

PARASITIC DISEASES AND HEALTH EDUCATION ACTIONS IN A RURAL SCHOOL IN BAHIA:  
PROMOTING KNOWLEDGE AND PREVENTING PARASITIC INFECTIONS

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Parasitic diseases have a significant impact on growth and development, especially among children, interfering with school performance, and they also affect adults, influencing work activities and social interactions. In this context, children become vulnerable due to a lack of knowledge about basic hygiene principles and the forms of transmission of parasites. Therefore, educators play a fundamental role in promoting knowledge about parasitic diseases and addressing this issue in schools is essential to prevent new cases. The aim of this study was to conduct a parasitological survey in the community of Colégio Estadual do Campo Maria Quitéria in Feira de Santana, Bahia, and based on the results, implement educational actions to promote health. The methodology included parasitological examinations of feces, delivery of results, referrals of positive cases for treatment at the local health unit and carrying out health education activities. Participants signed the Free and Informed Consent Forms (CAAE 58923722.8.0000.005). The survey identified 21.7% of samples positive (parasites and commensals). Among the commensals, *Entamoeba coli*, *Iodamoeba butschlii* and *Endolimax nana*; among the parasites, *Giardia duodenalis*. These findings guided activities in elementary school II and high school classes, with lectures, board games and practical microscopy classes. An illustrated booklet was created with information, word searches and interesting facts about the parasites studied. To enhance learning, students produced posters, and these were presented at the 8th UEFS Graduation Fair. These approaches proved to be relevant in stimulating student protagonism and participation, contributing to the perception and awareness of measures to prevent and control parasites. These strategies reinforced the importance of health education for learning and improving the community's quality of life.

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