

## OVERCOMING THE FEAR OF OPEN WATER AT THE INITIAL STAGE OF LEARNING TO SWIM

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### Abstract

The article deals with the fear of children of primary school age to open water, which appears at the initial stage of teaching swimming and is a serious obstacle to mastering the skills of swimming. Analysis of the scientific researches indicate a lack of reasonable methods of overcoming fears associated with the water during swimming training and scientific-methodological developments in the prevention and overcoming fears associated with water, which leads to certain problems and violations of logical consistency in teaching swimming. The following empirical methods as questionnaires, interviews, pedagogical observations are used. The article presents the results of a study of this problem, especially: the results of the survey of primary school children who arrived at the base of the summer camp «Lastochka» in Skadovsk of Kherson region in 2016 during the month of June as well as conversations and observations with them that took place in real conditions of training swimming. This study provided the opportunity to determine the origin of fear causes of primary school age children, to reveal the reasons and statistics of accidents at open water, to identify factors fear of open water of primary school age children. The article indicates signs of the most important physical symptoms associated with the fear of open water.

Methodical recommendations developed to overcome fears at the initial stage of swimming lessons in open water based on the principles of psychological impact on the minds of everyone as well as the use of innovative techniques while swimming. Methodical recommendations focus on the preparation and organization of lessons with children of primary school age, with the problem of fear of open water. They aim to overcome fear and to achieve the main goals of the swimming lessons in the summer camp to teach swimming every child.

**Key words:** swimming, fear, primary school age, water

**Ольга Ображей. Подолання страху відкритих водойм під час початкового навчання плавання.** У статті розглянуто причини страху перед відкритими водоймами, які виявляються на початковому етапі навчання плавання та є серйозною перешкодою для оволодіння навичками плавання. Аналіз наукових досліджень свідчить про відсутність обґрунтованої методики подолання страхів, пов'язаних із водою, під час навчання плавання й науково-методичних розробок із попередження та подолання страхів, пов'язаних із водою, що призводить до певних труднощів і порушення логічної послідовності в навчанні плавання.

У роботі використано такі емпіричні методи дослідження: анкетування, бесіди, педагогічне спостереження.

У статті представлено результати дослідження з указаної проблеми, а саме: результати анкетування дітей молодшого шкільного віку, які перебували на базі літнього оздоровчого табору «Ластівка» в м. Скадовську Херсонської області у 2016 р. протягом червня-місяця. а також бесід із ними й спостережень, що відбувались у реальних умовах проведення навчальних занять із плавання. У цьому дослідженні проаналізовано причини нещасних випадків на відкритих водоймах. Визначено чинники страху відкритих водойм дітей молодшого шкільного віку. У статті зазначено прояви найбільш важливих фізичних симптомів, що пов'язані зі страхом відкритих водойм

Розроблено методичні рекомендації подолання страхів на початковому етапі занять із плавання на відкритих водоймах, які ґрунтуються на засадах психологічного впливу на свідомість кожного під час занять із плавання. У методичних рекомендаціях основна увага приділено підготовці та організації занять із дітьми з проблемою страху перед відкритими водоймами. Заняття спрямовано на подолання й досягнення основної мети – навчити плавати кожну дитину.

**Ключові слова:** плавання, страх відкритих водойм, молодший шкільний вік.

**Ображей Ольга. Преодоление страха открытиях водоемов при начальном обучении плаванию.** В статье рассмотрены причины страха перед открытыми водоемами, которые определяются на начальном этапе обучения плаванию.

Анализ научных исследований свидетельствует об отсутствии обоснованной методики преодоления страхов, связанных с водой, и научно-методических разработок относительно предупреждения и преодоления страхов, связанных с водой, которые, в свою очередь, приводят к определенным трудностям и нарушению логической последовательности в обучении плаванию.

В работе использованы такие эмпирические методы: анкетирование, беседы, педагогическое наблюдение.

