

SOCIALIZATION AT PRESCHOOL AGE

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SOCIALIZAREA LA VÂRSTA PREȘCOLARĂ

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Abstract. In this article you will find the essential characteristics of the development of socialization in preschool children, the educational framework favorable to the development of social competence, the way in which the family can get involved in the educational activity to support the social development of the preschooler.

Keywords: socialization, preschool, family, kindergarten, education.

Rezumat. În acest articol se vor regăsi caracteristicile esențiale ale dezvoltării socializării la copiii de vârstă preșcolară, cadrul educațional favorabil dezvoltării competențelor sociale, modalitatea prin care familia poate să se implice în activitatea educațională pentru a sprijini dezvoltarea socială a preșcolarului.

Cuvinte-cheie: socializare, preșcolar, familie, grădiniță, educație.

In early education institutions, the preschooler is in the center of attention. The educator is the one who plans and organizes activities aimed at educating the preschooler both cognitively and behaviorally, but also emotionally and relationally.

The role of education as specified by E. Păun in the development of socialization is a process in which everything that is not born must be assimilated through learning. Education is the conscious conduct of this learning process in which the subject becomes aware of social relations, assimilates the norms and roles that will allow him to insert himself into adult society [apud 1, p. 68].

According to the Vocabulary of psychology by H. Pieron [6], socialization implies the social integration of the child during his development, in which he is offered the means of communication of language, systems of knowledge and in which he is determined to acquire rules of life, habits, ways of thinking, beliefs and ideals consistent with the social environment in which he is raised [apud 4, p.14]

Socialization takes place to a large extent through actions with a well-determined, conscious, controlled purpose and also with the help of spontaneous, spontaneous processes that influence personality formation [6, p.323].

Research over the past 30 years has highlighted significant correlations between environment and intellectual development, between early learning and learning that occurs at other stages of life. Thus, children raised in a stimulating environment have an accelerated intellectual development compared to those raised in a restrictive environment [apud 2, p.122]

Investing in children at an early age leads, in the long term, to their social development and the sustained realization of children's rights. The parent is the key partner in the child's

education, and the family-kindergarten-community relationship is decisive according to the Curriculum for Preschool Education, 3-6/7 years, MECT, 2008 [9, p.13].

The preschool period can be considered a period of discovery. For the first time, the child overcomes the narrow familiar space of the house, notices that there is a world beyond it, notices that he can get involved in its knowledge and transformation, he can discover himself, and the fact that he has the ability to make it happen certain things, develop autonomy and initiative in knowledge [5, p.9].

For the development of the preschooler's socialization, the educator is advised to plan and carry out activities in the formal, non-formal, informal framework, in partnership with the preschooler's family, activities that are mainly based on play.

For the development of socialization, it is optimal to emphasize *interpersonal* competence and *intrapersonal* competence, according to C. Ștefan. Next, we will refer to some essential characteristics for the development of *interpersonal* competence:

