

AFFECTIVITY AS A PEDAGOGICAL PRACTICE IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION



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ABSTRACT

This article presents a theoretical research that aimed to reflect on the importance of affectivity in the practices of Early Childhood Education. To this end, it was based on the vision of Early Childhood Education legally established from the Law of Guidelines and Bases of National Education (LDB, 1996) and the National Curriculum Guidelines for Early Childhood Education (DCNEI, 2010) and the conception of child resulting from them. The investigation sought to point out theoretical discussions based on the studies of Pikler and Gerber, which understand babies and young children as powerful beings. Aspects of pedagogical practices with emphasis on affectivity, what is or is not the education of children and babies, the aspect of attachment and the development of emotions in this age group were discussed. It is concluded that the affective bond and interpersonal relationships are inherent to the basic needs of child development and the particularities of the work, principles, practices and curriculum of Early Childhood Education involve the affective character of educators, who must be part of the group of limited adults who daily participate directly and indirectly in the construction of meanings, cultures and personalities of the child.

Keywords: Affectivity. Pedagogical Practice. Early Childhood Education.

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INTRODUCTION

Affectivity in Early Childhood Education is a fundamental basis for strengthening the bond between teacher and child, which makes it indispensable in the educational practices of this age group.

This work aims to reflect on the importance of affectivity in Early Childhood Education practices, presenting a theoretical perspective that can contribute to guide the pedagogical practice of early childhood educators in contact with babies and young children. Although relevant, this theme causes debates and doubts in the daily experience of Early Childhood Education professionals, as they question which practices would be appropriate in the exercise as early childhood educators with young children: how to conduct moments of care in an affective way and to the same professional? What attention should be given to the moments of emotional challenges that the child faces, as he is still in the initial development of his capacities in this area? How to deal with tantrums, with the need to be held and welcomed? What would be the limit and the appropriate measure for all this in the school environment, where several children are together as a collective, but with individual needs?

These seem to be latent doubts for Pedagogy students who are starting the first professional experiences of their careers, especially through mandatory internships or paid internships. However, this dichotomy also makes up the pedagogical work of many Early Childhood Education teachers who already work in the area, and sometimes demonstrate inadequate practices or even question their professional work with this group precisely because of the demands that working with this age group requires, as it involves care and education in a broad and inseparable way.

This study was motivated by the author's first experience with Early Childhood Education, in the first semester of the course. During this period, she was able to observe, as a Pedagogy student with a still inexperienced vision, that young children seemed to adapt and develop better when they established an individual affective bond with their educators. In addition, they demonstrated a greater willingness to participate in the proposed activities and adhere to the established routines. Authors such as Falk (2010) and Fochi (2015) highlight the importance of the affective bond for the full development of children during the first years of life. It is understood that affectivity, when integrated into pedagogical practices, provides a welcoming environment that is conducive to the emotional, social and cognitive development of children.

The Law of Guidelines and Bases of National Education (LDB) provides for the purpose of Early Childhood Education the integral development of the child, also considering the psychological aspect (Law No. 9,394/96, art. 29), which involves the affective dimension, especially for young children. However, it is common to observe that this dimension has been explored without the seriousness that this theme implies for working with babies and young children, in which the affective bond is often relegated to the background, without being contemplated in the pedagogical character. There may also be the conception that the expression of affection is naturally inherent to the teacher (Arce, 2001).

The text proposed here has a theoretical character and presents some discussions by authors that conceptually respond to my concerns about pedagogical practices with children in Early Childhood Education, considering the perspective of emotional development and affection, beyond the dichotomy of theory and practice, when a practice in schools that distances itself from the proposed theory of a respectful education for babies and young children is often reinforced. In view of this, the present work has as its object of study the relevance of the affective bond between teacher and child, as well as the affective practices within Early Childhood Education.

It was identified that these issues were very present in reports of colleagues during the undergraduate course, whether in debates of disciplines, reports on the mandatory internships of the Pedagogy Course (especially those of Early Childhood Education) or paid internships and, therefore, we sought to understand what would be the possible bases for a consistent discussion on the importance of affective development in Early Childhood Education.

The article is organized presenting information that structures Early Childhood Education in Brazil, its organization and functioning and subsequently, how this educational stage should be thought of based on the DCNEI. We present the vision of a child consistent with this proposal.