В статье представлены результаты исследований по указанной проблеме, а именно: анкетирования детей младшего школьного возраста которые прибыли на базу летнего оздоровительного лагеря «Ласточка» в г. Скадовск Херсонской области в 2016 г. в период июня-месяца, а также бесед с ними и наблюдений, которые происходили в реальных условиях проведения учебных занятий по плаванию. Это исследование дало возможность определить

происхождение причин страха детей младшего школьного возраста, раскрыть причин несчастных случаев на открытых водоемах. Определены факторы страха открытых водоемов детей младшего школьного возраста. В статье указаны проявления наиболее важных физических симптомов, которые связаны со страхом открытых водоемов

Разработаны методические рекомендации преодоления на начальном этапе занятий по плаванию, которые базируется на принципах психологического влияния во время такого обучения. В методических рекомендациях основное внимание уделяется подготовке и организации занятий с детьми с проблемой страха перед открытыми водоемами. Занятия направлены на их преодоление и достижение основной цели – научить плавать каждого ребенка.

**Ключевые слова:** плавание, страх открытых водоемов, младший школьный возраст.

**Introduction.** The lack of swimming skills is a significant risk factor for human life. In our opinion, the main reason for it is inadequate supply of appropriate, material and technical equipped specialized training pools for swimming. Analysis of the scientific and methodological sources proves rather high percentage of accidents (13, 8 %) in open waters [4].

Organization of summer recreation for children involves the combination of health, recreational and educational areas in summer camps, the structure of which includes open water intended for swimming [3].

From experience of organization of physical education classes in the summer camp we found out that there is a fairly large percentage of younger students (45 %) who do not know how to swim, and the main reason is the fear of open water [5].

Fear is one of the types of emotions that occurs as a reaction to the emergence of a real or imaginary danger. Feeling of fear is a protective reaction of the organism, a danger signal. This dramatically impairs coordination of movements, loss of control, impaired activity of the central nervous system, there may be a sudden deceleration of all mental and motor reactions. This is a natural reaction, and it is a characteristic of every normal person [1]. When a child, who cannot swim falls into the water, she finds herself in a precarious situation, besides life-threatening. That is why the child captures intense fear on a subconscious level, and natural water retention is lost completely, which is a significant problem of the initial swimming training for primary school children [3].

The most favorable conditions for swimming training and overcoming fear of open water are created in summer camps, their daily routine is filled with a variety of fitness and sports events. In the system of summer camps various forms of swimming lessons are widely used that provided the program of physical education.

The conditions of the camp (the presence of well-organized groups based on children age, the flexibility to use a particular time of day) allows you to plan ahead and carry out the work at swimming training of children [5].

The works of scientists (G. A. Parawan; S. Sheckman; G. A. Dmitriev; D. F. Mosunov, V. G. Sazykin) were theoretically-methodological basis of the research problem.

Theoretical analysis of scientific research testifies to the absence of reasonable methods of overcoming the fears associated with the water when teaching to swim and scientific-methodological developments in the prevention and overcoming fears associated with water, which leads to certain difficulties and violations of logical consistency in teaching swimming.

**The goal of the study** is to develop methodological recommendations on overcoming fear, in the initial swimming training of children.

During the development of methodological recommendations to overcome fear, children who cannot swim, in the initial training set the following **goals**:

- to analyze the causes of accidents in open water;
- to identify the most common fears and the reasons for their occurrence in younger students that hinder teaching swimming;
- to develop methodological recommendations for the prevention of fears that hinder teaching swimming.

**Research materials and methods.** The study was carried out in educational and training sessions in swimming at the summer camp «Lastochka» in Skadovsk in 2016 during the month of June. The study involved 80 people who could not swim aged 7–10 years, of which 46 girls and 34 boys.

Analysis and synthesis of scientific and methodological sources, interviews, observations and questionnaires.

Analysis of scientific and methodological sources was carried out to determine statistics, causes of accidents in open water, the most common fears of children allowed to make a questionnaire to identify and overcome certain difficulties and violations of logical consistency in teaching swimming primary school children.

