



## CARE TO THE CHILD LESS THAN ONE YEAR OLD: NURSING PRACTICE PERSPECTIVE ABOUT CHILD CARE

### CUIDADO À CRIANÇA MENOR DE UM ANO: PERSPECTIVA DA ATUAÇÃO DO ENFERMEIRO NA PUERICULTURA

### CUIDADO DE NIÑOS CON MENOS DE UN AÑO: PERSPECTIVA DE LA PRÁCTICA DEL ENFERMERO ACERCA DEL CUIDADO DE NIÑOS

Aline de Luna Benicio<sup>1</sup>, Milana Drumond Ramos Santana<sup>2</sup>, Italla Maria Pinheiro Bezerra<sup>3</sup>, Rosângela Rodrigues dos Santos<sup>4</sup>

#### ABSTRACT

**Objective:** recognizing the perception and nurse's actions before the childcare consultation at the Family Health Strategy. **Methodology:** this is a descriptive study of a qualitative approach. Informants were nurses working in the Family Health Strategy for the municipality Caririçu/CE, Brazil. The data were produced through semi-structured interviews and analyzed by the Technique of Content Analysis. **Results:** based on the design of nurses, child care plays a key role in the growth and development of children, and although the actions planned and executed in the child care program have positive responses, professionals revealed some difficulties during their workday. **Conclusion:** the discussions highlighted the care and practice that nurses have before the child in the childcare service, as well as the need for creation of new strategies to improve the health monitoring of the child in the city. **Descriptors:** Child Care; Growth and Development; Nursing.

#### RESUMO

**Objetivo:** conhecer a percepção e a atuação do enfermeiro diante da consulta de puericultura na Estratégia de Saúde da Família. **Metodologia:** estudo descritivo com abordagem qualitativa. Os informantes foram os enfermeiros atuantes na Estratégia de Saúde da Família do município de Caririçu/CE, Brasil. Os dados foram produzidos por meio de entrevistas semiestruturadas e analisadas pela Técnica de Análise de Conteúdo. **Resultados:** baseando na concepção dos enfermeiros, a puericultura tem um papel fundamental no crescimento e desenvolvimento da criança, e embora as ações planejadas e executadas no programa de puericultura tenham respostas positivas, os profissionais revelaram algumas dificuldades enfrentadas durante sua jornada de trabalho. **Conclusão:** as discussões evidenciam a assistência e a prática que os enfermeiros têm diante da criança no atendimento de puericultura, como também a necessidade de elaboração de novas estratégias para melhorar o acompanhamento de saúde da criança no município. **Descritores:** Puericultura; Crescimento e Desenvolvimento; Enfermagem.

#### RESUMEN

**Objetivo:** conocer la percepción y las acciones del enfermero ante la consulta de puericultura en la Estrategia de Salud de la Familia. **Metodología:** un estudio descriptivo con un enfoque cualitativo. Los informantes fueron los enfermeros que trabajan en la Estrategia de Salud de la Familia en el municipio de Caririçu/CE, Brasil. Los datos se produjeron a través de entrevistas semi-estructuradas y analizados por la Técnica de Análisis de Contenido. **Resultados:** se basa en el concepto de los enfermeros, el cuidado de niños juega un papel clave en el crecimiento y desarrollo de los niños, y aunque las acciones planificadas y ejecutadas en el programa de cuidado de niños tengan respuestas positivas, profesionales revelado algunas dificultades durante su jornada de trabajo. **Conclusión:** las discusiones han destacado la atención y las prácticas que los enfermeros tienen ante el niño en el servicio de guardería, así como la necesidad de la creación de nuevas estrategias para mejorar la vigilancia de la salud del niño en la ciudad. **Descritores:** Cuidado de Niños; Crecimiento y Desarrollo; Enfermería.

<sup>1</sup>Nurse Egress, Faculty of Juazeiro do Norte/FJN. Juazeiro do Norte (CE), Brazil. Email: [alyne-luna@hotmail.com](mailto:alyne-luna@hotmail.com); <sup>2</sup>Odontologist, Educational Coordinator, Master Professor, Faculty of Juazeiro do Norte/FJN. Juazeiro do Norte (CE), Brazil. Email: [mildrumond@hotmail.com](mailto:mildrumond@hotmail.com); <sup>3</sup>Nurse, Master Teacher in Models of Decision and Health, Graduation Program in Nursing, Juazeiro do Norte/FJN, Doctoral Student of Health Sciences, Faculty of Medicine of ABC Paulista. São Paulo (SP), Brazil. Email: [itallamaria@hotmail.com](mailto:itallamaria@hotmail.com); <sup>4</sup>Pedagogy, Educational Psychologist, Tutor at distance, Open University of Brazil/UAB, Psychopedagogical Center Coordinator of Faculty Members and Students, Faculty of Juazeiro do Norte/FJN. Juazeiro do Norte (CE), Brazil. Email: [rosangelajua@gmail.com](mailto:rosangelajua@gmail.com)

