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## PROPHYLACTIC AND PSYCHO-CORRECTIVE MEASURES TO PREVENT SUICIDAL BEHAVIOR IN ADOLESCENTS

### Abstract

The purpose of the study was to study the specifics of the organization of preventive work to prevent suicidal behavior of adolescents.

Suicide is one of the leading causes of death among young people of school age, and suicidal thoughts are literally defined as thoughts of ending life. This is much more common than we can imagine. Such thoughts often arise in adolescents because of depression or because of the desire to avoid a situation in the family or school that is impossible to cope with, and this is the avoidance of punishment and shame, humiliation and despair, disappointment and loss, rejection and loss of self-esteem. Suicidal thoughts can quickly turn into a suicide attempt, so suicidal teenagers need help before they can start planning for real life. Suicide prevention among young people is most effective when they are detected at an early stage and when a teenager at risk receives timely psychological help.

**Keywords:** *adolescence, suicidal thoughts, suicidal attempts, psychoprophylaxis, psychocorrection, organization of preventive measures*

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## ЖАСӨСПІРІМДЕРДЕГІ СУИЦИДТІК МІНЕЗ-ҚҰЛЫҚТЫҢ АЛДЫН АЛУ БОЙЫНША ПРОФИЛАКТИКАЛЫҚ ЖӘНЕ ПСИХОКОРРЕКЦИЯЛЫҚ ШАРАЛАР

### Аңдатпа

Зерттеудің мақсаты жасөспірімдердің суицидтік мінез-құлқының алдын алу бойынша профилактикалық жұмысты ұйымдастырудың ерекшеліктерін зерттеу болды. Суицид мектеп жасындағы жастар арасындағы өлімнің жетекші себептерінің бірі болып табылады және суицидтік ойлар сөзбе-сөз өмірді тоқтату туралы ойлар ретінде анықталады. Бұл біз ойлағаннан әлдеқайда кең таралған. Мұндай ойлар көбінесе жасөспірімдерде депрессиядан немесе отбасындағы немесе мектептегі жағдайды жеңе алмайтын жағдайдан аулақ болғысы келетіндіктен пайда болады және бұл жаза мен ұяттан, қорлау мен үмітсіздіктен, көңілсіздік пен жоғалтудан, бас тартудан және өзін-өзі бағалаудан аулақ болу. Суицидтік ойлар өз-өзіне қол жұмсау әрекетіне тез айналуы мүмкін, сондықтан суицидке бейім жасөспірімдерге нақты өмірді жоспарлауға кіріспес бұрын көмек қажет. Жастар арасындағы суицидтің алдын алу олар ерте анықталған кезде және қауіп төнген жасөспірім уақтылы психологиялық көмек алған кезде тиімді болады.

**Негізгі сөздер:** *жасөспірімдік кезең, суицидтік ойлар, суицидтік әрекеттер, психо-профилактика, психокоррекция, алдын алу шараларын ұйымдастыру*

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## ПРОФИЛАКТИЧЕСКИЕ И ПСИХОКОРРЕКЦИОННЫЕ МЕРЫ ПО ПРЕДОТВРАЩЕНИЮ СУИЦИДАЛЬНОГО ПОВЕДЕНИЯ У ПОДРОСТКОВ

### *Аннотация*

Целью исследования явилось изучение особенности организации профилактической работы по предупреждению суицидального поведения подростков. Самоубийство является одной из ведущих причин смерти среди молодых людей школьного возраста, и суицидальные мысли буквально определяются как мысли о прекращении жизни. Это гораздо более распространено, чем мы можем себе представить. Такие мысли часто возникают у подростков из-за депрессии или из-за желания избежать ситуации в семье или школе, с которой невозможно справиться, и это является избеганием наказания и стыда, унижения и отчаяния, разочарования и потери, отвержения и потери самоуважения. Суицидальные мысли могут быстро перерасти в попытку самоубийства, поэтому склонным к суициду подросткам нужна помощь, прежде чем можно будет приступить к планированию реальной жизни. Профилактика самоубийств среди молодежи наиболее эффективна, когда они выявляются на ранней стадии и когда подросток, находящийся в группе риска, получает своевременную психологическую помощь.

