**THE IMPORTANCE OF A SOCIAL ACTION OF HEALTH PROMOTION FOR INSTITUTIONALIZED CHILDREN**

**Thauane Joshua Santos Sousa1, Samuel Sotero Lourenço2, Maria Cecília Marques Lopes3, Carolina Arantes Gama Porto Brum4.**

1Centro Educacional do Planalto Central Apparecido dos Santos, Brasília - DF; thauane.sousa@medicina.uniceplac.edu.br

2Centro Educacional do Planalto Central Apparecido dos Santos, Brasília - DF; samuel.lourenco@medicina.uniceplac.edu.br

3Centro Educacional do Planalto Central Apparecido dos Santos, Brasília - DF; maria.lopes@medicina.uniceplac.edu.br

4Centro Educacional do Planalto Central Apparecido dos Santos, Brasília - DF; carolina.arantes@uniceplac.edu.br

**Keywords:** Child, Growth and Development, Health Promotion, Health of Institutionalized Children, Growth and Development.

**INTRODUCTION:** Shelters for children show a scenario of social vulnerability in which institutionalized children are removed from the family cycle and face collective care, in detriment of parental attention. As a result, issues relating to lifestyle and health cannot be addressed effectively to sheltered children, demonstrating a problem for Brasília's social structure. Moreover, according to the Brazilian Legislation, all children have the right to full access to health. Therefore, medical students and pediatricians promoted a social action of health promotion for children between 0 (zero) and 12 (twelve) years of age at a shelter for children in social vulnerability. **OBJECTIVE:** Demonstrate the importance of a social action carried out by medical students to promote health care for institutionalized children in a shelter in Brasília. **METHODS:** An original article with research on SciELO, LILACS and PubMed, using the key-words: "Health of Institutionalized Children" AND "Social Vulnerability". The inclusion criteria were: articles in Portuguese and English, between the years 2009 and 2024, available in full text. As an exclusion criteria: articles which did not contain information in accordance with the research purposes. **RESULTS:** When children are subjected to situations of severe material and emotional deprivation, as can be the case with many sheltered children, there’s a high potential of affecting their physical, psychological and even social development. Moreover, children's growth and development is the main indicator of their health conditions, so the analysis of the health and illness process in sheltered children needs to be critical, because they live in a collective care environment where there is not too much attention to each child’s development. Therefore, the social action had the goal of promoting medical care, doing the physical exam, completing the growth and development marker of the children’s passbooks and updating the vaccination booklet. It contributed to the health care in institutionalized children, as it enabled an objective and practical medical care, with referrals for children with special needs for more specific follow-up with specialist professionals. As a result, the social action had a positive impact on the health of each child held in the shelter, because it enabled the medical team to directly access the patient, facilitating the process of health promotion for these children in a situation of social vulnerability. **CONCLUSION:** Therefore, when analyzing the collective care environment, monitoring and evaluating the growth and development of sheltered children requires a delicate approach. In this way, a medical approach to health promotion with social actions in this vulnerable population is a doable way to guarantee well-being, prevent complications and educate about important factors for health care.

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