

SEXUALITY EDUCATION IN PRIMARY SCHOOL: THE NEED TO LISTEN TO CHILDREN

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: Human sexuality should be understood in all its multiple dimensions and children previous conceptions need to be considered in sex education. This research aims to identify primary school children conceptions about sexuality, considering individual and socio cultural factors, and to evidence the sexuality issues that children want to learn more.

Methods: This research follows a qualitative approach. It is a case study, which used focus groups for data collection. We carried out four groups of discussion constituted on the basis of gender, age and school year. Our sample included twenty two children (10 females and 12 males) from different sociocultural, socioeconomic and socio affective contexts.

Discussions were audio recorded and after transcribed. A content analysis was done and we considered nine pivot terms (adults, family, dating, sexy, sex, get pregnant, baby, separate and talk) and two emergent categories (boys & girls, love & passion).

Results: The results allow us to verify: the existence of gender stereotypes; the use of vulgar language to name body parts; the value of interpersonal relationships; the existence of jokes with sexual nature; gender differences in the verbalization of love and passion terms; the interpretation of the divorce as a result of the lack of love and respect, as well as the existence of violence; differences in acceptance of non-traditional family models and homosexuality; that younger children do not have temporal notion of processes of sexual maturation, fertilization and pregnancy; lack of communication about sexuality.

Conclusions: Children interests and doubts relate to: interpersonal relationships; gender and social roles; different expressions of the sexuality; family concept; sexual maturation and reproduction.

Keywords: Sexuality, Children, Conceptions