

The current situation and countermeasures of early childhood sex education

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Abstract: In the preschool stage, young children often ask "where did I come from", "why am I a boy or a girl" and other questions, which shows that young children have developed sexual awareness and show curiosity about sexes, adults must provide timely guidance and education, so that they can obtain the appropriate, scientific knowledge about sexes. Freud once pointed out that 3-6 years old is the time when gender consciousness is emerging, and it is also the sensitive period of young children's gender development, and good sex education for young children at this stage can cultivate healthy personality of young children, help young children to shape correct gender roles, and lay the foundation for the healthy development of young children's physical and mental health. This paper analyzes the current situation of sex education for young children, points out the existing problems, and puts forward corresponding educational suggestions to better promote the development of sex education for young children.

Key words: early childhood sex education; current situation; educational countermeasures

1 Introduction

Sexual abuse of young children occurs from time to time in society, and sex education for young children is in urgent need of attention. With the rapid development of society and economy, the proportion of sexual assault and sexual abuse of young children in the cases of sexual abuse of minors continues to rise. In September 2021, the State Council issued the *Program for the Development of Children in China (2021-2030)*, which explicitly pointed out that it is necessary to let school-age children universally receive sex education, to incorporate sex education into the basic education system and the quality monitoring system, and to guide children to establish a correct concept of gender and morality. Sexual abuse can cause great physical and psychological harm to young children, leaving a psychological shadow, which may even stay with them for the rest of their lives. There are still many problems in the practice of sex education in China. In China's early childhood education, sex education has always been a topic to be avoided, and studies have shown that the vast majority of kindergartens and parents do not have enough knowledge of early childhood sex education and do not pay attention to the education of young children in preventing sexual abuse, and in recent years, the frequent occurrence of sexual abuse cases has attracted more and more attention, and how to better carry out sex education for young children has become an urgent task.

2 Problems in early childhood sex education

2.1 Social concept of sex confinement

According to existing research, sex education has a long history, but the development process is more tortuous [1]. Due to the continued role of feudal thinking, people's understanding of sex has always been obscure, and parents and teachers of young children cannot naturally and healthily educate young children about sex. In the process of continuous speeding up of social development, China has stepped into a brand new era, and people's understanding of sex has gradually changed from being closed to being open. But the long-term traditional concepts cannot be completely changed in a short period of time, so parents and teachers of young children facing the topic of "sex", is still shy to take the initiative to put it on the stage to teach children, and the development of today still exists by the influence of traditional history and culture. China's deep-rooted sexual conservatism has become an obstacle to the implementation of sex education [2].

2.2 Insufficient supply of kindergarten sex education resources

The prerequisite for the normal development of kindergarten sex education is that the kindergarten can provide sufficient sex education materials and resources. In kindergartens, sex education knowledge is usually involved in the field of health, and most of the content is biased towards gender roles and physiological knowledge. In recent years, many kindergartens have paid attention to picture books and sex education books, using picture books and stories as the carrier of sex education for young children, but the selected materials for sex education for young children are fragmented and unsystematic. Kindergartens do not pay enough attention to sex education for young children, resulting in the lack of sufficient resources for teachers to carry out sex education, which in turn makes the overall sex education activities encounter greater resistance.

2.3 Lack of sex education knowledge among parents and teachers of young children

Most of the parents and teachers do not have a high level of knowledge about sex, and their knowledge about sex education mainly lies in the two aspects of the source of life and gender roles, and they do not pay attention to the education of sexual organs and other knowledge. According to a survey, more than half of the parents and teachers of young children said that they did not know how to educate young children about sex, and did not know what to teach or how to teach. In the face of young children's curiosity about sex, many parents and teachers do not know how to answer young children, or even think of an answer to deal with young children. For example, in kindergarten, children ask teachers, "Why am I a boy or a girl?" Some teachers don't know how to answer and just tell their children, "You have to go home and ask your mom or dad about this". Another example is when children ask their parents, "Where did I come from?" Some parents answered, "You were picked up from the garbage can." It shows that parents and teachers of young children have a relatively shallow understanding of sex education, and are unable to fully grasp the specific ways of sex education, and are also unable to fully grasp the educational opportunities for young children to carry out sex education.