The following titles present our discussions: they scrutinize some aspects of pedagogical practices with an emphasis on affectivity, what is or is not the education of children and babies, the aspect of attachment and the development of emotions in this age group. We base our work on approaches that understand babies and young children from this perspective, as powerful beings. To this end, we focus on the theoretical construction of Falk (2010) that is based on the principles of the studies of the Hungarian physician Emmi

Pikler and authors who report on her work or are in tune with it, such as Magda Gerber, presented in the studies of Gonzales-Mena and Eyer (2014).

We will present four fronts of discussion, exposing:

- Some principles, practices and curriculum in Early Childhood Education;
- What is and what is not the education of babies and children;
- Clarifications about attachment;
- Development of emotions.

Below, we present how Brazilian Early Childhood Education is organized.

WHAT IS EXPECTED OF EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

The Brazilian legislation that guides education in the country, the LDB (1996), establishes that Early Childhood Education is the first stage of Basic Education, aimed at children from zero to five years of age. It is divided into two moments: the daycare, from 0 to 3 years old; and preschool, in the following two years.

The LDB (1996) defines Early Childhood Education as an educational modality that aims at the integral development of the child, in its physical, psychological, intellectual and social aspects, complementing the action of the family and the community.

From this purpose, it is understood that Early Childhood Education should provide an educational environment that favors the full development of children, stimulating their potential and guaranteeing the right to quality education from the first years of life, in line with the principles of equality, inclusion, diversity and respect for human rights. To this end, the institution responsible for introducing children in their first collective access to culture, basic knowledge and welcoming, needs an adequate look at babies (Rocha, 2001).

According to the National Curriculum Guidelines for Early Childhood Education (DCNEI, 2010), the institution of Early Childhood Education usually becomes the young child's second link with society, the first being outside the family environment. Therefore, the feeling of belonging to someone (primarily family), built in the first year of life, does not leave the child abruptly when he enters school. However, other bonds are created and the child will bond with other adults and children. To this end, the work developed in the first years of Early Childhood Education, therefore, the period of daycare, must be developed in a shared way with the family.

Thus, daycare centers as collective spaces for education have socio-political responsibilities guided by the performance of an active role in the construction of a democratic society. From a socio-political point of view, Early Childhood Education has the role of promoting equity and social inclusion from the first years of life, ensuring that all children have access to quality education and equal opportunities. With regard to the pedagogical function, that is, the integral development of the child, it seeks to create an educational environment that enables growth in different areas, such as physical, emotional, cognitive and social. Through pedagogical approaches appropriate to each age group, activities such as play, social interactions, logical thinking, artistic expression and language development are encouraged (Rocha, 2001).

HOW SHOULD THE APPROACH BE WITH BABIES AND YOUNG CHILDREN

Considering that the work with infants and young children cannot be contemplated under the same guidelines and practices as that of older children and more independent of physical and emotional care, it is crucial to contemplate the principles of pedagogical practices. In this way, relationships are understood as the pillar of education and care for this target audience.

Care routines in Early Childhood Education play a fundamental role in providing opportunities for respectful, reactive and reciprocal interactions (Bassedas; Huguet, Solé, 1999; Cerisara, 1999). It is unquestionable to recognize the affective bond as a structural element in these practices. In addition, simple interactions such as handing/picking up objects, picking up and putting the child on the floor are essential components of these interactions, and it is crucial that they are conducted with respect and attention. Equally indispensable is to ensure individual moments of interaction between children and caregivers, allowing personalized attention and strengthening the affective bond.

From the social conceptions about Early Childhood Education, it is understood the importance of the DCNEI guiding the pedagogical practice, as well as the skills to be developed. In Brazil, the existence of a specific curriculum for Early Childhood Education was the field of debates and controversies due to different views of children, families and the functions of daycare. The curriculum needs to be constituted as a political, cultural and scientific instrument, understood as educational practices organized around knowledge and in the midst of social relations, which

[...] seek to articulate the experiences and knowledge of children with the knowledge that is part of the cultural, artistic, scientific and technological heritage. Such practices are carried out through social relationships that children establish from a very young age with teachers and other children, and affect the construction of their identities (Brasil, 2009, p. 6).

Such practices should conceive the particularities of the age group of the child served by Early Childhood Education, which are characterized by remarkable acquisitions, such as speech, gait, sphincter control, the ability to pretend and formation of imagination and representation in different languages. From this perspective, child development is represented by its apparently biological character, however, the dimensions of child development are integrated and indivisible, in addition to not being universal constitutions. In this sense, it is not just an influencing character, but a development that happens **from** interactions, relationships and daily practices.