- *Interaction with other children*: children's ability to integrate into the group increases with age, as they manage to control the interaction with an increasing number of children. If at 3-4 years old children develop symbolic play, isolated play, parallel play, the ability to interact simultaneously with several children evolves over time through repeated exposure to cooperative games, where exchanges of lines illustrate shared concern for a certain game. At 6 years old, children get involved not only in symbolic games but also in games with rules such as „don't worry brother!” [7, pp. 28-29].
- *Initiating interaction with other children*, leading to the formation of friendships, the development of cooperation and conflict resolution competence. Involvement of children in the game facilitates the development of the ability to initiate interactions. With the passage of time, children's interaction strategies become more and more refined, moving from non-verbal to verbal strategies. If at the age of 4-5, children manage to interact in increasingly large groups, cooperate in play and begin to understand that playing with other children means listening to what others say and responding, at 5-6 years old they are already improving their ability to get involved in the game „on the fly” as a result of their experience in cooperative games. That is, to integrate into a game already in progress.
- *Shares objects/toys* - it is a behavior that is at the basis of forming friendships, because reciprocity is one of the prerequisites for forming and maintaining relationships with others. Therefore, sharing toys facilitates the integration of children in the group and cooperation, that is, it influences popularity among peers. Gradually already at the age of 5, children start to share without being explicitly asked to do so by the adult.
- *Ask for and offer help* - the ability to understand that sometimes our skills are not enough to solve certain situations. Children aged 5-6 show more autonomy, rarely ask for help and are much more inclined to show responsibility towards those younger than them.
- *He waits his turn - a rule* of behavior frequently used by educators that has the benefit of developing children's ability to regulate their emotions and to effectively solve problems that may arise in the game. After the age of 5, children end up waiting their turn without being reminded or even give up their place in line in favor of other children.
- *Use polite forms of address* - it is a way to initiate a relationship. Those children who use the formulas „please”, „thank you” are more liked by their peers than those who do not use them. Since this behavior is influenced by the child's level of language development, the use of these politeness formulas is an indicator of the development of social competence around the age of 5-6.

As for *intrapersonal* social competence, they develop and are shaped in a social context. Children's ability to adapt is largely influenced by how they can control their own behavior.

- *Respecting the rules* is the premise of any form of social interaction. In order for the rules to be respected, they must be established together with an authority (parent or educator) and must be explained and discussed. At 5-7 years old, children can remember up to 4-5 rules both in the family context and in kindergarten. The greater the similarity between the rules established, discussed and negotiated at home and at kindergarten, the greater the child's chances of respecting them.
- *Tolerates situations that cause frustration* - tolerance to frustration is equivalent to identifying appropriate solutions to conflicts. Starting from the age of 5, children can tolerate situations of frustration with less and less support from adults, especially in cooperative games where they learn emotional regulation strategies for conflict resolution [7, p. 34].

As can be seen, the family-kindergarten relationship is essential, therefore a partnership with the preschooler's family is beneficial for the preschooler to develop from all points of view.

The efficiency of the pedagogical act with preschoolers is also reflected in the new relationships between educators and parents. The family must be the first school where children learn to learn, together with the rules of behavior in life and society, the appreciation of work, devotion to the country and the people. The conjugation of the educational action of the kindergarten makes these educational values easier for the family. Naturally, the example of the parents and the teacher stimulates the imitative behavior of the child who does what he sees more quickly than what he is told. The priority function of the kindergarten being the formative-pedagogical one, it is natural that its action targets both children and their parents, because parents educate, but they are also educated through their children [8, p173].

One of the important pedagogical issues raised by the cooperation between the family and the kindergarten concerns the establishment of a rational life regime. In the family where the child continues the pedagogical regime established by common agreement with the kindergarten, the educator's dialogue with the parents consists in the confrontation of opinions in relation to the image of the child's development [8, p.171]

The forms through which the collaborative relationship between educators and parents is achieved are varied and multiple. The activities are carried out outside the activity program at the kindergarten, but they are part of the educational task that should be fulfilled. *The parents' committees* are supported by a close collaboration between the kindergarten and the family, which contributes greatly to the smooth running of the instructional-educational work in the preschool units. You cannot conceive of an educational influence on someone without knowing them. Thus, through *individual discussions*, especially in the morning when the child is brought to kindergarten or after dinner when they take him home, the educator gets information from the parents about the child's attitude and manifestations, at home with the family, playing with friends, which leads to employment and training parents in the educational act. In all these *conversations*, the educator highlights the child's positive elements, showing a robust pedagogical optimism in the child's development possibilities and thereby awakens the parents' interest and desire to synchronize their educational efforts with the educator's. In addition, these conversations represent for educators the opportunity to inform themselves both about the educational environment of the family and especially about the knowledge of the evolution of the child's mental processes [8, pp.171-172].

