



The silencing of drugs: experiences-reflections in the school context

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INTRODUCTION: The school space is (re)known as a place of socialization, exchange and welcoming of the different subjects that are in it. Especially for adolescents, in which the space is experienced through interactions and experiences among their peers, which makes the environment conducive to discussions and access to the empirical knowledge of schoolchildren. It is from the perspective that the school should serve as an environment for disease prevention, health promotion, and discussion about everyday issues of childhood and adolescence, such as the issue of drugs, that this research is developed. **OBJECTIVE:** To understand and discuss how drugs are present in the speeches and silencing within the school context. **METHODOLOGY:** The present summary is a part of the project "*Production of meanings about drug addiction: an overview of drug use from the point of view of the adolescent and the family in the intersection of the school context, PSE and CAPSia in Santa Cruz do Sul*", submitted and approved by the Ethics in Research Committee of the University of Santa Cruz do Sul. In this project, visits are made to public schools in the municipality, where, after a dialogue with the directive team, a questionnaire is applied with students from the last five years (12-19 years), to understand their views on the theme of drugs. As a registration tool, field diaries are produced, which are analyzed according to the theoretical perspective of the Analysis of Meanings by Mary Jane Spink. In total, so far, nine schools have participated in the research, and the diaries analyzed relate to the experiences lived by the researchers at the time of the production of data both with the management team and with the students. **PARTIAL RESULTS:** To systematize the data, we chose two thematic markers that deal with different perspectives: "*the drug and the school staff*" and "*the drug and the teenagers*". In the first marker, it was identified a school environment surrounded by uncertainties and concerns. The theme of drug addiction remains a taboo, and is remembered by the team for its negative implications. It was observed a resistance of the directive teams in bringing the subject to school debate, sometimes requesting the results of the research for discriminatory/disciplinary uses, at other times demanding verticalized actions, such as lectures on the theme. It was observed that the school, in the figure of the teams, showed apprehension about how the adolescents would face the approach of the researchers and how the institution would deal with their questionings after the meeting. In the second marker, when the contact with the students was analyzed, this taboo theme exerted different reactions, especially an estrangement. When a conversation about drugs is proposed, it initially produces a corporal effect of discomfort, even in the passive act of listening to terms related to drug addiction. Between exchanges of glances, laughter, and parallel conversations with colleagues, a certain distrust in the dialog was expressed. The uncertainty derived



from a school routine in which the issue of drugs was not approached, or included in any discipline, carried out under a prohibitionist and abstinence bias. This meeting with the students was marked by a certain opposition in the narratives; despite showing interest in the theme, the adolescents feel censored in exposing their questions. It is possible to understand the fears that permeate the subjects involved in this narrative, but it is necessary to emphasize that health actions are also built through dialogue and reflection. **FINAL CONSIDERATIONS:** In this sense, it can be noticed that the theme of drugs is an imminent subject among the actors of the school context, but it is not worked on by any of the sides. Being by the fear of the reaction or the way of dealing, the silence is the ally of the problem in the corridors, in which it is noticeable the understanding of both the staff and the students of the complexity of the subject, but accepting the veiled agreement of not discussing it. The culture of silence can result in difficulties in accessing information, collecting data, and knowledge about the theme. Moreover, this scenario hinders the effectiveness of concrete actions provided for in public policies on education and health that aim to prevent drug use and promote health in the school environment.