



Importance of sex education in school for the prevention of STIs/AIDS in adolescence

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Abstract: Prevention is an important factor to be included in the school program, since one tries to approach the subject only in science classes, with specific contents. However, it is noted that the topics addressed basically refer to contraceptive methods and biological conceptualization, focused on human anatomy and physiology. The objective was to bring information and alerts to students about possible infections transmitted by sexual intercourse without any form of prevention. The work was carried out in the class of the 8th year of the municipal school August 3 in the city of Vitoria de Santo Antão - PE, with the target audience in the age group between 14 and 16 years. The gymkhana provided young people to interact in a more didactic way, besides raising awareness about certain types of infections. Work contributes so that adolescents can later exercise sexuality with responsibility and safety.

Keywords: Sex education; Adolescence; School; Prevention; Infections

1. Introduction

In the beginning, sexuality was worked, not because it believed to be important for the integral development of the individual, but for the appearance and increase of cases of teenage pregnancy, the use of drugs by adolescents and the concern of parents and educators for the onset of AIDS (Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome) that begins to threaten young people and change their ways and concepts of experiencing sexuality (RIBEIRO, 1990).

Sex education performed in schools currently has occurred in a beginner way, the sexual orientation programs provided by schools are unprepared and do not focus on prevention. Prevention is the important factor to be included in the school program, while it becomes a lack of established standards and rules, since they state that one of the ideal ways to approach the subject would be only when some demand is presented, that is, only when the topic is addressed in science classes, with specific contents (MAROLA, 2011).

However, it is noted that the topics addressed basically refer to contraceptive methods and biological conceptualization, returning to human anatomy and physiology, where the focus is on the male and female reproductive system, with no training with the adolescent to develop skills and expand problem solving skills (MANPRIN, 2009).

With the onset of the HIV virus (Human Immunodeficiency Virus) some people believed that the contamination was linked to homosexuality, thus leading many heterosexuals to contract the virus because they did not prevent themselves, also increasing the number of people with the disease. From this reality, public agencies began to worry and create policies as a way of preventing the disease, which has not failed to achieve a great effect, today the society has information on the disease, also knowing that condoms are the only way to prevent and care for themselves (QUEIROZ, 2005).

AIDS is the disease caused by human immunodeficiency virus infection. This virus attacks the immune system, which is responsible for defending the body from diseases. The most affected cells are CD4+ T lymphocytes. The virus is able to alter the DNA of this cell and make copies of itself. After multiplying, it ruptures lymphocytes in search of others to continue the infection (FEDERAL, 2018).

There is not only AIDS as a sexually transmitted disease, there are several infections transmitted from sexual intercourse without any form of prevention. Some examples are: the human papilloma virus, which causes warts in various parts of the body; genital herpes, causing pain and genital sores; chlamydia, an infection that most often does not even present symptoms, leading people to contaminate other individuals without even knowing that they have the

disease, in this case the main symptom is genital pain and secretions (FEDERAL, 2018).

The school and the family play a fundamental role in the sexual education of young adolescents who, well oriented, will seek ways of prevention and take more care in their interpersonal involvements. Sexual orientation does not give us the certainty of total awareness of young people, but, without a doubt, we will have a decrease in the picture if we fight for full awareness of them. Although knowledge alone does not guarantee the modification of behaviors (FISHER & FISHER, 1992).

Sexual Education at school should take place in the pedagogical scope, and therefore does not have a therapeutic character. The work should be understood as a space so that, through dynamics, we can problematize themes, raise questions and broaden the world view and knowledge (MAROLA, 2011).

The main objective of the study was to develop an instrument to evaluate the knowledge of adolescents on the prevention of sexually transmitted infections.

2. Methodology

The chosen institution was municipal school August 3, in the city of Vitoria de Santo Antão. The chosen school is named for this because it is a historical date, not only for the municipality, but also in national importance, because it is the date that happened the Battle of the Tabocas occurred in Pernambuco in the seventeenth century, one of the episodes of the Dutch invasions and that prevented the advance of the flamingo army, into the interior of the Pernambuco captaincy. It is also the date that celebrates the political emancipation of the municipality.

