

DEVELOPMENT OF EDUCATION  
National report of the Russian Federation  
«Inclusive education: the way of the  
future»

by

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## **I. The education system facing the challenges of the twenty-first century: an overview.**

The Russian law, in accordance with the development of basic international documents on education, provides for the principle of equal rights to education for all categories of citizens, both adults and children.

The guarantees of the right of citizens to education are enshrined in the Constitution of the Russian Federation, the Russian Federation Law "On education," federal laws "On Higher and Postgraduate Education," "On social protection of disabled persons in the Russian Federation," "On additional guarantees of the social support for orphan children and children deprived of parental care," "On basic guarantees of the rights of children in the Russian Federation," "On the fundamentals of prevention of child neglect and juvenile delinquency," and a number of other legislative acts.

The State guarantees its citizens accessible and free pre-school, primary comprehensive, basic general, secondary (full) comprehensive education and basic vocational education as well as, on a competitive basis, free secondary vocational, higher vocational and postgraduate education in public and municipal educational establishments within the federal government educational standards and federal government requirements if the citizen obtains the mentioned level of education for the first time.

At the same time, the educational opportunities are guaranteed regardless of gender, race, nationality, language, origin, place of residence, religion, beliefs, membership of public organizations (associations), age, health, social, property and official status, or criminal record.

One of the fundamental principles on which the state policy of Russia in the field of education is set in public education is adaptability of education system to the levels and particularities of development and training of students.

Particular attention is paid to ensuring the state guarantees of the right for education to minors. Education of children, ensuring of their stay and socially useful employment in the educational environment is seen as an important measure directed at prevention of neglect and delinquency.

In recent years, the state authorities of the Russian Federation have adopted a series of additional measures to realize the right of children to receive education.

The Law of the Russian Federation "On education," starting from 2007, has provided for the establishment of obligatoriness of all three levels of comprehensive education - from primary to secondary (full) comprehensive education. According to these changes, the requirement of obligatoriness of comprehensive education remains in force until the students reach the age of 18 years old (previously, 15 years old) unless they have received corresponding education earlier. In 2006, the age at which a juvenile could be banned from educational establishments was raised (from 14 to 15 years old). A requirement has been introduced regarding agreement on the issue of expulsion of students who have not received compulsory education with the participation of the Juvenile Committee and protection of their rights.

In accordance with the Law of the Russian Federation "On education," the Federal Law "On the fundamentals of prevention of child neglect and juvenile delinquency," the work directed at identification and record of the children who do not attend or are systematically absent, for unjustified reasons, from classes in educational establishment is conducted on a regular basis in order to ensure they receive compulsory education. Measures are implemented to ensure the right of education of different categories of children in difficult situations<sup>1</sup>.

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**1 In accordance with Article 1 of the Federal Law "On basic guarantees of the rights of the child in the Russian Federation" the category of children in difficult situations includes: children left without parental care; children with disabilities; children with health disabilities i.e. children who have deficiencies in physical and (or) the mental development; juvenile victims of armed and ethnic conflicts, environmental and technological disasters, natural disasters; children from families of refugees and internal migrants; children trapped in extreme conditions; juvenile victims of violence; children who serve sentences in imprisonment in educational colonies; children in special educational institutions; children living in poor families; children with behavioral deviations; children whose livelihood is objectively impaired as a result of circumstances and who cannot overcome these circumstances, individually or through family.**

The bodies of the executive power of the subjects of the Russian Federation that implement control in the area of education provide for development of differentiated network of educational establishments of various types for children with development, behavior, learning and social adaptation problems. In particular, at the beginning of the academic year 2007/2008, the following establishments operated in the regions:

1678 special (correctional) educational establishments for students and pupils with limited health (for children with deficiencies in physical and (or) mental development);

87 recreational sanatorium educational establishments for children in need of long-term care;

676 comprehensive education schools, boarding schools (established primarily for provision of education and social protection of children in need of help from the State, including children from big and poor families, children of single mothers, fathers, children under guardianship (care));

1688 educational establishments for orphans;

97 special educational establishments of closed and open types for children with deviant (socially dangerous) behavior (for children who commit crimes and antisocial acts, are in need of special circumstances, and require special education and pedagogical approach);

More than 700 educational establishments for children are in need of psychological, educational, medical and social help.

## **II. Inclusive Education: the way of the future.**

The vast majority of children who find themselves in difficult life situations can be, to a certain degree, integrated into the regular education environment and be trained on general conditions in comprehensive establishments, vocational colleges, and higher education establishments. However, a few children, because of the medical, social or socio-pedagogical reasons, need to receive education in a special environment. For these children, specialized educational establishments are set up.

In particular, children with various diseases and children who need long-term care are educated in health educational establishments based on the medical indicators.

The education of children who have committed crimes and are sentenced to imprisonment is arranged by place of residence, i.e. in the educational establishments in the educational colonies of the penitentiary system.

