

THE TOPIC OF ETHICAL COEXISTENCE IN SCHOOL CONTEXTS
A TEMÁTICA DA CONVIVÊNCIA ÉTICA EM CONTEXTOS ESCOLARES
EL TEMA DE LA CONVIVENCIA ÉTICA EN CONTEXTOS ESCOLARES

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“No one is born hating another person because of the colour of his skin, or his background, or his religion. People must learn to hate, and if they can learn to hate, they can be taught to love, for love comes more naturally to the human heart than its opposite”
Nelson Mandela

The school has always been, by excellence, a place for learning about coexistence among people, where indiscipline, transgressions of rules and different forms of violence are manifested, which reverberate the urgency of considering the theme of coexistence as the focus of investigations that guide the formulation of documents and laws, pointing methodologies and effective actions for the prevention of such problems, especially those that remain hidden in the relationships between peers. These, although less frequent compared to the others, are more difficult to solve and crueler for those who experience them: the systematic intimidation characteristic of bullying and its extension into virtual environments, cyberbullying.

At the same time, school is configured as a space for training and preservation of historically built human achievements. Therefore, educating boys and girls so that coexistence, inside and outside of school, has an ethical quality is its primary function.

It is about such present and urgent issues that this dossier deals with. It emerged from the urgencies and needs of young humans in training to find, in their schools, a space of well-being that contemplates what they are guaranteed by law: the right to learn to live together. This is a collection of research conducted from 2019 to 2022 in state public schools in São Paulo in a project funded by two foundations - the Carlos Chagas Foundation and the Itaú Social Foundation, aiming to fulfill the urgent task of conducting scientific research that could build public policies to improve the quality of the final years of elementary education in Brazil. There

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are eight articles resulting from this investigative course plus a ninth article, the result of a previous investigation, whose beauty (to remind Paulo Freire) is the clarity that the most important thing in the implementation of a coexistence program is its process, not its arrival - it is the people who are transformed, not the results of the performance.

What the reader will read here are investigations conducted by a group of giants that transformed their times and spaces of daily struggle to make science have a voice and a turn in a country so unbelieving of its human potential. Certainly, it was no easy task to do so before the pandemic that devastated the world.

During this time, amidst many anxieties, researchers, students, schools, Education Departments, educators had to reinvent themselves in face of the possibilities of remote work through digital platforms, making evident the worldwide transformation of educational institutions into "schools without walls". We have been and are still being impacted by the effects of the most urgent problems we have been experiencing, beyond physical health: how do we feel today when faced with the unexpected, when faced with a situation we have no control over? Fruit of these new conditions, feelings of fear, sadness, nostalgia, anguish, worry, frustration and discouragement have taken up residence in each of us, humans, of any age! And how have these feelings manifested themselves in our daily lives? It is not difficult to understand what lies behind the number of children and adolescents, as well as adults diagnosed with symptoms of depression, anxiety, self-harm, and even those more worrisome thoughts that life is not worth living (the suicidal ideations).

Both the facts and the research we have presented here show us that people who experience the impact of a crisis will need to rebuild with the help of someone, and in the case of our children and adolescents, with the help of those with whom they live most in their daily lives. In fact, this reconstruction is progressive and will not happen overnight. In the face of this, how can we reconcile the demands brought about by the complexity of the long period of absence from the school context with the urgent need to prevent violence and learn positive coexistence in our schools?

Some of the answers - and there are many - to this question will be given in this dossier. Our research has identified the urgency of structured public policies for teacher training that go beyond the practice of specific projects to address emerging issues and demands.

They also showed the need to listen to what teaching professionals think and live in order to build teacher training programs (times, themes and spaces). They pointed out the urgency of new themes incorporated into the school's daily life (cyber coexistence and

emotional suffering) and of proactive actions for a respectful and empathetic social coexistence, in addition to the need for integration, knowledge, and joint action agreements between the school and the rest of the protection network to meet the social and emotional demands of the students, especially after the pandemic.

The research and reflections brought in this dossier were made by many hands. People committed to assert the function of the public university: that knowledge may generate recognition of its importance and finally, action and reaction. They have also generated a set of recommendations for all those whose concern we share about the direction of educational policies in this country. When we come to the end of the work done in this crazy biennium that we have lived through, we have realized, concretely, that it was possible to condense into ten recommendations the most important results found.