The expected acquisitions for children aged 0-5 years cover several areas of development. During this period, children are expected to advance in their motor coordination, both in gross coordination, performing movements such as running and jumping, and in fine coordination, manipulating small objects with dexterity. In addition, they are expected to develop social skills, such as interacting with other children and adults, sharing and expressing emotions appropriately. In the cognitive aspect, children begin to explore the environment around them, demonstrating curiosity, solving simple problems and developing attention. As for language, they are expected to expand their vocabulary, develop oral language, understand simple instructions, and begin to construct sentences and tell stories. In the ethical and moral sphere, the development of values such as respect, solidarity, cooperation, responsibility and autonomy is sought. These acquisitions are fundamental for the integral growth of children, and adequate stimulation through meaningful interactions in a conducive environment is essential for their full development (Bassedas; Huguet, Solé, 1999).

Caring should be intrinsic to educating in the curriculum, since it is an essential and inseparable dimension of the educational process. It needs to be integrated into the curriculum and developed in an articulated way when educating. Care involves attention to basic needs, such as food, hygiene, rest and health, ensuring a safe and welcoming environment for the development of children, but not only that: care covers all actions and practices aimed at the physical, emotional, social and affective well-being of young children. For these practices to be effective, it is essential to establish healthy and trusting affective

bonds, which allow the child to feel welcomed and safe even in the absence of the family, establishing new relationships with the group of educators with whom he or she relates throughout the day.

Despite its relevance, the affective and emotional character of the curriculum does not receive the attention it deserves and is little discussed. The strengthening of these practices is fundamental for the establishment of the affective bond as a means of achieving quality early childhood education that is attentive to the child's moment in life. It is worth remembering that the previous vision of Early Childhood Education was of preparation for elementary school, exclusively, without taking into account the multiple aspects of child development.

THE CHILD'S VISION

The DCNEI (2010) help to understand the young child as someone who seeks to understand the world and himself, experiencing feelings of discomfort, uncertainty and generating needs and desires. She develops responses and meanings to deal with these experiences, and is constantly modifying and reconstructing these meanings through her interactions with other people and objects.

Through these experiences shared with children, educators expand their possibilities of understanding and responding to their initiatives and needs. This view highlights the importance of affectionate, meaningful, and stimulus-rich interactions between teachers and children. The reciprocity between educator and student is valued, in which both benefit and learn from each other.

Thompson and Goodvin (2005) state that young children seek to attribute meaning to their experiences from the first moments of life, directing their interest to know both the material and social worlds around them. In this sense, the child's cognitive, social and emotional capacities are built and influenced by the interactions he establishes with the environment, especially with adults and more experienced partners. It is through these interactions that children attribute meaning to their experiences and expand their skills and knowledge (Bassedas; Huguet, Solé, 1999).

During daily interactions with various partners, shared meanings are constructed, from which the child learns how to act or resist the values and cultural norms of his environment. It is essential to recognize that children learn very significant things when they interact with their peers, different from the learning acquired through contact with adults or

older children. In addition, as the group of children interacts, children's cultures are built, that is, their own modes of expression, games, communication codes and forms of relationship are established. "Childhood cultures express the societal culture in which they are inserted, but they do so in a different way from adult cultures, at the same time that they convey specifically childish forms of intelligibility, representation and symbolization of the world" (Sarmiento, 2002, p. 12).

Interaction with different partners provides children with the opportunity to broaden their understanding of the world, develop social skills, exercise empathy and cooperation, and promote cultural diversity and the collective construction of knowledge. Therefore, interaction with different partners in childhood plays a fundamental role in the integral development and formation of children as sociocultural beings.

In the Sociology of Childhood, the child is considered a "social agent" active in the creation of culture (Oliveira; Tebet, 2010). From this perspective, it is recognized that children play an active role in the socialization process. However, it is essential to emphasize that, although children are active in the production of culture, they cannot carry out such production in a social vacuum. Their interactions, experiences, and social contexts shape and influence the process. Therefore, the child is inserted in a web of social relationships that contribute to his socialization. Despite playing an active role in cultural production, children do not have complete autonomy in this process. They are subject to adult influences and orientations, as well as established social norms and values. Reactions, responses, psychodramatic games, interpretations of reality and games are products of the interactions that children establish with adults and other children. These interactions contribute to the construction of meanings, values and social behaviors (Sarmiento, 2002).