The existence of educational establishments for orphans and children deprived of parental care (hereinafter referred to as orphans) is owing to the need to ensure the upbringing, education, and social protection of children in this category, who could not have been arranged to be taken into a foster family in the short term. However, in recent years, owing to the measures taken for the development of foster family system, there is a tendency to reduce the number of establishments of this type and the number of the children who receive their education in them. In 2007, as compared with 2005, the number of orphanages and boarding schools for orphans decreased by 108 (from 1796 to 1688), the number of students, by 27 thousand people (from 130 thousand to 103 thousand). In parallel, transformation of these establishments from the establishments of permanent stay to foster family centers is ensured.

One of the categories of citizens, whose education, in Russia, has been traditionally focused on, is people with limited health.

The main task that would ensure the right for education of citizens with limited health is creation of the conditions for education for all persons in this category, which would take into account their psychophysical characteristics.

The primary focus of this activity is identification of the weaknesses in the physical or mental development and implementation of remedial work at the earliest possible stage. Timely delivery of the required psychological, medical, and educational help for preschoolers helps ensure correction of the major drawbacks in the development of the children by the time of early learning in primary educational establishments and thus prepare them for education in educational establishments.

Many regions (including Moscow, St. Petersburg, Krasnoyarsk area, Kaliningrad, Novosibirsk, Samara, Saratov, Tomsk oblast) develop and implement programs for early detection and correction of irregularities in the development of children. Methodological support to the bodies and establishments of education in this work has, for over 7 years, been provided by the Center of early diagnosis and special help to children identified with developmental disorders,

established for this purpose at the Institute of correction pedagogy of the Russian Academy of Education.

Currently in Russia, there is a differentiated network of specialized educational establishments involved in education of children with disabilities. It includes, notably, pre-school compensative educational establishments, specialized (correctional) educational establishments for students and pupils with limited health (hereinafter referred to as correctional facilities).

In 2007, correctional work with children with various violations of development was carried out in 1640 pre-school compensative educational establishments and in 8935 pre-school educational establishments that include compensative groups, which helped raise 457.6 thousand children.

At the beginning of academic year 2007/2008 in Russia, 1884 correctional establishments (schools and boarding schools including 216 correctional boarding schools for orphans with health disabilities) were operating, in which 214.7 thousand children with various disabilities of physical and (or) mental development (blind, low vision, deaf, hearing impaired children and children who recently became deaf, children with impaired functions of the musculoskeletal system, children with serious speech problems, children with mental retardation, mentally retarded and other children) were educated. Also, 177 correction foster homes for orphaned children with health disabilities were functioning.<sup>2</sup>

Moreover, in recent years, a trend is developing in Russia directed at the integration of children with disabilities into educational environments, along with regularly developing peers. The current law currently allows organization of education for children with disabilities in regular pre-school educational establishments, educational establishments, establishments of primary vocational education, and other educational establishments that are not included in the correction category (hereinafter referred to as educational establishments of general type).

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<sup>2</sup> Orphanages provide only maintenance and upbringing of children, while teaching of inmates of rehabilitative children's homes is carried out in correctional schools (boarding schools) or remedial classes at schools of comprehensive type.

There are various models of integration. The first one, which is more common in Russia, involves education of children with disabilities in special (remedial) classes at schools of comprehensive type. At the beginning of academic year 2007/2008, such classes enrolled 161.9 thousand children including 27.9 thousand mentally retarded children, 122.5 thousand children with mental retardation, and 10.2 thousand children with physical disabilities.

Education in correctional facilities and classes is conducted based on 15 educational programs developed on the basis of fundamental educational programs, which take into account psychophysical characteristics and capabilities of such students. The graduates of correctional establishments receive a state-approved document regarding the appropriate level of education obtained or a state-approved certificate that provide them with the opportunity to continue their education in the establishments of higher education.

Another option of integrated, or inclusive, education for children with disabilities is education in a class with children who have no development deficiencies. This experience is also available in Russia, particularly in some regions (Arkhangelsk, Vladimir, Leningrad, Moscow, Novgorod, Nizhny Novgorod, Samara, Sverdlovsk oblasts, Moscow, St. Petersburg, and others) experimental sites have been set up in order to develop a model of integrated education.

The forms and degree of educational integration of children with limited health may vary depending on the level of intensity of their mental and (or) physical development deficiencies.

For example, the children whose level of psychological and physical development is generally consistent with the age norm may be permanently trained on the regular educational program in a class with peers who have no development deficiencies, if the necessary technical means of instruction are available. At the same time, the number of children with disabilities enrolled in regular classes, as a rule, should not exceed 3-4 students. In the course of organization of education of children in this category in a regular classroom, it is advisable to use the opportunities for learning in due course on an individual curriculum guaranteed by the Article 50 of the Law of the Russian Federation "On education," along with the application of modern educational technologies

that provide flexibility of educational process and successful mastering of educational programs by the students with limited health.

For the children whose level allows mastering of the course material in the same circumstances as normally developing learners, it may become more preferable to provide education in special (remedial) class of the educational establishments of common type.

It is also recommended to ensure the participation of all children with disabilities, regardless of the degree of development deficiencies, together with regularly developing children in conduction of educational, cultural, entertainment, recreation and other leisure activities.

