

Psycho-pedagogical assistance to students with disabilities in conditions of COVID-19 pandemic

Scientific Researcher **Emilia FURDUI**
Institute of Educational Sciences, Chisinau

Abstract

In this article, we will report the socio-emotional problems of students with disabilities, which impede the optimal development of the educational process in the crisis situation caused by the pandemic with Covid-19, which is transited by a whole world. The evolution of the epidemiological situation of COVID-19 infection has led to the suspension of the educational process in general and special education institutions in the country.

In this context, we will focus on the remote organization of psychological care for children / students with disabilities, parents, teachers. The purpose of psychological assistance in the context of suspending the educational process is both to ensure psychoeducation, emotional stability of beneficiaries and to manage behavior and psychological mechanisms to get out of the crisis.¹

Keywords: pandemic, psychological assistance, relationships, disability, inclusive education

Introduction

Nowadays we live in a world where our well-being, safety or even our lives are being tested by various kind of events that we cannot anticipate and that we can control at most partially, despite the evolution of science and technology. Unfortunately, the period that a whole world is going through does not fit very well with human nature, which needs communication and direct interaction with other individuals.

It is known that the COVID-19 pandemic determines emotions, such as anxiety, stress and uncertainties, felt more by children of all ages, including those ones with certain disabilities. Although they have their own mechanisms in dealing with these emotions, given the fact that schools have reviewed their work schedule, students have to follow certain rules even when they need friends, communication or support incentives with positive effects.

The purpose of the psychological assistance in the context of suspension of the educational process is both to ensure psychoeducation, emotional stability of beneficiaries and to manage behavior and psychological mechanisms aimed at getting out of the crisis.

In the context of the crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, at national, educational and social level, the Extraordinary National Committee for Public Health was instituted (Decision no. 6/2020 1). Accordingly, the Ministry of Education, Culture and Research (MECR) of the Republic of Moldova approved the *„Methodology on the remote continuation of the educational process in quarantine conditions, in primary, secondary, higher education, special education institutions in the entire territory of the country”* and the *„Methodology on organizing the remote educational process in quarantine conditions for early education institutions”*.

At the same time, in the new complicated conditions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, with the view of carrying out the distance learning process, ensuring the psychological-social

¹ The article is elaborated within the Project *Theoretical and methodological bases of ensuring the psychological activity in the general education system from the perspective of contemporary societal approaches*, 20.80009.1606.10.

development of the student in relation to individual and age peculiarities, the main responsibility and the determining role within the educational institution belongs to the psychological service of the Republic of Moldova.

Respectively, the MECR launched a series of training programs, methodologies, and regulations. We will refer in particular to the „*Handbook on organizing the psychological assistance to children, parents and teachers during the suspension of the educational process*” (MECR Order no. 380/220), which requests the development of an intrasectoral and intersectoral cooperation, maintaining a good feeling condition and psycho-emotional balance, but also risk prevention. The document stipulates that the main responsibilities in the field fall:

- at the central level – on the Republican center for Psycho-pedagogical Assistance;
- at district/municipal level – on local specialized bodies in the field of education, district/municipal psycho-pedagogical assistance services;
- at the institutional level – on the management staff, the school psychologist and the teacher.

All the above mentioned structures operate in the context of hierarchy and intrasectoral, but also intersectoral collaboration, approaching holistically the needs of the child and ensuring the respect of his/her superior interest.

The psychological assistance during that period will be carried out mainly remotely, via technical means that are available and accessible to all beneficiaries (*telephone, video call applications, online platforms, messenger, Viber, e-mail etc.*).

Beneficiaries of the psychological assistance are the following categories:

- all children/students, regardless of the material condition of the family, the environment of residence, ethnicity, language spoken, sex, age, health status, learning potential, criminal record, children at risk etc.;
- the parents of the child/legal representatives;
- teachers, management staff etc.

