



## Review Article

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# MENTORING AS A FORM OF PSYCHOLOGICAL SUPPORT FOR CHILDREN LEFT WITHOUT PARENTAL CARE

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## Abstract

*Relevance.* The loss of parental care like nothing else affects the psychological well-being of the child and can have detrimental consequences for their further social adaptation and self-realization in adulthood. The emergence of effective mechanisms for child's social adaptation is the result of its productive interaction with a human social environment and an indispensable condition for successful socialization in society. The purpose of this study is to identify the influence of mentoring on the social and psychological adaptation of children left without parental care.

*Methodology.* By means of theoretical analysis using the methodology of the systemic and cultural-historical approach, the article analyzes in detail the history of mentoring, its types and functions in working with children.

*Results.* The paper proves that a child left without parental care faces a number of problems ( compensation for the level of mental deprivation, formation of basic trust in the world and gender-role identification, understanding ethical norms, and formation of relevant values), which negatively affect their ability to social adaptation. To solve them, she needs competent psychological support from adults.

Mentoring is considered as an effective form of psychological support and guidance for children, which, by transforming and enriching itself in the processes of formation, has found due recognition in modern society and is widely used as a tool for the personal development of a person as a subject of activity. It is concluded that the psychological and pedagogical potential of mentoring should be used in the psychological support of children who were left without parental care due to military operations on the territory of Ukraine.

**Keywords:** mentoring, psychological support, child's psychological well-being, social adaptation, psychological support.

## Relevance

Many scientists have dealt with the problem of mentoring as a form and technology for the development of social adaptation of a person. The historical aspects of the establishment of the mentoring institute as a relevant psychological and pedagogical



technology of post-boarding support for orphans were studied in their works by O. Baidarov, I. Baranov, Z. Bondarenko and others. The problems of socialization and social adaptation of children were psychologically studied by M. Antropov, M. Bityanov, M. Galaguzov, M. Koltsov, N. Maksimova, V. Markova, T. Pirozhenko, Yu. Shvalb, and others.

The Ukrainian psychological and pedagogical tradition closely links the success of school and preschool educational socialization with the issue of the child's psychological well-being (Ushchynskyi K., 1990, Pirozhenko T., 2013, Vlasova O., 2014). The psychological well-being of an individual is a complex psychological formation that includes emotional, cognitive, and conative components, which are formed in the process of social and psychological activity of a person in the system of their real interactions with other people and objects of the surrounding reality (Vlasova, O. I. Gulenko, A.C., 2014). Under the influence of such processes, socio-psychological attitudes, values, and strategies of individual behavior are formed. Kaufman found that strong social support in children who survived trauma protected them from developing depression, even despite the presence of genetic vulnerability to psychopathology. (Naidyonova, L. A., 2007).

### **Methodology**

The main goal of the current study is to identify the influence of mentoring on the social and psychological adaptation of children left without parental care.

Social adaptation is an indispensable condition and result of a child's successful socialization, which is known to occur in three main areas: activity, communication, and consciousness (Naidyonova, L.A., 2007). A decrease in adaptive capabilities is characterized by such a phenomenon as maladaptation. O. Borysenko, T. Komar, M. Levchenko, B. Rudov, V. Shtyfurak, and others actively studied this mechanism in their works. In particular, in social pedagogy, a child's maladjustment is an indicator that their behavior, performance, and relationships with others do not correspond to social norms that are typical for a certain age.

A child left without parental care faces a number of problems that negatively affect their social adaptation, as a result the development of maladaptive phenomena is inevitable. In the domestic humanitarian sphere, the concept of "mentor" came from Western science, where the term "mentor" is used to describe it. The concept of "mentor" has reached our times and is now used as a general name for mentors, educators, teachers, and generally leaders of youth (Baidarova, O.O., 2012).

The analysis of scientific and psychological literature on the peculiarities of the formation of the personality of a child who was left without parental care showed that the specific conditions of development of such children lead to the appearance of negative aspects of their "I - concept", which can be expressed through low self-esteem, personal hopelessness, lack of initiative and inability to establish positive social relationships with others.

The concept of "self-concept" is most thoroughly revealed by R. Burns who defines it as a hierarchical set of attitudes of an individual about him- or herself. The structure "I –

concept“ represents the interdependence of such components as: “real I” (what I, in my opinion, really am), “I” (what I want to be), and “mirror I” (what, in my opinion , others see me) (Burns, R.B., 1979).

