



Public policies: The role of the School Health Program (PSE) as a tool for the integration between health and education



<https://doi.org/10.56238/levv15n39-132>

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ABSTRACT

This research analyzed the School Health Program (PSE) as a tool for the integration between health and education, highlighting its importance and impact on the integral development of students. The objective was to evaluate how the PSE articulates the health and education networks to improve the quality of life and school performance of children and adolescents. A bibliographic research methodology was used, with a survey of articles on the SciELO, Web Of Science and Google Scholar platforms. The results showed that the PSE promotes an effective intersectoral approach, offering preventive and health promotion actions in schools, such as vaccination, visual screening, physical exercises, and educational campaigns. The analysis revealed that the program contributes to the reduction of social inequalities and improves the school environment by integrating health into the educational process. The conclusion reaffirms that the PSE is an innovative and essential strategy, as it combines health care and teaching to prepare students for academic and social challenges, demonstrating the effectiveness of public policies that promote intersectoral integration and the balanced development of the new generations.

Keywords: Public Policies, Health, School Health Program (PSE).

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INTRODUCTION

Public policies play a key role in promoting social well-being, especially when it comes to strategic areas such as health and education. The integration of these two spheres is essential for integral human development, directly reflecting on the quality of life and school performance of children and adolescents. In this context, the School Health Program (PSE), launched in 2007 by the Federal Government of Brazil, emerges as an important tool for intersectoral articulation (Fertonani et al., 2015).

The PSE seeks to promote actions that involve the school community, health professionals and public managers to build an environment that favors student learning and health. The PSE is an intersectoral public policy that aims to articulate the health and education networks in a coordinated effort to meet the needs of basic education students. The initiative proposes a model of comprehensive health care, with actions ranging from disease prevention to the promotion of healthy habits in the school environment. This approach considers the school a privileged space for the implementation of practices that directly impact the cognitive and social development of students, integrating the knowledge and practices of both areas to form more conscious and healthy citizens (Fusco et al., 2023).

The relevance of the PSE lies in its ability to face problems that transcend the school space, such as childhood obesity, oral health, mental health and drug use, which directly affect school performance and the quality of life of students. By incorporating health into the school's daily life, the program aims to reduce social inequalities and ensure that all students, regardless of their social background, have access to information and services that contribute to their full development. This approach broadens the concept of student care, going beyond the classroom and creating a link between health and education that benefits the entire school community (Mattos et al., 2014).

The implementation of the PSE involves carrying out pedagogical activities and direct care actions, such as vaccination, visual screening, nutritional assessment and educational campaigns. These actions are planned and executed in partnership between schools and health units, with the objective of identifying and intervening early in risk factors that may compromise the physical and intellectual development of students. The program also promotes the training of teachers and health professionals, enabling them to act in an integrated manner in the promotion of school health, which strengthens the articulation between the service networks (Souza; Ferreira, 2020).

Thus, the PSE stands out as an innovative public policy that seeks to promote health in the school environment, contributing to the integral development of students and reinforcing the importance of intersectorality in the management of public policies. The integration between health and education provided by the program shows that the care of students' health is essential for

academic success, in addition to contributing to the formation of healthy individuals prepared for the social and professional challenges of the future (Vieira; Belisário, 2018).

In view of the above, the objective of this research was to analyze the role of the School Health Program (PSE) as a tool for the integration between health and education. To this end, a bibliographic research was carried out through the survey of articles on the SciELO, Web Of Science and Google Scholar platforms.

DEVELOPMENT

PUBLIC POLICIES: CONCEPTS, IMPORTANCE AND CHALLENGES IN IMPLEMENTATION

Public policies are actions and strategies adopted by the government to solve problems and meet the needs of society. They represent a commitment of the State to collective well-being and are essential to guarantee rights, promote social justice and stimulate economic and human development. Public policies cover several areas, such as health, education, security, housing, environment, and infrastructure, and are elaborated based on social diagnoses, popular demands, and legal guidelines that aim to improve the quality of life of the population (Vieira; Belisário, 2018).

