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**PSYCHOLOGICAL TRAINING AS AN EFFECTIVE METHOD  
OF INCREASING YOUTH AWARENESS ON THE ISSUE OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE****DARYA TUKHTO, SVIATLANA ASTAPCHUK**  
**Polotsk State University, Belarus**

*The statistics related to domestic violence is arbitrary. It's all happening within the family, and if people do not go anywhere, these cases are not recorded. A serious problem in Belarus is the prevention of violence against children. It is important to form public opinion against the use of violent methods of raising children. Physical punishment is a lesson of violence to a child. Cruelty to children is not only harmful to the physical and mental health of the child or adolescent, but also has heavy social consequences.*

**Introduction.** In the last 20 years the United Nations has been assisting and insisting on adopting laws on domestic violence practically worldwide. A number of documents which our country has signed obliges that such legal acts existed. First of all, it is the Convention on liquidation of all forms of discrimination against women.

143 countries in the world adopted laws on prevention of domestic violence. Among them and the CIS countries are Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan. The result of adoption of the law was reducing for 40% number of crimes in the sphere of domestic violence [4].

The international commitments of Belarus on the prevention of domestic violence are reflected in numerous national legislative acts and normative documents. The law of Republic of Belarus No. 122-3 of 04.01.2014 "On the basic activities aimed at offences prevention" is the unique regulation which contains a package of measures of preventive nature, directed to the prevention of violence in a family. The Prevention Law includes some innovation that directly regulate the prevention of domestic violence.

Experts of different levels talk about the need of development in Belarus of the specialized Law on counteraction to domestic violence long ago. Regulations of the Criminal code of Republic of Belarus about administrative offenses are directed not to the prevention and to liquidation of consequences of the incident and begin to act after the fact of violence. The Belarusian state has no right to interfere with private life, in the prevention stage.

**Main part.** Interest of a research on students' awareness of domestic violence is that young people are future parents and distribution of information on ill treatment in a family and about causes of family abuse can promote reduction of the spread of the wrong models of education and number of cases of violence in general.

Domestic violence is often regarded as a pattern of behavior which involves violence or other abuse by one person against another in a domestic setting.

In our research we relied on the concept of domestic violence provided in the Law "On the basic activities aimed at offences prevention".

Domestic violence is the intentional actions of physical, psychological, sexual nature of a family member in relation to other family member violating his/her rights, freedom, legitimate interests and causing him/her physical and (or) mental sufferings [5].

As a rule, violence in a family has the following features:

- If physical abuse has already taken place, then frequency of its repetition and degree of cruelty will increase;
- Violence and offensive behavior alternate with promises to change and apologies brought by an offender;
- In attempt to suspend relations escalation of danger to the victim is observed;
- Domestic violence happens in any layers and categories of the population, despite of class, racial, cultural, religious, social and economic aspects [1].

A lot of contemporary theories try to reveal the causes provoking domestic violence. Generally all of them reflect professional beliefs of this or that researcher. The sociological model refers to influence of sociocultural factors (i.e. to the stereotype of the family relations acquired in the childhood and accepted in this social group), to the housing and material conditions generating a chronic psychological stress and post-traumatic frustration. From the psychiatric, medical point of view ill treatment and neglect of child is a consequence of pathological changes in mentality of parents, degradations, alcoholization. Social and psychological approach explains violence manifestation because of personal life experience of parents, their "injured" childhood [3].

Nothing is more damaging to the child than being in any kind of abusive relationship; it creates the situation unsuitable for life. Some parents believe possible "to break", "enhance" the child by means of an emotional deprivation, a psychological manipulation, humiliation in order to bring the child properly [2].

A history of family violence is one of the greatest predictors of juvenile delinquency. The rate of partner abuse was 100% higher for men who observed domestic violence in their childhood than for men who came from families without violence. Children and adolescents in families in which domestic violence has occurred are 6–15 times more likely to be abused than those who are not [2]. Negative consequences for those who were exposed to sexual abuse in their childhood could be: depression; inadequate sexual behavior and problems in sexual contacts; post-traumatic stressful frustration (periodically repeating nightmares, and also persuasive, not giving in to the control "flashes" of memoirs which can be caused, for example, by smells, sounds determined by events and so forth); the self-destructing behavior (abuse of alcohol or drugs, a mutilation, suicide attempts); condition of "supervigilance" or, on the contrary, imaginary helplessness before possible danger; inability to adjust and maintain close relations; violation of physical development; psychosomatic diseases: obesity or, on the contrary, the sharp loss of weight caused by lack of appetite; psychological diseases: tic, stutter, enuresis; decrease in a self-assessment; violation of intellectual development.

