



Associação de Apoio à Criança

ASSOCIAÇÃO DE APOIO ÀS MENINAS E MENINOS DA REGIÃO SE

Utilidade Pública Federal: Portaria 46 de 31 de Janeiro de 2003

Utilidade Pública Municipal: Decreto nº43.342/2003

C.N.P.J. 74.121.880/0001-90

Rua Djalma Dutra, 70 - Luz - São Paulo - SP - CEP 01103-010 – Tel.: (11) 3106-9589

E-mail: aacrianca@uol.com.br

Annual Report of the Activities of the

Association in Support of the Girls and Boys of Se Region - 2009

- **Centre for the Defence of the Rights of the Child and Adolescent, Se Region(CEDECA Se)**
- **Nucleus for the Support of Youth: Project To Be A Woman**
- **Annex: Reproductive Health in Brazilian Context**

"It is the children who, without speaking, teach us the reasons for living. They do not have wisdom to transmit. However, they know the essence of life". **Rubem Alves**



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CEDECA SE

The Centre for the Defence of the Rights of the Child and Adolescent “*Mariano Cleber dos Santos*” (CEDECA Se) aims to attend to, orient, guide and accompany children and adolescents, between the ages of 0 - 17 years 11 months (and exceptionally 21 years), living on the street and/or in situations of risk, as well as their families, victimized by various kinds of violence, in order for them to be able to establish healthy, fulfilling lives.

To achieve this, throughout 2009 our work in the legal, social, pedagogic and psychological areas continued, including in an advisory capacity to other entities connected to the child and adolescent, giving support and guidance to them with the constant objective of guaranteeing quality assistance and respect to the infant/ juvenile population.

The team of CEDECA Se is composed of: 1 coordinator, 1 social assistant, 1 psychologist, 1 lawyer, 2 educators, 1 general help.

Legal Service

Within the lines of work established by the *Association in Support of the Girls and Boys of Se Region* (A.A. Criança), for the defence, promotion and social control of the rights of the child and adolescent, favouring the rescue of human dignity and channels for the development of human affection and citizenship, the lawyer of CEDECA Se continued his work in 2009, in conjunction with the other teams of the Center for the Defence (i.e. the educators, social assistant, and psychologist), in the defence, promotion and guaranteeing of the human rights of children and adolescents living on the street and/or at social risk and their families, particularly in the downtown region of Sao Paulo city.

In this context the lawyer continued to work on legal processes which discuss: the defence of the rights of the child and adolescent in the civil ambit; the act of breaking of the law; and processes in the criminal ambit, in which the lawyer acts as an assistant to the accused. During 2009, the lawyer assisted approximately 228 individuals, both in person and by telephone, clarifying doubts as well as making referrals to other members of the Centers’ multidisciplinary team and the social assistance network of Sao Paulo city.

The routine of the legal team consists of:

- Interdisciplinary discussion of cases and action to be taken in each. This takes place in regular meetings between the various multidisciplinary teams in order to reflect and decide on appropriate actions to defend, promote and guarantee the rights of those assisted/attended to;
- Visits to adolescents detained in Juvenile Detention Centres (Fundacao Casa/FEBEM);
- Accompaniment of legal processes in various courts, such as the Central Civil Court and the Court of Special Jurisdiction for Infants and Youth. In addition, on a sporadic basis, accompaniment of processes in the Regional Court of Santo Amaro and Police Districts of the City Centre.
- Provision of assistance to interested parties by phone and in person;
- Participation in hearings and accompaniment of adolescents accused of breaking the law to the State Ministry of Prosecution;
- Engagement in external activities, particularly with the network of civil society organizations working in the defence of the rights of the child and adolescent.

Social Assistance

Social assistance was provided Mon – Fri from 9:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m. All individuals seeking this assistance were given appropriate orientation, referred to the network of social services and /or to the other professionals of the CEDECA Se team.

Throughout 2009, the social assistance team of the Centre served approximately 449 individuals (inc. adults, adolescents and children), working in conjunction with various forums, including that of the Child and Adolescent, Health, Guardianship Councils, the Secretary of Social Assistance, public hearings in the City Council of Sao Paulo and the Human Rights Commission.