The process of formulating public policies is complex and involves several steps, from the diagnosis of social problems to the evaluation of the results of the actions implemented. First, it is necessary to identify the needs and priorities of the population through surveys, statistical data, and public consultations. Next, the policy is formulated, which involves the definition of objectives, goals, strategies, and resources necessary for its execution. The implementation phase is crucial, as it is where policies are put into practice through programs, projects, and concrete actions. Finally, the evaluation of public policies makes it possible to measure the impact of actions and identify possible adjustments to improve their effectiveness (Veras; Ferreira; Lourinho, 2020).

The importance of public policies lies in their ability to transform social reality, reducing inequalities and promoting inclusion. They have a fundamental role in guaranteeing basic rights, such as health, education and security, which are essential for human development and citizenship. In addition, public policies act as mechanisms of regulation and social control, influencing behaviors, encouraging good practices, and promoting cultural and structural changes in society. By providing an organized and planned response to collective problems, public policies are indispensable tools for strengthening democracy and sustainable development (Souza; Ferreira, 2020).

However, the implementation of public policies faces several challenges. One of the main ones is the lack of financial and human resources, which often prevents the full execution of planned actions. Public management also faces difficulties related to bureaucracy, corruption, and administrative inefficiency, which can compromise the delivery of services to the population. Another significant challenge is the need for integration and coordination between the different



levels of government (federal, state and municipal) and sectors (health, education, security), to ensure that public policies are implemented smoothly and effectively (Fertonani et al., 2015).

For public policies to be truly effective, it is essential that there is an active participation of society in the process of elaborating and monitoring these actions. Transparency, accountability, and popular participation are essential pillars to ensure that public policies meet the real needs of the population and are adjusted according to the feedback received. Social movements, non-governmental organizations, and public policy councils play an important role in monitoring and proposing improvements, ensuring that government actions are directed towards promoting the common good and strengthening citizens' rights (Fusco et al., 2023).

Public policies are vital instruments for building a more just and equitable society. They materialize the State's commitment to the population, providing solutions to collective problems and ensuring the protection of fundamental rights. However, for its potential to be fully achieved, it is essential to face the challenges in its implementation, promote intersectoral integration, and ensure the active participation of society in the construction of policies that truly meet the desires of the community (Fusco et al., 2023).

SCHOOL HEALTH PROGRAM (PSE)

The School Health Program (PSE) is an intersectoral public policy implemented by the Federal Government of Brazil in 2007, which aims to promote health and improve the quality of life of basic education students. The program is the result of a partnership between the Ministries of Health and Education, with the objective of integrating health and education actions in the school environment, involving public schools and health units throughout the country. The PSE's proposal is to create a healthier and more conducive environment for learning, recognizing that the health and well-being of students are fundamental to their integral development (Fusco et al., 2023).

The PSE seeks to articulate the health and education networks through preventive and health promotion actions, such as vaccination campaigns, visual screening, nutritional assessment, physical activities, and education actions for oral health, mental health, and prevention of drug use. These actions are developed by health teams in partnership with schools, taking into account the specific needs of each school community. In addition, the program promotes pedagogical activities that address health issues, integrating knowledge that helps in the formation of healthy habits and in raising students' awareness of the importance of taking care of their health (Souza; Ferreira, 2020; Lima; Domingues Junior; Gomes, 2023; File; Domingues Junior; Silva, 2024; File; Silva; Domingues Junior, 2024).

The PSE's work is not limited to health actions in the school environment, but also involves the training of teachers and health professionals so that they can work in an integrated and



collaborative manner. This training is essential for actions to be continuous and incorporated into the school routine, ensuring that health promotion becomes a permanent and effective process. By strengthening the relationship between health and education, the program expands students' access to essential information and services, contributing to the reduction of social and health inequalities that affect the young population (Vieira; Belisário, 2018).