We created a program of trainings. The aim of the trainings was to increase awareness of the students on the issue of domestic violence.

For carrying out our research we chose students of the Polotsk State University, we divided them into two groups: experimental and control.

We took experimental and control groups to estimate efficiency of the trainings. 35 students participated in our research.

Before the trainings we conducted a survey in experimental and control groups, we used a questionnaire. In the questionnaire there were several options of the same question to save validity and reliability besides the questions in our questionnaire covered completely all the aspects of the issue.

The questionnaire contained questions of frequency and forms of punishment which parents applied towards the students in their childhood, there were also questions of those actions which the students thought to be "violence" in relation to the child, and about forms of upbringing which the students could select as "accepted" in case of parenting the children.

The trainings in the experimental group included games and tasks on different aspects of domestic violence: its concept, types, the reasons and consequences of violent acts concerning children.

The students from of the experimental and control group were offered to select those forms of upbringing which, in their opinion, were acceptable to use with their own future of children (See Figure).

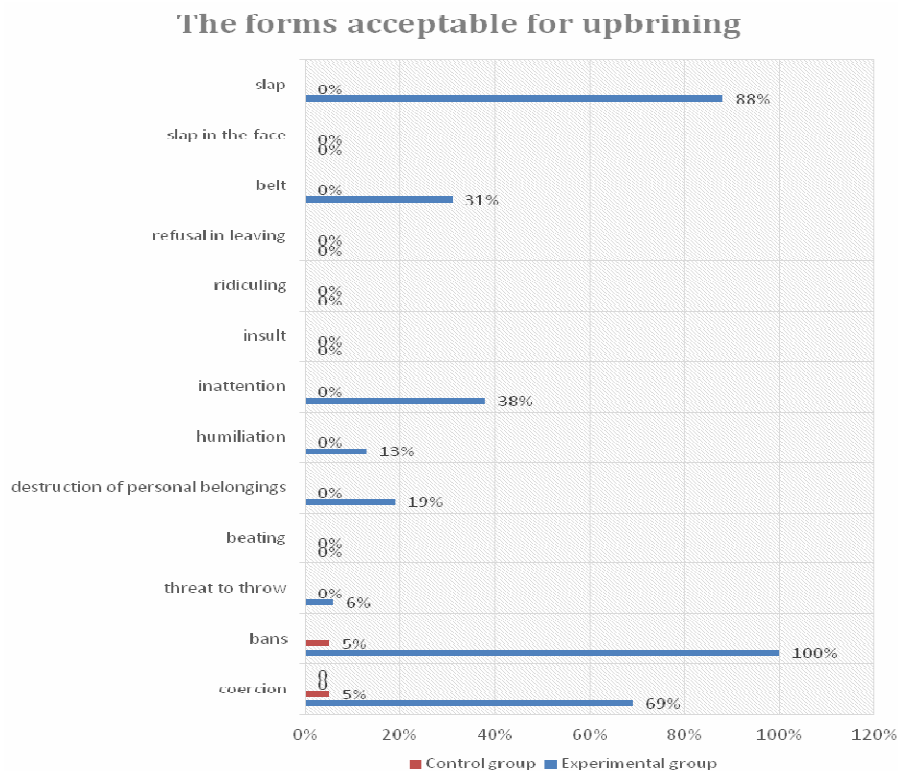


Fig. Comparison of results of experimental group after the trainings and repeated survey of the control group about acceptable forms of upbringing of their own children

Thus, the fact that most of the students of the experimental group after the trainings refused a possibility of using abusive educational acts in relation to the child was very encouraging. The students of the control group who did not take part in the trainings showed almost the same result.

**Conclusion.** Combating violence against children is complicated by a number of circumstances. One of them is the fact that the majority of abusive cases against children in a family for various reasons don't reach militia and social workers. Parents give up testimonies, besides, social responsibility of neighbors, relatives – all those who can see or hear abuse against the child, is very low. And children consider that any family is better than a shelter, and also they are afraid to lose love of unmerciful parents [1].

It should be acknowledged that gender inequality is the main root cause of domestic violence, especially against women and children.

Undoubtedly psychological trainings can contribute much in prevention of domestic violence by means of increasing awareness of young people; it can bring the essential help in the prevention of domestic violence against children.

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