The development of an integrated (inclusive) education is regarded as one of the most important and promising areas for improving education of children with disabilities in Russia. Organization of teaching children with disabilities in educational establishments of common type at the residence location of the child and his parents (legal representatives) (hereinafter referred to as parents) helps to avoid placing children for a long time into residential establishments, to create the conditions for their accommodation and education in the family, to ensure their constant communication with regularly developing peers, which contributes effectively to solution of the problems of their social adaptation and integration into society.

In connection with this fact, the state policy of Russia in this sphere is aimed at consistent development of integrated forms of education of children with disabilities that suggest establishment of adaptive barrier-free environment in the educational establishments of common type which helps ensure full integration of these children into educational establishments (creation of such conditions is provided in the Article 15 of the Federal Law "On social protection of disabled persons in the Russian Federation"). A necessary condition of realization of this trend is conformance to a number of priority requirements, including:

availability of material and technical conditions to enable children with development efficiencies with an easy access into buildings and premises of educational establishments and with organization of their staying and studying at the institution;

availability of educational programs and curricula adapted to the psychophysical characteristics and capabilities of students with limited health;

integrated psychological and educational support of children with disabilities throughout the period of teaching, hence introduction in the personnel list of the educational establishments of common types of teaching staff of corresponding profile (teaching speech pathologists, teaching speech therapists, speech therapists, teaching psychologists, social pedagogues and others);

provision of special training for the teaching staff of educational establishments in the field of features of psychophysical development of children with disabilities, techniques and technology of organization of educational process for such children;

conduction of public awareness programs directed at the issues of education and integration of children with disabilities with all parties of the educational process: students (both those who have, and those who don't have, deficiencies of development), their parents, teaching staff.

At the same time, this implies preservation and improvement of the existing network of correctional establishments, which may also serve as teaching centers and provide guidance to teachers of educational establishments of comprehensive type as well as provide psychological and educational help to students and their parents.

This approach fully meets the basic principles of the right of persons with disabilities for education that are contained in international instruments in this area.<sup>3</sup>

In accordance with the priorities of public policy, this sphere provides improvement of regulatory frameworks that govern education of children with disabilities. A very eloquent example here is the new revision of the Typical Provisions on pre-school educational establishments, which was ratified by the Government of the Russian Federation in September 2008.

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<sup>3</sup> In particular, Standard Rules on Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities (adopted by the UN General Assembly on December 20, 1993, Resolution 48/96), Action Plan of the Council of Europe to promote the rights and full participation of people with disabilities in society: improving the quality of life for people with disabilities in Europe, 2006-2015), Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (signed on behalf of the Russian Federation on September 24, 2008).

According to the aforementioned Typical Provisions, the basic structural unit of pre-school educational establishments is a group of preschool children. The groups may have a different focus: general development, compensative (for children with disabilities, including those children with hearing impairment (deaf, hearing impaired etc.), visually impaired children (blind, low vision etc.), orally impaired children, children with abnormalities of the musculoskeletal system, children with mental retardation (mild, moderate, severe degrees), autistic children and other children including children with complex defect as a combination of two or more deficiencies in physical and (or) mental development, and health-promoting (for children with various illnesses that require a set of special recreational activities, including children with tuberculosis intoxication, children who often become sick and others). At the same time, it is possible to organize combined focus groups that will teach both disabled pre-school children and children who do not have limited health. Various variants of filling combined groups have been identified depending on age and psychophysical characteristics of the students.

Particular attention is paid to the possibility of additional staffing of pre-school educational establishments that provide education, training and development for children with disabilities, with specialists in the field of correction and rehabilitation of such children.

In doing so, variety conditions for the realization of the right for pre-school education to all categories of children are set in legislation taking into account the state of their health and particularities of their development. The principal point here is that the mentioned rules are based on real practical experience in the field.

In Russia, particular attention is paid to development of the system of education and upbringing of children with complex violations of mental and physical development (children with complex defects, autism, moderate/severe mental retardation etc.). In order to organize the work in this direction at the federal level, a number of methodological recommendations that take into account specific educational and correction process for these children have been developed.

Children with disabilities who are unable to attend educational establishments due to health reasons have all the necessary conditions created

for home schooling. Every year in the Russian Federation, up to 40 thousand and more children with disabilities study at home (at the beginning of academic year 2007/2008, the number was 43.5 thousand). In recent years, development of remote form of training using modern information and telecommunication technologies has been considered an effective tool for education of children in this category. The work in that direction is successfully conducted in Moscow, the Republic of Karelia, the Republic of Tatarstan, the Kaliningrad oblast, Khanty-Mansi Autonomous Okrug, and a number of other regions.