For this reason, we have decided to dedicate this space, which would only be a presentation, to the difficult but emancipating task of announcing what we have produced so far. We begin, therefore, at the end, not as the end, but as the meaning for all that we have presented here: there are ten recommendations that represent the sign of resistance from all those who, like us, wish to see the theme of coexistence and ethical quality as an educational policy for all Brazilians (TOGNETTA, 2022). Let us move on, then, to the recommendations arising from the work carried out that were the basis for the research presented in this dossier.

First recommendation: A diagnosis of the school climate and coexistence: know, face, and transform

Among the recommendations that the experience of the investigations conducted has to propose, we highlight the first great lesson learned: to know how those who live and feel, in a certain period, should perceive what they live and feel, and how it should be a condition for any work that proposes the improvement of the climate and of the very coexistence in the school.

Evaluating the quality of the school climate enables a look of recognition of the difficulties that one has to favor personal development and of the educational community (MILICIC, 2001), but, above all, it reiterates the value that the issue of coexistence has within institutions that, many times, focus their educational processes above all on academic results (PASCUAL, 1995; JARES, 2006; URUÑELA, 2013, 2018).

The relational climate assessment actions implemented in the Secretariat of Education of the State of São Paulo (Seduc-SP) made it possible to realize these two important findings. About the first of them, in our research on the relational climate in São Paulo schools, the results

indicated quite interesting aspects for those who wanted to establish a policy to improve coexistence. We saw, for example, that the students of these schools, even before the pandemic, already indicated what can no longer be denied, given the virtual character increasingly present in the scenario of relationships between people in the world we live in - the cyber-aggressions.

Similarly, we saw that other manifestations of disturbing character were present in São Paulo schools: teachers and members of management teams complaining about transgressions and disobedience to rules. However, it is the students who highlight the situations of humiliation frequently experienced in their relations with their teachers, professors, and managers, in the same way that the student body is the one that most conceives as negative the ways in which the school uses to solve conflicts. The data indicated the vulnerability of the social environment where the schools are inserted, revealing how much such notes could contribute to social policies implemented with the articulation of the protection network in these most vulnerable spaces.

The results also showed how much the issues of bullying - so present in everyday life and certainly in the tense imagination lived in that Secretariat that had its more than 5 thousand schools impacted by the massacre in Suzano - are present and need, more than specific actions, a planned, organized and intentional program of actions that allow the prevention of a violence that, when it happens, it is difficult to remove all its irreparable consequences (TOGNETTA; FODRA; BONI, 2020).

These data proved the importance of the path that the São Paulo State Department of Education was taking: there was a sense of fear experienced by students in relationships with their peers, which could signal that the major condition for academic, moral and social learning - which is the well-being in relationships of trust and cooperation established with authority and peers, respectively - needed to be considered. That was the investment to be made.

The school climate data, on the other hand, also showed how much hard violence exists, although at a very low frequency in schools, being much more recognized still among students than by teachers. This is a fact that explains the need for a protection policy, but more than this, it highlights the urgency for peers to be trained in diagnosis (because they are the ones who know most about their peers), intervention and transformation of the "spirit" towards which the educational community converges.

All of these benefits generated from diagnosing the relational climate - partly considered in the shift from the School and Community Protection System (Spec) to the School Conviviality and Protection Improvement Program (Conviva SP) - would be predictors of the

needs of those living in the school (TOGNETTA, 2022). However, they are of no use in the hands of those who take them as political data because there is necessarily no confrontation with the needs of those who live in schools.

Second recommendation: Building a plan for coexistence

This is the second recommendation of the research presented here: knowing in order to transform is only possible when a continuous plan of actions is established, or implemented, as we have already said, something planned, structured, and intentional. There is no politics without confronting the problems experienced and pointed out by those who are part of them (CASASSUS, 2001).

That said, it is necessary to remember that implementing an agreement with foundations that work on themes such as social and emotional competencies would be satisfactory if the aspects that young people perceive as the worst in their relationships with their teachers were considered, for example: the lack of intimacy, of welcoming, of affection, as the data found proved. In this logic, rejecting a coexistence plan in favor of adopting juxtaposed proposals on convergent themes, except in their applicability, but that diverge in their theoretical foundation, is to bring to the surface one more problem, and not the solution for what is already problematic at school. But, this is exactly what we experienced during the research highlighted here.