The activities carried out by the social assistance team were:

- 79 home visits;
- 68 regularizations of documentation (birth certificates, I.D. cards etc);
- 34 referrals of notifications to Guardianship Councils of Sao Paulo and other Brazilian States;
- 26 referrals to local Health Services;
- 09 referrals to long and short – term shelters;
- 27 referrals to nursery and infant schools;
- 76 referrals to Professional Training Courses;
- 26 referrals for Psychological, Legal and Educational assistance;
- 48 individuals served involved in cases of domestic violence;
- 24 meetings of the “Quality of Life” group – the families of which receive a “cesta basica” (box of staple food items) on a monthly basis.
- 36 meetings of the “Quality of Life” programme with children and adolescents (10 to 17 year olds) living in downtown region of Luz.

Pedagogic Activities of the Educators – Total number of child/teen beneficiaries: 600

Street Walk:

In 2009, street walks took place on Monday afternoons. The objective of these walks being for the educators to get to know children and adolescents who are not familiar with the socio-educational workshops of Project CASA 20 (part of CEDECA Se). For those children who have already participated in these workshops, the aim of the educators in making these walks is to strengthen the bonds being developed with these children living on the street/ at social risk. This takes place through verbal and visual contact, both of which are fundamental in the process of approximation between the educators and children and constitute the first step in the construction of a relationship based on trust.

Casa 20 (House 20) Workshops:

Throughout 2009, non-formal educational workshops were held on Tuesdays and Thursdays with two groups of children and adolescents – those living on the streets and those from the nearby community, living in conditions of high vulnerability. The workshop themes developed by the educators included sexuality and STDs, domestic violence, the natural environment, citizenship and human rights, street life and family life.

Home Visits:

In 2009, 15 home visits were made, all in São Paulo city. The objective of these visits is for the educator and/or social assistant to understand better the reality of the family of the street child, their difficulties and necessities and to develop a bond with them. The aim, wherever possible, is to work towards bringing about a re-approximation between the child and family. These visits also take place to families living in the nearby community where the children are at high risk of going to the street but have not yet done so.

Accompaniment to Health Services:

When necessary and/or at the request of a child, a member of the CEDECA Se team accompanies him/her to a health service or hospital – this occurred 14 times in 2009.

Visits to Detainees of Juvenile Detention Centres:

Members of the CEDECA Se team make regular visits to adolescents with whom they already have a connection and who are being detained in Juvenile Detention Centres under socio-educational measures. The objective of this contact is to show the child/adolescent that they are not alone and that their legal process is being closely accompanied. The aim is also to provide a constant positive reference in the project of reconstructing the social life of the young detainee.

Psychological Care

Psychological support and care is offered to the children who attend the pedagogic workshops at CEDECA se and, wherever possible, their families. The most common difficulties amongst this population are inter-familial conflicts, domestic, physical and emotional abuse, teen parenting, learning difficulties, alcohol and/or drug addiction, extremely vulnerable living conditions. As well as individual sessions, visits are also made to the homes of children leaving the street, in order to accompany their re-insertion into family life, and to the homes of children in the community where the problems of domestic child labour, multiple unplanned pregnancies and school evasion are prevalent.

NUCLEUS FOR THE SUPPORT OF YOUTH: PROJECT - TO BE A WOMAN (SER MULHER)

The principle objective of the project To Be A Woman is to provide education in the area of the reproductive rights and health of adolescents, prioritizing actions to improve the life conditions of highly vulnerable youth, particularly teen moms who have lived on the streets. The attendees of the project are adolescents who already have children and/or are pregnant, or are at high risk of becoming pregnant and live in situations of domestic violence and/or high social risk and unemployment in the central region of São Paulo city.

To achieve this objective, the project offers: social and legal assistance; psychological care; workshop groups on sexuality and gender; workshop groups for pregnant adolescents (this sometimes includes 12 year olds) and for the young mothers with their newborns. In addition the project gives presentations on pertinent themes such as human/women's rights and offers a supervised play room facility for the children of the young attendees.