2.4 Parents' and teachers' lagging behavior in sex education

In the relatively closed traditional understanding of sex in China, parents and teachers can recognize the importance of early sex education is clearly a breakthrough. Compared with the past, parents and teachers are gradually deepening their understanding of sex education. However, when it comes to the implementation of sex education, parents and teachers often struggle with the question, "When should sex education begin?" Conservative parents and kindergarten teachers think that "sex" is an embarrassing issue, not only is it "inconvenient" to tell the child, but also the child will not understand even if they are told about it at such a young age, so let's wait until he or she grows up a little bit more, and they think that involving knowledge of sex education at too early an age will have an adverse effect on the children's growth. This shows that conservative parents and teachers of young children have a vague understanding of sex education. They often think that sex education is not necessary, not suitable for young children, and even think that "sex" is a topic not to be talked

about in front of young children, which leads to a lag in the behavior of parents and teachers of young children in sex education, which is not conducive to the healthy development of young children's physiology and psychology.

3 Educational suggestions for the implementation of early childhood sex education

3.1 To change traditional concepts and apply correct ideas to early childhood sex education

Traditional conservative thinking is no longer adapted to the development of today's society. The whole society must abandon the misconceptions about "sex" in traditional culture, fully and comprehensively understand the early childhood sex education, and comprehensively interpret its importance and necessity. Children's sex education is not just about reading a sex education book, listening to a sex education lecture or watching a sex education movie, but also a highly valued educational project for families, schools, and the whole society [3]. Parents, teachers and even society as a whole cannot take an evasive attitude towards the issue of sex education for young children. We must face up to the existence of sex education for young children, according to the age of young children and physical and mental characteristics of the appropriate way to carry out the correct education and guidance. The implementation of sex education for young children should respect the equality of men and women, boys and girls should receive correct sex education and sexual ethics, and young children should be guided with healthy values in line with the mainstream of society.

3.2 Kindergartens should provide sufficient resources for sex education

Sex education for young children cannot be carried out without adequate educational resources. Kindergartens should, based on their own actual situation, introduce more sex education resources to ensure that sex education for young children can be carried out and promoted smoothly. Kindergartens should combine the age characteristics and physical and mental development of young children to set up diversified sex education teaching aids, which can trigger the interest of young children's learning and at the same time can also carry out sex education for young children. Kindergartens should make structural adjustments in the investment of educational resources, and pay comprehensive attention to the three factors of sexual psychology, sexual physiology and sexual morality of young children. At the same time, kindergartens should strengthen the training of teachers, and regularly carry out training activities on "sex education" to improve the professional skills of kindergarten teachers in sex education, so as to better implement sex education for young children.

3.3 Multi-channel learning to improve the level of sex education for parents and teachers of young children

Only when parents and teachers of young children have sufficient sex knowledge will they have more self-confidence in sex education for young children. The self-confidence of parents and teachers of young children is the key to the easy and effective implementation of sex education. Parents and teachers of young children should actively participate in professional sex education training and sex education courses through social organizations and educational institutions to learn correct and systematic scientific basic knowledge and improve their ability to implement sex education for young children.

3.4 Parents and teachers of young children should do a good job of "joint education at home"

In the process of sex education for young children, parents and teachers play an indispensable role. In order to carry out good sex education for young children, it is necessary to mobilize the joint efforts of families, parents, and teachers of young children to reach an agreement on the sex education of young children. Only through the joint implementation of sex education for young children at home can we truly promote the healthy physical and mental development of young children. In the family, parents can seize the life of the educational opportunities for young children to carry out sex education, such as young children in the bath time to tell them to understand their own private parts, can not be exposed, teach young children to learn to protect themselves. In kindergarten classroom activities, teachers can invite parents to carry out parent-child reading of sex education related picture book stories or watch related film and television materials to

strengthen the knowledge of young children on sex education. Kindergartens can build a platform for dialogue between parents and teachers of young children through parent-teacher conferences, open day activities for parents, parent committees, etc., to share information on sex education for young children to each other, and only through joint cooperation between the home and the family can we lay a good foundation for children's sex education.

Conflicts of interest

The author declares no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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