The election of packages of papers on mental health and social and emotional competences are, in our view, political choices that have not understood that the improvement of the academic dimension denoted in the grades of government and international evaluations, sought with appreciation by governments, depends on the improvement of the set of perceptions about human relationships, about school coexistence, which in itself encompasses both what is called mental health (with the caveats highlighted in the articles on emotional suffering that we have addressed here) and social and emotional competences.

Certainly, for the students to whom these policies are addressed, feeling that their intellectual and learning capacities are valued by their teachers and by themselves when they have spaces to discuss problems, when they participate in assemblies, when they learn with teachers a language that welcomes and not accuses, that seeks consensus and not punish, directly affects their grades and, consequently, their learning (ARÓN; MILICIC, 1999).

Undoubtedly, the implementation of an educational policy that wants to solve the problems of violence at school - those that already existed and those to come, as indicated by the research in this dossier - requires listening to those who coexist and a look focused in the

same direction, with a theoretical foundation that substantiates actions with teachers, managers and students, in order to build together a program of coexistence. It also requires the consideration of aspects that, far from being new, were enhanced during the Covid-19 pandemic. We shall move on to them.

Third recommendation: New dimensions of the relational climate and living together

As elucidated in the course of this dossier, the use of an instrument for the diagnosis of the relational climate at school was one of the starting points for the implementation of a Support System among Equals (SAI) within an Ethical Coexistence Program. This is what we did. However, with the pandemic instaurated and the relations becoming distant, besides the depreciating work of the Secretary with whom we work, not valuing the findings of the climate questionnaire, it would not make any sense to keep the evaluated dimensions in a possible return to the classroom after two years of social separation, because others become indispensable to be considered.

It was for this reason, and because we knew the results of different investigations that already alerted to the issues related to emotional suffering and the experience of remote living in the digital world, bringing new problems, that we proposed a new questionnaire to children and adolescents.

When we analyze the data that portray the frequency of situations in which there are signs of emotional suffering, we are faced with situations that are quite challenging for our society in today's world, and for the school in the face-to-face return: children and adolescents have been impacted by the lived situation and will need a school that considers their emotions and feelings.

The data found indicate that emotional suffering is evidenced both in what they feel and in behaviors that put their own lives at risk. Even though the percentages found referring to sadness, crying, fear, and anxiety symptoms may seem low, they must be understood as clear signs that part of the children and adolescents are suffering, data that corroborate the other investigations carried out in this period.

The results of our investigations point to a special attention to the group of children that already show symptoms of suffering. The signs that they need help are clear, especially when they show themselves to be open to the challenges proposed on the internet to their own lives and to the lives of others. They also show a sensitive data pointed by the number of students, children and adolescents, who have committed self-mutilation, and also a special need for

attention to gender issues: adolescent girls show higher scores of emotional distress, and this is an important issue, especially in times where civilizational milestones such as the equity of relationships have been daily deprived (JARES, 2006; LAHR; TOGNETTA, 2021).

All this to endorse our third recommendation: there is no longer any way to think about interpersonal relationships at school without thinking about cyber relationships and the so-called intrapersonal relationships; or even the emotional or affective issues that permeate the human experience and that, therefore, point to the urgency of an intentional plan of work with emotional issues.

Fourth recommendation: Intentional plan for working with emotional issues

The findings of our investigations point to a necessary reorganization of the educational curriculum, in view of the urgent intervention to the problems of emotional distress that plague our children and young people. More than ever, this curriculum must intentionally include work on these and related issues. Children and adolescents have suffered the consequences of social isolation. The non-socialization and the absence of listening spaces that, however simplistic, were found in school, brought important consequences to be considered. The proposals for activities carried out in the project (described in this dossier) to assist children and adolescents based on literature books, games, oral and written representation dynamics, and exchanges between young people, point us to the need for the continuity of this urgent and important work. That said, it is necessary to remember that part of this intentional work, as we have defended, is presented in the daily life of relationships.

According to the constructivist proposal that sustains our actions, "socioemotional skills" are not taught by books, but by establishing relationships of trust and mutual respect, present in small groups, in discussions about the rules of coexistence, in the cooperation among peers and in the application of sanctions for reciprocity and forms of conflict resolution that allow reparation and awareness on the part of those who act badly. It will also require intentionally planned pedagogical spaces and strategies, in order to promote conversations, exchanges of ideas, reports on their fears, sorrows, anxieties, and joys, thus feeling listened to, welcomed, understood, recognized, and finally valued (TOGNETTA, 2003; TOGNETTA, 2009).