## INTRODUCTION

Child development, especially in early life, is a period that contributes to the formation of a subject and its human potential. However, some disorders that affect this phase are responsible for serious consequences for the individual. So, actions were developed to come to ensure and maintain the quality of life of this population.<sup>1</sup>

For the child have a good development and grow healthily and be prepared to face the changes that occur in its body is essential to receive specific care, able to promote its physical well-being, preventing problems that can interfere with the child's development.<sup>2</sup>

In this sense, assistance to children's health has been an activity of fundamental importance in child development period; because, with proper monitoring these children, it is intended to reduce the incidence of disease and increase the chances of developing and have a healthy life, thus achieving their full potential.

The primary health care provides such assistance to children in the Child Care Program, which is based on promotion, prevention, early diagnosis and recovery of health problems and aims to monitor 100% of children born in the catchment area of the Family Health Strategy - FHS, are soon recommended seven visits during the first year of life, two queries from 12 to 24 months and an annual consultation from 36 to 72 months.<sup>3</sup>

The scheduled monitoring of growth and development, complemented by control activities of childhood illness such as diarrhea and acute respiratory diseases, and the basic actions, such as promoting breastfeeding, nutritional guidance and immunization, contributing to the promotion of good quality of life and it is essential the joint effort of both the family and the healthcare team and several government bodies.<sup>4</sup>

A childcare consultation can be developed by both the physician and the nurse and have duties such as performing a physical examination on the child, identifying risks in their growth and development and health problems; to request the ACS (Community Health Agent) active search for missing program; fill the weight chart and stature in children's cards, checking and administering vaccines as the basic vaccination schedule; encourage exclusive breastfeeding; guide the complementary feeding and accident prevention according to age group, clarifying

the doubts and difficulties of the mother or caregivers who participate in consultations.<sup>2</sup>

The promotion and restoration of health and child welfare is a priority in assistance to child health, ensuring proper growth and development in the physical, emotional and social aspects. For the promotion takes place satisfactorily, child care consultation should be developed with fullness, in which health professionals should know and understand the child in the family and social environment, and the relationship and interaction with the socio-economic context, historical, political and cultural.<sup>5</sup>

Consultation of health professionals although it has a practice in a systematic way, it is clear that the nurse has played his work with actions not just clinics, but with an epidemiological and social conception, forgetting to promote a generous hosting during the consultation, one attentional listening, good dialogue and the relationship between work, children and family members.

Given these considerations above, some questions arose: How will the nurses perceive child care consultation? How are these consultations conducted? What are the point elements that can facilitate or hinder these consultations? Thus, to answer questions assess, the aim of this study is to know the perception and nurses' actions before the childcare consultation in the Family Health Strategy.

## METHODOLOGY

This is a descriptive study of a qualitative approach, ensuring the achievement of the objectives proposed, which was closer to the reality to be studied, seeking to know the meaning and values of the theme.

The study was conducted in the municipality of Caririaçu - CE, Brazil, with the scenes of the Family Health Unit of the municipality. Thus, of the 11 nurses, only one refused to participate, thus making a total of 10 subjects participated in this study.

Data were collected through semi-structured interviews addressing on the theme under study. To organize them, there were executed pre-analysis, which collected the reading of the material was made identifying converging points, representative and meaningful to the theme; then separating the passages relevant to approach each question, classifying similarity to the extent that were found; and interpretation of the data were performed based on the literature and standardization, linking with the theoretical

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research contribution, respecting thus the steps when working with content analysis.<sup>5</sup>

This survey was conducted after approval by the Research Ethics Committee of the Faculty Leão Sampaio under registration number 434871/2013. He complied with the ethical and legal aspects, in accordance with Resolution 466/12. This resolution incorporates the perspective of the individual and communities, bioethics references such as autonomy, non-maleficence, beneficence, justice and equity, among others, and aims to ensure the rights and duties they say about the participants of the research, the scientific community and the State.<sup>6</sup>

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The research subjects were 10 nurses of the Family Health Teams, two males and eight females. Ages ranged from 23 to 36 years old, having monthly income ranging from three to eight times the minimum wage. The

professional training ranged up to 13 years and the time of experience in municipal health units was four months to thirteen years as shown in Table 1.