The psychological assistance is based on the following *specific principles*:

- the principle of competence, specialization and professional responsibility;
- the principle of moral and professional integrity in all relations;
- the principle of observing the rights and dignity of any individual;
- the principle of confidentiality;
- the principle of immediate intervention, imposed by the extreme situational /emotional character, in order to prevent and/or limit the damages of the individual and those around him/her;
- the principle of focusing on the practical solution of problems, starting with the development of a realistic action plan and the identification of the sources of social support of the individual in crisis etc.

It is worth to be mentioned that the psychological assistance is provided by the psychologist /psycho-pedagogue from the general education institution or from the district/municipal psycho-pedagogical assistance service.

In this context, the psychologist / pedagogical psychologist will:

- provide psychological assistance to children / students, parents and teachers to help them overcome the temporary period of emotional crisis and adapt to stressful situations;
- provide psychological support to parents in order to manage the relationship with children in a constructive and non-violent way, in the context of the remote continuation of the educational process;
- provide psychological support to teachers with a view of preventing burnout syndrome, stress and anxiety;
- inform the administration of the institution with reference to the cases, which require a specialized approach (medical, social services);
- work with teachers to monitor the well-being of children / students and their safety.

The psychological assistance will be provided through the following recommended forms of activity:

- ❖ *Psychological evaluation, which includes:*
 - selecting the necessary tools for establishing the psycho-emotional state of the child /student, parents and teachers and establishing their immediate psychological needs;
 - conducting discussions / interviews with the child / student, with parents, obtaining information from third parties, analyzing the products of the child's activity etc.;
 - applying questionnaires for various target groups: children / students, parents, teachers aimed at determining needs in crisis situations;
 - jointly with parents developing a set of actions to overcome the current situation, taking into account the emotional needs of the child;
 - assessing the post-crisis condition and ensuring the monitoring of the child's / student's well-being and directing, if necessary, to different institutions for specialized professional assistance.
- ❖ Individual and group *psychological counseling* of children / students, parents and teachers, which is targeting:
 - improving the abilities of emotional, relational, cognitive and behavioral (self) regulation, with an impact on their mental and physical health;
 - guaranteeing to the children that there is a person (s) who can offer them safety, protection and trust;
 - encouraging children/students to use effective strategies for maintaining social relationships with peers, colleagues in order to adapt to the current situation and overcome emotional problems;
 - developing a responsible, courageous and balanced behavior;
 - offering psycho-emotional support to teachers, parents through communication based on empathy, acceptance, validation of emotions, open collaboration etc.
- ❖ The activity of *consulting and informing* children / students, parents and teachers, which involves:

- communicating / informing on the impact of anxiety on emotional, physical, intellectual, relational, spiritual health and the role of personal control, in terms of well-being, on reducing the risk of contamination;
- strengthening the effective partnership with the family, in order to develop parenting skills, building positive and constructive relationships between parents and children, parents and teachers etc.

At the same time, through the present study, the theoretical analysis is interconnecting with practical segments that are conditioning the necessary effect in the process of developing the relational dimension of the mentioned students (Adet, N., Pomohaci, C., 2016, pp. 99-110) in COVID-19 pandemic conditions.

Research Methodology:

The scientific study was conducted between September and November 2020. The psychological research tools applied – questionnaire-based survey in Google Drive format, which was online managed and had focused on ensuring the psychological activity within the framework of the general education system, on the development of students' relational sphere, in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. The survey has been jointly developed by the Institute of Educational Sciences (IES), Moldova State University (MSU) and the Republican Center for Psycho-pedagogical Assistance (RCPA). The experiment included 67 psychologists from all over the country, 37 teachers from rural and urban areas and a group of 24 students from middle and high schools in Chisinau.

Obtained Results:

School psychologists

58.2% of psychologists consider that *the most common problems of psychosocial adaptation (school adaptation) they face during the epidemic* are: -fear, agitation, anxiety. More than half of the respondents – 44.7% have registered a deficit of socialization and communication; lack of direct interaction with students was mentioned by 43.2%, isolation – 31.3%, stress during pandemic was recorded by 30.0% of respondents.