One of the great differentials of the PSE is its focus on prevention and early care. By identifying risk factors and promoting immediate interventions, the program helps prevent health problems from interfering with school performance and student development. In this way, the PSE acts preventively, avoiding the aggravation of conditions that could compromise learning, such as undetected vision problems, eating disorders or emotional issues. By integrating health and education, the PSE creates a more favorable environment for learning, while contributing to the formation of citizens who are more aware of their health and well-being (Mattos et al., 2014).

THE ROLE OF THE SCHOOL HEALTH PROGRAM (HSP) AS A TOOL FOR THE INTEGRATION BETWEEN HEALTH AND EDUCATION

The School Health Program (PSE) plays a crucial role as a tool for the integration between health and education, promoting an intersectoral approach that seeks the integral development of students. Integration between these two areas is critical, as it recognizes that the physical, mental, and social well-being of students is essential for academic success and for the formation of healthy and critical citizens. The PSE articulates the health and education networks, creating a link that allows the execution of coordinated and efficient actions, aimed at promoting health within the school environment (Souza; Ferreira, 2020).

One of the main roles of the PSE is the implementation of prevention and health promotion actions directly in schools, such as visual health screenings, vaccination, nutritional assessments, physical activities, and awareness campaigns on important topics, such as mental health, oral hygiene, drug use prevention, and healthy eating practices. These actions are developed collaboratively between health and education professionals, making the school a space that goes beyond formal education and becomes a point of integral support for the well-being of students (Veras; Ferreira; Lourinho, 2020).

By integrating health and education, PSE not only improves students' access to health services but also contributes to the creation of a healthier learning environment. Undiagnosed health problems, such as vision difficulties, hearing, emotional issues, or eating disorders, can significantly impact school performance. With the early intervention and awareness promoted by the PSE, it is possible to minimize these impacts, ensuring that students have better learning and development conditions (Fertonani et al., 2015).



In addition, the PSE strengthens the role of the school as a transforming agent in the community, taking healthy information and practices beyond the school walls. Teachers and health professionals receive training to work in an integrated way, which enhances the reach of the program's actions and generates a positive impact on the training of students. The involvement of the family and the community in the activities of the PSE is also encouraged, expanding the support network for the student and reinforcing the importance of health care in all contexts of coexistence (Souza; Ferreira, 2020).

Therefore, the School Health Program is an innovative and essential strategy for the integration between health and education, promoting a school environment that values the well-being of students as a fundamental part of the educational process. By acting together, health and education policies enable a more complete and effective approach to the development of new generations, preparing them not only for academic challenges, but also for the construction of a healthy and conscious life.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

The analysis of the School Health Program (PSE) evidences its significant role as a tool for the integration between health and education, meeting the central objective of this research. The PSE stands out for promoting an intersectoral approach that is essential for the integral development of students, recognizing the interdependence between physical, mental and social well-being and academic success. Through the articulation between the health and education networks, the program is able to implement actions that go beyond the school curriculum, creating a healthier and more conducive environment for learning.

The study demonstrates that PSE not only improves students' access to essential health services, such as screenings, vaccines, and nutritional assessments, but also acts preventively, preventing undiagnosed health problems from compromising school performance and student development. The program's ability to identify and intervene early in risk factors contributes to the reduction of social and health inequalities, promoting a more equitable and inclusive school environment.

In addition, the PSE strengthens the role of the school as a transforming agent in the community by involving teachers, health professionals, families and the community in general. The continuous training of educators and health professionals and the encouragement of community involvement increase the effectiveness of the program's actions and ensure that health promotion is a continuous process and integrated into the school routine. This aspect of PSE demonstrates how collaboration between different sectors can generate positive and lasting impacts on students' lives.



Therefore, the Health at School Program reveals itself as an innovative and effective strategy for the integration between health and education. The program contributes significantly to the construction of a more holistic educational approach, where the health care of students is integrated into the educational process, preparing them to face academic and social challenges with a solid foundation of well-being. The evidence presented confirms that the PSE is an essential public policy to promote a more balanced and healthy development of the new generations, aligning health promotion with educational advancement.



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