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The team of the project To Be A Woman is composed of: 1 coordinator, 1 social assistant, 1 lawyer, 1 psychologist (shared with CEDECA Se), 1 educator, 2 volunteers, 1 Social Service trainee, 1 office help and 1 cook/cleaner.

Throughout 2009, the social assistance team provided the following services and took the following actions, attending to 1,471 individuals:

- reception and orientation of new project attendees;
- home/shelter visits to each participant of the pregnant teen group shortly after the birth of their babies;
- advice/orientation to the young mums regarding birth certificates and the first medical consultations of their newborns;
- provision of social assistance to and accompaniment of 50 adolescents and their families on a monthly basis in the *cesta basica* (box of staple foods for one month) program. Including individual and group meetings for both parents.
- formal applications for birth certificates to public notaries in Sao Paulo and other states;
- evaluation and accompaniment of 45 pregnant adolescents and young mothers each month, all of whom participate in the Bursary Program of Support to Young Mothers (whereby they each receive a monthly sum of R\$ 70 to spend on the necessities of their baby);
- accompaniment of adolescents on the waiting list for a place in the projects' workshops and programs – in December this list was brought down to zero;
- making contact with other institutions with the aim of requesting services for the adolescents and their families as well as to consolidate institutional partnerships. These included: the Association in Support of the Family, the Reference Centre for Social Assistance, various state hospitals, child courts, shelters for young mothers and public records offices.
- accompaniment of pregnant adolescents to hospitals in the state network;
- participation in project meetings, training sessions, presentations, psychological evaluations and planning of activities.

Psychological Care

In 2009 the project psychologist attended to 292 individuals and carried out the following actions:

- made appointments for and gave individual consultations;
- made an initial evaluation of each participant of the young mother with newborn workshop group;
- participated in the project team psychological supervision (by an external psychologist) every 15 days;
- discussed individual cases of project attendees in regular meetings with other project staff;
- coordinated, with the projects educator, the monthly meeting held with the parents in the *cesta basica* program;
- participated in the young mother with newborn workshop group;
- gave presentations along with the project educator in other institutions;
- made home visits;
- led the newly opened Workshop Group for Young Fathers;
- referred project attendees to public health services and shelters.



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Legal Service

In 2009 the lawyer of the project served approximately 1,337 individuals through the following services and actions:

- accompaniment of legal processes through official government press and in courts;
- elaboration of reports on case progress;
- visits to Santana Female Penitentiary
- participation in hearings at the Public Prosecutions Office;
- visits to the Guardianship Council of Mooca, São Paulo city;
- visits to Juvenile Detention Centres;
- visits to various Courts of Special Jurisdiction for Infants and Youth;
- provision of legal advice and services to attendees of the project as well as non-attendees and their families, particularly regarding their rights and possible legal action to be taken;
- elaboration of cases related to investigation of paternity, alimony etc.

Activities of Educators – Workshops and Play Room

Throughout 2009 the educators developed the following activities with the adolescents of the project, serving 1, 075 individuals, and with project partners:

- leading non –formal educational workshops with the Tuesday, Thursday and Friday groups on the themes of STDs/AIDS, domestic violence, sexual abuse, the Statute on the Rights of the Child and Adolescent, adolescent pregnancy, family, race and ethnicity; as well as cultural excursions in the city centre;
- leading four workshop groups per week on sexuality and gender, totalling 70 participants bi-annually. All workshops aim to impart knowledge to the young participants as well as working on prevention (STDs/pregnancy etc) and optimal improvement of self – esteem.
- giving presentations and workshops on the same themes mentioned above, on a bi-monthly basis in other institutions;
- giving advice on and guidance to other services with relation to returning to education, training and employment opportunities;
- supervising and interacting with children (of 0- 9 years) in the play room whilst their young mothers participate in project activities;
- participation in external meetings in order to develop partnerships with other institutions;
- participation in research /studies with the project team with the aim of constantly improving services provided to the young project attendees;
- participation in psychological supervision together with project team - the objective being to develop teamwork, work with emotional issues and the ability to best serve the project participants.