Recognizing childhood as a generational category of its own, children from their alterities as the multiple-others, in relation to adults and also the critical balance of the theoretical perspectives that constructed the object childhood as the projection of the adult in miniature or as an imperfect adult, in becoming, constitutes a deconstructionist theoretical effort of the sociology of childhood (Sarmiento, 2005, p. 373)

Children, based on their multiple interactions and relationships with the world: "formulate interpretations of society, of others and of themselves, of nature, of thoughts and feelings, and they do so in a different way to deal with everything that surrounds them" (Sarmiento, 2005, p. 373).

To understand the child as a social being is to understand that his action in front of society is not only that of an observer or object of teaching, but to humanize them in the most legitimate sense, it is to consider that he not only can but acts intensely in society.

Oliveira and Tebet (2010) state that in order to understand children as producers of cultures, it is necessary to: "break with the old hegemonic representations, reject the obviousness and the old models of institutions and childhoods". In contemporary perspectives, we can understand the child as an active individual, contextualized in time and space, who is not simply a copy or opposite of the adult. She is a participating subject, playing roles of actor and author in her relationships with herself, with others and with the world around her.

In this context, the daily life of Early Childhood Education should allow children to appropriate different languages and knowledge that circulate in our society, but considering them as capable beings who also act in the world in a meaningful way. In this way, the organization of daily life becomes an environment conducive to the integral development of children, valuing their capacities and promoting the construction of knowledge in a meaningful and pleasurable way.

DISCUSSIONS ON AFFECTIVE DEVELOPMENT IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

We base our work on approaches that understand babies and young children from this perspective, as powerful beings. To this end, we focus on the theoretical construction of Falk (2010) that is based on the principles of the studies of the Hungarian physician Emmi Pikler and authors who report on her work or are in tune with it, such as Magda Gerber, presented in the studies of Gonzales-Mena and Eyer (2014).

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PRINCIPLES, PRACTICES AND CURRICULUM IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

Considering that the work with infants and young children cannot be contemplated under the same guidelines and practices as that of older children and more independent of physical and emotional care, it is crucial to contemplate the principles of pedagogical

practices. In this way, relationships are understood as the pillar of education and care for this target audience.

Considering the above, even though respectful relationships and affectionate interactions are fundamental principles in working with babies and young children, it is crucial to emphasize that pedagogical work in this age group goes beyond simply being friendly, patient and warm. It is not just about acting on instinct. Although the physical and mental presence of the caregiver is necessary in the care of children, it is important to recognize that pedagogical actions are often implicit in reactive interactions with them. Therefore, the simple act of being receptive to young children and responding reactively to their requests or forms of communication creates developmental and learning situations.

It may seem that anyone who is warm and friendly is fit to care for children, and that anyone who has patience can handle babies. To be sure, these are valuable traits in caregivers, but caring for children under three involves more than just acting on instinct or driven by what seems to work (Gonzales-Mena; Eyer, 2014, p. 5).

Much more than "teaching something", Early Childhood Education proposes a more bodily work, which requires the physical and mental presence of the caregiver towards the children. Often, the "simple" action of being receptive to young children and responding reactively to their requests or forms of communication create developmental and learning situations.

Some caregivers feel like they're not doing their job if they just sit on the floor where babies and toddlers play. They want to play the role of teachers, which they interpret as "teaching something". It is very difficult for most adults to sit around small children and not direct the situation. Being receptive and positively reactive is a skill that most adults need to learn, apparently it does not occur naturally (Gonzales-Mena; Eyer, 2014, p. 7).

According to Gonzales-Mena and Eyer (2014), relationships develop from various interactions, and it is through these positive interactions that it becomes possible to build a desirable relationship in Early Childhood Education in which care and education complement each other, promoting the healthy development and well-being of children. In addition, they point out the need to recognize that the way we approach, refer to, and touch a child can lay the foundation for the teacher-student bond if it is cultivated with affection and respect.

Until you realize how much of a difference it makes, the natural tendency is to pick the child off the floor without saying anything. Babies are often carried around as objects, even when they are old enough to walk and talk. Adults often pull a child off

the floor and put them in a chair or stroller without saying a single word. This type of attitude is not respectful (Gonzales-Mena; Eyer, 2014, p. 11).