## Results

Nowadays, there are several leading types or types of mentoring, depending on the field of application. In particular, M. Farkhan singles out the following types of mentoring:

- community-based or social mentoring;
- religious mentoring with a specific emphasis on spirituality;
- professional/industrial mentoring aimed at mastering the basic skills of a certain profession or work in a specific organization;
- educational mentoring (mentoring carried out by teachers or professionals in the field that interested the student).

Depending on the parties involved in the mentoring process, mentoring can be implemented in the following forms [4]:

- One-on-one mentoring - a traditional model of mentoring, when one mentor works in pairs with one mentee;
- Team mentoring is a form of mentoring that involves the work of a group of experienced individuals with a group of less experienced individuals; often used in social projects;
- Group mentoring – one or two mentors build relationships with a group of mentees through frequent meetings or living together.

In world practice, considerable experience has been accumulated in supporting children and youth who, for various reasons, feel a lack of care from adults: children of prisoners, children from poor, single-parent families (including families of military personnel who died at the front), children who are on long-term inpatient treatment far from their loved ones. Since the 1980s in the USA, on the initiative of Matilda Cuomo, mentoring has been used in the social sphere to combat such a negative phenomenon as children dropping out of school. Founded in 1995, the Cuomo School of Mentoring USA continues to support statewide mentoring programs today that reach children between the ages of 5 and 18, promoting their learning and nurturing (Reid, S. A., 2012).

Today, in Ukraine, mentoring refers to individual work to prepare a young person who leaves a residential care facility for independent life in the community.

Researcher O. Baidarova aptly defines the concept of “mentor“, in her opinion, a mentor is a person from the community to which a pupil returns from boarding school, their task is to help the child acquire social and life skills for successful social and psychological adaptation and integration into the community residence. Understanding the regularities of mental development processes, age and individual characteristics of the child for the mentor is a mandatory condition for the implementation of this task. The mentor helps the child in solving a number of psychological problems, such as the formation of basic trust in the world, the formation of sex-role identification and acceptance of gender roles, the assimilation and adoption of ethical values, the formation of motivation to create one’s own family (Baidarova, O.O., 2012).



The mentor's diagnostic function consists of the ability to reproduce a real picture of the life of the child and their biological family, using adequate psycho-diagnostic tools for this.

The prognostic function of the mentor includes the ability to predict the life processes of the child and the ability to see specific ways of their further arrangement.

The activity of the mentor also includes the function of assistance and support. It consists of creating for the child's personal well-being and conditions for development, helping to solve problems, and general support.

And, finally, the analytical-evaluative function covers the ability of the mentor to analyze the results achieved in the processes of raising and developing the child, to identify positive aspects, to realistically evaluate their own capabilities and the capabilities of the child, to see the possibilities of their self-improvement (Murashkevich M.I., 2015).

It is also worth mentioning cultural competence. After all, culture is a prism through which a person perceives the world and sees him- or herself, it determines a person's behavior and influences their decision-making. The mentor's cultural competence involves knowledge and acceptance of national and universal values, it is the ability to recognize and respect the values of a culture that is different from one's own. This competence involves empathy, understanding of other behavior, and flexibility in relationships (The Borden Institute, 2017).

In order for the relationship between the mentor and the mentee to be effective and help the child from the residential institution to socialize, the mentor needs to constantly develop him- or herself and improve their own competencies. The mentor's task is to help the child master social and life skills for successful social and psychological adaptation and integration.

### **Conclusions**

Mentoring has an unequivocal positive effect on a child's social adaptation, and it should be used both for children left without parental care and for teenagers from full-fledged families, because everyone needs external support, especially from more experienced people.

The practice of mentoring should be carried out taking into account three important aspects: 1) focus on the child gaining a qualitatively new experience of relationships, different from those that developed in a destructive family or with educators of a residential institution; 2) application of an individual approach in working with a young person, in-depth study of their interests, needs, values to determine life goals and develop a plan for their personal development, assistance in making personal decisions; 3) the use of a complex approach in working with the child, which involves taking into account all aspects of the child's life, help and support both in the formation of the simplest household skills, social skills, and in solving psychological problems of personal development, resolving internal and interpersonal conflicts, organizing their life as a whole.

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