

PREFACE

The first issue of “Vestnik of Saint Petersburg University. Psychology” is traditionally dedicated to the theme of the annual conference of the Faculty of Psychology at Saint Petersburg University “Ananyev Readings”. The conference which was held in October 2025 focused on issues of early intervention for children and their families, a topic the Department of Mental Health and Early Support for Children and Parents has been fruitfully and comprehensively researching for 25 years. The conference’s topics covered current issues in studying the early stages of child development in interaction and the formation of relationships with parents, their correlation with individual psychological and biological characteristics, and practical aspects of early assistance to children and their parents in the context of family, society, and culture.

The thematic part of the issue includes articles by faculty members of the Department of Mental Health and Early Support for Children and Parents, its graduates, postgraduate students, and undergraduates, providing an opportunity to overview of the department’s research. The relevance of their research is evident in the fact that this topic is included as a significant issue in the Federal Law of the Russian Federation.

The issue opens with the article “St. Petersburg University Department of Mental Health and Early Support for Children and Parents: Contribution to the field of child development in parent-child interactions and early intervention”, presented by the Department’s head, Dr. Sci. in Psychology, Professor R. J. Muhamedrahimov. It describes the research of Department’s staff members, who have made significant contributions to scientific understanding of child development in interaction with a close adult and the organization of early intervention. This article presents in detail significant projects related to the establishment of the first early intervention service in Russia; participation in longitudinal Russian-American projects studying the role of environmental changes on the development and mental health of children in orphanages and foster families; research into the psychological characteristics of women during pregnancy and after childbirth; and studies into the effectiveness of a scientifically based early intervention program. These projects served as the basis for developing a theoretical framework for early intervention for children and their families, proposing the prospect of an integrative model.

The article by E. V. Shabalina, I. A. Arintsina, A. Yu. Artamonova, and M. A. Kolesnikova, “Assessing mental health in infants and young children from at-risk families” is devoted to the most important issues of modern tools for the early diagnosis of mental health. The authors describe in detail the multi-axial Diagnostic Classification of Mental Health and Developmental Disorders in Children from Birth to Five Years (DK:0–5), noting its uniqueness, its emphasis on the interpersonal nature of early disorders, and the assessment of psychosocial risks for mental health and developmental disorders in children.

They also discuss the potential for its combined use with other assessment methods. This article will be useful for specialists developing support programs tailored to the needs of children at psychosocial and mixed risk and their families, as well as for a wide range of psychologists.

Current issues of mental health and development in children in their first years of life are considered in the article by N. V. Andrushchenko, E. Yu. Kryukov, and E. A. Vershina, "Mental development of the first-year premature infants with intraventricular cerebral hemorrhages". The prevalence and severity of this problem necessitate a comprehensive study. The article describes the results of a longitudinal study of infants born prematurely with varying degrees of intraventricular hemorrhage and its complications who received various types of neurosurgical treatment. The data obtained and their thorough analysis culminate in differentiated recommendations for evidence-based early intervention for this target group of children and their families.

Several articles in this issue focus on the mental health of mothers and families before a child's birth as a unique environment for the development of a child's mental health. The longitudinal study of women during pregnancy and after birth, presented in the article by M. E. Blokh, S. S. Savenysheva, and V. O. Anikina, "Dynamics of maternal attitude from pregnancy to infancy", revealed an overall increase in maternal attitudes. At the same time, the article discusses the complex nature of this dynamic, due to the presence of anxiety and possible internal conflict in the topic of motherhood among some women, manifested, in particular, in the discrepancy between the results of survey and projective techniques, which reveals the prospects for further study of this issue both in terms of content and methodology. The article "Emotional state, maternal attitude, and mother-fetus interaction during pregnancy in women with gestational diabetes mellitus" by R. A. Blokh, M. E. Blokh, and R. J. Muhamedrahimov, is devoted to the issue of the peculiarities of pregnancy experience in women with specific health problems. The study revealed specific qualitative differences in the mechanisms of emotional regulation and the ways women with gestational diabetes mellitus establish a bond with their child, likely serving a compensatory function in the face of physiological and psychological stress associated with the disease. The obtained data open up new perspectives in the research of this problem and practical issues of support for this group of pregnant women.

