of free time excuse used by 91% of the parents demonstrates parenting deficiencies, such as the idea of need for

free time to organize proper communication with the child, while those are skills of proper communication with the child that are limited.

3. The parent-child relations and parenting style, communication between parents and their children are the factors that influence the involvement of children in the virtual world. Ignoring their needs and authoritarianism, permissive or overprotective attitude affirm the need of the child for additional ways to stimulate activity and for escaping the reality.

4. Therefore, one of the main conditions for ensuring psychological health of the family and the child is the development of psychological and pedagogical culture of the parents, their parenting competence, development of consciousness parenting style. The efforts in this field should be consistent and include both propaedeutic activity at the future parents' maturing stage and psychological and pedagogical assistance provided by school and family psychologists.

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## Условия обеспечения психологического здоровья семьи и ребенка

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**Аннотация.** В статье обсуждаются результаты изучения современного состояния среды развития детей: социодемографических и культурных характеристик, а также досуговой деятельности семьи, включенности младших школьников в виртуальную среду. Всего на разных этапах в исследовании приняли участие 206 семей дошкольников, 138 младших школьников в возрасте 9-11 лет и их родители. Полученные в ходе работы сведения были подвергнуты методу статистической обработки данных, корреляционному анализу по Пирсону, проведенному с помощью прикладного пакета SPSS.17.0.

Исследование показало, что при наличии благоприятных социодемографических и культурных характеристик ведущими условиями оптимального развития детей выступают характер родительско-детских отношений и система воспитательных воздействий родителей. В настоящее время преобладает авторитарно-монологическое общение, при котором родители не в полной мере учитывают интересы, склонности и потребности ребенка. Стиль воспитания и общения родителей с ребенком является одним из факторов, способствующих вовлеченности детей во взаимодействие с виртуальным миром. Основные условия обеспечения психологического здоровья семьи – повышение психолого-педагогической культуры родителей, родительской компетенции, формирование осознанного родительства. Работа в этом направлении должна носить системный характер и предполагать как пропедевтическую деятельность на этапе взросления будущих родителей, так и психолого-педагогическое сопровождение семьи в рамках деятельности психологов образования и семейных психологов. Практическая значимость исследования состоит в выделении технологического комплекса профессиональных действий по обеспечению психологического здоровья детей и взрослых.

**Ключевые слова:** современное детство, ребенок, родители, психологическое здоровье, информационная среда, психологическое сопровождение, непосредственное общение, семья, дошкольный возраст, младший школьный возраст.

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