If we talk about *the multitude of relationship problems that teachers, students, parents address with to the school psychologist* (measured on a hierarchical scale from 1 to 5), we can reflect them as follows:

- *problems of relationship of the student with his/her colleagues*: the majority of respondents – 34.3% and 32.8%, are facing exactly this type of problems. The average position is held by 20.9% psychologists, followed by 9.0% of respondents. 3.0% of participants are placed on the minimum position;
- *problems of relationship of the student with the teacher*: the highest rate is registered by 32.8% and 26.9% of psychologists, followed by the average rate -10.4% and the minimum rate of 7.5%;
- *problems of relationship of the student with parents*: in such situations, the maximum position is registered in equal rates by 28.4% of respondents, the average position – 16.4% and 14.9%. 11.9% of individuals place themselves on a lower position;
- *problems of relationship with representatives of the opposite sex*: about half of the participants – 31.3% and 20.9% face such problems, average percentage values are observed at 11.9% followed by 4.5% psychologists.

Other 30% of participants are making reference to a number of different issues, such as: disturbances caused by COVID-19, which most severely affect children/students with disabilities, self-awareness, inappropriate behavior in a classroom, age-related problems, marginalization, learning problems, conflict of values, parental migration, dependence on gadgets, mobile phones, internet, computer, problems in choosing the profession. 34.3% of psychologists noticed that they did not face any other problems.

From the answers provided by psychologists regarding *difficulties they are encountering in the process of carrying out the prevention activity* we can find out that: 46.3% consider as such the lack of programs in organizing and carrying out the activity of the psychologist in the educational system, 38.8% - the lack of communication with parents during this period, 32.8% of respondents indicate as a problem the insufficiency of information resources, 29.9% - the large number of beneficiaries, while 25.4% of people mention the limited access to beneficiaries, 10.4% of people face the resistance of students, 19.4% psychologists consider insufficient professional experience as a problem, while 4.4% - the lack of cooperation with teachers etc.

In the context of the question with reference to *significant emotional difficulties that represent the psycho-relational field, which students are addressing to the psychologist with during the pandemic*: 51.0% of people consider as the most common issue: anxiety, frustration, fear, stress, shyness, aggression; inefficient communication or lack of it and conflictual family relationships: parents, brother (sister), isolation – 26.5%. The fewest number of psychologists accentuated deviant behavior – 3.0%, failures in love – 3.0%, psychosomatic problems (bulimia, anorexia) – 1.5%, suicide – 1.5%.

In order to prevent *relational problems faced by students*, the interviewed psychologists use more frequently: prevention activities through information, discussions, communication – 34.3%; development activities with training elements – 28.4%; psychological activities, which include several forms in common – 17.9% of respondents; individual and group psychological counseling – 16.4%; psychological, interactive, role-playing games, case studies, exercise, art therapy have been registered by 14.9%; methods of psychodiagnosis and evaluation – 9.0% of participants.

The suggestions that psychologists come up with to ensure an effective psychological activity in the general / special education system in pandemic crisis conditions are: the existence of the psychologist unit in each educational institution, the collaboration between psychologists and SAP, technical equipment and materials necessary for the activity, separate areas and ergonomic facilities etc.

The answers offered by **teachers** are of an equal importance, starting with the mentioning of contemporary psychosocial problems, which are influencing the psychological activity in the general / special education system, with reference to the development of the relational sphere of the student.

Consequently, the highest percentage of respondents – 72.9% emphasize isolation and lack of communication in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, followed by emotional problems (depression, fear, shyness) – 29.7%, low motivation – 27.0%, attention deficit in the family, school – 16.2%, parental migration – 10.8%, inferiority complex – 10.8%. Other issues: criticism of those around, underestimation of the student's abilities by some teachers, gender relationships, specific incompatibility – 13.5% of participants.

Subsequently to *the psycho-pedagogical evaluation of students with relational disorders*, according to the vision of teachers, the following types of problems have been identified: *school*

adaptation – young students rank first with a ratio of 64.8%, preadolescents – 10.8%, children with SEN – 5.4%, adolescents – 2.7%.