As long as we believe that group work strategies are only necessary to solve pedagogical difficulties; as long as there are beliefs that one educates morally through obedience and military education (VINHA *et al.*, 2021), the scenario observed in this research will not be

different, neither among students nor among their future families. In a word: it is recommended that the school be continuously - and not only in the first week of school - a space for welcoming, listening and sharing, where children and adolescents have opportunities to choose and speak their minds.

How will our schools deal with so many recommendations? What is the path? The answers to these questions constitute the next recommendations of this research.

Fifth recommendation: Promoting respectful cyber coexistence

When thinking about the social isolation in which we live, another dimension already necessary even before the Covid-19 pandemic becomes a condition in new times: cyber coexistence. More than an extension of face-to-face interaction, coexistence in the digital space has become a necessity whose importance of new discussions and new research show what is fact: children were and will be exposed to screens and networks at an increasingly early age. It is a fact that, beyond the benefits generated by the connectivity provided by the Internet at a time when parents, children, grandparents, and friends have been separated, the conflicting human relationship has become evident in these digital spaces.

We call cyber aggression or virtual aggression situations that are marked by violence, exposure and humiliation practices, using, for this, cell phones, internet and social networks. We understand that cyberaggression situations are threatening to the mental health and psychological well-being of children and adolescents, leading to damage and suffering (ABRAMOVAY *et al.*, 2016; AVILÉS MARTÍNEZ, 2009; FARHAT; LAN, 2010; SELMAN; WEINSTEIN, 2015; SIBILIA, 2016; SMITH, 2012; UNICEF, 2019).

Thus, more than a work in which we know the problems faced in the virtual world - such as cancellations, lynching, sexting, shaming, hate speech, Fake News - our investigations have shown the need to promote opportunities for healthy and respectful coexistence virtually to children and adolescents.

As we will see in the following articles, the experiences lived by students in schools that have implemented the Teams of Help (TH) show us that girls and boys continue to be the main protagonists in supporting those who need to be welcomed, listened to, and helped also in the virtual space. To put oneself in the other's place, to perceive the feelings of others, may help to build more respectful virtual spaces of coexistence. The discourses that, nostalgically, many used to use about the need for parents to control their children's access to their cell phones go out of the window when we realize, based on the data from our investigations, that not having

a cell phone does not make adolescents less likely to be cyber bullies. Similarly, when we compare teens who do and do not have computers or laptops in their homes with their actions as cyber aggressors, the study we will present in this dossier shows exactly this same fact: most attacks do not come from home.

Our research has again revealed a priority issue when we think about relationships in the digital world: girls are more impacted by the problems in these relationships and they need our help much more so that they can strengthen themselves in search of a positive identity, whose ideal of fashion, of beauty is deconstructed so that they can overcome the damage both in time spent, access and type of relationships established on the web. How can this be done? With intentional proposals that allow the discussion, the sharing of experiences, and the collective search for the recognition of the problems experienced by the school community. It is no longer possible that emerging problems such as virtual coexistence issues are left "outside" the schools. A curriculum that promotes a respectful coexistence for the future that awaits us is one that, in the present, girls and boys have in their classes, the experience of thinking about this issue (BOZZA, 2016; FARHAT; BOZZA, 2020). That said, experiencing fair virtual relationships and thinking about them, reflecting on how those who are humiliated, forgotten, canceled, and disrespected feel is a condition for a school that "no longer has walls" (TOGNETTA, 2020a).

Sixth recommendation: Where will our children and adolescents seek shelter? The school, the family and the protection network

At school, there is a group of professionals who should know or should seek to know how to prepare for the new problems, as we will see later in a new recommendation. For now, what we want to point out is that it will also be the school's task to guide and welcome families who know little or nothing about how to deal with the behavior of their children, impacted by social isolation and the consequent increase of virtual relationships, as well as by the problems of emotional distress potentiated by Covid-19. It will be necessary to help parents understand that, like adults, children and adolescents also feel afraid, anxious, sad, and worried, among other emotions and feelings; to help families provide opportunities for listening and dialogue in which children and adolescents can express what they feel; and finally, to guide them in building bonds that protect children when the new experience of digital coexistence cannot be fully controlled. These seem to be necessary actions, based on the data from the research we conducted and the numerous proposals for care, protection, and manifestation of feelings and

emotions that were shared with the educators at the moment when the school became the living room, the kitchen, the bedroom of the students' homes. Certainly, there was an increase in domestic violence, without boys and girls having "someone to count on", since the school represents a great protective space (FIOCRUZ, 2020; REZERA; D'ALEXANDRE, 2020).

