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## **FORMATION OF CULTURAL AND HYGIENE SKILLS IN CHILDREN OF LOW-KINDERGARTEN AGE**

Cultural and hygienic skills are an essential component of a person's overall culture, contributing to the formation of a harmonious personality. The acquisition of these skills occurs throughout life, beginning in early childhood. The level of mastery of such skills determines an individual's social status.

The education of personal hygiene culture in young children is crucial for maintaining their health and fostering appropriate behavior both in everyday life and in public spaces. Children's adherence to necessary hygiene rules and behavioral norms directly impacts their well-being as well as that of adults.

The issue of developing self-care skills in preschool children has been explored by renowned educators and psychologists such as V. Sukhomlynsky, T. Ponimanska, I. Bekh, V. Bondar, L. Vavina, O. Gavrilov, and others.

Young children should be taught to understand the purpose and basic properties of objects, name actions, independently meet the needs of adults, and ask for help when necessary. They should learn to sit at the table only with clean hands, drink from a cup using both hands, eat with a spoon without spilling, use napkins appropriately, eat liquid food with bread, push in their chair after getting up, and follow basic table etiquette. The process of daily activities should encourage children's independence by reinforcing acquired skills and fostering new cultural and hygienic habits [1].

Three-year-old children should be taught to eat independently and neatly, chew food thoroughly, hold a spoon correctly, take a piece of bread with them, eat quietly without talking to others, remain seated properly at the table, and express gratitude to adults for their meal without reminders.

Since preschoolers primarily rely on concrete, visually based thinking, methods such as demonstration and explanation are effective in developing cultural and hygienic skills. Teaching young children begins with a direct demonstration by an adult. Demonstrations should be accompanied by clear explanations, starting with the most important actions and followed by secondary ones. This approach helps children better understand the overall behavior expected of them. Adults must remember that their own behavior significantly influences children and serves as an example. Proper table manners, such as sitting correctly, avoiding placing elbows on the table, using utensils properly (spoon, fork, knife, napkin), and eating slowly and quietly, should be demonstrated consistently [2].

Next, young children participate in performing simple tasks related to mealtime routines. For younger children, these tasks may involve one or two specific actions, such as placing a spoon on the table, setting a bread bowl, or arranging a tablecloth.

Educators should explain the purpose of the task and ensure that children accompany their actions with explanations of how and why they are performed [3].

To facilitate such activities, a "Little Chef's Corner" or "Our Helper's Stand" can be created, where daily tasks are visually displayed using pictures, symbols, or verbal instructions. Children can earn points or stickers (such as smiley faces with different expressions) as a reward system for well-executed tasks. Additionally, they should be provided with appropriate attire for the activity (aprons, scarves for girls, and white or brightly colored hats for boys) and suitable tools (such as a spatula or brush for collecting crumbs from the table) [4].

*Key Conditions for the Successful Development of Cultural and Hygienic Skills:*

- A well-structured daily routine in preschool, ensuring clarity and timeliness of activities.

- Adults serving as role models for children to imitate.

- Systematic education in accordance with cultural behavior standards.

- Consistency between hygiene requirements at preschool and at home.

- Monitoring and adjustment of hygiene habits by educators, assistants, and parents.

- An individualized approach to the pace at which each child acquires cultural and hygienic skills [5].

Other contributing factors include cleanliness, the availability of appropriate equipment and materials, proper ventilation, and an aesthetically organized environment for hygienic procedures. A consistent daily routine fosters the gradual development of habits, ensuring the regular repetition of hygiene practices at the same time each day [6].

*Cultural and Hygienic Skills for Early Childhood Development:*

**1. First younger group (ages 2-3):** With adult assistance, children learn to wash their hands before and after meals, use a towel, wash their face, use a handkerchief, wipe their feet upon entering a room, and hold a spoon properly.

**2. Second younger group (ages 3-4):** Children begin to wash their hands independently, keep their clothes dry, use soap and a personal towel, and wipe their hands and face on their own. They learn to dress independently, neatly fold their clothes and shoes, use utensils correctly (spoons, forks, napkins), maintain cleanliness around them, help set the table, clear dishes, and keep their play area tidy [7].

Thus, the development of cultural and hygienic skills remains a relevant issue, as it serves as the foundation for fostering a competent personality in preschool children. Additionally, it contributes to the gradual formation of knowledge and abilities necessary for self-care, healthy living, and maintaining overall well-being.

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