

ABSTRACT

The formation of social relationships accompanies us throughout our lives and are a source of satisfaction. While social interactions bring joy to healthy children, children diagnosed with an autism spectrum disorder bring such interactions to an unknown territory filled with uncertainty and distress.

The social domain is an interrelated system consisting of several areas. If a child does not understand one or more areas, she will not function correctly during human-to-human interactions. Areas that help a child acquire appropriate social skills include cognitive, perceptual, motor, and emotional abilities. Consequently, it is only appropriate to focus on such areas during social skills training to achieve the best possible outcomes.

The thesis deliberates on the social skills development of children with autism spectrum disorder (ASD). The work aims to characterize the methods and intervention options in social skills development, imitation, and fine motor skills and evaluate progress in respective areas.

The thesis is divided into four chapters. The first chapter outlines the history and terminology development of autism spectrum disorders. The second chapter focuses on social skills development, imitation, fine motor skills, and play. The third chapter describes two children's case studies and evaluates their current social skills development, imitation, and fine motor skills, using the educational-evaluation profile method. The fourth chapter spells out developmental options and methods in respective areas for each child. Both children's achieved developmental results are the chapter's integral part.

In education, individuals diagnosed with autism need particular pedagogical care. The care is based on three pillars - individual approach, structure, and visualization.

Caring for a child with an autism spectrum disorder requires patience, empathy, love, and the ability to compromise. Still, such care enriches and grants us a different world view.

Children with autism are candid, pure beings, but they are a bit lost. With our help and guide, we can help them to live more fulfilling and happier lives.

KEYWORDS

individual approach, fine motor skills, imitation, autism spectrum disorders, social development