The school's look to families, of course, has never been a condition of generosity, but rather, a need for justice, especially if we consider that at school there are professionals whose specialty is "human development" (VINHA; TOGNETTA, 2013). However, such premise does not mean to create a demand for schools that are doomed to failure because of the many actions they have to take, but to understand that the spaces of education of the younger generations, the more articulated and coordinated they are, the more they strengthen the human bonds necessary for life in society. For this reason, the school is not alone in its mission to protect and train (LAHR, 2022).

Our investigations have shown how important it is the articulation among the several services that attend the new generations. The data on the perception of actors in the protection network and of professionals who work in the school regarding coexistence problems and their referrals allow us to confirm another important concern when thinking about public policies aimed at improving the quality of school coexistence: the need for continued training for educators and managers on the roles of these different agencies, the services developed to assist children, adolescents and their families, as well as on the necessary referrals to the different problems of school coexistence.

As we will see in the following articles, our research has pointed out the lack of knowledge about what we should do in situations that involve indiscipline, incivility and behavior problems in general, generating inadequate referrals and unmet expectations, especially among school managers, as in the case of the feeling that there will be accountability of adolescents by the Guardianship Council, when such action does not match the attributions of this body.

Certainly, participating in intersectorial meetings that involve the protection network to align the performance and the service flows to deal with the problems of adolescents that appear in schools is a recommendation that resulted from our investigations; another would be the contact of the institution with the other services of the protection network that operate in the territory. This is because, by approaching the other public policies existing in the same place, the school can strengthen itself as an institution, gaining more support for those situations that, in fact, require working together with the network. To this end, it is possible to have telephone

contacts, periodic meetings organized by the school itself or by other services, and participation in municipal discussion forums, such as the Municipal Councils for the Rights of Children and Adolescents.

Thus, it is a *sine qua non* condition that educators know and participate in these councils. School is a place of human formation, and its role is to ensure the respect and dignity of children and adolescents, whether inside or outside the educational institution (LAHR; TOGNETTA, 2021; OLIVEIRA *et al.*, 2020; SILVA; ALBERTO, 2019; VIEIRA, 2009). Our experience has shown us that many educators do not even know of the existence of this council...

As for the actions or policies aimed at public management, our data pointed out the need for a joint action of these different sectors. This means that there must be an alignment among the different public policies with the participation and effective action of the Education Policy in the attendance and elaboration of municipal flows (CAIDEN; WILDAVSKY, 1980; LINDBLOM, 1979; WILDAVSKY, 1992).

Even with the advances in the laws that ensure the rights of children and adolescents, we see in our country that public policies still act in a separate way, "in boxes", in an overlapping of projects, without any connection between them, which makes it difficult for the professionals who deal directly with the users of the services and with the highly complex demands that were even intensified during the pandemic period. In post-pandemic times, this protection network will need to work more than ever!

Therefore, we conclude that, as an emerging theme for the agenda of our schools, are the discussions about the problems of coexistence in school and the relationship between the school and the other organs of the protection network, so that this institution, so important for the development of children and adolescents, can also take its place in the protective aspect of the public attended.

Seventh recommendation: Teacher training and public policies for coexistence

Brazilian teachers are in schools that reflect an education permeated by problems. Although on the one hand we have great structures, not only in traditional private networks but also in some public institutions known internationally (as is the case of the State Universities of São Paulo), it is not difficult to see a few blocks away portraits of a school whose basic rights of the people who live there are not respected.

There are many reports or situations witnessed by us, researchers, that expose the weaknesses of education in Brazil. Sometimes, and it must be said in passing, this is what we

saw in our visits to different schools in São Paulo: there is a lack of basic items ranging from toilet paper in the bathrooms to their doors, the lack of which makes it degrading for the students to use them. We were in small schools that have a huge staff of professionals and in others whose overload of work shows the lack of human resources. We witnessed countless situations in which principals have to divide themselves between cleaning the bathrooms, cooking, receiving employees, students, and the work of managing a school, for this very reason.