**Discussion and the results of the study.** According to St. Miles, 140,000 people die from drowning every year in the world, specified by G. N. Klintsevich – 200,000, according to UNESCO, up to 350,000. In

Kherson region, 140–180 people drown annually (former the USSR – 35–36 thousand, in Ukraine 5–6 thousand). The death rate from drowning is second only to deaths from road accidents [4].

For comparison, there is the average world statistics number of annual fatal accidents.

On average, each year a lot of people die on different reasons: railways – 574 people; in car accidents – 48 880 people; the plane crashes – 2049 people; ships disasters – 1500 people; other (domestic, industrial) – 10,000 people – around 63 003 people, including 1/6 of all the victims in the water.

The threat in the water may be due to the following factors:

A) external environment (swimming in unfamiliar places, the winter water, stormy weather, swimming close to the boats, etc.);

B) the condition of the body, emotional stress – fear, physical and mental fatigue, age, sex, general state of health, previous diseases.

The methodological analysis of scientific sources allowed to determine the causes of accidents in open water, as shown in table 1.

In table 1 there are the percentage figures of the causes of accidents in open water. The highest percentage of bathing in alcohol intoxication is 13,8 %. The second place is the inability to swim 13,7 %. The third place is taken to the coverage of fear 13,1%. The fourth one is violation of the rules of boating 15 %. The fifth is lack of child care 9,3 %. The sixth place is pranks and violence 9,2 %. The seventh step is the reasons of suicide 6,9 %. The eighth place shared by unidentified circumstances and causes of overheating of the body 4,6 %. The ninth is a cause of disease of 4,5 %. The tenth place is a long swim and the loss of strength 4,3 %. The eleventh step causes of hypothermia 2,8 %. At last place causes of accidents in open waters 2,3 %.

*Table 1*

**Characteristics of the Causes of Accidents in Open Water, %**

<b>Causes of Accidents</b>	<b>%</b>
Bathing in an alcohol intoxication	13,8
Inability to swim	13,7
Coverage of fear	13,1
Violation of the rules of boating	11,5
Lack of child care	9,3
Pranks and violence	9,2
Reasons of suicide	6,9
Unidentified circumstances	4,6
Causes of overheating	4,6
Cause of disease	4,5
Long swim and the loss of strength	4,3
Causes of hypothermia	2,8
Causes of accidents	2,3

Scientific and methodical analysis of literature allowed to identify the common fears:

- the fear of depth;
- the inability to fix safely;
- unusual weather conditions;
- uncomfortable bottom to enter the water barefoot (mud, seaweed, pebbles, shells);
- unfamiliar environment (large number of strangers on the beach and in the water and the use of technical means in the area reserved for swimming people);
- the possibility of meeting underwater creatures;
- the fear of sudden appear of waves or water flows;
- the opacity of the water.

Researchers E. V. Voskresenskaya, E. V. Miller, N. V. Kuhtova found the most important physical symptoms associated with fear of open water:

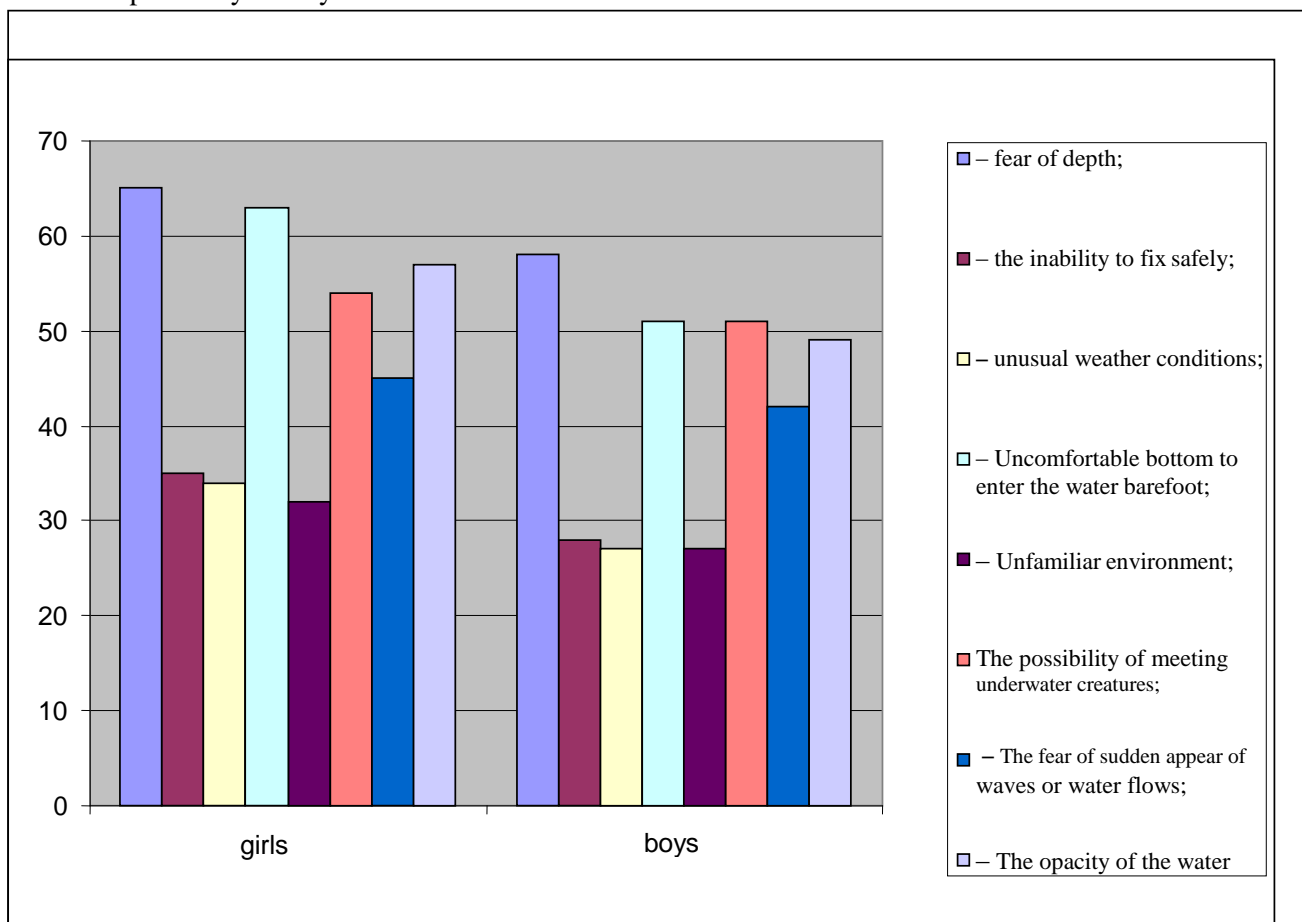
- tachycardia;
- dry mouth;
- tremor, trembling in the limbs;
- the feeling of asthmatic asphyxiation and difficulty in breathing;
- nausea, vomiting;

- feeling dizzy, pain in the temples;
- fear of losing control;
- the feeling that the objects and actions are unrealistic;
- the feeling of unreality about his own «I»;
- numbness and tingling;
- hot flashes and chills.

If there is one of the symptoms, the swimming lessons should be postponed until the next time [2].

During the conversation with the children it was found that the reason of fear and unwillingness to learn swimming was: a bad swim in open water, when the child fell and swallowed some water; the situation when the boat turned down; non proper use of auxiliary means such as an inflatable vest, swimming boards and balls, sleeves and other means, violations of teaching swimming methods by parents.

It was found out that the negative information about the dangers of swimming, children learn from their parents who in the presence of children transfer tragic events related to open water. The reason for the fears of children is also views of various horror films, the plot of which associated with a tragedy in open water and accompanied by bloody scenes and death.



**Fig. 1.** Indicators of Factors of Fear of Primary School Children, %

In the diagram, pic.1, the percentage indicators show the fear factors of boys and girls: the highest percentage is the fear of depth 65 % girls and 58 % boys. Fear of uncomfortable bottom to enter the water barefoot is 63 % girls and 51 % boys. The percentage of children who had the fear of opaque water was 57 % girls and 49% boys. The fear of underwater creatures is 54 % girls and 51 % boys. The fear of a sudden appear of waves is 45 % girls and 42 % boys.