It was found that most respondents have expertise and/or training course in the area of pediatrics. From this perspective, it is important to train these professionals, so they can acquire information and strategies to cope better with the public, especially with children in childcare consultation.

From this perspective, nurses can plan and schedule actions to improve the quality of care in primary health care. Thus, the training of nursing professionals has great relevance to work in the FHS in scope for a comprehensive health care, contemplated promotion, protection, disease prevention, early intervention, treatment and cure.

Table 1. Socio/professional profile of the subjects of research. Caririáçu-CE, 2013.

Variable	n	%	Total
<b>Gender</b>			
Male	02	20%	10
Female	08	80%	
<b>Age (in years)</b>			
23 - 28	05	50%	10
30 - 36	05	50%	
<b>Marital Status</b>			
Single	04	40%	10
Married	06	60%	
<b>Monthly Income</b>			
Non informed	01	10%	
03 minimum wages	02	20%	
04 minimum wages	02	20%	10
05 minimum wages	04	40%	
08 minimum wages	01	10%	
<b>Time of Graduated</b>			
01 year and 04 months	03	30%	
03 years	01	10%	
05 years	01	10%	10
07 years to 08 years	02	20%	
09 years to 10 years	02	20%	
13 years	01	10%	
<b>Specialization</b>			
Yes	07	70%	10
No	03	30%	
<b>Type of specialization</b>			
Public Health	01	10%	
Family Health	04	40%	
Urgency/Emergency and Family Health	01	10%	10
Elderly health and Gerontology	01	10%	
<b>Course in the area of Pediatrics</b>			
Yes	08	80%	10
No	02	20%	
<b>Time of acting at the FHS</b>			
04 months and 09 months	02	20%	
01 year	01	10%	
03 years	02	20%	
06 years	01	10%	10
09 years	02	20%	
10 years	01	10%	
13 years	01	10%	

Regarding the knowledge of aspects related to the perception of the FHS and the nurse's role in childcare consultation, the following categories were developed: Nurse's perception on child care consultation; Nurses' care; Health education action in childcare; Approach and guidance provided by the nurse; Difficulties experienced by nurses and facilities; Overcoming the difficulties.

#### ◆ Perception of the nurse in childcare consultation

The nurse should be able and know the most important aspects of the development/growth of the child and be prepared to make some interventions, if necessary, identifying clearly those children who should be referred for treatment or specialized treatment.<sup>7</sup>

Note that in the speeches of nurses about the perception of the importance that the professional must take when making a childcare consultation, are covered all aspects of growth and development of healthy and prevent complications that may interfere with children's health as evidence the statement below:

*During a consultation, notice any change in the development / growth of the child and if appropriate, send it to. (Nurse. 02)*

*By childcare can be detected if the child is growing and developing in a healthy way, and if not, you can intervene early on, avoiding major sequels. (Nurse. 04)*

*There is no way to measure such importance. A childcare consultation is essential in the growth and development to children. (Enf. 06)*

Based on the statements above, child care consultation has been a most important tool for child development process, and it is through this that nurses have the opportunity to investigate and identify the profile of children accompanied by analyzing so if the standard growth and development is compatible with age and may even intervene, avoiding major consequences that could harm their development.

The monitoring of child growth when checked monthly, will the interventions of abnormalities that may arise and these are corrected, allowing the child to develop in a healthy way.<sup>8</sup>

The childcare has been an enabling tool in the comprehensive monitoring of child growth and development, turning to aspects of prevention, protection and promotion of health, so that the child reaches adulthood without unfavorable influences brought from childhood.<sup>9</sup>

#### ◆ Attendance by the nurse

Meeting the child population involves actions or preventive measures targeting from the period of pregnancy during prenatal to five years of age, aiming to prevent the child becomes ill while promoting proper growth and development, but also, enhancing and monitoring the children under risk.<sup>10</sup>

During a routine visit, the nurse as well as weigh, measure and examine the child in full and assessed its physical and psychomotor growth, should check vaccination coverage, encourage the promotion of health and prevention of the most common diseases in this infant stage, as also promote hygiene, food Guide, security of domestic accidents, encouraging and providing socialization and adaptation of children in their social environment.<sup>11</sup>

In this sense, the steps taken by nurses in childcare consultation was hold in the aspect of evaluation of growth and development of children according to their age, following steps that guide their actions in a systematic way, with a clinical eye on the physical examination, which assesses the situation that the child is and provide own guidelines for each stage of the life cycle, as evidence the reports below:

*Measuring weight, height, circumference/head, calculate BMI, record all these in the child's graphic card. Evaluate the motor development and immunization schedule and advise mothers on the same information. (Nurse. 05)*

*Take care of the child holistically and detect the earliest possible changes to thereafter decide on the action to be taken. All procedures performed in the query are passed to progenitors, praising when the child and cared for and enhancing the guidelines especially when detected changes. (Nurse. 04)*

*The query identify normal conditions or abnormality, step guidelines in accordance with the needs of a child and family reality. (Nurse. 06)*

*Physical examination (cerebro-caudal); measurements (height, head circumference, chest); assess development and if there is change, refer to the professional responsible. (Enf. 09)*

For child care nurses it is an important time, as well as evaluating the state of growth and development of children, turn out to be a moment of information exchange, and the guidelines are socialized according to the child's health status and the reality of social conditions in which the family lives, worrying so, with this good of the child and the host of the same.

It is during child care that have the ability to provide a systematic assistance, paid up

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and individualized, identifying health problems and disease, executing and evaluating the care that contribute to the promotion and disease prevention of child health.<sup>12</sup>

Nursing professionals through the childcare consultation develop follow-up actions of growth and development and can intervene before the real needs of the child, implementing new forms of care, ensuring its full development, reaching an adult life without unfavorable and derived influences from this stage of life.<sup>13</sup>

#### ◆ Action of health education in childcare

In a basic health unit, the nurse is responsible for various duties, among them child care consultation, in which besides evaluating the child, mothers transmit guidelines on various aspects for the promotion of child health.<sup>14</sup>

Through childcare consultation are passed guidelines on the care for the child and the early detection of changes in the growth/child development, using as aid strategies of educational activities in health, because health promotion is a community empowerment process for act on improving the quality of life and health, including that way, increase control over this process.<sup>4</sup>

In this regard, we note that one of the important duties that nurses emphasize are the guidelines for the progenitors during a routine visit. The act of guiding can be understood as a time to take action, and address health education issues, as you can see in the statements below.

*Yes, these are always targeted. The actions aim to keep always informed the progenitors or responsible for the child, always focusing on the importance of attending well child visits. (Nurse. 01)*

*On average there every 3 months realize health education with varying themes. It was produced a leaflet which is delivered on a routine visit and read along with the mother or caregiver clarifying possible doubts. (Nurse. 06)*

*In addition to guiding the actions should be recorded in medical records. (Enf. 09)*

The health education action is intended to strengthen the individual's awareness of himself and his reality, and for it to occur fully and enable actions planned in the health services there needs to be a dialogue between technical and scientific professional knowledge health and popular knowledge of users, thus aiming at the construction of autonomy and the subjects in the care responsibility for their health through the transformation of knowledge.<sup>15</sup>

#### ◆ Approach and guidance provided by the nurse in childcare

Developing nursing care while health education, necessary permits, share experience and expertise, feelings and perceptions, and still perceive the child as a unique being, which is in the process of growth, development and discovery of the world and the relationships with each other.<sup>16</sup>

The way how nurses addresses and guides the mothers', will influence in improving the quality of care for the child, but also the growth and development because during the service the nurse just recognizing when the progenitors assimilate or not the information transmitted to the care of their child, as observed in the statement below:

*Certainly the progenitors want to give their best for their children. Only that it is difficult for us professionals, when information is not well transmitted, or when the progenitors become faulty, then indeed is hard work and you need to have more incentives and more attention. (Nurse. 10)*

*Most of them are quite interested and take the doubts arisen. I try to make them feel free to express their opinions and questions. (Nurse. 02)*

*I believe that contributes to better care, after childcare they feel safer to care for their children. (Nurse. 08)*

*Through them care for the child and assimilated guidelines, I realize change every month, until the second year of life. What about security, many had medical consultation, but see ask if they can give that medicine. (Enf. 09)*

Based on the guidelines, actions and stimuli directed by nurses to care for the child, in addition to positive responses noted by the professional according to the parameters of child growth and development, the mothers' eventually become a security and trust in nurses, recognizing their working and going to value it in relation to other health professionals.

