

## **Dog therapy as a way of support emotional and social development children with mild intellectual disabilities**

### **Summary**

In the doctoral dissertation entitled "Doggo therapy as a way of support emotional and social development of children with mild intellectual disabilities" The main cognitive goal of the conducted research was to find out the effectiveness of doggo therapy as a way of support emotional and social development of children with mild intellectual disabilities (MID). The therapeutic program prepared with the participation of a dog was developed based on the assumptions of cognitive-behavioral therapy and prepared for MID children at younger school age. Each of the 20 sessions was designed to most effectively develop emotional and social competences in the field of self-awareness, social awareness, responsible decision-making, managing one's own behavior, and managing relationships with others.

The research was a natural experiment in which 24 children participated MID. The analysis of the collected empirical material showed that the level of emotional and social development of participants at the beginning of dog therapy classes is low, whereas the presence of a dog during dog therapy classes increases competencies in terms of motivation for school learning, reduces the amount of anti-social behavior, lowers the level of inhibition in interpersonal contacts and increases the level of socialization. the presence of a dog during dog therapy classes supports the development of competences in the field of self-service, socialization, communication and general motor skills. The experiment showed that the dog is a motivating factor for children to undertake various activities and its presence contributes to improving the well-being of participants during dog therapy classes.

On the basis of the obtained results, conclusions were formulated for pedagogical practice regarding the possibilities offered by the use of dog therapy as a way of support emotional and social development of MID children.

Key words: dog therapy, experiment, supportive therapy, cognitive-behavioral therapy, emotional and social development, children with mild intellectual disabilities.