

Organization of volunteering for the prevention of using psychoactive

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Abstract. The problem of drug abuse and use of other psychoactive substances (PAS) in children, adolescents and young adults is extremely pressing both in Russia and abroad. The spread of drug addiction in Russia is a global threat to public health, state economy, law enforcement and national security. A number of addicts are tending upwards, while their average age is reduced. Both in foreign countries and in Russia, society starts to recognize and evaluate the resources of young people in social preventive work. In this paper, we describe the practical experience of students of Elabuga Institute affiliated at the Kazan Federal University (KFU), who served as volunteers of the "Volunteer" voluntary center (VC) in the city of Elabuga, preventing school children against the use of psychoactive substances.

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Introduction

By the beginning of the new millennium, there is not a state left on the planet, whose authorities are not bothered by aggravated drug problem. This disease, which grew into an epidemic, today can be recognized the threat to national security. UN sounds the alarm: the number of drug addicts in the world reached 210 million people. According to various sources, this number in Russia varies from 3 to 5 million people; this number includes only registered addicts. In Tatarstan, number of drug takers is more than 8 thousand people.

Spikard E. and B. Thompson believe that alcoholism directly or indirectly reduced the average life expectancy of Russian men to fifty-nine years (this is by twenty years less than in Western Europe). According to various estimates, there are from three to twenty million alcoholics in Russia. After all, alcoholic not only harms himself but causes suffering his family, friends, and colleagues. Children, raised in alcoholic families, get deep mental wounds. Alcoholism affects whole society [1].

Consistently high prevalence of drug addiction, smoking and alcohol abuse among young people, in spite of the continuing large-scale social preventive work in schools, universities and the mass media, is a separate problem to be studied. Longstanding studies of Ann W. Smith indicate that alcoholism affects several generations [2].

Main part

Successful and effective preventive maintenance is based on the involvement of target groups in preventive work (especially young people),

the prevention of PAS use in schools, and promoting a healthy lifestyle [3]. Developed programs are tested on the model sites, where they are used in practice during several years and show the effectiveness of prevention work.

Currently, there are a lot of drug prevention programs. Different countries develop various prevention methods. Thus, in Bulgaria, a web site was created to raise awareness of young people about drugs, drug addiction and drug abuse prevention in an unconventional way. In Greece, they used devotion of youth to dancing and music and dispelled stereotype that dance and music have always evoke associations with drug use. In Poland, young people organized special kiosks in places of youth recreation. They can get there not only the anti-drug information materials, but also to talk with volunteers about exciting problems without wasting time searching for help. The program "Danger zone" is on TV in Russia, where peers highlight youth issues related to drug and alcohol use in accessible and understandable manner.

The work on the implementation of preventive measures in European countries is carried out by professionals, social workers, educators in youth organizations, teachers in schools and kindergartens. No country offers the special education for professionals specializing in the prevention of drug addiction. Prevention of drug addiction is not an independent specialty in any country. As a rule, specialists get their profession only as a result of their practical activities. "Learning by doing" is the basic principle.

Family members of addict, who can subsequently become addicted to the use of PAS, most suffer from the drug habit. Bauman K.E. and V.A. Foshee consider in their work the problem on the effect of family centered programs on prevention of adolescent drug use [4].

However, the problem still remains. The number of drug addicts gradually increases. It turns out that not all the programs are effective. The programs focused on adolescent personality and addressed his own interests are the most effective.

The youth of our city could not remain aloof from the problems of the state importance. In 2003, psychologists of the Center for social psychological assistance to the population, named "Ariadne", affiliated at the Department of labor, employment and social protection of the Republic of Tatarstan, together with the students of Elabuga State Pedagogical Institute established a volunteer's community.

The first meeting of this community defined a list of social problems and priorities. The first task was to prevent young people against PAS use and promote healthy lifestyle. Another task was to help children in hardships, as well as to provide assistance to the disabled children. To implement these tasks, volunteers from among students of the Pedagogical Institute were specially trained. The main purpose of volunteering within the prevention area was to provide knowledge about the dangers of drug addiction, and to train to work with adolescents on prevention against harmful habits.

The preventive activities were based on the teenager-centered program "Step by step", launched by Professor A.M. Karpov, Doctor of medical sciences, Head of the Psychotherapy and addiction department of the Kazan State Medical Academy [5]. He proposed a model for prevention of drug addiction in the form of self-protection against drug abuse. Self-protection is based on self-love and a reasonable egoism. Peculiarity of this program is that it has been tested in pilot sites of the Ministry of Social Protection of the Republic of Tatarstan. The program aims at the formation of deliberate attitude in children when choosing positive behavior strategies, as appropriate to their own needs, as well as the expansion of available social adaptation techniques.

The program is based on the principles of personal approach, rational egoism, pragmatism, socialization, patriotism, collectivism, accessibility and attractiveness, and humanization of interpersonal relations. The work is aimed at developing in every child positive attitude towards himself as a potentially successful person, responsible attitude to

his own live, his own health and the health of people around him.

The success of this program can be explained by the fact that it focuses on the teenager's personality and is addressed to his personal interests. The work is aimed at developing a positive attitude in teenagers towards themselves, self-perception as potentially successful persons, responsibility to their own lives, and the ability to make free choices.

An idea of creating the project entitled "Coach training school" came up to train coaches for socially significant volunteering.