Low motivation during the crisis period has been registered at adolescents – 24.3%, preadolescents – 21.6%, followed by young schoolchildren and those with SEN, in equal proportion of 18.9%. *Overload of activities*: high prevalence has been found at young schoolchildren – 40.5%, preadolescents – 24.3%, adolescents – 13.5%, students with SEN – 5.4%. *Shyness* – young schoolchildren – 43.2%, students with SEN – 18.9%, anxiety – students with SEN constitute – 27.0%, followed by preadolescents with 24.3%, young schoolchildren – 21.6%, adolescents – 10.8%. On subjects of fear and aggression, young schoolchildren register 37.8% and 16.2%, students with SEN – 21.6% and 10.8%, preadolescents – 18.9% and 27.0%.

If we refer to verbal, physical and psychological violence, the results are the following: adolescents – 37.8% and 48.6%, followed by preadolescents with 21.6% and 35.1%, young schoolchildren – 10.8% and 16.2%. Problems in relationship with peers and representatives of the opposite sex constitute: at adolescents – 29.7% and 51.3%, preadolescents – 18.9% and 27.0%, young students – 13.5 and 21.6%.

Regarding the relationship with parents and teachers, the respondents have indicated the following answers: adolescents – 43.2% and 32.4%, preadolescents – 29.7% and 21.6%, young schoolchildren – 21.6% and 13.5%, students with SEN – 8.1% and 2.7%.

The most common obstacles faced by teachers to provide psychological assistance to students with relationship problems in the context of the pandemic crisis are: lack of psychologist in school – 18.9%, irresponsibility of parents, their neglect of their own children's education – 21.6%, a large number of students in the classroom – 8.1%, do not want to go in tact with the teacher – 13.5%.

In order to make the correlation with the psychologist more efficient concerning students with relational disorders, the teachers participant in the survey highlighted the following opinions: parental involvement - 27.0%, teamwork – 24.3%, student confidence – 21.6%, teaching materials – 16.2%, psychologists unit in school - 10.8%, more consultations from the psychologist – 8.1%, this is the job of the psychologist, consider – 8.1% respondents.

And finally, the answers to the question „*What is the degree of cooperation between parent/student/teacher/psychologist in solving the problems of students with relational difficulties in the general/special education institution during COVID-19 pandemic?*” indicate the following: *with parents*: medium – 40.5%, satisfactory – 21.6%, high – 18.9%, lack of cooperation – 2.7%; *with students*: medium – 32.4, satisfactory – 29.7%, high – 16.2%, lack of cooperation – 5.4%; *with teachers*: high – 43.2%, medium – 29.7%, satisfactory – 8.1%, lack of cooperation – 2.7%; *with psychologists*: medium – 37.8%, high – 24.3%, satisfactory – 10.8%, lack of cooperation – 10.8%.

As there is no psychologist unit in every educational institution, the problems of children / students with disabilities remain the same. In order to overcome the difficulties and solve the hard cases, the psycho-pedagogical assistance is provided in coordination and under the supervision of teachers.

Regarding the factors that limit the teacher's relationship with children with disabilities and their parents, most of the interviewed subjects, about 90.0% (teachers), mention: lack of seriousness in the attitude of parents on the child's problems, non-compliance with the recommendations proposed by the specialist during the pandemic, lack of time, interest,

information, indifference, communication from the part of parents, the material situation, migration of parents.

Further, we will present the authentic results obtained in the course of the study from **the group of students**. We will make reference to *psychosocial difficulties that negatively influence the student's relationship in various activities in conditions caused by COVID-19 pandemic*. The most frequent answers that were indicated: lack of communication between parents-children – 36.8%, irresponsibility – 36.8%, social indifference – 31.6%, followed by parental migration and poverty that include the same percentage values – 15.8% of students, and 5.3% consider betrayal as a problem that makes it difficult to ensure a good relationship.

Regarding the problems faced by students in the process of distance learning, among the highest there were mentioned the following issues: low motivation – 31.6%, dependence on others – 31.65, verbal and physical violence in relationship with parents – 21.1%, stress and shyness – 21.1%, followed by visions with a lower degree of approach – anxiety and fear – 15.8%, lack of will – 12.5%, uninteresting tasks – 10.5% of students.

