

# **SOCIAL PRACTICES OF DEALING WITH MULTI-PROBLEMS FAMILIES IN RUSSIA**

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# I. SOCIAL WORK WITH FAMILIES HAVING DISABLED CHILDREN



# **I. SOCIAL WORK WITH FAMILIES HAVING DISABLED CHILDREN**

- **14 747 disabled children live in St. Petersburg as of July 2015**
- **The largest percent among such families is single-parent households**
- **15% of couples get divorced after a disabled child's birth**

# I. SOCIAL WORK WITH FAMILIES HAVING DISABLED CHILDREN

**There are three types of reaction for a disabled child's birth:**

- 1. Passive reaction: misunderstanding of the given problem, the feeling of parents' broken hopes, problem denial.
- 2. Hyperactive reaction: attempt to find the most famous doctors, latest and expensive medicines, with frequent changes in treatment .

# I. SOCIAL WORK WITH FAMILIES HAVING DISABLED CHILDREN

## **Three types of reaction for a disabled child's birth:**

- 3. Average well-minded reaction: consistent fulfillment of orders of doctors, psychologists and other specialists

Families of the third type of reaction have the most efficient cooperation with social workers.

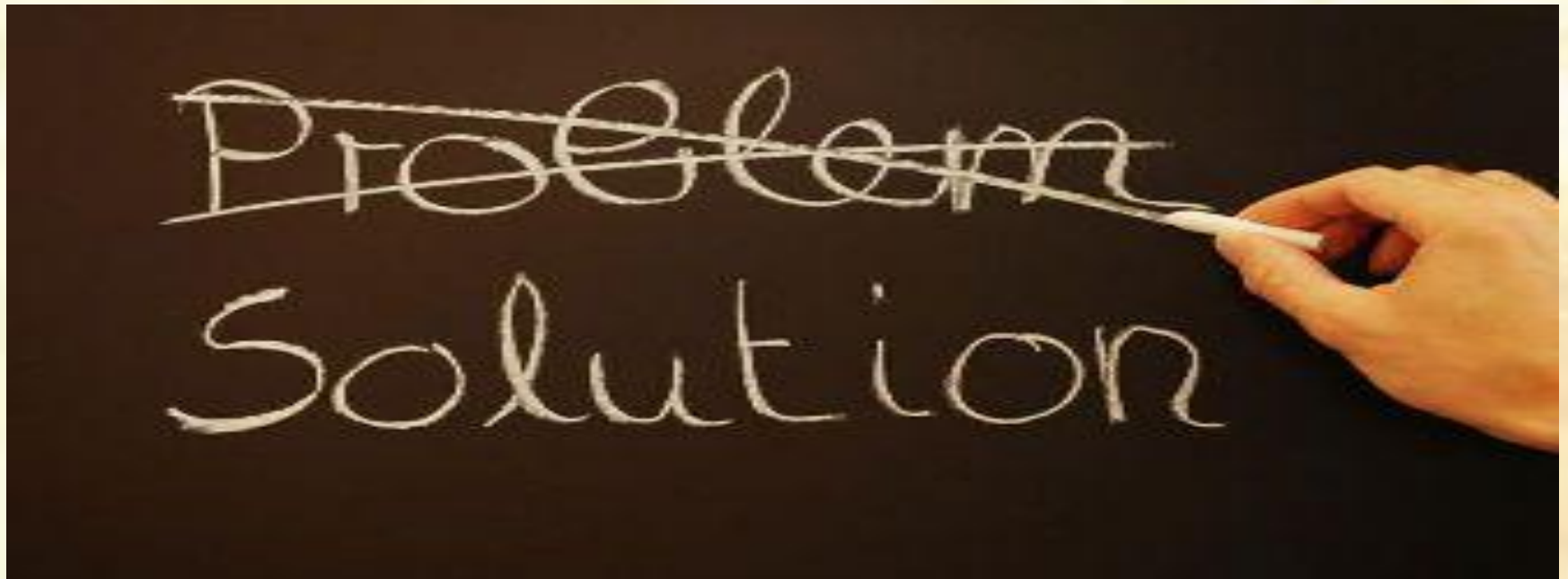
# I. SOCIAL WORK WITH FAMILIES HAVING DISABLED CHILDREN

## **Educational opportunities for disabled**

- Children with not very expressed abnormal physical and mental development study in special boarding schools
- Children with deeper psychosomatic disorders live in boarding schools constantly

A special medical and pedagogic commission select children for such schools

## II. PROBLEMS OF THE SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT SUPPORT OF FAMILIES WITH DISABLED CHILDREN



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- **Financial.** The law provides monthly care payments for disabled children up to 18 years old. The problem is small allowance (5500 RUB / approximately 75 €) and difficulty of its execution. But 50% discount for municipal housing is also provided. An indexation of monthly allowance is planned for 2016.
- **Work search.** One of the parents (guardian) of a disabled child has the right to work part-time. The problem is that it is hard to find such a work as companies are not interested to employ people with such requirements.