Besides these issues, which could never be discussed or negotiated, there is also the urgent need to have more solid proposals for public policies in education that contemplate the continuous training of the professionals who work in schools, especially teachers. In our country in particular, regarding the promotion of ethical coexistence and the prevention of violence at school, we observe timid initiatives that are far from being consolidated as public policies.

In 2019, the National Education Council approved the new National Curriculum Guidelines (DCN), with the establishment of the Common National Base for the Initial Training of Basic Education Teachers (BRAZIL, 2019). In a preliminary analysis of the document, we observed some points related to coexistence issues. In Chapter III, Article 8, there is an indication that the institutions responsible for teacher training have "a commitment to the comprehensive education of teachers in training." The fact is that the document itself clarifies the themes that constitute such comprehensive education of teachers: in addition to knowledge, the formation of "values and forms of conduct that respect and value diversity, human rights, democracy, and plurality of ideas" (BRAZIL, 2019, p. 5).

The text also points out that these future professionals need to develop essential skills, among them the one number 3.2.4, which mentions the ability to create in school "safe and organized environments that foster respect, strengthen bonds of trust, and support the comprehensive development of all students" (BRAZIL, 2019, p. 17). In addition, they need to be prepared to

[...] to pay attention to the different forms of physical and symbolic violence, as well as the ethno-racial discrimination practiced in schools and digital environments, and to promote the ethical, safe and responsible use of digital technologies (BRAZIL, 2019, p. 19).

The truth is that this is not the first time that a document or legislation on teacher training addresses issues of coexistence, but the country continues without deepening these discussions; nor do governments in general demonstrate openness to discuss, together with the institutions

that train future teachers, the best ways to transform laws and guidelines into intentional and systematic practices.

An example of this is the State of São Paulo itself, which, even before the pandemic, started working with Conviva SP, the successor of Spec. Such program was officially instituted through Seduc Resolution n. 48, of 01/10/2019, and amended by Seduc Resolution n. 49, of 03/10/2019, having as one of its goals "To contribute to a positive school climate through collaborative, supportive, and welcoming learning environment" (SÃO PAULO, 2019, p. 1). Among the dimensions provided by the program, the first of them - described in Article 2 of the Resolution - lists the importance of "coexistence and collaboration", providing for the development of

[...] projects and actions that promote a positive, supportive, inclusive and welcoming school environment through the development of relational skills that value consensual conflict resolution and respect for differences and diversity (SÃO PAULO, 2019, p. 1).

Although this has been an important step, there are still no systematic and intentional actions for the continuing education of teachers that are integrated in a way that offers support for schools to build a coexistence plan, or even their anti-bullying projects, as provided in Law 13.185/15, which establishes the requirement for a Program to Combat Bullying (BRAZIL, 2015).

The vast majority of units continue with isolated initiatives, characterized by several small projects that are not connected to each other; nor are they planned in a way to involve the whole school community, since it is in the same way, with juxtaposed proposals, that the guidelines from Seduc-SP arrive in schools.

The apparent big step in the transformation of the former Spec into Conviva SP did not have the incentive or the backing of the Secretary, who, for example, vetoed the schools' receiving the report on relational climate in time to guide the 2020 planning. Subsequently, the same Secretary changed the course of a planned and organized program, which had already been announced for the entire network and included an agreement with the São Paulo State University (Unesp). Instead of working with coexistence, a juxtaposition of other projects was installed, as mentioned before.

In the midst of all these uncoordinated actions, the worst of all aggravating factors: a pandemic. The global impact of Covid-19 inaugurated new needs in all areas of social life, requiring people to change their behavior in order to deal with such a crisis in the best possible way. Without a doubt, one of the areas in which this was most evident was education.

Firstly the massive suspension of classes worldwide had by July 2020 reached more than 1,067 million students (UNESCO, 2020). As a consequence of the interruption of face-to-face classes, educational inequalities and exclusions have increased, some of them linked to access to digital platforms and adequate conditions for studying, further impacting the learning of students, especially in historically marginalized groups. In addition to the complications worldwide, closer to our context, one notices the problem exacerbated in Latin American and Caribbean countries, since, according to 2019 data from Cepal (2019), they were already facing structural problems before the pandemic, such as the increase in poverty and extreme poverty by 2018, registering indicators of 30.1% and 10.7%, respectively (UNESCO, 2020, p. 96).

