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An early diagnostics of pupils' addictive behavior by a psychologist

© 2015 Belous Elena Nikolayevna*, Tkachuk Olga Sergeyevna, Fomenko Tatiana Andreyevna*****

*PhD in Psychology, the associate professor, the chair of Psychological Education, State University of Social Sciences and Humanities (Kolomna, Russia) belousen@yandex.ru

**psychologist at comprehensive school №17 (Kolomna, Russia) tkachuk.st@rambler.ru

***Ph.D in Linguistics, the associate professor, chair of Linguistics and International Communication State University of Social Sciences and Humanities (Kolomna, Russia) tatfomenko@yandex.ru

Annotation. the article is devoted to a practical working-out of an early diagnostics of pupils' addictive behavior, it contains a valuable generalization of theoretical data on addictive behaviour, it is supported with the results of the research conducted in the 7th and 9th classes of a school.

Keywords: addictive behavior, smoking, drug addiction, psychological diagnostics, algorithm of the psychologist's activity

Работа психолога по ранней диагностике аддиктивного поведения учащихся

© 2015 Белоус Елена Николаевна*, Ткачук Ольга Сергеевна, Фоменко Татьяна Андреевна***,**

*кандидат психологических наук, доцент кафедры психологического образования Московского государственного социально-гуманитарного института (г. Коломна, Россия), belousen@yandex.ru

**психолог общеобразовательной школы №17 (г. Коломна, Россия) tkachuk.st@rambler.ru

***кандидат филологических наук, доцент кафедры Лингвистики и межкультурной коммуникации Московского государственного областного социально-гуманитарного института (г. Коломна, Россия) tatfomenko@yandex.ru

Аннотация: статья посвящена практическим разработкам в области выявления коррекции аддиктивного поведения школьников, содержит также ценные обобщенные теоретические сведения о зависимом поведении,

подкреплена результатами исследования, проведенного в 7-ом и 9-ом классах общеобразовательной школы.

Ключевые слова: аддиктивное поведение, табакокурение, наркозависимость, психологическая диагностика, алгоритм работы психолога.

In spite of all efforts of our society to restrict the accessibility of the things that can cause addictive behavior, the number of addictive people is not only constantly growing but addiction is discovered among extremely young people. It can lead to the loss of the whole generation and finally to the degradation of the nation.

The works of foreign researchers such as Blevins, Brickman, Coates, Cohn, Curry, Dana, Gordon, Kidder, Lewis, Marlatt and others are devoted to different aspects of addictive behavior. This issue is in a focus of research of such Russian scientists as Lichko A., Bittenckiy V., Bratys B., Gabiani A., Dmitrieva N., Kulakov S., Kolesov D., Korolenko Ts., Kurek N., Mendelevich V., Nikolskaya I., Pyatnitskaya I., Sidorov P., Rean A., Hudik V., Eydemiller E. and others.

An addictive behavior turns out to be closely connected with abuse and disturbance of needs. The most suitable classification of all types of addictive behavior is based on the dominant object of the addiction. It can be observed in the Table below, where we summarized the results of contemporary scientific works on clinical psychology, medicine, remedial sciences and defectology, published in periodicals as well. (Table 1)

The data summarized in Table 1 inform us about not only the quantity of objects and types of addictive behavior but the possibility of its constant complication and deterioration. Through the years of growing and maturity we can observe only some of mentioned above addictions. But the knowledge of all possible variants of the addiction helps to diagnose it at the very early stage.

Table 1

The classification of addictions based on the dominant object

№	The type of	The object of addiction	Examples
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	addiction		
1	Psychoactivator		
	Tobacco	Hard smoking Passive smoking Tobacco chewing Tobacco snuffing	filtertipped cigarettes, cigarettes without filter pipes chewing tobacco snuffing tobacco
	Smoking mixtures (spices)	Entheogen Chemically synthesized blends	Mixture of herbs Mixtures of chemically cultivated herbs (forbidden by law)
	Alcohol	Low alcohol Strong drinks	Got through fermentation Got through distillation
	Drugs	Opiates Cannabis products Amphetamine Cocaine Hallucinogen Ecstasy Soporific Inhalation	Heroin, poppy straw, acetelized opium, beast heroin, methadone Marihuana, cannabis Ephedrine, pervetine, ephedrine, Cocaine, crack LSD, psilocin, psilocybine Ecstasy Phenozepan, relanium, reladorm, and other products based on barbituric acid Volatile products in such stuffs as dyestuff, removal liquid, glue, oil, hair spray, insect repellent
2	Food	Mono-food addiction Multi-food addiction Bulimia Anorexia	The dependence on a certain product or a type of a product (sweets – sweet tooth) Some kinds of vegetarianism Hyperalimenation Apastia, starvation
3	Games	Action games Games with prizes	Casino games computer games, on-line games Totalizer, lottery, pane games

