

CHRONOPOLITICS AND NETWORKS AS VITAL INDICATORS IN THE FIELD OF CHILDHOOD AND ADOLESCENCE

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Since the implementation of the principles of the International Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNICEF) in Brazil, through the Statute of the Child and Adolescent (1990), enforcement mechanisms for the rights of children and adolescents have strengthened, mainly guaranteeing, in a more effective manner, access to this public policy. The quality of care and the responsibilities of public actors in monitoring and evaluating this care however, cannot always count on indicators able to produce findings about violations or the impact of the policy on the lives of children and adolescents.

We investigated the quality of mental health policy for children and adolescents, through studying how the long-term care practices in institutions diverge from their explicit aims, thereby contradicting the reasons for their establishment and the directives of the national mental health policy. To this end, we used research of medical records of children and adolescents in long-term care institutions in the state of São Paulo: a) circuits of long-term stays of children and adolescents in psychiatric hospitals (2012); b) analysis of the population and of the life conditions of the children and adolescents in long-term care institutions (2019).

We understand that the investigation of this analytical event (psychiatric hospitalization) allows us to interrogate certain functions and effects of the policies. We defined two aspects for this supervision/evaluation: a) the “temporal” dimension of care; when the effects of time produced by the institutional circuits affect the life of the child or adolescent, that is, a chronopolitical perspective in dialogue with a perspective on the right to development, understood through its intensive dimension; b) the network dimension or the institutional incompleteness of care in contrast to institutional insulation.

We suggest, therefore, that sentinel-events (in the field of public health) or analytical-events, as suggested by the institutional analysis, related to time and insulation, should be considered elements for ongoing evaluation of public policy, constituting a field for “monitoring of policy for children and adolescents”, from a critical, epidemiological perspective suggested within public health.

In this manner, the study presents an analysis of psychiatric hospitalizations of children and adolescents in the State of São Paulo over the last decade. The comparison of the data found in the research highlights the common characteristics of the institutional histories of children and adolescents subjected to long-term hospitalization. Additionally, the analysis of the medical records was found to be an important tool for research into mental health since it allows us to uncover indicators for attention and care for children and adolescents.