

## **Editorial: Features of Non-Verbal Communication in Children with Intellectual Disabilities**

This monographic issue investigates the problems of intellectual disability, as well as the features of non-verbal communication in primary school children. The difficulties of identifying the features of communication skills in children with intellectual disabilities are becoming more and more relevant every year.

During the period from 1991 to 2000 in Russia, the frequency of diagnosis "mental retardation" in primary school children increased to 139.8 people per 100 thousand population [1]. Therewith, in 75% of cases, a slight degree of decrease in intelligence was established. Among the indicated group of children, persistent underdevelopment of cognitive activity in 75-90% is determined by organic damage to the central nervous system [2]. According to the Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation (2016), over 60% of children of primary school age belong to the risk category of school, somatic, and psychophysical maladjustment. In 35% of them, even in preschool age, disorders of the neuropsychic sphere are found. The number of students who cannot cope with the requirements of the general education program has increased 2-2.5 times over the past 20 years, reaching 20-40% [3]. The researchers [4, 5] emphasise that the deterioration in the health of students becomes one of the reasons for the difficulties in the development of their adaptive and communicative potentials. Children with intellectual disabilities have a decrease in the ability to use verbal and various non-verbal means of communication, which have a compensatory value for the child's successful socialisation.

In the context of this study, a programme of psychological influence was developed to optimise the non-verbal communication of children with intellectual disabilities. With psychological influence aimed at the development of communication among children of primary school age with intellectual disabilities, more intact mental functions associated with the implementation of the emotional-personal and behavioural components of non-verbal communication are taken into account. The content of the programme places emphasis on the ability of primary school children with intellectual disabilities to recognise gestures designed to express their emotional states and behavioural interaction, which increases understanding and enhances the potential for non-verbal communication.

The empirical results obtained as a result of research can be used in the differential diagnosis of the communicative development of children with varying degrees of intellectual decline. A programme of psychological influence developed and tested for its effectiveness to harmonise the development of non-verbal communication components can be used in the work of clinical psychologists who provide assistance to children with intellectual disabilities. This

programme assumes an effective solution to the problem of the development of non-verbal communication in children with intellectual disabilities in preschool institutions in preparation for school and specialised correction-oriented schools for primary school students. The main provisions and methods of the programme of psychological influence on the optimisation of non-verbal communication of children with intellectual disabilities can be applied by clinical psychologists and primary school teachers when teaching children with disabilities.

## REFERENCES

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