О проблеме взросления людей с аутизмом.
Вступительное слово тематического редактора

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Во вступительном слове тематического редактора раскрыты основные актуальные задачи, связанные с проблемой взросления детей с расстройствами аутистического спектра. Проводится краткий анализ содержания тематических публикаций, вошедших в текущий номер журнала. Представлена новая рубрика «Дистанционная поддержка людей с аутизмом», появившаяся в связи с изменениями жизненных условий, вызванными эпидемией COVID-19.

Ключевые слова: аутизм, взросление, дистанционное образование, сопровождение, COVID-19.


On the Growing up of Autistic Individuals.
Thematic Editor’s Note

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The Introduction word by the thematic editor of the issue reveals the main current tasks related to the challenges of growing up individuals with autism spectrum disorders. A brief analysis of the content of thematic publications included in the current issue of the journal is carried out. A new rubric “Remote support for people with autism” introduced in connection with changes in living conditions caused by the COVID-19 epidemic is presented.

Keywords: autism, growing up, remote education, support, COVID-19.


It is my honor to introduce this special issue of the Journal “Autism and Developmental Disorders” (Russia) focusing on supporting adults on the autism spectrum to lead fulfilling and productive lives; and making that the rule rather than the exception. Research into promoting and matching supports to needs of autistic adults is a fast-growing area with good reason. Children on the autism spectrum grow up to be adults on the autism spectrum. Many subscribe to the goal of a person outgrowing their autism and/or needs for accommodation. However, it is more realistic to reframe the concept towards growing into understanding one’s own characteristics and using needed supports to lead fruitful, rewarding, and authentic autistic lives (Gassner, 2020).
Examples of shifting the focus towards growing into autism can be found in A. Steinberg and A. Voskov’s «Work of Support Group for Adults with Asperger’s Syndrome in Russia» which provides powerful insight on successes and challenges of adults on the autism spectrum. The work of G. Itskovich «Therapeutic Strategies for Adults with ASD. Professional and Social Adaptation» examines the effect of employing DIR/Floortime, a developmental-relational approach, for improving social interaction, which deepens understanding of matching supports to needs for adults on the autism. Whether mental disorders are truly comorbid or secondary to autism remains unresolved. However, the insights from «The General Problems of Professional Orientation of Young People with Severe Mental Development Disorders and Intellectual Disabilities» by N. Karpova, provide important information for support autistic individuals for coping with mental challenges.

Successful navigation of transition to adulthood requires meaningful intervention and education in childhood. «Learning to Read Children with ASD» by N. Nikonva and Yu. Pavlova addresses how we can better teach foundational academics to children on the autism to promote success later in life. Whilst on the subject of education, we are at a point where it is becoming unusual for there not to be a child with autism or other disability included in the classroom. Teachers and psychologists need education on effective collaboration strategies for providing needed supports as described in «Effective Teacher-Neuropsychologist Interaction in an Inclusive Educational Environment. Diagnostic Stage» by M. Guilyaeva and colleagues.

In addition to good education as key to lifelong success, a fundamental catalyst is a solid family foundation. The Study of Marital Satisfaction in Autistic Families by A. Ghahjvarestani and colleagues provides important insights into the challenges a child with autism in the family can bring to the marital relationship. An analysis of family history and genetic markers is a promising area of research that may be key to understanding the biological foundations of autism. S. Tyushkevich and her colleagues in the work “On the Mechanisms of the Occurrence of Autism Spectrum Disorders: a Family Case Report” analyze the hereditary markers of autism in three siblings. We are already seeing the benefits and implementation of research in educational intervention, psychology, and family life in that unprecedented numbers of young adults on the autism spectrum are successfully getting into and studying at the university level.

Whilst on the subject of education, the COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in unprecedented changes in education from preschool to university. Whilst educators and others in allied field have cobbled together stopgap strategies for the last few months of the school year it is clear that online and distance education is here to stay in some form for the foreseeable future. In this regard, the Journal opens a new section “Remote support for people with ASD.” In the article “Potentials & Conditions of Remote Counselling of the Families of Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders” S. Pantsyry and E. Shvedovsky attempt to highlight the most significant factors affecting the success of the psychologist’s distance work. N. Gusева and O. Piskareva offer a range of activities aimed at developing cognitive functions in children with autism using distance technology. It will be good to see research devoted to how we can best support students on the autism spectrum during this unusual time of pandemic and what the implications are for education in the future.

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