By understanding the importance of these moments, we understand that care goes beyond basic physical needs, it also involves the emotional and affective dimension, directly impacting the well-being and integral development of the child. Therefore, by building a solid and honest relationship, the educator creates an environment of trust, in which the student feels safe to express their emotions, ask questions, seek support, and explore the world around them. By intentionally working with the affective field in educational practice, the educator recognizes the importance of the emotional bond and dedicates himself to cultivating it. This implies listening carefully, being emotionally present, valuing the student's experiences and perspectives, as well as encouraging autonomy, authenticity, and mutual respect.

In this way, when the bond and attachment are strengthened, the caregiver acquires the ability to interpret the child's signs and expressions, understanding their needs even when they are not verbalized. This allows for more effective communication and better harmony between caregiver and child. In order to guide the pedagogical practices of care for young children in daycare, Gonzales-Mena and Eyer (2014), based on the works of Magda Gerber, point out 10 principles based on the philosophy of respect. These principles are:

1. Involve babies and children in the things that concern them;
2. Invest in quality time;
3. Learn the unique ways children communicate and teach them yours;
4. Invest time and energy to build a well-rounded personality;
5. Respect babies and children as valuable people;
6. Be honest about your feelings;
7. Be the model of the behavior you want to teach;
8. Look at problems as learning opportunities and let babies and children solve them on their own;
9. Build security by teaching trust;
10. Be concerned with the quality of development at each stage.

From this, it is understood that the pedagogical practice that involves the affective aspects is far from intuitive. The adult should act as a stimulator of the baby – rethinking

what the stimulus means – either from the intervention or just from the physical presence in situations with learning potential.

WHAT IS AND WHAT IS NOT THE EDUCATION OF INFANTS AND CHILDREN

Gonzales-Mena and Eyer (2014) point out the need for an education program for children in which the focus is not on the stimulation of babies *per se*, but the quality of facilitator attributed to the educator, whose function is to contribute to the development of the child by promoting conflict resolution and individual autonomy. The authors argue that an education in which educators are trained to react positively and respectfully to the individual needs of each child focuses on both education and care.

It is understood that the development of children from 0 to 3 years old requires adaptations to the environment and specific reactions from educators. The educator – who is also a caregiver – must know the babies very well, in order to become able to react to the expressions and cues of each child, developing communicative patterns that satisfy the needs.

The work of the educator in this age group would be guided by positive and respectful practice, in which the adult facilitates the understanding/learning of the child by providing situations and reactions that allow the development of individual conflict resolution for each child, that is, creating an environment conducive to the child learning, without invading the space necessary for him to develop.

According to Gonzales-Mena and Eyer (2014), it is essential to create a safe environment to stimulate a baby, awakening and exploring their senses to enhance their development and learning, however, the education of young children is not exclusively about stimulation. It is necessary to have someone who meets their needs, offering affection and understanding, considering that the relationship resulting from care experiences provides education. Care is a fundamental basis for education, with an emphasis on the preschool age group.

That said, the authors point out four roles of the adult in the education of children, namely:

1. **Determine optimal stress levels** – Observe children with empathy in order to assess whether the stress level is too high, insufficient or adequate to stimulate and motivate their participation in activities and problem solving.

2. **Giving attention** – Recognizing when children are trying to get attention by purposely disappointing them and when they are communicating their needs; be generous with their attention during caregiving routines in order to satisfy the children's optimal amounts of attention. Be specific about behaviors, using positive reinforcement to reinforce repetition, helping the child recognize his or her own internal satisfaction.
3. **Give feedback** – Clearly verbalize the reactions resulting from the situations experienced by the children, helping to understand cause and effect from the experiences; talk to young children, stimulating language in problem solving from the observation of the child in the face of daily experiments.
4. **Be a role model** – Act and interact in a way that the child can observe and imitate; be honest in front of his own feelings in order to convey perceptive messages; be aware of the behavior he is giving as an example, in order to teach and act in a harmonious way.

In view of this, it is understood that the fundamental role of the adult in the education of babies and young children goes beyond simply teaching and performing mechanical care processes, but rather facilitating the learning process from an affective, respectful and careful posture, providing an environment conducive to the development of their personal skills and interests.

To act as a scaffold, adults need to constantly keep an eye on a child who is in a situation where there is learning potential. The adult sensitively structures the situation, so that problem solving is supported and stimulated (Gonzales-Mena; Eyer, 2014, p. 14).

For the baby's development to happen, it is often not necessary for the adult to intervene. The physical presence of the adult acts as a stimulator for the baby in some situations that do not represent danger or escape the stage of development in which the child is.