The fear of the inability to fix safely is 35 % girls and 28 % boys, the fear of unusual weather conditions is 34 % girls and 27 % boys. The fear of the unfamiliar environment is 32 % girls and 27 % boys.

The preventing fear can be done by methodically proper formation of initial training in swimming, that would help maximize the accumulation of persistent positive conditioned reflexes connections in response to unusual situations, such as:

- avoidance of conversations about the danger of exercise;
  - maximum division of the exercise on the background of its whole performance;
  - avoidance of premature self-exercise;
  - sequence in training;
  - analysis and clarification of details technology, taking into account trainer's comments about mistakes;
  - completing training on the successful performance of a dangerous exercise to create confidence and a favorable emotional background for the future trainings;
  - the creation of prevention (excluding injuries) training conditions, including the provision of insurance.
- The main measures to prevent the state of fear are:
- obligatory observance the principles of availability, consistency, algorithmic learning in the educational process;
  - accounting degree of readiness (physical coordination, mental) before learning new complex exercises;
  - development of volitional qualities (courage, determination, confidence);
  - injury prevention in the classroom;
  - the use of suggestion and auto-suggestion before performing dangerous exercises based on the principles of psychological impact on the minds of everyone;
  - the use of innovative techniques while swimming. [1; 3]

#### **Methodical Recommendations in Overcoming Fear of Water in the Initial Teaching to Swim.**

1. Before the classes in water methodical preparatory classes are carried out to clarify the problem of fear, the aim of which is overcoming the negative attitudes of the whole group and preparing children conscious attitude to learning.

2. The first lesson in the water has to convince the child in the safety of the lessons and to instill confidence in successful learning, to inspire confidence to the instructor. It is necessary to conduct a lecture with a demonstration of some exercises that will introduce children with the laws of interaction between body and water environment.

3. Each lesson should start on the land and remind the rules of behaviour in open water (entry and exit from the water only with the permission of the teacher, introducing special commands), as well as demonstrations of exercises, which will be studied in water (learning swimmer movements on the ground is a good psychological preparation).

4. It is recommended at the beginning of the lesson to announce the whole plan of the lesson. Then the children move from performing one exercise to another, overcoming fear and at the end of the lesson their mood will get better understanding completed tasks.

5. In the first stage of teaching swimming it is used a complex of preparatory exercises for the mastering of water. They allow beginners to know the properties of water, training exhales into the water, perform simple swimming movements.

The instructor needs to teach the children the rules of using the equipment, visually to establish the suitability of their use, to verify the degree of preparation for each participant. Proper use of equipment in some cases will help to overcome fear.

It is necessary that the pupil wanted to get rid of his own fears. The instructor, in turn, should inspire a faith in a child himself, show patience and endurance. The primary task in overcoming fear is the need to accustom the child to the water, that will allow to navigate in the unusual circumstances of the aquatic environment and, as a result, confidence in their abilities.

Overcoming the psychological barrier to water and physical stiffness are major ways to the extinction of a steady negative association to stay in the water. However, in cases when a child cannot overcome the fear of water, it is important not to insist. Give him the opportunity to sit and watch as others swim. After some time he will understand that it's not so bad. All exercises for initial swimming training should be chosen according to didactic principles of conscious education of children. Thus, children must be convinced that the ability to swim is a vital skill that is a prerequisite for the security of their lives. The instructor should be aware that such factors as comfortable temperature of air and water, known depth, water transparency have a positive effect on the psychological state of children, especially at the first lessons.

**Conclusions and prospects for further research.** Fear associated with open water is one of the most common varieties of children's fears, which is a serious obstacle to mastering the skills of swimming. We showed the methodical recommendations of preventing fear related to open water while the initial training of swimming, which are based on the principles of the psychological impact on the minds of everyone as well

as the use of innovative techniques while swimming. Using these methodical recommendations to prevent fear associated with open water can greatly facilitate the process of initial training in swimming and create the possibility of swimming training of everyone.

*Джерела та література*

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