**Ключевые слова:** *подростковый период, суицидальные мысли, суицидальные попытки, психопрофилактика, психокоррекция, организация профилактических мероприятий.*

### **INTRODUCTION**

Suicidal thoughts often arise in adolescents because of depression or because of the desire to avoid a situation in the family or school that cannot be handled, and this is the avoidance of punishment and shame, humiliation and despair, disappointment and loss, rejection and loss of self-esteem. Suicidal thoughts can quickly turn into a suicide attempt, so suicidal teenagers need help before they can start planning for real life.

Prevention of suicidal behavior is one of the most important and complex problems of our society. Since it is not a one-sided and common problem, but is a complex process consisting of several stages, requiring the joint work of several structures. To predict and prevent suicide, first of all, it is necessary to “recognize” outwardly, by behavior, the first and possibly insignificant signs of suicidal intent in adolescents. It is very important! Often parents, educators, adults and even specialists, i.e. school psychologists miss this important point, they do not pay due attention to the depression, closeness and isolation of a teenager, explaining this by the fact that the child has a transitional age. Sometimes, suicidal acts are committed by teenagers outwardly quite calm, sociable, and no changes in behavior were observed in them. Therefore, teenagers should always be in the attention of parents and teachers in general, adults should not forget that this age is very vulnerable, parents should often talk with the child, there should be a favorable atmosphere at home, teenagers should feel the care and support of the family. In the treatment of schoolchildren by teachers, delicacy, tact and respect should always be observed [1].

### **METHODOLOGY AND RESEARCH METHODS**

Carrying out preventive measures is complicated by the fact that children and adolescents with suicidal thoughts, as a rule, do not seek help, many of them do not trust their parents, teachers, do not believe that they will be helped, many of them do not know how and from whom to ask for help, some are afraid to admit it, afraid of the reaction of adults, so often teenagers prefer not to share their difficulties with anyone.

In addition to the above, there are several problems school psychologists have in recognizing suicidal intent or tendencies in adolescents. In Kazakhstani schools, this is a large number of children and a small number of psychologists working in the it, i.e. in large schools, where 2,000 or 3,000 children study, two or three educational psychologists are counted. Psychologists are not always able to recognize and diagnose all

schoolchildren with such a heavy workload. The fact that school psychologists do not conduct classes, and therefore electives do not have the opportunity to contact with adolescents, exacerbates the problem of diagnosis [2].

In addition, school psychologists do not have a unified, common psychodiagnostic base of methods for identifying children and adolescents at risk, i.e. there is no specific system. Of course, there are many standardized and non-standardized methods for determining aggressiveness, anxiety, depression, but unfortunately this is not always a sufficient method for detecting the suicidal state of schoolchildren. In this regard, it is advisable to create a database of methods, unify them and thus make a single system for diagnosing suicidal behavior in children and adolescents for all schools.

The next problem that many parents, teachers, psychologists face is noticing signs of suicidal intent in a child, not knowing what to do and how to act in such situations. Lack of knowledge and readiness to solve such problems lead to the fact that adults make a number of mistakes in relations with a teenager [3].

Many parents tighten their control over the child, afraid to leave him alone, see him off and meet him, call him several times, find out where he is and what he is doing, constantly monitor him, i.e. behave very anxiously, which, on the contrary, harms the condition of the teenager, and does not help him. Perhaps for parents this is absolutely normal and justified behavior in such a situation, but such disturbing “surveillance” and hypercontrol of the child is by no means help for the child.

Some parents begin to put pressure on pity, cry or try to make him feel guilty, “we do ... for you, and what do you do?”, “don’t you have everything? what do you lack?” thereby thinking that he will pity them or he will become ashamed and change his mind, thus everything will fall into place. This behavior of parents is not correct, because they oblige him, blame, and do not help the child, and subsequently the condition of the teenager may worsen even more, because such behavior of the parents explains to him that his parents absolutely do not understand him or that he is ungrateful, unworthy child of his parents, i.e. it might get even harder for him.

Others begin to feel sorry for the child, to treat him as weak. With all their appearance they demonstrate pity for him, they want to show their support with over-care. Perhaps such an attitude towards a teenager in a difficult situation for him will not harm him, but again he does not receive the support of adults. He sees the same helpless grown-ups as himself and perhaps understands how pathetic and helpless he looks from the outside. And that doesn’t make it any easier for him [4].