This project involved two stages. The first stage included training of volunteers in order to instruct them how to carry out studies on the program targeted on prevention of psychoactive substances use. The second methodological unit included lectures and discussions on the basic principles of group sessions with teenagers. Practical sessions were based on the Karpov's program "Step by step" for primary prevention against drug abuse. Master - classes were conducted on specific topics of the program.

The program "Coach training school" was based on sports, cultural events (team games, running, and aerobics), socio-dramatic plays, relaxation, concerted items, mini-performances, practical trainings on overcoming fear of public speaking, release of anxiety, and other activities that contributed to volunteers team building and further motivated them for socially minded activities, namely, prevention against use of PAS among pupils and students in Elabuga. Feedback has shown the effectiveness of selected methods and techniques. Announce pronouncing of School participants; Elena: "I started to take steps towards understanding myself"; Ruslan: "I am ready to hold classes on drug abuse prevention in the school of my younger brother"; Dima: "Coach training school is a unique project. I became more confident and willing to work with teenagers"; Denis: "It's great to present drug prevention in such a nonintrusive way"; Katya: "I got a lot of knowledge that could be acquired only in Coach training school".

In the classes, which were carried out by volunteers, students gained knowledge about the dangers of drugs, they learned to interact constructively with each other, develop appropriate behavioral strategies, shared their feelings and thoughts. It is very important that in the classes teenagers learned to argue, to develop adequate behavior strategies, interact constructively with people. This results in their self-confidence and increases their self-esteem. Teenagers become motivated and able to exercise their emotional,

intelligent, strong-willed, creative, and social resources.

The final class was devoted to discussion on the topic: "What necessary and useful I have brought into my life during the classes?" Results of the participants survey indicated that 97% of the participants learned a lot of new things; 85.7% noted that the classes were not boring, and sparked interest; 32% stated that they got a clear image of drug taker; 21% of the children learned to communicate in new ways; 92% of teenagers have expressed a desire to meet again and talk about life. Above responses confirm the relevance of the problem.

The activities towards prevention of psychoactive substances use are being carried out by student volunteers of Elabuga Institute for over 10 years. Students themselves become the target audience to which the preventive measures are directed.

During the time from 2012 to 2013 student volunteers of Elabuga Institute held on several drug prevention actions, such as "Sweet life", "Life against nicotine", "Make your choice", "Health march", "Choice is up to you", and others. Events were different, but the sound was the same: it is necessary to protect your health! Such actions and projects have helped not one dozen of people in their hardships.

Final part

To recover and save young generation we need to attract moral, intellectual, volitional people, having access to information resources. Lack of social movement against drug abuse is a consequence of the fact that most people have fragmentary knowledge concerning this issue. Their personal attitude is not clear enough. Results of opinion poll conducted among the residents of the Republic of Tatarstan showed that 92% of interviewed citizens are willing to eliminate addiction as a social phenomenon. Only 41.5% believe that they have the necessary knowledge to eliminate this problem. About 23% of citizens are ready to take a personal part in the elimination of drug addiction [3].

Most people want the problem to be eliminated, though without their personal participation. With such a passive attitude to drug addiction problem we cannot expect significant advances in the prevention of using PAS. It is necessary to expand the knowledge of the younger generation about the dangers related to use of drugs and promote healthy lifestyle [6].

Practical solution to the problem of drug abuse prevention is constrained because, on the one hand, a wide range of social institutions and social organizations are involved in preventive work, and on the other hand, the study of problems on primary

prevention of drug use among minors is conducted by numerous representatives of various ministries and departments, as well as public organizations, whose minimum participation is ineffective [7].

Prevention of drug use is the best way to fight against drug addiction. As world practice shows, not more than two or three percent of drug addicts can be cured of this disease.

Both in foreign countries and in Russia, society begins to recognize and evaluate resources of young people in the prevention work on a volunteer basis [8]. It is impossible to achieve serious progress without the active involvement of youth in the prevention work. Youth's practical experience, ambition, as well as desire to contribute to the problem deserve attention. Successful and effective preventive actions can be reached by involvement of target groups into preventive work, inclusion of preventive work and promotion of a healthy lifestyle into the school curricula.

Currently, prevention of drug addiction has defined goals, objectives, strategies and action plan and represents the system of scientific knowledge. Even with all things considered, there are still serious problems. Therefore professionals, working in the field of drug prevention in various countries are anxious about finding and developing new and more effective methods and techniques for preventive measures [9]. Such aspect, as involvement of the youth in the prevention work on a voluntary basis is one of the priority approaches. Youth is an active part of society and can bring positive and lasting benefits. Young people, as teachers, are able to convince their peers that drug prevention is extremely important, and they are able to assess, which techniques are the most effective. The work is carried out on peer-to-peer basis, i.e. young people are listening to young people. The whole work should be focused to the development and formation of skills that can help a person to learn the behavior patterns, which promote health, as well as to learn how to overcome stress, to live happily, enjoy and have fun without the use of drugs [10].

Conclusions

- Most people want the problem to be eliminated, though without their personal participation; thus it is necessary to motivate citizens for proactive approach.
- Prevention is the best method to fight against drug addiction. It is necessary to expand the knowledge of the younger generation about the dangers of PAS use and popularize healthy lifestyle.
- The whole work should be directed to the development and formation of skills that can help a person to learn the behaviors, which contribute

to health, as well as help to learn how to overcome stress and live happily enjoying life without the use of drugs.

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