

Educational Sport and Quality of Life for Children and Teenagers from Brazilian Northeast

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Abstract : The use of sport as an integration mean is a very important tool regarding the social involvement of children and teenagers in a vulnerability situation. This study aims to report the experiences of a multidisciplinary program that intends to improve the quality of life of children and teenagers in Fortaleza, in the Northeast of Brazil. More than 400 children and teenagers aging 11 and 16 years participated in this study. Poor communities experience many particular difficulties in the urban centers such as violence, poor housing conditions, unemployment, lack in health care and deficient physical education in school. Physical education, physiotherapy, odontology, medicine and pharmacy students are responsible for the activities in the project supervised by a general coordinator and a counselor teacher of each academic unit. There are classes about team sports like basketball and soccer. Lectures about sexual behavior and sexually transmitted diseases are ministered beside the ones about oral health education, basic life support education, first aids, use and care with pharmaceuticals and orientations about healthy nutrition. In order to get the children's family closer, monthly informative lectures are ministered. There is also the concern about reflecting the actions and producing academic paperwork such as graduation final projects and books. The number of participants has oscillated lately, and one of the causes is the lack of practicing physical activities and sports regularly. However, 250 teenagers have participated regularly for at least two years. These teenagers have shown a healthier lifestyle and a better physical fitness profile. The resources for maintaining the project come from the Pro-Reitoria of Extension, Federal University of Ceara, as well as from the PROEXT/MEC, Federal Government. Actions of this nature need to be done thinking for long periods so the effects results can become effective. Public and private investments are needed due to low socioeconomic families who are most vulnerable and have fewer opportunities to enhance to health prevention services.

Keywords : children and teenagers, health, multidisciplinary program, quality of life

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