

SUPPORTING A CHILD WHO STUTTERS IN A KINDERGARTEN GROUP

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Introduction, reasearch methodology

Introduction: Supporting a stuttering child in a preschool group is an extremely important element of early speech therapy intervention. Effective support for the child's closest environment has great importance in the therapeutic activities undertaken. It is also an invaluable preventive measure. An important source of information for speech therapists are the attitudes, actions and opinions of preschool teachers. Both in the diagnostic process and while planning the therapy speech therapists relay on data about child's functioning in a peer group. The poster presents the results of a survey conducted among preschool education teachers in terms of knowledge about the possibilities of supporting a child who stutters in a peer group, as well as guidelines for use by teachers in an educational institution.

Research methodology: The research was conducted from February to May 2021 using an anonymous questionnaire sent via the Internet. Responses were collected from 80 teachers of preschool education.

Findings

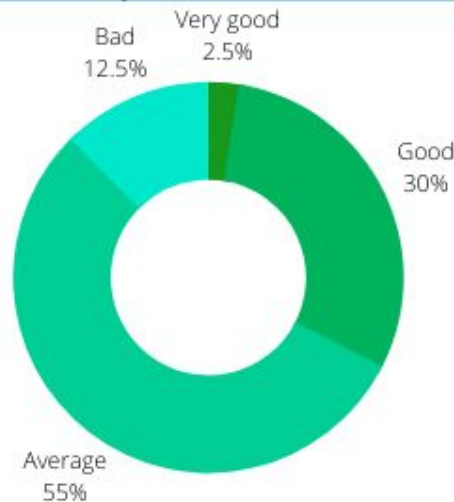
Findings:

80 respondents took part in the study, including 79 women and 1 man. Almost half of the respondents (49%) are teachers with over 20 years of teaching experience. 20% of them work in the profession for 11–20 years, 15% work in a kindergarten for 6–10 years, and 16% work as a pre-school education teacher for a maximum of 5 years. 66% of respondents worked with a child who stutters.

Teachers' feelings towards a child's stuttering in a kindergarten group:



Self-assessment of knowledge about stuttering by teachers:

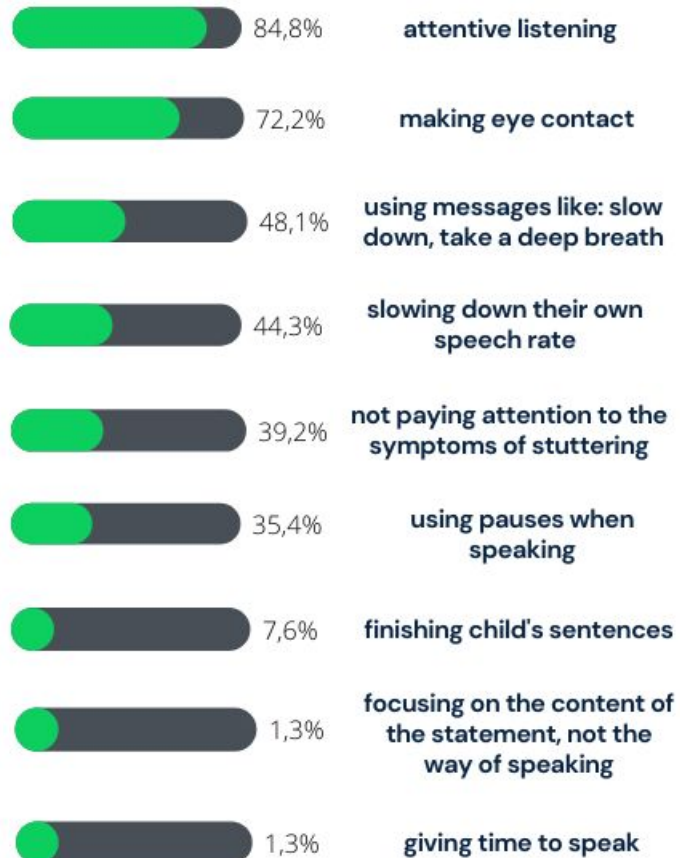


Methods and activities considered by teachers as most helpful in supporting a stuttering child in a kindergarten group:

1. Logorhythmics - indicated by 83% of respondents.
2. Batia Strauss's method - indicated by 52% of respondents.
3. The pedagogy of play - Klanza's method - indicated by 47% of respondents.
4. Dennison's method - indicated by 43% of respondents.
5. Education through movement - D. Dziamska's method - indicated by 39% of respondents.
6. Sherborne Developmental Movement - indicated by 37% of respondents.
7. The Good Start method - indicated by 34% of respondents.
8. Educational drama - indicated by 29% of respondents.
9. Coding games on the carpet - indicated by 9% of respondents.
10. Several people also indicated: relaxation, rhythmic speaking, the "Echo" method, the shadow method, the Modified Program of Psychophysical Therapy of Stutterers by M. Chęciek, the Cracow Method, motor and manual exercises.

Findings

Recommendations considered by teachers as helpful in contact with a child who stutters:



What actions can a teacher in a preschool group take to support a child who stutters? - selected responses

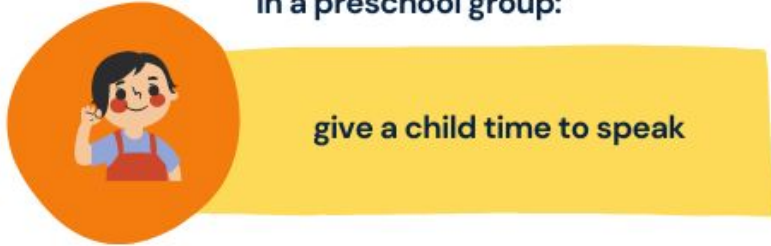


Teachers' needs to support a stuttering child:

- 1.SLT support - indicated by 95% of respondents.
- 2.Enhancing knowledge about stuttering - participation in workshops - indicated by 80% of respondents
- 3.Psychologist support - indicated by 63% of respondents.
- 4.Specialist teaching aids - indicated by 34% of respondents.
- 5.Retrofitting the kindergarten room with additional equipment - indicated by 33% of respondents.
- 6.Support of a pedagogue - indicated by 25% of respondents.

Tips for teachers

Tips for teachers to support a stuttering child in a preschool group:



Summary, conclusions

Summary:

1. Effective support of a stuttering child in a preschool group is mainly related to the knowledge and experience of teachers and employees of educational institutions, as well as their feelings and approach to the child's stuttering.
2. Most of the surveyed teachers assessed their knowledge of stuttering as good or average. More than half of the respondents consider the knowledge about stuttering acquired during pedagogical studies as low. The educators assess the information obtained on this subject during professional development much better.
3. Many teachers have had the opportunity to work with a child who stutters.
4. The main feelings of teachers while talking to a stuttering child are peace, followed by compassion, anxiety, embarrassment and impatience.
5. Teachers consider listening attentively and making eye contact as a recommendation that is helpful in working with a stuttering child. Still a large group (almost half of the respondents) assess the use of messages such as "slow down", "take a deep breath" as supportive as well.
6. Logorhythmics is most often proposed as a pedagogical method supporting a group with a child who stutters.
7. In teachers' opinion the best practice supporting a child who stutters in a kindergarten is to cooperate with a speech therapist, participate in thematic training and workshops, as well as cooperate with a psychologist.
8. Cooperation with parents and a speech therapist, active listening, giving the child time to speak, motivating and building child's self-esteem are main activities indicated as actions that teachers can use to the group to support a child who stutters. One respondent indicates that "using a hand movement to conduct a conversation" is a helpful technique.

Conclusions:

1. Many teachers are familiar with recommendations for preventive activities in a preschool group attended by a child who stutters.
2. It would be worth popularizing among teachers specific ways and methods of activities aimed at creating a communication - friendly environment in a kindergarten group, as well as building a stable self-esteem in young children.
3. There should be more proposals for professional development of teachers in the field of child's speech disfluency, which could positively influence teachers' feelings in contact with a child who stutters, reassure them with the correctness of their actions, increase self-confidence and reduce anxiety towards stuttering child.

References

References:

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