The decisive factor in determining the form and degree of integration of children with disabilities into the educational environment is the needs of the children based on the features of their development and opportunities. The Law of the Russian Federation "On Education" establishes guarantees of the rights of children with disabilities and their parents when deciding on the educational route for the children in this category. In accordance with the Article 50 of the Law of the Russian Federation "On Education," children with limited health may be sent to correctional facilities only on the basis of the conclusion of a psychological, medical and educational committee regarding the results of a comprehensive survey of the child and regarding whether the child has any special educational needs. The same law (Articles 50, 52) guarantees the right of parents of minors, including children with disabilities, to choose forms of education, educational establishments of their children, to protect the legitimate rights and interests of their children including compulsory agreement of the transfer of the children with disabilities into correctional establishments (classes, group) with the parents.

Environment is created for persons with disabilities to receive professional primary, secondary vocational and higher education as an important component of their continuing education, significantly expanding further opportunities for their employment.

The Law of the Russian Federation "On Education" provides privileges for persons with disabilities as regards receiving of vocational education. In accordance with the Article 16 of the mentioned law, children with disabilities, invalids of groups I and II, to whom, according to the conclusion of federal establishments of medical and social expertise, training in their respective educational establishments is not contraindicated, are subject to being

accepted in the respective establishments on the condition of passing entrance examinations to the state and municipal educational establishments of higher professional and secondary vocational education *hors concours*. Also, this law provides for the establishment of characteristics of the entrance tests for admission to these establishments for citizens with limited health.

In recent years, there has been a tendency to increase the number of educational establishments of vocational education that train persons with disabilities. In 2006, based on all forms of education, only in the 346 universities subordinate to Department of Education of the Russian Federation, 17.7 thousand students were enrolled; in establishments of secondary vocational education, more than 16.5 thousand students; in establishments of primary vocational education, 20.9 thousand students.

The important aspects of learning and socialization of persons with disabilities in physical and mental development is the formation in the society of tolerant attitudes towards people in this category, promoting thus the ideas of equal rights of persons with disabilities to receive education.

The authorities that implement management in the sphere of education at all levels actively cooperate in resolving these problems with non-state organizations, especially with associations of people with disabilities, organizations of parents of children with disabilities.

The issues related to observance and protection of human rights, in particular, the rights of persons with disabilities and other categories of citizens who are in difficult situations, are examined in educational establishments including through a series of subjects of the federal component of the state educational standards for comprehensive education ("Social science," "Law," "History" etc.).

Training of specialists for working with students with limited health is at the faculties or departments of correction pedagogy (defectology) in 36 higher educational establishments and 22 secondary specialized educational establishments. In addition, a number of educational establishments of higher professional education is training teachers on various directions of correction pedagogy ("Methods of teaching the blind," "Methods of teaching the hard-of-hearing," "Oligofrenopedagogy," "Speech therapy," "Special psychology," "Special preschool education and psychology"). Every year, all educational

establishments that preparing speech therapists graduate about 5 thousand teachers in the field of remedial teaching.

A significant role in improving remedial education process in educational establishments is the system of training. In each subject of the Russian Federation, additional vocational education establishments operate, which carry out training and retraining of teachers who work with students with limited health. In total, 94 such establishments are active, which include 11 chairs of special pedagogy and psychology and 25 self-teaching classrooms of defectology. Their work is coordinated at the federal level by the Department of correction pedagogy and psychology of the Academy of special training and retraining of educators.

All the positive developments in the field of educational development, including integrated (inclusive) education, of children with disabilities in Russia is largely based on targeted research, which has for many years been conducted by Russian scientific organizations, higher educational establishments and additional vocational education establishments. The leading scientific center of the country that specializes in basic and applied research in the field of education and psychological and educational rehabilitation of children with different disabilities in physical and (or) mental development, is the Correction pedagogy institute of the Russian Academy of Education.

The positive role in the modernization of education of children with disabilities in Russia is played by international cooperation, including cooperation with UNESCO, UNICEF and other UN organizations that provide training of Russian specialists based on the experiences of other countries in this field. Thus, under the auspices of UNESCO, in June 2008 in Saint Petersburg the conference "Inclusive Education: Problems and Prospects of training," was held, which was devoted to the issue of training teachers for the purpose of inclusive education in different countries.

The legislature of the Russian Federation on separation of powers among various levels of authorities, the task of ensuring the state-guaranteed rights of citizens, including persons with disabilities, for public and free preschool, primary comprehensive, basic, secondary (full) comprehensive education as well as the task of provision of primary vocational and secondary vocational education (with the exception of education received in federal establishments) have been

attributed to the competence of the organs of the state power of the subjects of the Russian Federation.

In order to assist members of the Russian Federation in matters concerning the right of persons with disabilities for education, certain measures are planned and implemented at the federal level including the activities within the framework of the "Education" national project activities of the federal authorities and departmental task programs.

In particular, within the framework of the "Education" national project in 2006-2007, measures were implemented directed at connection of correctional establishments of all subjects of the Russian Federation to the Internet. At the expense of the federal program of education development for 2006-2010, the educational establishments of this type have been provided with fire-defense equipment.

Also under the federal task program of education development for 2006-2010, a project is being implemented directed at supply of computer equipment to the subjects of the Russian Federation for distance education of children with disabilities who are unable, for health reasons, to attend educational establishments. In 2008, the project has already involved 30 regions. The issue of prospective creation of conditions for organization of distance education for all children in this category, including supplying their residence with the equipment required for connection to the Internet, is examined.