		Financial games	and so on Open trade on the exchange and stock market
4	Sex	Affectionate Sexual Avoidance behavior	Platonic affection, desire disorder, willingness to make sacrifices, voyeurism Lady-killing, zoophilia, necrophilia, Sadomasochism, fetishism, exhibitionism Paranoia, sexual phobia, transvestism
5	Religion and cult	Sectarianism	Indoctrination: developing of a new identity that leads to a dissociation of personality and subconsciously a person feels danger and discrepancy

Zmanovskaya E.V. singles out several forms of addictive behaviour, such as chemical addiction food addiction, gambling (game addiction), sexual addiction, religious destructive behavior. It is important to know that the degree of addiction can change from practically normal to abnormal, to serious biological addiction with somatic and mental pathologies.[Zamanovskaya E.V., 2004]

The formation of a steady addictive behavior depends on a personality, nevertheless there are some typical stages in this process. [Kleiberg Y.A., 2003]

The 1st stage. Treat for the first time. It usually happens under somebody's influence or a group pressure. Curiosity, behavior contagion, group conformity and the desire to achieve a group self-affirmation play the leading role at this stage. The natural desire of a person to change his or her state of consciousness is the motivation of the treating for the first time. The probability of forming an addictive behavior and developing of the disease is high. The younger a person is and the weaker a desire to change the state of consciousness using the legal ways the more obvious is starting of the addiction. The way how to achieve a desirable state is involuntary, it depends on the ethic and cultural peculiarities of the society, subculture, the experience of the group and accessibility of the stuff. .

The 2nd stage. A search addictive behavior. As soon as a person treated the stuff for the first time, he starts making experiments with different types of psychoactive substances or objects of addiction. As a rule, at this stage a person is under the influence of his company and does it to feel relaxed, to laugh, to intensify sense perception, to remove shyness and sexual barriers, to express attitude to others openly. At this stage a person activates his searching for a new kind of stuff and methods of usage. Finally he chooses one particular personal type or object of addiction. The 3d stage. The addictive behavior leads to a disease. Here we single out contributing factors classified as social, psycosocial, psychological and biological. Social factors – social imbalance, the accessibility of the things that can cause addictive behavior, the lack of positive social and cultural traditions and customs, the social contrast, the intensity and the level of migration and others. Psychosocial factors – a high level of a mass anxiety in the community, breaking down of the family relationships, incapacity for the youth to join sports clubs, centers of entertainment. Psychological factors – immaturity of a personal identification or disability to have an inner dialogue, a low level of enduring psychological stresses, keeping the behavior under control, the constant desire to change the state of consciousness as a means of solving inner problems and conflicts. Biological factors - the type and ‘aggressiveness’ of the psychoactive stuff, personal tolerance, disorder of the detoxication, changing of the motivation, keeping under control the illness. Pupils’ addictive behavior is displayed in both simple and complicated forms, obvious and easy-understood. So, initially this behavior is exhibited in such forms as a dependent study (the dependence on the teacher’s custody), the dependent preparing of the home task (the dependence of the mother’s custody), uncontrolled lie and stealing. Gradually, these forms are developing or some more complicated forms are added such as uncontrolled addiction to play computer games or to gamble, to use psychoactive stuff, to find themselves in an unreal world

The provoking factors of the addictive behavior are:

- Neuro-mental imbalance [Zmanovskaya E.V., 2004, Kleiberg Y.A., 2003]

- Accentuation of the character (hyperthymia, instability conformity, hysteroid and epileptoid types), [Leachno A.E., 1986].

- Behavioral response of a group [Leachno A.E., 1986, Zhmurov V.A., 1994, Shabanov Y. D., Shtakelberg O.Y., 2000; Ovcharova R.V., 2000 and others].

- The reaction of emancipation [Leachno A.E., 1986, Zhmurov V.A., 1994, Shabanov Y. D., Shtakelberg O.Y., 2000; Ovcharova R.V., 2000 and others].

- The reaction of enthusiasm (different hobbies) [Leachno A.E., 1986, Zhmurov V.A., 1994, Shabanov Y. D., Shtakelberg O.Y., 2000].

- The growing of sexual affection [Leachno A.E., 1986].

