

ACCEPTANCE AND FRIENDSHIP QUALITY IN CHILDREN WITH AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER INTYPICAL CLASSROOM

Arjana Muçaj¹, Ardita Korriku²

¹Tirana University, Faculty of Social Science, Department of Pedagogy-Psychology, Albania,
Email: arjanamucaj@yahoo.it

²Tirana University, Faculty of Social Science, Department of Pedagogy-Psychology, Albania,
Email: korrikuardita@gmail.com

Abstract

Friendships are one of the most vital aspects of childhood. From early on, friends help us to develop both emotionally and socially. It is well documented that individuals with Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) have difficulty forming the same social relationship with peers as other children do. Unfortunately, many children with ASD want to have friends, but they do not know how to develop friendships. In this paper it has been done a review of some studies and literature about the acceptance and the friendship in children with ASD in typical classroom. There are different ways, which have been proven through many studies that social skills of children with ASD can be improved, and consequently may be easier their acceptance from classmates and their relationship will be more qualitative. One of them is the use of Integrated Play Groups, which offer a comprehensive, researched-based intervention that helps children in the autistic spectrum engage in play with typical peers in regular social settings. Most students like to be helpers. When they share things well with others, it gives them a sense of pride. The child with ASD that receives this help builds relationships, learns to focus on others rather than self, and experiences cooperative and valuable social skills. Teachers can educate themselves about the ASD- as well as the needs of that particular child in his/her classroom- in addition to helping the child classmates understand the disorder. Students with autism in inclusive settings are as accepted, visible, and members of peer groups, as well as both their peers without disabilities and those with other disabilities, according to a study; a promising result, but it should be investigated further. Promoting children with ASD's skills in popular activities to share with peers in early childhood may be a key preventive intervention to protect social relationships in late elementary school grades.

Keywords: *autistic spectrum disorder (ASD), acceptance, friendship, peers*