Partners of A.A. Criança

National

Guardianship Councils (for children and adolescents)

National Council for the Rights of the Child and Adolescent (CONANDA)

State Council for the Rights of the Child and Adolescent (CONDECA)

Municipal Council for the Rights of the Child and Adolescent (CMDCA)

Municipal Council of Social Assistance (COMAS)

National Council of Social Assistance (CNAS)



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Braslian Association of Non-Governmental Organizations (ABONG)

National Association of Centres of Defence (ANCED)

Municipal Prefecture of Sao Paulo (Municipal Secretary of Social Assistance and Development)

Municipal Prefecture of Sao Paulo (Special Secretary for Participation and Partnership)

Entities that work with children and adolescents in Sao Paulo City

Pia Society of Sao Paulo

Tok and Stok (household store)

HSBC Bank

French Community Sao Paulo

Special Secretary of Human Rights of the Presidency of the Republic

Francisca Franco Foundation – House of the Girl Mother I and II

International

Austria Mission

Groups Jangada Trento (Italy)

Província di Trento (Italy)

Group of People for the Trento Mission (Italy)

Central Mission for the Diocese of Trento (Italy)

Families that support the Project *Sponsorship* (Paris)

Global Fund for Children (USA)

Congregation Maryknoll (USA)

ANNEX:

Reproductive Health in Brazilian Context

In Brazil the area of reproductive education is difficult to work in due to various contradictions in society as well as the fact that, contrary to popular belief, in general the country remains very conservative about sex. While it is a taboo to have sex at a young age and within families the subject of young people sleeping together is not discussed, at the same time there is a lot of stimulus (on TV etc) to have sex when young. It is also very much the choice of the male to use a condom or not and it is seen as a good thing if a young man has sex early- contrary to the negative judgment afforded to a young woman. The teenage pregnancy rate causes concern - one in four of all births are to mothers between 10 and 19 years old and this rate is very much connected to socio-economic status, being much higher among the poorest communities.

The Federal Government has invested in contraceptives but the actual distribution of these has proved to be very difficult as despite being available at local health clinics, the teens and preteens who need access to them most are generally too embarrassed to go and ask for them. The rules as to the age at which young girls may be given the pill are also somewhat blurred, so while a girl of 15-16 years or more can receive it, it ultimately depends on the mentality of health clinic staff as to who is or is not given the pill. Condoms are more widely and easily distributed, but males, both young and old, resist using them, feeling that they compromise their masculinity.

With regard to pregnancy termination, in Brazil abortion is illegal- it is allowed only in exceptional cases such as rape and when there is a serious health threat to the mother. This illegality results in clandestine clinics performing abortions. These can be of different standards- if sufficient money can be paid, then better, safer clinics can be used, but for most young pregnancies, the only alternative is a poor standard clandestine clinic with serious health risks and future health problems for the woman. This means that in Brazil, it is essential that the main focus of reproductive education be on the prevention of pregnancy, while also highlighting the illegality, difficulty and danger of pregnancy termination in clandestine clinics. In addition to the prevention of unplanned pregnancy, it is also of great importance to educate on STD's as these are also prevalent in youth, particularly the marginalized youth with whom the project **To Be A Woman** works. It is important to highlight that the excellent health care offered to AIDS patients in Brazil is actually having negative consequences with regard to protected sex, as there is less fear in society about AIDS, people are less worried about it as a health threat and youth in particular are using less protection- the result being an increase in AIDS among young people, as well as Hepatitis B and C and syphilis.

The fact that there is a severe inadequacy of access to information on reproductive education and there is an essential need for projects like To Be A Woman, is made readily apparent when 10-14 year olds come to the project and request information on "how can I *not* get pregnant?" In many cases, these girls have had sex already or are about to, yet they will not say so directly, but prefer to say, "I haven't had sex but I know someone (my age) who has" or "I haven't had an abortion but I know someone who has and I know where". In general it is less common for girls of 10-14 years to become pregnant, but the project has worked with a significant number of mothers in this age range.