Summing up, we can say that the causes of pupils' addiction are different, they depend on the degree of the addiction. Let's compare the causes of smoking and drug addiction given by Smirnova N.K., Shabalina V.V., Zmanovskaya E.V. (Table 2) [Smirnova N.K., 2003, Shabalina V.V., 2001, Zmanovskaya E.V., 2004].

Taking into consideration the data from Table 2 we can judge that causes for smoking and drug addiction differ, but we can compare them. The causes for drug addiction are deeper and their influence on the personality is more dramatic in comparison with smoking. We conclude that as soon as the chemical addiction is increasing the causes for addiction are changing. Thus, the stage Pleasure gives place to disability in self-acceptance and dependence on the situation, curiosity leads to the emotional and volitional immaturity.

An early diagnostics of preconditions for pupils' addictive behavior is a psychological issue because:

- We have no complete comparative analysis of the addictive behavior performed under the influence of different objects of addiction;

- It is extremely difficult to comprise a complete nonrecurring sample for the study of various addicts' peculiarities (due to the object of addiction)

- We have no solution to the age index when an early diagnostics will not be misrepresented because of the age related peculiarities, for a example: a child has a volitional immaturity, he is not able to differentiate and keep under control his natural

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desire to have some pleasure and the starting of addiction (either child's curiosity is a feature of the age or his personal dissatisfaction and the trait of his character, either it is a natural desire to eat a sweet or he is not able to resist the temptation)

Table 2

*The Spectral Analysis of Causes for Smoking and Drug Addiction among School Children
(according to Smirnova N.K., Shabalina V.V., Zmanovskaya E.V.)*

Description	Cause for smoking	Cause for drug addiction	Description
If smoking is accepted by the peer group to which a pupil belongs and didn't view himself a member of this community, he recognizes a paramount need for smoking to be equal.	Social consistency	The disorder of self-control	This state constitutes a durable disorder of self-control and self-regulation, difficulty in keeping one's own behavior under control and predicting the results of it.
The desire to look like a grown-up who can smoke in public, demonstrate lighting a cigarette. This effect is called the mask of a grown-up.	Pleasure	The problems of self-evaluation	The ground forth lack of self-esteem and low, polar unreasonable self-judgment is in the early childhood.
According to the law cigarettes and alcohol are banned from selling to teenagers under 18. But it is constantly violated.	Accessibility	Decline in achievement motivation	Disbelief in oneself, unwillingness to succeed, disposition to regressive behavior, emotional and volitional immaturity, limited capacity for reflection and caring about oneself.
Some teenagers start smoking out of curiosity	Out of Curiosity	A steady imbalance in affective (highly emotional) sphere	This state constitutes alexithymia, high emotional ability, "negative" affective disposition, a low level of empathy.
Smoking can be treated as a symbol of rebelling against the social values.	Hostility	Hostility	This state comprises in an adequate psycho sexuality or attitude to it in his way, aggressiveness and intolerance

Table 2. Continuation

Description	Cause for smoking	Cause for drug addiction	Description
Prosperity and spare time can lead to boredom and the loss of interest to life. Smoking can seem to be a stimulus for life	Prosperity and spare time	The lack of communication	Unwillingness to be among other people, disability to communicate with others, maladjustment, keeping to coping behavior strategy
A good many of people are able to cope with stress, but some try to perform a certain ritual of calming down. You've heard it more than once "If I smoke now I'll become less angry, upset, or excited.	Escaping a physical stress	Social influence	Total submission to the demands of a peer group, a low level of adaptive capacity, inadequate attitude to the social support

- We can't rely on the response of a child, because the probability that the respondent is afraid to lose the object of his addiction is rather high, that is why children can conceal the truth give the answer desirable by grown-ups.

- We have no specialized techniques implying both the age of the respondent and the type of addiction.

In our opinion, the very idea of diagnosis is possible only when we take into consideration individual factors of risk and individual inclination toward addiction.