The metaphor of the "scaffolding" - which is a solid structure used in the construction of buildings, which allows adaptation and locomotion to the point already built, moving and advancing in the development of the building, being finally removed, but essential for the final construction - is used by Bassedas, Huguet and Solé (1999) to understand the active role of the educator in the learning of young children.

Therefore, the interactions established between adults and the baby have defined characteristics in which each one performs certain actions; Thus, the younger the child, the greater the adult's role as predominant in this relationship. The adult acts by offering a shared context, first observing the child's degree of maturation, which will serve as a basis for the new levels of development, then will inspire them to take small steps on the way to learning and incorporating new things, providing autonomy. Finally, help decreases and demands increase, always adjusting to the needs of children, in search of an autonomous practice.

The moments in which the adult allows the child to participate in the situations or invites him to participate, knowing that he will be able to succeed with his or her performance, serve to stimulate the development of the boy or girl. In this way, the adult person is acting in the child's potential development zone, offering him a shared context, in which he can do things on his own that allow him to advance in his capacities, starting from what he already knows. At the same time, these experiences that the child enjoys, being successful in his attempts to do certain things and living the emotional experience that is part of the joint action with a person with whom he maintains affective bonds, contribute to his security and self-esteem (Bassedas; Huguet; Solé, 1999, p. 28).

Thus, considering that the daycare seeks to promote the development of children according to their personal and individual identity, it is unquestionable that attention and partnership with families are essential to materialize the educational process, as they complement the individual analysis of children and allow the educator to understand the key aspects that involve the child's personal relationship with their learning.

CLARIFICATIONS ON ATTACHMENT

Attachment is an ongoing interactive process influenced by caregiver reactivity and infant and child characteristics. Gonzales-Mena and Eyer (2014) bring studies of psychology (Restak, 2006; Shore, 2003; Gallagher, 2005; Raikes, 2002; Isabella; Belsky, 1991) to support the issue of young children's brain functioning in the face of quality primary care. Therefore, it is understood that attachment is essential for the security that allows the child brain to understand positive and warm interactions, stabilizing brain connections.

For this attachment to be constituted, it is necessary that there are mutually reactive behaviors that include touch, affection, eye contact, in addition to care, forming a close relationship between babies and adults. The vulnerability of young children makes the presence of a caring caregiver essential to promote their development and provide security and self-confidence. It is through attachment that the basis for the development of

autonomy arises, since the security provided by attachment allows the child to explore the world with confidence (Falk, 2010).

A child's first attachment is usually related to their parents, so the work of caregivers in daycare centers emerges as a continuity of family attachment. The child's development at the moment of separation between him and his object of attachment (the parents) and entry into the daycare center occurs from the construction of trust between child and caregiver, which is established through an interactional synchrony, in which the educator and the babies send important signals to each other. Secure attachment relationships directly affect the way the brain "entangles", and positive and warm interactions stabilize brain connections, from this, it is understood that solid neural patterns help all areas of growth, especially cognitive and social development (Gonzales-Mena; Eyer, 2014).

In short, the presence of a caring caregiver, the establishment of secure attachments, the release of feel-good hormones, and the formation of consistent neural patterns are key factors for the healthy and full development of young children. Attentive care and the establishment of positive affective bonds play a crucial role in building a strong foundation for children's growth, autonomy, and emotional well-being. According to Gonzales-Mena and Eyer (2014), when educators do not demonstrate consistent response reactions in their attachment behavior, children tend to give up trying to influence people, thus:

Lacking not only attachment but also adequate physical contact, these babies are deprived of a whole variety of sensory inputs that accompany a healthy relationship. They become passive and resigned, their development is delayed, and they may fail to thrive in a variety of ways (Gonzales-Mena; Eyer, 2014, p. 105).

According to Falk (2010), the quality of care offered to young children in their daily lives plays a crucial role in stimulating their psychomotor and psychosocial growth. In this sense, the adult acts indirectly, creating conditions that balance emotional, affective, psychomotor and intellectual development. The establishment of a deep and stable bond between the child and the caregiver provides the necessary security for social development, based on the privileged relationship and the interest shown by the adult. It is essential that the baby establishes this bond with a small number of adults, in order to build his system of values in relation to society, standards of judgment, rules of behavior and prohibitions, which will be internalized through processes of imitation, assimilation and identification. Therefore, mental health is only achieved through constant care that promotes the

continuity of personal affective development, initially provided by the family and, later, by educators.

