

**STUDY INTO THE HOSPITALIZATION OF CHILDREN AND
ADOLESCENTS IN LONG-TERM CARE INSTITUTIONS FOR PEOPLE
WITH DISABILITIES IN THE STATE OF SÃO PAULO**

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In the Brazilian context, mental health care for children and adolescents was, for decades, realized through philanthropic enterprises in specialized long-term care institutions. Following the implementation of the law 10.216 in 2001, however, the National Mental Health Policy reformulated the directives for assistance and recommended the substitution of the long-term care model for the psycho-social model, grounded in community-based care, and organized through the connection of extended and multidisciplinary networks.

It is notable however, that the implementation of public policy is processual and does not happen automatically or concomitantly with its regulation. Therefore, carrying out research into the institutions and care practices currently in evidence is necessary to evaluate the implementation process for RAPS and the roll out of the National Mental Health Policy for children and adolescents.

The present study investigates nonprofit care institutions for people with disabilities, given that they are still active in the mental health area and offer care for children and adolescents under conditions of long-term care. Therefore, this study seeks to identify and describe the profile of the institutions offering treatment under long-term institutional care to people with disabilities in the State of São Paulo and to analyze the hospitalization of children and adolescents in these institutions.

The research was carried out in three stages: firstly, we mapped and characterized the institutions. The second step involved ascertaining the profile of patients of specific institutions. The final step involved categorizing and analyzing the data, with the aim of determining the hospitalizations of children and adolescents and evaluating the role played by the long-term care institutions for people with disabilities in the area of infant-youth mental health.

It is an original study in the State of São Paulo, investigating a little-known reality. The research collected information about 28 institutions that had 1851 people living under their care at the time of data collection. Additionally, we could observe that the long-term hospitalization of children and adolescents is a recurrent practice in these institutions. The study also reveals an absence of categorization or specific regulation of these services, which are uncoordinated with the multidisciplinary and territorial network and do not promote practices of deinstitutionalization. Therefore, the institutions and the State, in a simultaneously distant but complementary fashion, promote the ongoing institutionalization of children and adolescents.

We found therefore, that hospitalization in care institutions for people with disabilities urgently needs to be the focus of new studies and public health initiatives. The survey of information that allowed us to recognize specific demands is fundamental to guarantee the effectiveness and consolidation of the Psycho-social Care Network, as well as to guarantee, for this demographic group, the rights outlined in the Statute of the Child and Adolescent.