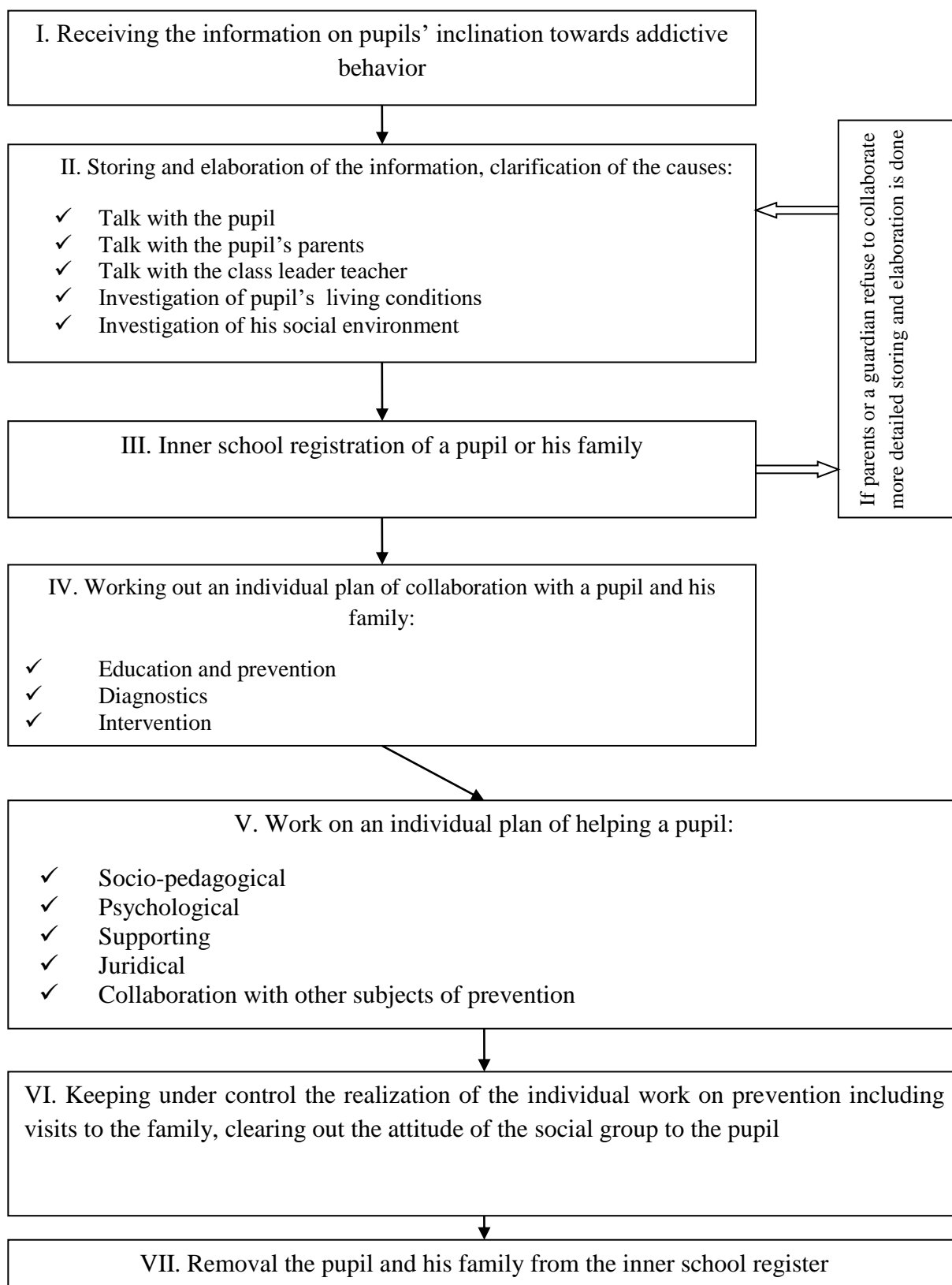
We insist on the need to work out the universal algorithm of psychologist's activity in comprehensive schools, where he can early diagnose child's precondition for addictive behavior, prevention and intervention. (Scheme 1).

Judging by Scheme 1 the work of school psychologist comprises 7 or 9 steps of the universal algorithm. Let's have a precise look at these steps.

At the first step we are supposed to get some information on pupils' inclination towards addictive behavior from any possible sources, for example teachers' supervision, their opinion, the mind of somebody's from the child's social environment, the results of planned testing, the information from pupils' parents, data from other institutions.

At the second step the school psychologist starts storing and sorting information, analyzing it, systematization of detailed checked information on clearing the addiction, its type, kind and peculiarities. The most wide-spread methods of work are given in Scheme 1

The third step is connected with the sharing of the information with the school authorities, the ways of coping with the problem including not only the work of the school psychologist but other members of the educational community. If parents or guardians refuse to collaborate, if they are against inner school registration, the psychologist must go on collecting information, more detailed and precise, he involves the child and his family in instructive educational process.