Educational establishments of various types, including correctional establishments, occasionally receive help assisted from the reserve fund of the President of the Russian Federation directed at conduction of capital repairs and maintenance of buildings, furniture, and educational, technological, and other equipment. This year, an allocation from the reserve fund of the President of the Russian Federation of 200 million rubles is scheduled in order to provide special equipment for pre-school educational establishments of compensative type and correctional establishments.

Over the years, the federal budget has regularly paid for training events for educators and administrators of correctional and other educational establishments directed at education of children with disabilities as well as national and interregional activities (subject contests, sports competitions, other

competitive activities) for different categories of students of correctional establishments.

Every year, federal lists of textbooks recommended for use in the educational process in correctional establishments are ratified, and measures directed at federally-covered printing and mailing of teaching and other literature for students with limited health are implemented.

In order to provide technical help to regional executive authorities the Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation has ratified in February 2008 and mailed to the subjects of the Russian Federation recommendations on creation of the conditions for the education of children with disabilities. The recommendations include implementation of a set of measures on the following priority areas:

creation of a system of early detection and correction of deficiencies in the development of children; creation of a system of monitoring and account of the number of children with disabilities; presence of environment for their education; access to quality education for children with disabilities; creation in all educational establishments the environment for education of children with disabilities; creation of the environment for all children with limited health required to receive education at their place of residence, including home schooling; development of integrated education for children in this category in educational establishments of the common type in addition to maintaining and improving the existing network of correctional establishments;

creation of the environment for children with limited health required to receive professional primary, secondary vocational and higher education;

provision of ongoing training, retraining and skill improvement of education managers, educators (employed by both correctional and – as a matter of priority – common-type educational establishment), psychological, medical and educational committees and other bodies and organizations that deal with issues of education of children with disabilities;

creation in society of tolerant attitudes toward children with disabilities;

promotion of the ideas that help them in education and social integration;

organization of interdepartmental cooperation and interaction between government authorities and local governments with non-state organizations in meeting the challenges of educating children with disabilities.

*Factors providing for the development of inclusive education.*

Legislative framework. First and foremost, this means the availability of legal and juridical support of the process of collaborative education of children with disabilities (as ratified by the Russian Federation Declaration of the Rights of the Child, 1959; UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1989; Declaration on the Rights of Mentally Retarded, 1971; Declaration on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, 1975; World Declaration on Survival, Protection, and Development of Children, 1993; the UN Declaration on Education for All, 1990; the Standard Rules on Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities, UN, 1993; Declaration on inclusive education, adopted in Salamanca, 1994; Materials of the Conference in Dakar, 2000).

These documents have played a very important role in the formation of a new policy and strategy that help persons with disabilities and are directed at respect of human rights and implementation of truly equal opportunities.

Joint education and training is based on the Law of the Russian Federation "On Education" (1996), "On social protection of disabled persons in the Russian Federation" (1995). The basic legal document for the implementation of the integrated education will be the Law of the Russian Federation "On education of persons with disabilities (special education)," a draft version of which is being prepared by the Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation. In the regions, while teaching children with disabilities, comprehensive educational establishments are guided by the documents of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation "On the concept of integrated education of persons with disabilities (with special educational needs)" and recommendations on the organization of joint education and training of normally developing children and preschoolers with developmental disorders.

Personnel. The widespread introduction of integration, or inclusion, requires that a large number of professionals – speech therapists, deaf-and-dumb pedagogues, blind-teaching pedagogues – be involved in the work of comprehensive preschools and schools. The existing Russian network of special pre-schools and schools is lacking speech therapists with higher education (under 15 pct). The most fortunate are large cities, where the problem is completely solved.

The state of the network. On the territory of our country, special correctional facilities and a variety of centers that can provide remedial help to children with disabilities (including students of comprehensive pre-schools and schools) are still distributed not evenly. This is particularly the case for children with impairments of emotional and volitional spheres, hearing, vision, and musculoskeletal system.

Public opinion. Studies have shown that treatment of co-education mentioned by teachers, parents, and students depends on their involvement in the process of integration. For example, from 8 pct to 30 pct of teachers of comprehensive schools oppose education of children with disabilities in those schools, while in co-educational schools, the share of such teachers does not exceed 10 pct. The greatest cause for rejection is integration of children with intellectual impairments (opposed by 78 pct of teachers in mainstream schools and by 42 pct of teachers in co-educational schools).

*Research on the development and testing of various models of inclusive education.*

Recognition of integrated education of persons with disabilities as one of the priorities of modernizing Russia's special education system has allowed the state scientific institution "Institute of correction pedagogy of the Russian Academy of Education" to intensify the research and development and experimental work aimed at creation of a system model of integration (joint learning) of children with disabilities into educational environments with normally developing peers, which was started in 1992.

The Institute has detected, justified and experimentally verified a set of options for organization of joint education, which allow matching each child with special educational needs with a model of integration that would be accessible and useful to their development, and retain all necessary specialized psychological and educational help.