It is important to mention that the group of students that were interviewed are aware of the fact that they can rely on confidential support from the psychologist, regardless of the complexity of problems they have to face.

Being asked: „*How often do you go to the school psychologist?*”, the answers were: 46.1% - if necessary, 23.1% - often, 15.4% - very often, 15.45 – never (2,3,4).

The fact that students show an increased maturity is a pleasant one. They have their own position that manifests itself in a better interaction with colleagues, as well as with adults.

Another relevant study that was conducted by CRAP (September-November, 2020) on providing psychological assistance to students in the risk group in general education institutions at the national level, during the pandemic crisis, shows the following results: about 93.0% of psychologists provided individual psychological counseling to children / students online; 78.0% provided psychological counseling to teachers and management in the institution; 80.0% provided psychological counseling to parents; 36.0% provided psychological counseling as volunteers at the district / municipality level; 78.0% carried out information and awareness activities for teachers; 38.0% organized activities with training elements for students; 50.0% observed the behaviors of children / students on various online platforms (Skype, Messenger, ZOOM application, Google Meet); 64.0% monitored the children's situation through systematic discussions with class leaders; 61.0% had regular discussions with students in the class groups (Facebook, Viber groups) (Rusnac, V., Lungu, T., 2020, pp. 191-197).

In the Republic of Moldova, 1.6% of all children have some form of disability. This means almost 11,000 minors in need of professional rehabilitation, psychological recovery and psychosocial inclusion services among their peers. COVID-19 has had a significant impact on the education system from the country in general and on the advocacy of the inclusive education in particular.

Adapting distance learning has not been an easy task for either students with disabilities or teachers. However, it was extremely difficult for children / students in difficulty, because they need more attention and increased involvement of teachers through special methods.

At the same time, children / students with disabilities, educated by way of distance learning, have the right to benefit from:

- modifying / adapting the curriculum of one, several or all school subjects;
- allocating a longer time to complete learning tasks;

- modifying / adapting the content and the way of solving the learning tasks;
- modifying / adapting technologies for psychological evaluation of school performance;
- providing written explanatory notes, communication interpreters, transcription, listening devices or any devices that facilitate the achievement of academic results.

When teachers teach regular school subjects, they not only apply special methods, but also adapt the curriculum to the specific needs of children. For example, some children, in addition to hearing impairments, have other disabilities, and teachers need to modify and adapt texts and tasks individually for each student. Here, too, the family was the biggest support during the time when we had to transfer all our activities to online. Students could not perform the tasks on their own, especially children in primary schools. So, it was a common effort of all: teachers, psychologists, students and parents.

In this sense, some explanatory videos were made for children and parents with concrete tasks to help them during online classes. Parents worked on those tasks with their children and sent videos to be evaluated by teachers.

At the same time, MECR distributed educational packages for children/students with disabilities and for those who do not have access to online information technologies and materials available free of charge for distance learning and positive parental education during the pandemic and recovery period.

MECR had a unique initiative by proposing the launching of creative learning platforms for students, at different educational levels: primary, secondary and high school, but also for early education. They were invited to select their favorite activities and to research, to organize virtual trips, to discover the personalities of the Republic of Moldova from various psychosocial and professional fields, to draw, to sing, to dance, to do sports, to fulfill their curiosities and others.

Psychological aspects of exit from isolation in the context of the pandemic

Although the quarantine has a major and beneficial impact as a social protection strategy, it is associated with experienced psychological difficulties. Most studies, after a period of isolation, report negative psychological consequences – effects, including symptoms of post-traumatic stress, confusion and irritability both at adults and children. Stress factors include prolonged quarantine, fear of infection, frustration, boredom, inadequate supplies, inadequate information, financial loss and stigma.