Scheme 1. The universal algorithm of the work of psychologist at school to diagnose preconditions of pupils' addictive behavior at early stages, primary prevention and the following psychological intervention

The fourth step is connected with the working out of the individual plan of collaboration with the addictive pupil. Surely, this work is carried out according to the aim and goals.

For example:

The aim of the individual target work of the psychologist is to ensure success in decreasing the risks of arousing addiction and its developing.

The goals:

Psychological and educational diagnosis aimed to exposure the inclination toward addiction, finding the causes, searching for ways to cope with the problem, ways of prevention and intervention

Individual forms of work with the child

Supplying the child and his parents with the information how to cope with the problem activating his own resources

Using the method of supporting the child, developing the psychological and pedagogical competence of all the pupils of the school.

The fifth and the sixth steps. The effectiveness of the individual plan is checked by analyzing the psychological and pedagogical supporting.

The effectiveness of the plan is observed by indirect indicators such as its using by other specialists and the decreasing of the number of pupils with destructive behavior.

The seventh stage is the ideal goal for which all previous actions were done. This goal is not always achieved but it is worth working on it

We think that years of studying at age 10-16 are the factors of risk to display deviant (addictive) behavior, that is why it should be taken into consideration while working on prevention and early diagnosis of addictive behavior.

Our investigation is based on the data we got while working at a comprehension school located in the town of Gasoprovodsk, Luhovitsky area, Moscow Region. The number of respondents is 40, 23 boys and 17 girls, pupils of the 7th form, in our study we called them the junior group (20 pupils). The schoolchildren of the 9th form comprised the senior group (20 pupils).

To diagnose the inclination to addictive behavior we used the following techniques:

- 1) questionnaire survey on causes for smoking and attitude to smoking
- 2) A.E.Lichko's questionnaire on finding out the type of accentuation;
- 3) The project work on 'A Non-existent Animal' to test personal traits of the character, his emotional level, activity, and its types.
- 4) Bass-Darka's questionnaire on the components of aggressiveness
- 5) The technique 'Anxiety and depression' is directed on the testing the level of anxiety and teenagers' depression;
- 6) The technique 'Why do you smoke?'

Having conducted the investigation we made the following conclusion

- 1) Smoking is not treated as a disease by any of the group
- 2) 55% of teenagers in the senior group can't resist the temptation to smoke, in the junior group – 40% of respondents
- 3) The main ground for smoking the first cigarette is to keep the company: 35% in the senior group, 15% in the junior group; the desire to look like a grown-up: 35% in the senior group, 20% in the junior group;

Analyzing the results of E.A.Lichko's questionnaire, we found out that in the junior group there were 6 pupils with labile accentuation, 3 – with hyperthymia,

psycho-sthenic and conformist type of accentuation. Thus, in the junior group labile accentuation predominates. In the senior group 5 - with hyperthymia, and 4 – with schizoid type of accentuation. Here the type with hyperthymia prevails over the schizoid type.

The project work 'A Non-existent Animal' showed a high level of aggressiveness, anxiety in both groups, low levels of self-esteem, self-evaluation, rationalism and self-determination.

Bass-Darka's questionnaire on the components of aggressiveness reveals the following results: in the senior group - indirect verbal aggression, offence, the feeling of guilty, aggressiveness, and hostility, in the junior group – physical aggressiveness, irritation, negativism, suspicion prevail.

Judging by the results of the test 'Anxiety and depression' we can say: 11 teenagers in the senior group displayed a high degree of anxiety and only 6 had a good psychological health; in the junior group 7 pupils displayed a high degree of anxiety, 8 had a good psychological health.

Analyzing the causes for addictive behavior on the smoking sample we found out:

- 1) The first wide-spread cause for smoking was 'the play with the cigarette': 6 in the senior group and 3 – in the junior group;
- 2) The second cause – from force of habit: 3 – in the senior group and 2 – in the junior group
- 3) The third cause - 'stimulation': 2 – in the senior group and 1 – in the junior group

The data got by the method of statistical processing showed that comparing average indexes in senior and junior groups we found:

The index of anxiety 0,653 and 0,342 respectively

The index of depression 0,625 and 0,015

Thus, the figures are proximately the same. In other words the problem of addictive behavior is of primary importance for schoolchildren of the 7th and 9th forms. It proves the necessity and importance of psychologist's activity to diagnose addiction at early stages not only in senior classes at school.

So, using both scientific and methodological data we singled out multiple risks leading to pupils' addiction, worked out the algorithm of psychologist's activity in comprehensive schools to diagnose inclination toward addictive behavior at early stages, intervention and prevention as well.

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