The valuation of a professional category is related to the quality of service provided to users.<sup>17</sup>

By interacting with the children and their families, nurses experience the service pleasant and enjoyable way, feeling gratified and pleased to see the development of the child and, above all, the possibility of acting in prevention. Perform the nursing consultation also means a great reward, for being recognized professionally generates sense of triumph, of professional development, personal and even as a human being.<sup>18</sup>

### ◆ Difficulties and easiness experienced by the nurse

Meeting the children and their family becomes a challenge for the health team, we need to carry out monitoring of children, and guiding and supporting to perform a planned assistance, individualized and quality with the community's socio-economic use of that belongs.<sup>19</sup>

Considering the importance of child care consultation, the nurse during their workday experience difficulties such as lack of materials and maintenance of the same, the high demand, but also keep the assiduous progenitors with consultations.

*Some kids don't collaborate, high demand, it is not 100% of mothers who bring their children to childcare. Lack of some materials to conduct neuropsychomotor test. (Nurse. 04)*

*Attendance of responsible (rural area). Insufficient material or lack of maintenance. (Nurse. 05)*

Another difficulty was the lack of training and continuing education of nurses in the pediatric area, as reported by one of the interviewees:

*Lack of courses offered in this area. (Enf. 03)*

Continuing education, with emphasis on child care, are of utmost importance to the training of health professionals, especially doctors and nurses, to provide update and refresher courses to these professionals has the intention to improve the quality of care the child population, favoring thus the growth and development of children.<sup>20</sup>

Even experiencing difficulties, especially with the question of Attendance of the mothers in the consultations, nurses have certain facilities in childcare as the progenitors follow the information provided by the nurse, the partnership with the ACS, have affinity in the childcare area and enjoy working with child as well as create the bond with the child and family, as can be seen in the following statements:

*The progenitors follows and the information provided. (Nurse. 01)*

*I like working with children, and own the vast majority of materials needed. (Nurse. 04)*

*Partners of the ACS. (Nurse. 06)*

*The link with the mother and child. (Enf. 07)*

The childcare allows nurses to strengthen the bond with the assisted families. The interaction established between work and family is very important in enabling mutual trust, and the strengthening of the bond increases more and more over time, causing the nursing consultation is successful and

impact on the care of child and the community.<sup>21</sup>

### ◆ Overcoming the difficulties

To overcome the difficulties experienced during the workday, nurses end up developing strategies and making adjustments as child care consulting associations with family planning, intensify visits and make the search for the children defaulting along with the ACS, thus reaching the query goals childcare.

*Organize together with ACS in monitoring child care together with family planning. (Nurse. 02)*

*Do active search of children through the ACS. Guide the progenitors of the importance of monitoring and providing materials. (Nurse. 04)*

*Guidance on the importance of the procedure and make the active search. (Enf. 06)*

The Community Health Agent - ACS is one of the FHS team members and plays a key role in the development of primary health care, especially in the attention to health of children where in their work has been outstanding, for the care of the developing child requires continuous monitoring, seeking promotion, prevention and health rehabilitation.<sup>22</sup>

The dialogue between the nurse and the ACS is essential to promote discussion about difficulties and facilities related to work. This verbalization of such situations can be presented as an aid in trouble coping and joint actions to ensure effectiveness in carrying out planned activities of this professional.<sup>23</sup>

Health professionals, especially nurses need to work the importance of childcare in the community consultation, as dissatisfaction with the services offered and the motivation of mothers' ends up not believing that consultation is important to the health of their children.

### FINAL REMARKS

The childcare query has a key role to influence positively on growth and development, which aims to assist the child as a whole, not limited only on physical examination and weighing perform anthropometric measurements and check the vaccination, but provide a humanized care during consultations and transmitting guidance on the health care of children so we can grow and develop healthily early preventing the diseases health.

It is noticed that nurses use the childcare consultation as a timely tool to perform education actions in health and at the same time the full monitoring of child growth and development.

Although the actions planned and executed have positive answer, nurses revealed some difficulties during the workday as a lack of adequate materials and equipment as well as compliance with the attendance of the mothers in subsequent consultations. Thereby attracting children to follow up growth and development will be carried out by ACS, because the link between the FHS and the community.

It needs to change this reality, disseminate periodic importance of childcare consultation for children, encouraging parents to attend the health unit keeping the attendance to perform the monitoring of child growth and development. Further action to improve care, it is the manager provide the material as well as maintaining the equipment necessary for it to carry out a full assessment in which the child has the right.

It was noted that some professionals reported having difficulty paying child care in child care due to lack of training courses in the area. Thus a policy that seeks to qualify health professionals is necessary to act in the FHS, thus improving the care provided to the child thus reaching all its potential for growth and human development.

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**Corresponding Address**

Aline de Luna Benicio

Rua São Francisco, 1224 A

Bairro São Miguel

CEP 63010-475 – Juazeiro do Norte (CE),  
Brazil