#### **THE DISCUSSION OF THE RESULTS**

As mentioned above, even with early detection of suicidal intent in children and adolescents, many school psychologists do not have sufficient knowledge and skills necessary to correct their behavior. The lack of training of school psychologists in the prevention and correction of suicidal behavior is one of the main problems in the prevention of suicidal behavior in minors. Many psychologists try to act on their own without informing parents and school administrations. Almost all school psychologists, when identifying suicidal tendencies in adolescents, act intuitively, having no specific knowledge of working with suicidal adolescents and a clear action algorithm. Regarding this, a number of mistakes are made on the part of school psychologists [5].

The third problem in the prevention of suicidal behavior in children and adolescents is the disagreement between the school and parents and the inability to act together as team, which is very important and necessary to help a teenager. Very often in such situations, parents blame the school, teachers, psychologist, classmates. Accordingly, the school blames the parents of teenagers in its turn. Such relationship between the two parties has a bad effect on the condition of the child. It is very important and effective when the school and parents cooperate and provide assistance to the teenager from both sides.

The problems of preventive work of destructive manifestations in the adolescent environment are due not only to subjective, but also to objective reasons. Such reasons include:

- Schools are focused on reporting on learning indicators, and not on the personal development and socialization of children, their active inclusion in society;
- Lack of programs and projects developed and implemented by schools to prevent the destructive behavior of adolescents;
- Lack of authority and resources (administrative, material) for schools to carry out preventive activities to obtain stable positive results;

- Lack of real leverage in schools and public structures on parents who do not perform and do not want to perform their main functions of supporting and educating their children;

- Insufficient development of mechanisms for the implementation of laws that ensure the priority of childhood and the protection of the minors' rights.

The main task of the school in the field of prevention of self-destructive behavior of schoolchildren is to conduct early prevention, because no other structure is able to solve this problem. The exception is the family, but the family sometimes itself acts as an object of preventive activity [6].

Perhaps these are the most basic problems in the prevention of suicidal behavior in children and adolescents.

With suicidal attempts or completed suicides of adolescents, as a rule, responsibility is mainly assigned to the school and teachers, the school psychologist. Of course, the school plays a big role in the life of the child and it has a huge impact on the development of the child as a person, and in the case when the child encounters any difficulties, the school is necessarily responsible for him. But, we should not forget that the child grows and develops in the family, that is, it is the parents who first of all form the personality of the child, in the family the child receives the first knowledge about himself and others, in the family he forms the right or wrong attitude towards life, there he receives basic skills of resilience, in the family the child becomes "healthy" or dysfunctional, from his parents he learns how to properly communicate and interact with the outside world. But, not all parents are aware of the importance of their role in shaping the psychologically healthy personality of the child and the socio-psychological climate in the family. Unfortunately, in our society they do not teach to be parents and the experience of parenthood is acquired through trial and error. And of course, the problems of parents negatively affect children [7].

Therefore, any prophylactic measures to prevent suicidal behavior of minors should be associated primarily with the family, parents. In this regard, it is necessary to ensure that parents acquire at least a minimum of knowledge about child and developmental psychology, about the basic patterns of raising children, about how to communicate with a child correctly, about the main mistakes in raising children and their consequences, about how to provide child, adolescent emotional support, psychological assistance, how to build a child's self-confidence. It is important to organize the training and education of parents in the basic concepts, knowledge and skills of raising children and adolescents in the schools where their children study.

Preventive and psycho-corrective measures to prevent suicidal behavior of adolescents, along with the family, must be organized in schools. It is important to create preventive and corrective work to prevent suicidal attempts among schoolchildren of different age groups.

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In the system of preventive work of the school, two directions should be distinguished:

- measures of general prevention;
- measures of special prevention.

General prevention measures should ensure the involvement of all students in the life of the school and prevent their emotional instability, aggressiveness, isolation, delinquency, and should be aimed at increasing the group cohesion of schoolchildren.

The basis of early general prevention is:

- creation of conditions that ensure the possibility of the normal development of children and adolescents of a certain age group;

- timely identification of typical crisis situations that arise in students of a certain age.