In developing the variation forms of integrated education and putting them into practice, the following tasks were set:

- expansion of the coverage of the needy children with the necessary special educational help, as closely as possible to the place of residence of the child;
- provision of children with limited health with an opportunity of integration into

the environment of properly developing peers;

- provision of parents with the opportunity to receive the necessary advice;
- provision of comprehensive pre-school and school teachers who work with the integrated children with continuous and qualified methodological support.

Co-education is also pivotal for properly developing children. This form allows them to be purposefully prepared for unconditional acceptance of a person with special social and educational needs, to form tolerant attitude towards humans that are different, and to lay the cultural norm of the emerging civil society, i.e. respect for differences among people.

The Institute of correction pedagogy of the Russian Academy of Education has developed the concept of joint education and training, which provides:

- integration through early correction because early detection of impairments and the remedial work since the first months of life allows for achievement of a different outcome in the development of the child, which enables him to study in larger establishments. Owing to early remedial help, from 15-20 pct to 100 pct of intellectually safe children with various developmental disorders are able to study on an equal footing in the comprehensive schools.
- integration through provision of medical and psycho-pedagogical support of each integrated child. "Special" children, even at achievement of a high level of psychological and physical and speech development that allows them to learn in comprehensive pre-schools and school have special educational needs related to a deviation in their development which must be met;
- integration through selection of appropriate forms of co-education and learning for every child with disabilities, taking into account the level of his psychological, physical and speech development. This model of joint education and training must be available to the child and useful for him, but at the same time, it may not hinder quality education of properly developing children.

We have also relied on modern scientific understanding that the level of mental development of children with the same primary impairment may be significantly different because the child's biological disadvantage (hearing, vision, central nervous system etc.) is only a primary prerequisite for impairments of his interaction with the outside world. Caused by the violation of the primary impairment, the secondary changes in mental development can be largely prevented and overcome through training, which must be specially organized

and specially designed. Given the considerable individual variation in the levels of children with special educational needs, we had to provide for a set of models of integration: from full and permanent to minimum and episodic.

In the course of research and experimental work, we have developed, tested, and described various forms of co-education and training that would integrate virtually all children with disabilities, but the proportion of integration is different. The implementation of the proposed model does not require considerable financial payments. The proposed options of co-education of children with developmental impairments as compared with properly developing peers, the following issues are reviewed:

- what children can benefit from this form of integration;
- in what types of educational establishments it can be used;
- what is the composition of groups and classes;
- dosage of the integration time;
- content and nature of the joint activities of children;
- what professionals are involved in the process of teaching and education;
- who provides special educational help and where;
- what mechanisms of interaction of comprehensive and special educators are used.

Thus, continuous integration involves teaching the child with certain impairments in development on an equal footing with properly developing children in some pre-school groups and classes. Full integration can be effective for those children whose level of psychological and physical and speech development is in line with or approaches the age norm, and who are psychologically ready for joint education with healthy peers. The children can receive the necessary remedial help either at the place of education (in schools and pre-school co-educational establishments), or in various rehabilitation centers (in the usual pre-school and school establishments). The pedagogues who teach corrective classes provide guidance to teachers on the issues of organization of comprehensive education and teaching children with disabilities in the environment of healthy peers.

Integration is needed by all children with disabilities because it allows normalization of the environment and the modes of interaction with other people. However, the lower the level of development of the children as

compared with properly developing peers, the less their psychologically readiness for integration, the more dosed and regulated the process of joint education. Only then will we have a chance to make integration accessible and helpful for the child's development.

A variant of dosed integration is ongoing, incomplete integration. It provides the teaching of:

- pre-school children in a mixed group, in which 1/3 is the children with an impairment of development, and 2/3 are properly developing peers; the group is taught by comprehensive school teachers and speech therapists;
- students in a flexible class, which combines children with disabilities in health for individual lessons where they cannot participate on an equal footing with properly developing peers; they attend the other lessons and classes in the regular classroom.

A large dosage of coeducation is provided with permanent partial integration. In this case, integrated children are enrolled in special groups and classes, but every day for part of the day, the children with higher levels of development are introduced into the conventional groups (classes) by 1-3 persons. They attend the classes where they can succeed.

An even more dosed type is a temporary partial integration, which includes all learners of a special group or class regardless of their level of development. They are united with their normally developing peers for walks every day, additional education (clubs, sports sections) and at least 2 times a month, carry out joint activities of primarily educational nature: entertainment, holidays, and individual classes.

In special pre-school and school facilities, which lack the capacity of the targeted joint education of properly developing children and students with impairments, the episodic model of integration can be used.

Episodic integration implies that the students of special establishments by studying separately for virtually all the time be occasionally united with the children of comprehensive establishments for a fixed period of time. Social interaction is provided in camps, on specially organized tours, festivals, competitions, during organization and conduction of exhibitions of children's works, cliques. This unification is of great educational value but also entails significant organizational difficulties.