The work was organized in three stages: on September 5, 2019, the first, a visit was held at the school to present the theme to the principal; the second happened on 05/10/2019, where the teacher responsible for the science discipline was chosen, the chosen class was a class of the 8th grade of elementary school final years, indicated by the teacher who appointed her for being the one who most needed a sex education class, besides being a participatory class. The third and last visit took place on 10/23/2019, where the class with the students took place, on the theme of sexual education focused on STIs (Sexually Transmitted Infection), where two classes were offered, one explaining the theme and taking the doubts of the students and another applying the gymkhana as a way of fixing the contents offered in the class.

The class took place in a very didactic way, where the students asked their questions about the topic discussed. Male and female condoms were displayed, causing the students to have a contact, since most did not know. The gymkhana was organized as follows: the class of 20 students was divided into two groups, each group chose a

representative to pop the balloon, who burst first would be entitled to the answer. Some questions related to the lesson were asked. Students chose the number of the question they wanted to answer, and consulted their classmates to answer correctly. The class that won was entitled to an award.

They were used to perform the class, balloons, chocolate for awards and a table of questions where the students draw the numbers of the questions to be answered. A total of 10 questions were asked for both groups.

3. Results and discussion

Students between 13 and 16 years of elementary school participated in the project at the end of elementary school in a public school in the municipality of Vitoria de Santo Antão. Initially the students were very quiet, showing a little shame on the subject. The class began with a discussion about when sex education began to be discussed in schools and why we talked about the topic (Figure 1). Of the 20 students who were in class, 05 asked questions about sexuality. Of the questions that arose: "Can a woman with HIV become pregnant?"; "can the baby be infected with the HIV virus during pregnancy or childbirth?"; "in sexual intercourse does the penis suffer some kind of pressure in relation to the vagina?"; "in the first sexual intercourse can there be contamination?".



Fig. 1. Exhibition of the theme at school. Source: The Author

Of the 20 students who were in class, 03 stated to ask questions with parents at home about sexuality, the other 17 feel ashamed or afraid to ask some kind of question, in this case fear of the parents' reaction. In this majority, there are also those who feel more comfortable taking questions in school with the teacher, so we can reinforce how much that school has a fundamental role in the sexual education of students. Among the 17 also had those who use the internet to answer questions, which is very worrying, because the internet offers pornographic content very easily and adolescents end up having access to the subject in a negative way.

We can also observe how working with different didactics, using something so simple, causes students to

interact (Figures 2 and 3). Unfortunately, there is a lack in schools, of a topic as important as sexuality, to be worked in a natural way.



Fig. 2. Gymkhana on sex education with 8th grade students. Source: The Author



Fig. 3. Intervention of 8th grade students with the theme through the gymkhana. Source: The Author

However, the activity was able to provide an open dialogue on the topics addressed and contributed to the formation of a more critical knowledge, besides clarifying simple but important doubts from the sexual and preventive point of view. For this and other reasons, it can be understood that empowering on the correct use of a contraceptive method is as or more important than making it available free of charge.

According to Martins (2012) and Furlani (2011), there is inefficiency of specific information interventions in relation to risky sexual behaviors among adolescents. According to the authors, with no improvement in related factors, such as training of professionals, questioning of didactic strategies and development of a culture that promotes critical reflection throughout school life, information will lose the sense of self-care for young people.

4. Conclusions

The pedagogical proposal presented can be a resource for professionals who work with adolescents and often wonder about how they can include young people in the development of health promotion actions, absorbing their experiences, enhancing their growth and development.

Talking about sexuality is not an easy task, but it is essential to keep our teens well informed about the possible risks they are or can take. We need to introduce this theme into class in a natural way, eliminating taboos that still come to exist. The educator is the important part, along with parents, in the process of guiding children and adolescents on what path and steps they should take to have a healthy sex life. It is extremely important to clarify that sexual orientation does not mean passing information about sex, but, addressing sexuality in a quiet and taboo-free way as a natural and satisfying situation in the lives of all human beings.

The study, in addition to raising awareness, contributed so that adolescents could later exercise their sexuality with responsibility and safety. Work is linked to the exercise of citizenship, which, on the one hand, proposes to work respect for oneself, linked to respect for the other, and, on the other hand, seeks to guarantee everyone, knowledge that will be fundamental for the formation of responsible citizens and aware of their abilities and responsibilities.

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