Another side on the impact of global negative environmental processes on mental health is explored in the article by V. O. Anikina, M. K. Novikova, M. E. Blokh, and S. S. Savenysheva, "Long-term impact of COVID-19 pandemic on mental health of women during pregnancy and postpartum, and their children development". Based on an analysis of international studies from 2021 to 2025, the authors demonstrate general trends in the deterioration of women's mental health during pregnancy and early motherhood, specific to different countries, their specificity depending on the wave of the pandemic, and associated risk factors.

A significant component of the problematic field presented in the issue is the study of the attitude of mothers and, in general, families, towards raising children with special needs and health limitations. M. J. Vasilyeva, A. I. Nigmatullina, E. S. Garbaruk, M. Yu. Boboshko, and R. J. Muhamedrahimov in the article "Factors affecting the emotional state of mothers raising children with hearing impairment" demonstrate that these impairments are associated with children's emotional, cognitive, and communicative developmental characteristics. These impairments are often accompanied by affective disorders, chronic

stress, and high rates of maternal anxiety and depression. The material collected by the authors on a whole complex of factors that have a positive effect on the emotional state of mothers, and the analysis they conducted, have undoubted theoretical and practical significance for the development of sound early intervention programs for children and families.

The article by A. S. Sharagina, V. A. Mironova, and O. I. Palmov “Needs and expectations of caregivers raising children with developmental disabilities in early intervention programs”, continues the theme of family. Drawing on a family-centered approach, according to which close adults, together with a specialist, participate in the planning and implementation of early intervention programs, the authors describe in detail the results of the study of forms and types of support needed and desired by adults enrolled in early intervention programs at state preschool educational institutions.

A current social issue is presented in the article by L. A. Aslamazova “Subjective perceptions of children with institutionalization experience about family relationships at the initial stage of substitute care”. The author obtained data that are very important for understanding the specifics of developing relationships in foster families. For example, they demonstrated that perceptions of anxiety, conflict, and hostility in the family (Kinetic Family Drawing, R. Burns and S. Kaufman) 2–4 weeks after placement are significantly higher in children in foster families compared to children from biological families. A differentiating role is also played by the factor of having limited health opportunities in a child. The findings will be useful to a wide range of professionals involved in working with foster families.

Particular theoretical and practical interest appeals the article by E. O. Pakhomova, A. D. Nasledov, L. O. Tkacheva, and S. A. Miroshnikov “Developmental changes of autism spectrum disorder symptoms among preschoolers (1–7 years)”. It presents the results of a comprehensive scientific study that makes a significant contribution to understanding and addressing pressing issues related to the timely recognition of autism traits in children, predicting their development and needs, and adapting rehabilitation strategies. The article provides a detailed description of autism markers, the results of a factor analysis of the data, and a comparative analysis of data across children’s ages and genders. The article has enormous potential for practical application.

The two final articles of the issue address the development and adaptation of psychological methodological tools. The first of them is the work of N. F. Mikhailova, E. A. Istomina, and A. S. Krasko “Adaptation and validation of the Illinois Bullying Scale (IBS)”. The authors highlight the social significance and severity of the problem of bullying in the modern world and the shortage of appropriate measurement instruments. The article presents the results of the adaptation and validation of the American Illinois Bullying Scale (IBS). Psychometric testing of the Russian-language version of the instrument demonstrated high performance, allowing it to be used to assess levels of victimization and verbal and physical aggression among children and adolescents. The authors present research findings confirming that the adapted instrument can be used to assess the consequences of bullying in adults.

The method presented by Yu. V. Misiyuk and I. V. Tikhonova in the next publication of the issue, “Adaptation of the Parental Stress Scale (PSS): A study on Russian mothers with children of different ages” is no less in demand. Parental stress, as the authors rightly point out, is a very common phenomenon. One of the methods used in foreign psychol-

ogy to diagnose the severity of this stress is the Parental Stress Scale. The published article describes the results of a reliability and validity tests of the Russian-language version of the methodology based on a survey of 572 mothers of a wide age range. The technique is of interest to psychologists working on a variety of family issues.

We are grateful to all authors — both those whose articles have already been published and those whose submitted articles are still awaiting publication — for choosing our journal.

We do everything we can to ensure that the quality of our journal meets the expectations of our authors and readers!

*Editor-in-Chief of “Vestnik of Saint Petersburg University. Psychology”
Svetlana Kostromina*