When everything that happens to the child is based on the context of a relationship, of a real exchange, which allows him to become aware of the person who takes care of him and of himself at the same time, only then can the child be aware of his individual integrity and his personal identity. Without this system of relationships, he cannot endure the inevitable frustrations necessary for the maturation of his personality (Falk, 2010, p. 23-24).

In this sense, the action of care should be directed to the baby or young child as a being who has sensitivity, observation, registration and understanding, or who will develop these capacities when allowed. It is essential that gestures are soft and perceptions are delicate, recognizing that the child is sensitive to everything that happens to him and should not be manipulated for the sole comfort of the adult. The development of this communication occurs through the repetition of the care offered throughout the days, on several occasions, and through the constancy of gestures accompanied by words, allowing the child to gradually understand and anticipate both the gesture and what is about to happen (Falk, 2010).

That said, the author still supports the differentiation of the role of the educator from common sense. To this end, it is not enough for educators to be spontaneous and have a maternal instinct for the education of young children. It is essential that there be a special competence, a continuous control and supervision that is distinguished from the mother-child relationship. In this sense, Falk (2010) states that the educator's interest should be dedicated to the needs and development of the child.

The child does not accept care in a passive way. He participates actively. The adult does not demand this participation, but makes it possible by motivating and valuing it. The fundamental condition for cooperation is good knowledge and a good relationship between the child and the adult, cooperation that strengthens this relationship. The newborn who enjoys good relations with the adult benefits in general from the possibility that is offered to him and progresses towards greater autonomy (Falk, 2010, p. 27).

Gonzales-Mena and Eyer (2014) recall that "from attachment also arises autonomy, or independence, as babies grow up and begin to learn to take care of themselves thanks to the development of capacities aimed at this" (Gonzales-Mena; Eyer, 2014, p. 99). Attachment is fundamental for autonomy to arise, from the development that the security present in attachment provides.

Based on Pikler's studies, Focchi (2015) emphasizes that the educator should not intervene directly in the child, but rather create a propitious, safe, adequate environment and offer him presence.

The adult is a fundamental figure in the child's life, as he needs presence, interest, affection, security and, especially, someone who creates the right conditions for him to develop. However, the child also needs to be offered time to realize his achievements, learn and discover about the world, which is possible with an adequate level of intervention (Focchi, 2015, p.109).

The adult should remain close, within hearing range and with mutual vision. Direct intervention should only occur in problematic situations, conflict or when there are signs of fatigue or discomfort. Thus, it is understood that the child's autonomy is directly related to the adult's posture through intervention, communication of results that babies cannot yet understand (either because it is a milestone to be reached or because of adult interruption) or by the partial restriction of the young child's movements.

DEVELOPMENT OF EMOTIONS

To understand the role of the educator in early childhood education, it is necessary to understand the dimension of pedagogical work in this age group. The initial years of schooling are contemplated by the target audience from 0-5 years old, in this sense, before linguistic expression begins to develop in young children, other areas are developed, such as emotional expression that evolves through cognitive development during this age group. From this, it is understood that the development of emotions and feelings begins from birth. The baby develops varied feelings and emotions for the first time and both physically and neurologically are affected by them.

The pedagogical work in Early Childhood Education must consider the different stages of development that are beginning in the child, which requires understanding preschool education not only as the beginning of motor and linguistic expression, but also a more global development work with children in the process of socialization and interaction with other people, whether adults or other children. being introduced to different realities of their family life every day (Gonzales-Mena; Eyer, 2014).

Children's personality is not innate, but rather developed through interactions with people around them. Therefore, relationships and interactions with others play a crucial role in the construction of personal identity and the development of all the child's abilities. From birth, the child's needs are met through these relationships with other people. Over time,

healthy relationships with adults establish stronger affective bonds, making the baby feel protected, safe and calm only with those people with whom he has a close relationship. This security transmitted by the affection of adult figures is the basis that allows the child to begin to explore the world and develop relationships with unknown people. The experiences lived over the years shape the image and knowledge that children have of themselves, providing an appreciation of the concept itself, which is transmitted by significant people in their daily lives. In addition, it is important that educators help children to insert themselves in different types of relationships and dynamics, which are different from those found in their families and known environments (Bassedas; Huguet; Solé, 1999).

