

Social and educational design as a means of creating a multicultural educational environment for successful adaptation of migrant children

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The increasing number of migrants in Russia has led to certain ethnic tension, as well to adults' rejection of other culture, and thus to the development of negative attitudes towards other cultures among Russian youngsters. Migrant children are in need of the same social protection and education as other children. Moreover, it has become more essential to nurture tolerance towards other cultures and nationalities among Russian citizens.

Preschool and primary school children are most susceptible to developing a friendly and positive attitude towards people of other nationalities and citizens of other countries. In this regard, there is a need for a social project, implemented by the students of the Faculty of Pedagogy and Psychology and aimed at working with migrant children. The project shall provide educational support and promote social adaptation of children among their peers and adults. To solve this objective, the Center of Student Initiatives has developed a project called Golos Serdtsa (The Voice of the Heart), aimed at creating the conditions for successful inter-ethnic interaction of preschool and primary school children on long-term care in the District Children's Hospital.

To create a comfortable educational environment we have chosen the following organizational forms:

1. A series of informative and entertaining programs under the motto "Russia is home for all of us and our friends!". The series is based on folk games of different peoples and ethnicities living in Russia and other countries.

2. A series of theatrical games called Circle of Tales and based on folk and art tales of different nations and ethnicities.

3. A series of cognitive practice-oriented classes of the Small Academy of Arts aimed at mastering different hand work techniques and practicing decorative crafts.

4. Individual tutoring sessions with primary school children in the School of Joy devoted to classes of Russian and Mathematics.

This work enabled to increase the number of volunteer students involved in social projects and events organized by the Faculty of Pedagogy and Psychology. For example, in the academic year of 2011-2012 the faculty held 13 events with 58 volunteers, while during 2013-2014 we held 27 events involving 78 people, plus four 3rd-year students regularly participate in additional classes for children organized twice a week.

Training and educating children in a multicultural environment allows one to create the conditions for developing the personality of indigenous and migrant children in a diversified and balanced way.