The presented set of variation models integrate children with disabilities into regular educational environment allows provision of each and every child with special educational needs (even the most «severe») with an integration model that is accessible and useful to his development and retains all necessary specialized psychological and educational help.

The purpose of creation of a national system model of integration in education, which contains a set of basic options, is a maximum utilization of the existing opportunities and continuing targeted expansion of the opportunities of children with disabilities in social and academic interaction.

*Experimental work on development of technologies of psycho-pedagogical support of inclusive education (experience of the subjects of the Russian Federation)*

Intensive development of inclusive education in the Russian Federation and Moscow leaves no doubt of its reality so far. In many regions of Russia (Krasnoyarsk Krai, Novosibirsk, Samara, Saratov, Rostov oblast etc.), there are actually acting inclusive educational establishments where children with special educational needs, including children with impaired health study together with healthy peers in kindergartens, schools, and establishments of higher education.

These processes have already started in various districts of the city of Moscow, on the basis of pre-school education and specialized establishments, psychological, educational, health and social care centers (hereafter referred to as PPMS Centers), establishments of additional education. In the Central Administrative Region (TsAO) in Moscow within the experimental urban area of inclusive education, a network of inclusive education establishments has been developed for 5 years (in the framework of educational “vertical”). So far, only about 30 TsAO educational establishments work on an inclusive paradigm.

Based in education administration of TsAO, a municipal experimental area (MEA) has been operating in the city for five years, which is directed at the development of models and technologies of psycho-pedagogical support of integrative processes in educational establishments (supervisor: candidate of psychology N. Y. Semago). As part of the MEA, a single inclusive education vertical “Kindergarten-Center-School” has been formed that provides support of inclusion of various categories of children into comprehensive educational

establishments, from an early age to middle school. The system of resource centers (including basic nurseries, correctional schools, PPMS Center) of TSAO provides the sharing of experience and testing of new psychological and educational technologies in all establishments of MEA. The system of skills improvement and professional retraining of the district specialists has been started.

The MEA specialists work closely with community organizations, various associations of parents of children with developmental disorders, international organizations of the relevant focus.

In order to explore opportunities for integrated training for various categories of children the Department of correction pedagogy and psychology of the Academy of special training and retraining of educators (APK and PPRO) has opened an experiment area at special school # 152 in Perm. The school is known throughout the region as one of the best to work with children with disabilities and possesses positive experiences of integrated education. The school houses different types of classes: classes for children with safe intelligence, who have disabilities as a result of systemic diseases; classes for children with mild mental retardation and classes for pupils with severe and multiple impairments of development (children with Down syndrome, Fölling's disease etc.).

The experimental work is directed at identification of potential development of various categories of children, development of socio-educational programs in order for every child to be integrated into the socio-cultural environment and to adapt to society.

Every category of students learns based on its own program in individual classes. The process of integration is scheduled for the afternoon, when children with developmental disorders are united with properly developing students for classes in drawing, singing and rhythmic, physical culture, as well for participation in various activities of educational nature.

A special role in the integration process is played by the program of additional education; the school houses working groups of manual labor and visual activities, culinary skills forming, arts and crafts, folklore, and dance. In these events, children with developmental problems are necessarily involved with healthy students. The former quickly form a habit of discipline and accepted norms of behavior during this type of activities on the basis of exemplary actions

shown by intellectually safe children; there is an adequate response to certain educational and living situation. The speaking skills of the students are progressing more rapidly, and they improve their communication skills. Regarding the properly developing children, they obtain a tolerant attitude towards children with disabilities and ability to understand problems of another person.

A great role in the processes of integration has been played by volunteer movements, for example, students of the Perm branch of the Academy of Law and Administration are working with children with complex defect, helping them adapt to society.

The experience of the experimental areas was presented in the book "Social adaptation of children with disabilities" (edited by A. R. Maller, candidate of psychology, assistant professor of correction pedagogy and psychology of APK and PPRO), published in APK&PPRO in 2008.

#### *Modern trends of training and skill improvement of teachers involved in integrated education*

Presentation of the experiences of inclusive education in other countries is taking place via annual international conferences and seminars (including Norway, Italy, Great Britain, etc.). Thus, under the auspices of UNESCO, in June, St. Petersburg hosted the international conference "Inclusive Education: Problems and Prospects of training," which was entirely devoted to training for inclusive education in different countries.

At the same time, in most cases such action is based on professional experience and enthusiasm of the professionals, vast interest in the development of inclusive processes of administrators and professionals of certain district education offices in Moscow. This work is not sufficiently backed by conceptual and scientific research that suggests a large representation of spontaneous inclusion. This situation has greatly reduced the effectiveness of the implemented activities and can lead to further system error. In turn, the lack of scientifically based and empirically verified development and psycho-pedagogical support of inclusive education does not provide for full training and professional development of educators involved in the inclusive process.