Theoretical information for parents in preschool psycho-pedagogy issues constitutes another collaboration plan between the kindergarten and the family. An appropriate framework

in which the educator can carry out this approach can be a program of individual and/or collective consultations. In these consultations, parents can collaborate with the educator and other specialists to create individual plans for their child's education, a program aimed at the particular needs of the children, such as overcoming their difficulties in various areas of development. Meetings in a wider framework, of meetings with parents and of lectures organized on different topics and conducted by educators, other specialists can be invited, such as doctors, psychologists, speech therapists, nutritionists, specialists invited by educators or even by parents [5 p.231].

These consultations and meetings must be announced in advance and rigorously organized, to follow each other with a frequency that allows the creation of a closer relationship with the family and the strengthening of its connection with the kindergarten. In the current educational practice, in a recent study on the issue of parents' relationship with the kindergarten, the educators mentioned as „ways to involve parents in the activity of the kindergarten the activities of ensuring the maintenance and repair of furniture, the creation of didactic material, the provision of sponsorships, the organization and carrying out actions in the community together with the children and/or the kindergarten staff: visits to old people's homes, activities carried out in foster care centers, children's homes, etc” [5 p.232].

According to Braghiș, the classic activities that contribute to strengthening the kindergarten-family relationship are:

- *Open door day* – an event in which family members have the opportunity to visit the children during group lessons, to observe their behavior and attitude towards the learning activity, towards the teacher, towards the other colleagues;
- *The visit* is a short trip with activities for parents and children to participate in. The parent can observe his child in another environment, outside of school, he can get to know him from other aspects: the relationship with the other colleagues, with the adults in the group, the behavior in public places;
- *School celebrations* are events of particular importance in the activity of children and in the lives of their families - both from an affective and cognitive point of view, giving children the opportunity to express themselves in a personal and original way. Parents can discover some special abilities of children, their level of development, they can evaluate their performances, get involved in the organization of these activities;
- *The sessions with the parents* are thematic meetings organized by the teaching staff, during which there are exercises for getting to know each other, self-knowledge, getting to know the child, problems of general interest are debated, case studies are generated, situations are generated in which the parents have to propose solutions;
- *Individual consultations* (conversations) represent an opportunity for an individualized approach to the problems faced by the child or the parent. Advice can be offered, parents can provide more private information, which they do not want to make public, but which are relevant for the child's education and training;
- *Excursions, hiking* - parents can contribute to the organization and sponsoring of these actions, they can ensure the supervision of children, experience positive emotions with their children, offer them models of behavior;
- *Exhibitions of children's works* - an opportunity to familiarize parents with important data about children's development, both artistically and in terms of the accumulated knowledge;
- *Celebrating children's birthdays* in a group - children learn civilized behavior, some social conventions; affective bonds are created with family members, because the guests of the celebration can be parents and other relatives;

- *Open lessons* - attending these, parents can get to know the didactic approach practiced by the teacher, with the modalities, methods and means of teaching-learning-evaluation used in the group;
- *The kindergarten-family-community* collaboration agreement, which stipulates the responsibilities of the school, parents and community educational actors in the educational process [appud 3, p.44]

The quality of the child's education, care and social development depends on us, all those who interact with children, day by day: parents or educators, school counselor or medical assistant; all acting coherently and keeping in constant attention the child and his individual particularities [3, p.74].

Therefore, socialization is a primary condition in the formation and affirmation of personality. Namely, within the framework of socialization, the human individual transforms from a helpless and dependent being into an impregnating personality within social values and symbols, autonomous and capable of orientation in the environment, and the family has an extremely important role in this process [4, p.20].

In conclusion, we can specify that the preschool period is marked by significant changes in social and emotional behavior. And for the harmonious development of the preschooler's socialization, it is desirable that both the parents and the entire collective of the kindergarten together with the community are part of the team.

The involvement of parents in the educational act of the kindergarten, through partnership, is crucial, as they can organize and carry out educational activities with a favorable impact for the development of preschoolers' socialization.

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