The private network has reorganized itself; many schools have even inaugurated ways of teaching that will not be abandoned after the pandemic period. The public schools, on the other hand, have not had the same luck. Besides the academic losses, the huge gap created by the fact that students and teachers do not see each other, do not talk to each other, and do not interact has the biggest impact of all: the delay in affective development and, consequently, in the morality of girls and boys. This is because, as already stated by Piaget (1932/1994), this human dimension can only be fully developed in situations of cooperation in which students regularly experience situations of mutual respect, collective discussion of rules, and the experience of values such as justice, solidarity, and democratic coexistence.

Before the pandemic, Brazilian schools still had unmet challenges, such as bullying, the lack of systematized spaces and proposals for conflict mediation in each school unit, and the lack of adequate training for teachers to contribute to the education of their students, enabling coexistence in an ethical way. Other challenges are blatant: the school and society, which didn't know well how to fight bullying, now also need to deal with the increase of virtual aggressions that, besides being serious in themselves, are intertwined with other manifestations of violence, such as racism and disrespect to essential human rights.

How to solve this in a country weakened by the complexity of economic, political, ideological, and social issues; in which many of the civilizational milestones historically built have been walking a tightrope? More than ever it is urgent that the initial and continuing education of teachers be rethought for Brazil (BARRIOS; MARINHO-ARAÚJO; BRANCO, 2011; GATTI, 2011, 2014a, 2014b; GONÇALVES, 2011; KNOENER, 2019).

Eighth recommendation: new challenges, new themes

Themes such as respect for human diversity, fighting inequalities, knowledge about restorative practices and the creation of spaces for conflict mediation and the development of affective aspects in children and young people, among others, are extremely necessary. In the same way, teachers need a continuous formation that provides opportunities for dialogue in which the roles that education professionals have regarding the preparation of students to live together in a respectful and empathetic way in virtual environments are discussed.

Just as important, it is necessary that the school understands its role within the protective network, becoming aware of its own duties, of the possibilities and potentials to combat violence such as femicide, domestic aggression, and sexual abuse of children and adolescents.

It is not about bequeathing to the school a role that should be played by other institutions, including the family, but rather to clarify that there are affective aspects of an autonomous morality that will only be developed in our students if they have the opportunity to live with their peers. It is about recognizing the collective dimension that is only offered by the school, as it is unique and of great potential to transform difficulties and possibilities of the private and intimate dimension that we don't want them to follow, generated in the family relationship in whose homes (as we have already said, when thinking about the theme of the formation also offered to the families) our children and adolescents may live with parents who are offenders, aggressive, users of alcohol and drugs, violent? Where, if not at school, the sons and daughters of these parents will find opportunities to live with other possibilities of relationships²?

Finally, we emphasize that in addition to promoting coexistence, the school must be a space for rejection of violence. To this end, it is necessary that educational professionals know paths, protocols, and techniques that contribute to numerous aspects, from non-violent communication to assertive intervention in cases of bullying (TOGNETTA, 2020b).

It is necessary for a teacher to have the opportunity to study to the point of understanding that a fight in a WhatsApp group created by students is not a problem "out there," and that, furthermore, "it is in here" the most favorable place to collectively build non-negotiable human values. Yes, the school has that power!

² We recommend here the reading of the poem by Taís Vinha "Onde, senão na escola?" Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rHDDXfnjeNo>. Access on: 15 Feb. 2022.

Ninth recommendation: The importance of peers

As we have seen, not being physically present in school has reverberated into great suffering for children and adolescents. At an age when having friends is so important from the point of view of constituting who you are, our investigations again showed the impact of the period in which we live. Before the Covid-19 pandemic, the school climate reports presented during the diagnosis performed in São Paulo schools and the Placon data already indicated problems in peer relationships, such as bullying, loneliness, and alcohol and drug use among adolescents.

The absence of interaction with their peers generated a great impact for children and adolescents because it affected not only the constitution of their self-image of value and belonging to a social group, but also factors related to language, communication between people, and social behavior itself (such as knowing how to listen to the other and knowing how to wait for their time, experiences that are difficult to conquer when they are not experienced).