Currently, the pedagogical and psychological universities of Moscow are training skilled professionals in various fields of correction pedagogy –

defectology teachers, speech therapists, special educators and psychologists for special (correctional) educational establishments of types of I-VIII. At the same time, the characteristics of upbringing and education of children with complex developmental problems, autistic spectrum disorders are not considered practical. The philosophy of inclusive education is distributed among professionals and parents, which determines the relevance of the problems of inclusive education and teaching of children with disabilities in an environment of conventional peers. It is therefore especially important to train specialists to work in the context of inclusive education in pedagogical universities and colleges.

Since under the conditions of inclusive education and teaching, children with disabilities appear in comprehensive environment, it is absolutely necessary to create entirely different logic and philosophical foundations of the system of training specialists to work in such establishments, groups of early help, inclusive pre-school and school establishments, establishments of secondary vocational education and of higher education.

Especially important is training of specialists for PPMS Centers as one of the major institutional educational establishments engaged in psychological and educational support of the inclusive education processes.

Currently, the teaching staff of the department of correctional pedagogy and psychology of APK and PPRO, Perspective ROOI, and practitioners of the TsAO of the city of Moscow on the basis of practical experience have developed a model of psychological and pedagogical support of the inclusive education vertical. Under this model, the concept of a modular system of training specialists of inclusive education is developed and tested.

The modular system of training and retraining of specialists supporting inclusive processes in education provides for creation of a set of programs in the areas of activities of the experts of support united in separate modules that are targeted to different specialists who undergo training and retraining, and provides for the development of modules:

- For administrative employees and administrators of education;
- For supporting educational psychologists including specialists of the PPMS resource centers;
- For social workers and social pedagogues;

- For teachers of primary and middle school levels, teachers of vocational education;
- For the speech therapists, defectologists in interdisciplinary teams.

The modules of the program are focused on coverage of issues related to interdisciplinary activities, specific activities of various professional support groups in relation to the challenges of inclusive education and support of the educational process of various categories of children with health impairments including children with disabilities.

As a part of the project, establishment of the foundations of a modular distance training of specialists from other regions involved in the support of inclusive processes.

The following parameters were used as basis for module skill improvement.

1. Orientation of the training module of the category of education specialist (modules: for administrators and directors of educational establishments, psychological support, educators, including defectologists and speech therapists, social workers);

2. Type and form of learning (lectures, courses, teaching workshops, inter-discipline consultation reviews, training on site etc.);

3. Time volume of the training modules (from 3 to 4 academic hours (training and consultations, case reviewing etc.) to 72-hour courses of skills improvement).

4. "Experience" and practical experience in the field of inclusive education. This determines, first of all, the content parameters for each module for each team of specialists or administrators.

The basic principle element of any educational module is training that is as closely as possible directed at practice activities of inclusive education establishments and individual children with special educational needs.

The principal system aspect of such education system is the use of modern scientific approaches in assessing and supporting of children with special educational needs, modern and methodologies of mental development of children.

Such an approach to a modular system of training and effective inclusion of professionals in an inclusive process has already shown its effectiveness, which allows a permanent inclusion of new educational establishments into the

inclusive educational environment. All this allows involving experienced members of an inclusive process (education establishment administration, teachers, educators, psychologists, speech therapists) as "playing coaches," which in turn makes the learning process lively, informal, and closest to reality.

As a part of the refresher courses in APK and PPRO, specialists have received education necessary to work with mentally retarded children of varying severity of defects that are in the educational environment of properly developing students. The programs of training courses include lectures on organization of inclusive education.

*Current challenges to improve inclusive education.*

The spread in our country of the integration process (inclusion) of children with disabilities in mental or physical health into educational establishments is not only a reflection of the time but also represents realization of children's rights for education under the Law "On Education." Inclusive education provides everyone with an equal access to any kind of education and creates the necessary conditions for all children to succeed in learning without exception, regardless of their individual characteristics, academic achievements, mother tongue, culture, mental and physical abilities.

The concepts of integration, in both foreign and domestic scientific literature, are presented in a variety of theoretical approaches to specific issues which makes scientific classification of its trends difficult.

Modernization of education at the present stage is impossible without fundamental changes in the approaches to learning and education of children with disabilities, especially invalid children, without creating an accessible educational environment, special conditions that will allow them to experience life in full. Achieving such a goal is impossible without an evolutionary transition to partial (integrative), and in the future, fully inclusive education, which must implement major restructuring of both comprehensive and special education, guide for preparation of a disabled child for future adult life, a full-fledged adaptation to the demands of the society. The main issue is creation of positive public awareness and tolerance of society, especially in an environment of comprehensive education.

Important aspects of implementation in this direction are the development of various elements and structures of inclusive education that provide conditions for lifelong learning and education for these categories of children throughout the educational vertical. There is a need to specifically identify such priority areas as: creation of a full inclusive system of early care (for children with developmental disorders and the risk of such deviations between the ages of two months to five years), psychological and educational support of children with disabilities who are unable to attend preschool education establishments; development and introduction of integrated and inclusive education of children with severe impairments; monitoring support of the systems of inclusive education; development of measures directed at creation of tolerance among healthy peers and teaching groups.

In this list, special challenge is development of a system of skill improvement and training / retraining of both special (remedial) and comprehensive educational establishments for work in inclusive educational space.