In this sense, the authors point out some educational attitudes and practices that contribute to the development of high self-esteem in children, highlighting that this dimension is fundamental for mental health, school success and the construction of constructive social relationships. These attitudes and practices include showing affection, respect, trust and interest frequently towards the child, establishing agreements and norms based on reasoning shared with the child, being firm but also flexible, avoiding the use of coercive measures of discipline, corporal punishment and withdrawal of privileges, opting for disciplinary measures that are discussed and thought out together with the child, and encourage children to express their own opinions and take them into account whenever possible.

These bonds manifest themselves in different ways, as behaviors, in the sense of designating physical proximity: in their interest in tactile and visual contacts, in their search for more contacts in moments when they feel uneasy, in the smile received when they saw the figure of the person from whom they were separated for a few moments; here too are the feelings and sensations of security, well-being, pleasure and calming anxieties (Bassedas; Huguet; Solé, 1999, p. 44).

Gonzales-Mena and Eyer (2014) point out that the first reflexes of the newborn are directly linked to immediate sensations. As the baby develops individually through social interactions and with the environment, memory and the ability to anticipate allow emotional expression to evolve in the young child. It is important to recognize young children's emotions and feelings as authentic and that they should not be underestimated. Even if the adult judges a certain expression as insignificant, a respectful look is needed. Respecting their feelings and the way they express themselves is fundamental in working with babies and children, as it is through attention and reflection that educators develop an empathetic view towards them, discovering ways to welcome and help them.

Acceptance plays a key role in children learning to understand their own feelings and deal with their emotions. It is the responsibility of the educator to promote comfort and the appreciation of feelings, so that, over time, children become able to calm down and deal with their reactions to external conflicts.

Acceptance is essential for the child to finally recognize, identify and accept his own feelings. It is important to provide security and help young children find their own ways to cope. Comfort can be offered in a way that leads children to learn to comfort themselves and to know when to ask for help (Gonzales-Mena; Eyer, 2014, p. 212).

During the first year of life, babies already show indications of social referencing, when they "connect" the caregivers' facial expressions to the signs of the new environment or situation. From the moment children realize that they can influence the objects and people around them, a more autonomous intentionality develops in their expression.

According to the authors, the specific experiences of each baby's life interfere with the nature and expression of their temperament, behavior and personality formation. Therefore, educators need to observe children well in their individualities and only then will they be able to really understand the needs of each child and predict their way of acting, in order to contribute to the resolution of conflicts.

Gonzales-Mena and Eyer (2014) listed some care strategies to help young children deal with conflicts and challenges in a resilient way, allowing for developmental advancement even in adverse situations. They are:

1. Get to know the children;
2. Build a sense of community;
3. Build consistent relationships with families;
4. Clear and consistent program for children to make predictions about routine;
5. Make learning meaningful;
6. Use authentic analysis procedures.

In addition, it is important to highlight that resilience is not only limited to children, but also applies to educators. To foster resilience in young children, caregivers should strive to cultivate their own. This entails reflecting on your own feelings and being truthful about your own emotions. By demonstrating authenticity and openness when dealing with challenges and adversity, caregivers serve as role models for children, as children learn and develop from this relationship. This active approach to facing problems not only strengthens

children's resilience but also establishes a safe and encouraging environment where they learn to cope in a healthy way with life's challenges.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

The education of young children is characterized as a result of care experiences, so for this to happen, it is essential that the educator creates an individual bond with the children, allowing them to recognize their personal interests and abilities, supporting their discoveries and building relationships and problem solving.

From the first moments of life, the affectionate interactions and stimuli provided by close adults are fundamental for development. Educators play a crucial role in children's first social interactions outside of the family environment. For this reason, their pedagogical practices must include affectivity as a means of meeting emotional needs and providing the necessary security for the cognitive and physical development of young children.

Although there is a growing recognition of the particularities of work in Early Childhood Education and an approach more centered on the active perspective of the child, in contrast to preparation for Elementary School, the importance of the affective bond as a significant pedagogical practice in the care and education of young children is not always clear to educators and students of pedagogy. It is essential to understand the child as an active being, capable of reproducing and creating culture, and who needs positive personal interactions based on respect and care. This implies the role of caregivers to create ways to establish individual closeness with babies, cultivating a genuine exchange relationship.

Early Childhood Education plays a key role in the development of society and it is therefore essential that the specific curriculum for this area provides clear guidelines that provide good practices for caring for and educating young children, including the role of attachment and emotional development.

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