It is also known that social support is one of the most protective factors against depression in adolescents (MEULEN; GRANIZO; DEL BARRIO, 2021). The conclusion of our studies, added to those that already presented such considerations, is that peers are a great force to be valued in schools. They are the ones who can best welcome, help, intervene when, as adults, we do not know about the pains, the anguish of our students, not because we do not want to see, but because adults will not be the ones sought by those who suffer bullying and other violence (AVILÉS MARTÍNEZ, 2013; COWIE, 2000; COWIE, WALLACE, 2000; MEULEN; GRANIZO; DEL BARRIO, 2021; TOGNETTA; SOUZA; LAPA, 2019). Surely this was the starting point of implementing an Equal Support System in public schools.

It was our male and female students from schools belonging to the network Help Teams from Brazil, formed as a result of the project presented here, who got closer to the more than 29,500 teenagers from the Regional Education Directorates (DREs) with whom we work. By dedicating their time and energy, they have proven that, given the opportunity, it is "on the side of good" that our young people will find the meaning to move forward (SOMOS CONTRA O BULLYING, 2021).

This is, without a doubt, the greatest of all the recommendations presented here: to give young people what is rightfully theirs: to be protagonists of a better civilization.

Tenth recommendation: What we learn from a scientific method

For some time now we have been trying to bring to our country the experience gained in countries where we have been, won friends and/or established working partnerships in the field of school coexistence. These countries - such as Chile, Spain, Colombia, Argentina, among others - have, for some time, had a structured policy for strategically planning and executing actions that overcome the empty and divergent forms of intervention and prevention, provided for in specific or electoral campaigns, to violence in schools. In 2014, in Colombia, the National School Coexistence System was organized and enacted, in which one of its main topics discussed refers to the exercise of human rights and the prevention and combat related to coexistence problems. With the school coexistence policy in Chile, we have also learned about the fundamental role that school curricula have in establishing a foundation with themes related to coexistence. We believe that a policy to promote coexistence is made by the need to guide and promote the teaching, learning, and management of coexistence for both personal and social development, being responsible for bringing out the knowledge and culture of both students and the educational community as a whole. (CHILE, 2019)³.

Certainly, the great promoter of the enthusiasm that Gepem's researchers had to start this work was one of the criteria for which the call for proposals was intended: choosing projects that had the potential for replication in education networks and that would become a public policy.

The pandemic context and all the difficulties encountered in the implementation of this project - incorporated into an accelerated decision to become, immediately, part of a public policy of coexistence - were challenges that made emerge, at least for now, a great desire that, in fact, the whole construction of a coexistence program would be integrated into the work of a network whose aspirations, coming from the school ground, converge towards the same ideal⁴.

The fact is that to finish the recommendations, we would not be fair if there was not the highlight and, consequently, the gratefulness ⁵ to the person who first idealized this research

³Available at: <http://convivenciaescolar.mineduc.cl/>. Access on: 01 Mar. 2022.

⁴ At the end of the formative meetings of the final year classes of elementary school, a large number of teachers recorded, in writing or orally, their satisfaction with the opportunity to study, discuss and reflect on the themes of coexistence. Even in a group interview with 12 professionals who participated in the training cycle, some also highlighted the importance of schools having systematic and intentional proposals to promote good virtual coexistence, in addition to signaling their desire to carry on with the dream of implementing the Help Teams.

⁵ Our immense gratitude for the opportunity and trust offered by Fundação Itaú Social and Fundação Carlos Chagas, not only through the research edict, but also for all the technical support, enrichment events involving all the different project teams, as well as the financial resources that made this research possible.

project, considering the university as the fertile ground for the transformation of a segment that is sometimes quite resigned: the final years of elementary school.

In fact, more than the University, what is at stake in this last recommendation is science and its quest. In respect to its complex, dialectic and sovereign nature that all the research results present in this dossier converge to the recommendation that, more than ever, it can be brought back to its value.

It is the exercise of science that makes our last word fruitful. It is through the exercise of search, of patience, of enthusiasm, of not giving up, that we leave here our greatest recommendation to give to boys and girls, from São Paulo or not, little Brazilians of all races, genders, colors and desires, the persistence that will move us. If it wasn't this time that we conquered a policy of coexistence for schools, we will try again, again, again...

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