In order for the school to act as one of the levels of prevention of deviant behavior of adolescents, becoming more attractive to schoolchildren, the following preventive measures can be distinguished:

- monitoring attendance of training sessions;
- design of information stands;
- preparation of memos for students, parents and teachers;
- establish a trust box where students could ask questions in writing or share their situation;
- individual and group lessons with schoolchildren;
- information, educational class hours for schoolchildren;

- various trainings;
- to create a "school psychologist's blog" for schoolchildren to seek help online;
- organization of a forum for schoolchildren, where they can get information, ask questions, learn how to help themselves and others in difficult life situations;
- educational programs for parents and teachers;
- inclusion in the educational program of the school of technologies aimed at the formation of socially responsible behavior and the expansion of the social practice of students;
- increasing the number of circles of different directions in the school;
- creating conditions for the implementation of children's projects and initiatives at school and outside the school;
- organization of "meetings" with accomplished adults (in science, art, sports, etc.) [8].

Special prevention measures should ensure that all students in need of special attention can be identified and work can be carried out with them at the individual level. For the organization of individually oriented psychological assistance, it is important to carry out measures for the early identification of children and adolescents prone to committing auto-aggressive and suicidal acts.

All forms of special prophylactic work to prevent suicidal behavior in schoolchildren can be divided into three groups:

1. work with schoolchildren;
2. work with parents of students;
3. work with the teaching staff

Working with parents of students includes the following forms:

- all-school and classroom parent meetings;
- design of the parent corner (memos, recommendations, booklets);
- round tables with the involvement of various specialists;
- individual meetings with parents, where you need to provide information about the causes, factors, dynamics of suicidal behavior, give clear recommendations on what to pay attention to, what to do if the child has signs of suicidal behavior.

The main forms of work with the teaching staff:

- Seminars for teachers. Psycho-educational seminars on maladaptive behavior of children and adolescents, including suicidal behavior, provide information on measures to prevent suicide among children and adolescents;
- Guidelines for class teachers on working with adolescents with suicidal behavior;
- Consultations of class teachers;
- Creation of methodical piggy banks of educational actions, memos, booklets;
- Compilation of a data bank of adolescents with suicidal behavior, requiring increased pedagogical attention.

When organizing suicide prevention among children, the school psychologist and teachers are recommended the following:

- Instilling in children the social norms of behavior existing in society, the formation of mercy, the development of value relations in society;
- Formation of a positive image of "I", uniqueness and uniqueness not only of one's own personality, but also of other people;
- Studying the features of the psychological and pedagogical status of each student with the aim of timely prevention and effective solution of problems that arise in the mental state, communication, development and learning;
- Creation of a system of psychological and pedagogical support for students of different age groups in the event of difficult life situations;
- Ability to provide emergency first aid to adolescents in need of immediate assistance and protection;
- Ensuring the safety of the child, stress relief;
- Involvement of various state bodies and public associations to assist the child and protect his legitimate rights and interests;

It is necessary to organize work in the following areas:

- work with adolescents with social maladjustment, but who have immediate prospects for overcoming it;
- work with adolescents in need of urgent psycho-emotional support;
- work with disadvantaged families [9].

#### **CONCLUSION.**

As follows from the foregoing, the prevention of suicidal behavior and attempts is the task of the psychological and pedagogical staff who carry out corrective work with students at risk. Here are some ways to accomplish this task:

- strict observance of pedagogical ethics, the requirements of pedagogical culture in the daily treatment of each teacher with schoolchildren;

- mastering at least a minimum of knowledge about child and developmental psychology, as well as the appropriate techniques of an individual pedagogical approach;

- identification of the risk contingent based on knowledge of its characteristics for the purpose of observation and timely psychological and pedagogical correctional work;

- active patronage of families in which adolescents at live risk, providing advice to parents and psychological, pedagogical assistance to minors;

- non-disclosure of the facts of suicidal cases in the team;

- formation in students of such concepts as “the value of human life”, “goals and meaning of life”, as well as individual methods of psychological protection in difficult life situations;

- increasing stress resistance through the psychological preparation of a teenager, the formation of readiness to overcome the expected difficulties;

- inclusion in the content of school education programs for the development of functional skills, including practical social skills necessary for the implementation of certain social roles.

To implement this list, you need:

- increasing the level of psychological training of school psychologists, teachers, social educators, parents;

- increase in the number of psychologists with knowledge of child and developmental psychology;

- creation of various forms of psychological assistance: territorial psychological consultations, including in their structure a psychotherapist, possibly a psychiatrist or a lawyer and other specialists;

- "helpline" for anonymous psychological assistance in crisis conditions, etc.

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