A study comparing parents and children / students who were quarantined with those who did not apply this measure shows that post-traumatic stress was four times higher at children in quarantine than in case of those who were not. *Greg Gwiasda*, vice president of the Ipsos Center for Behavioral Science in the US, mentions that isolation is the reason why people are longing for psycho-social interaction, and the fact that they do not benefit from it in time causes distrust of their own strength, pessimism, etc.

Further, we present the visions of the psychotherapist *Bruno Vibert*, who claims that getting out of isolation will be: the source of two types of anxiety: on one hand, the fear of contamination, and the on the other hand, the fear of having to return to an uncertain world, with “blurred contours”, a phenomenon of discomfort because the behaviors we are not used to will have to become systematic ones, such as wearing a mask, etc.; if a child goes to school without interacting with his classmates, at some point, he will not want to go. It is possible that in the long run we will face situations of school rejections.

However, the action plan for overcoming the crisis aims to restore the psychological balance and proper functioning of the individual. It must be realistic, concrete and flexible. Flexibility,

being one of the important features to survive is also a psychological approach regarding the possibility of evolution of the human personality (Furdui, E., 2020, p. 2).

In this regard, between April and July 2020, the Psychological Assistance Program for students: „*I choose to feel good*”, „*We learn at home in emotional security*”, took place in the Republic of Moldova. It was launched by the Ministry of Education, Culture and Research in collaboration with UN Population Fund (UNFPA). The sessions were organized by the director of the SINESIS Psychological Center, *Daniela Terzi-Barbăroșie*, psychologist, family and couple psychotherapist, and the president of the public association the Institute for Family and Social Initiatives *Sergiu Toma*, doctor, family psychotherapist.

The program was developed with the view of supporting students with disabilities to provide them with quality psychological counseling, to protect their mental and emotional health, as well as to help them overcome the COVID-19 crisis more easily.

The sessions were focused on organizing psychological assistance for children / students, parents and teachers during the suspension of the educational process, the priority topics being: how to fight stress, managing anxiety, fear and panic, etc. As parents are the ones who give their children the feeling of security and protection, it is they who can apply those useful actions, meant to help them overcome the most difficult and stressful situations. For them we propose some recommendations as follows:

- Learn to accept each day as it is.
- Adapt to the situation.
- Monitor your own behavior.
- Be calm and keep the situation under control.
- Talk to your children.
- Get inspired by your children and think carefully about how to balance between discussions and entertainment.
- Organize your children`s activity and rest time. Think about the day: when to study and when to play.
- Let your children experience their emotions, accept these feelings as normal and help them get over them more easily.

During the psychological sessions „*Learning at home in emotional security*” (2020), Dr. *Toma S.* emphasized that gradually, students` joy is replaced by emotions such as *confusion, fatigue, boredom*, maybe even *sadness* that they cannot see their colleagues, friends and they cannot take part in their favorite activities at school.

Here is what psychologist *Sergiu Toma* recommends for teachers:

- Keep a clear and predictable routine.
- While the motivation and will of children / students in home conditions may be lower than at school – focus on important, specific tasks.
- Match tasks to regular hours. Encourage children to complete homework during those hours that are usually dedicated to learning at school.
- Focus on interesting tasks that arouse children`s curiosity and motivate them to explore independently. Isolation is easier to endure when we remain curious and encouraged.
- Do not give too many tasks – dose and check regularly if the students are doing well at the proposed pace.

- In new learning conditions, students need to gradually adapt: the effort made matters more than the result that was obtained.
- Adapt specific tasks: encourage students to tell how they feel about the situation and the emotions they experience in the conditions of the pandemic with COVID-19, to use a daily diary, in which to express their inner states through drawing, poetry or any other form.
- It is known that music, dance, exercise, even online games are extremely important during this period, for all students, but especially for people with disabilities, because they can serve as effective methods to reduce emotions, anxiety, fear.
- Communicate with parents. Stay physically isolated, but socially connected. By sharing ideas, emotions, you contribute to the mental well-being of all those involved in the educational process (Toma, S., Terzi-Barbăroșie, D., etc. 2020)

Given the fact that coming out of isolation, will be a period full of fear, anxiety and worry, which can also affect psychological behavior, as health strategies to reduce the occurrence of adverse psychological reactions (panic, anger, distrust, etc.), we propose the following:

- Slow return to a normal life;
- A way to reduce close and / or frequent social interactions is social distancing;
- To have patience to find the right rhythm for each of us;
- To start from those work tasks that bring a state of well-being, the feeling of comfort and satisfaction for a new beginning;
- To cultivate our optimism and to dose our enthusiasm;
- To inform about the epidemic only from official sources, etc.