## II. PROBLEMS OF THE SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT SUPPORT OF FAMILIES WITH DISABLED CHILDREN

- **Provision with the required devices.**

Disabled people are provided with the necessary devices, typhlo-, surdo- and other tools required for social adaptation at the expense of the government . The problem is that a user can be provided with a tool only from the approved list pursuant to the legislation, and, as a rule, these are old-fashioned or inconvenient models. Now people have started resolving this problem via Internet, signing and submitting online petitions to the appropriate officials.

## II. PROBLEMS OF THE SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT SUPPORT OF FAMILIES WITH DISABLED CHILDREN

- **High cost of commercial childcare services.**

According to the statistics, just five families out of five hundred can hire a paid nurse for a child. Parents seldom use third person services because, firstly, it's hard to find a person who can be entrusted to take care of disabled children. Secondly, the market cost of disabled childcare services can exceed the amount earned by mothers of disabled children. The good news is that these problems are being solved now with the help of public organizations and charity foundations.

## II. PROBLEMS OF THE SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT SUPPORT OF FAMILIES WITH DISABLED CHILDREN

- **Lack of awareness of the population.** Parents of disabled children don't often know about kinds of social services available for them. According to the polling data just 16,7 % of parents answered that they knew the law about the disabled people social protection. The main part of pollees (83,3 %) admitted their unawareness.
- 49,2 % of pollees mentioned their friends and families as the main information source.

# III. INNOVATIVE METHODS OF THE SOCIAL WORK WITH MULTI-PROBLEM FAMILIES



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#### Social expedition:

Group of experts, organized on the basis of state social service institutions, with the involvement of NGO's. As a rule, this expedition includes lawyers, psychologists and social workers.



### III. INNOVATIVE METHODS OF THE SOCIAL WORK WITH MULTI-PROBLEM FAMILIES

#### **Social expedition:**

- **The task of this social service** is to visit hard-to-reach districts with an underdeveloped infrastructure of social service provision. They also have to visit families registered as “potentially risky”.
- **The purpose of the expedition** is to check the situation of children in registered families; to provide possible psychological, legal or other assistance; to render financial assistance to low-income families; to inform families about available social services, especially in suburbs.

# III. INNOVATIVE METHODS OF THE SOCIAL WORK WITH MULTI-PROBLEM FAMILIES

## Work with networks of social contacts

This method works with socially disadvantaged children and their families via building the network of a child's social surrounding.

### **The main goals :**

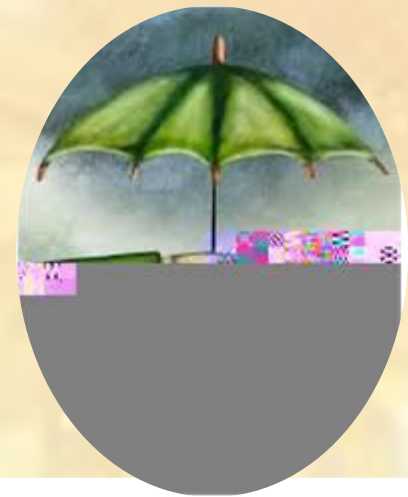
- reduction in the term of children's stay in government institutions, prevention of children from living out of their families;
- decrease of the level of social stress, anxiety or aggression in families in difficult life situation.
- Target group: children and teenagers in a difficult life situation.



### III. INNOVATIVE METHODS OF THE SOCIAL WORK WITH MULTI-PROBLEM FAMILIES

#### Work with a network of social contacts

- The main point of the method is that a social worker together with a child or a teenager makes a «network card» of the surrounding. Graphically it will be a set of dots joined with lines. The dots represent people – family, relatives, school, friends, and neighbors.
- The network card allows finding out the relations of a child or a teenager about people surrounding them. It allows the client finding the support resources that he/she already has in his/her social surrounding.





# III. INNOVATIVE METHODS OF THE SOCIAL WORK WITH MULTI-PROBLEM FAMILIES

## Work with a network of social contacts

Understanding the importance of each person in his/her surrounding allows an individual to build the correct scheme of relations with other people. The social worker can help an individual by asking the following questions:

- Which of your relatives is concerned with your life?
- Which of your family members has a positive influence on you?
- Which of your friends is ready to help you and listen to you if you are in a difficult situation?
- Do you consider it right, that the social service interferes in your life and what do you think about its actions? etc.

# IV. SOCIAL SUPPORT OF MULTI-PROBLEMS FAMILIES



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There is a significant support for multi-problems families from public non-commercial associations . Over 50 organizations cooperate with state social care authorities only in St. Petersburg.

### **Main directions of the public non-commercial associations:**

- arrangement of useful day-time occupation for youth from families in difficult life situation, including children with serious mental development disorders;
- social and labour adaptation of young people, vocational guidance, employment assistance, arrangement of part-time occupation of teenagers of 14-18 years old during non-study time;
- arrangement and holding of sport and creative festivals;
- conducting training, seminars and conferences for parents and specialists;
- creation of methodological, information and game video films, social commercials, educational materials;
- constant search for sponsors for providing material assistance for medical procedures, if needed, and expensive medicine to families with seriously ill children.

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR  
ATTENTION!**

