

TEACHER TRAINING AS A SUPPORT STRATEGY IN THE PREVENTION OF INTESTINAL PARASITIC INFECTIONS IN PRESCHOOL-AGED CHILDREN

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Preschool-aged children are prone to intestinal parasitic infections, and in this context, it is important to highlight the role of teachers in promoting and maintaining hygiene and prophylactic habits to prevent the spread of these diseases. However, teachers are not always prepared for such responsibilities. In this scenario, the extension project "Teach and Learn: Educational Actions for the Prevention of Parasitic Diseases," in its 9th edition, aimed to develop educational actions with teachers from a Municipal Center for Early Childhood Education located in the city of Natal. The project focused on the characteristics of the main parasitic diseases, their modes of transmission, and prophylactic measures. Initially, a digital questionnaire was administered to assess the teachers' prior knowledge of parasitology. Subsequently, through playful and digital resources, as well as specimens of parasites (slides or preserved samples), diseases such as schistosomiasis, taeniasis-cysticercosis complex, ascariasis, enterobiasis, and cutaneous larva migrans were presented, covering aspects such as transmission, signs and symptoms, and prophylactic measures. Finally, a discussion circle was held to address doubts and share experiences. Upon analyzing the initial questionnaires, it was found that none of the teachers knew more than 30% of the parasitic diseases presented during the activity. Although 58.8% of them had been working in early childhood education for over 5 years and 94% had completed higher education or were currently pursuing a degree, none of the teachers were familiar with enterobiasis, and only 59% had a superficial knowledge of cutaneous larva migrans and schistosomiasis. At the end of the activity, the teachers were awarded 4-hour certificates for the continuing education workshop they attended. Additionally, the educational action was evaluated by the teachers as a positive and necessary intervention.

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