Findings

The level of stress induced by self-isolation/quarantine was felt differently by respondents: firstly, the anxiety related to the health of those close to them was mentioned (67%), then the states related to their own health (11.6%), followed by professional or school future and global political context. Regarding the expression of optimism, respondents admitted a low level (26%) or a very low one (45%), only 20% a moderate level and 9% a high level of confidence in solving the short-term epidemiological crisis situation. Most people stated that there were no changes in communication only that it was marked by the feeling of lack of privacy associated with direct physical communication.

It was also found that there are no differences in this regard between children, young people or adults, between men and women. We can all be affected by the consequences of isolation.

Conclusions

The pandemic has profoundly affected education. We hope that this material will contribute to increasing of resilience of the educational systems – systems that are to be more flexible, completely dedicated to EVERYONE (children / students, psychologists, teachers, parents, administration, etc. (Vrășmaș, T., 2004), will encourage the educational community to address major inequalities in access to quality inclusive education and significant learning differences between groups of children / students during and after the COVID-19 pandemic.

However, a basic prerequisite remains the strengthening of general education, which is: focusing on societal problems in the general / special education system caused by the pandemic,

to promote distance learning opportunities and strengthen the psychological development of the student, ensuring a relational climate of positive influence.

The issue of returning from self-isolation must be viewed in a complex way – from the medical, educational, psychological, professional and social standpoint. To achieve these goals, from the psychological point of view it would be good for all of us not to focus too much on what had happened but to keep our energy to act based on the situation as it is today, here and now.

References

- Adet, N., Pomohaci, C. (2016). Relationarea elevilor cu cerinte educationale speciale (CES) cu colegii lor din perspectiva educatiei incluzive. (*The relationships between students with special education needs and their school mates from the perspective of inclusive education*). Journal of Pedagogy LXIV, no.1, pp. 99-110, IES, București.
- Questionnaire for psychologists from general and special education institutions (2020). CRAP, MSE, IES, Chișinău, available at: crap.psihologlungu@gmail.com
- Questionnaire for teachers in general or special education institutions (2020). IES, Chișinău, available: emilia.furdui20@gmail.com
- Questionnaire for Students from General / Special Education Institutions (2020). IES, Chișinău, available at: emilia.furdui20@gmail.com
- Furdui, E. (2020). Psychological Aspects of Exit from Isolation in the Context of Pandemic. Univers Pedagogic Pro Newspaper, no.31 (726), p.2.
- Instruction on organizing the psychological assistance for children / students, parents and teachers during the suspension of the educational process. Order of MECR no. 380 din 26.03.2020.
- Education and the COVID-19 situation in the Republic of Moldova (2020). Operations Group for UN Education with reference to COVID-19 situation, Series of thematic documents.
- Psychological Effects of Quarantine During the Coronavirus Outbreak (2020). What Public Health Leaders Need to Know, www.CSTSonline.org
- Rusnac, V., Lungu, T. (2020). Psychological assistance for children from the risk group in general education institutions. In Materials from the International Scientific Conference: Education: Primary Factor in the Development of the Society. Chisinau: Printing House Print-Caro, pp. 191-197.
- Study “Evaluation of the Psychological Impact of the Self-isolation /Quarantine Regime During the COVID-19 Pandemic”. (2020) ... www.scumc.ro > studiul-evalu...
- Toma, S., Terzi-Barbăroșie, D., etc.. (2020). „I choose to feel better”. A new assistance program. mecc. gov.md > content > aleg-sa-masimt-bi...
- Vrăsmaș, T., (2004). School and education for everyone. Bucharest: Publishing House Miniped.