

The adolescent and the institutionalization: understanding the phenomenon and meanings attributed to it

O adolescente e a institucionalização: compreensão do fenômeno e significados atribuídos

El adolescente y la institucionalización: comprensión del fenómeno y significados atribuidos

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ABSTRACT

Objective: To understand the meaning of being institutionalized and in conflict with the law for the institutionalized adolescent. **Method:** A qualitative, phenomenological-comprehensive study carried out in a Socio-educational Service Foundation in the northern region of Brazil, with 05 institutionalized adolescents. The analysis was carried out under the understanding of the content suggested by Heidegger, thus allowing the construction of analytical categories for a hermeneutical interpretation. **Results:** Conflicting with the law means something negative and bad for the institutionalized adolescents, in which they understand that although there is deprivation of liberty, the period of hospitalization is an important moment for the reflection on the need to start over. **Conclusion:** The meaning of conflicting with the law goes far beyond a simple word, act or behaviour, it is something that only those who experience the phenomenon are able to unveil, arouse deep feelings and provide reflection to the adolescent about the damages caused by the infraction.

Descriptors: Institutionalized Adolescent; Violence; Nursing; Education on Health; Development of Personality.

RESUMO

Objetivo: Compreender o significado de estar institucionalizado e em conflito com a lei para o adolescente institucionalizado. **Método:** Estudo qualitativo, fenomenológico-compreensivo, realizado em uma Fundação de Atendimento Socioeducativa da região norte do Brasil, com 05 adolescentes institucionalizados. A análise ocorreu a partir da compreensão de conteúdo sugerida por Heidegger, permitindo, assim, a construção de categorias analíticas para uma interpretação hermenêutica. **Resultados:** Estar em conflito com a lei para o adolescente institucionalizado significa algo negativo e ruim, onde o adolescente compreende que embora exista a privação de liberdade, o período de internação é um momento importante para a reflexão sobre a necessidade de recomeçar. **Conclusão:** O significado de estar em conflito com a lei vai muito além de uma simples palavra, ato ou comportamento, sendo algo que somente quem vivencia o fenômeno é capaz de desvelar, despertar sentimentos profundos e proporcionar reflexão ao adolescente sobre os prejuízos acarretados pelo ato infracional.

Descritores: Adolescente Institucionalizado; Violência; Enfermagem; Educação em Saúde; Desenvolvimento da Personalidade.

RESUMEN

Objetivo: Comprender el significado de estar institucionalizado y en conflicto con la ley para el adolescente institucionalizado. **Método:** Estudio cualitativo, fenomenológico-comprensivo, realizado en una Fundación de Atención Socioeducativa de la región norte de Brasil, con 05 adolescentes institucionalizados. El análisis se produjo a partir de la comprensión del contenido sugerido por Heidegger, permitiendo así la construcción de categorías analíticas para una interpretación hermenéutica. **Resultados:** El estar en conflicto con la ley para el adolescente institucionalizado significa algo negativo y malo, donde el adolescente comprende que aunque exista la privación de libertad, el período de internación es un momento importante para la reflexión sobre la necesidad de recomenzar. **Conclusión:** El significado de estar en conflicto con la ley va mucho más allá de una simple palabra, acto o

comportamiento, siendo algo que solamente quien vive el fenómeno es capaz de desvelar, despertar sentimientos profundos y proporcionar reflexión al adolescente sobre los prejuicios acarreados por el acto infractor.

Descritores: Adolescente Institucionalizado; La Violencia; Enfermería; Educación en Salud; Desarrollo de la Personalidad.

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INTRODUCTION

Adolescence is a fundamentally biological process, in which a profound transformation occurs, and the cognitive development and personality structure are accelerated. We must understand it as a prolonged period of transition and not as a framework of defined processes to achieve the responsibilities and adult status, through a process shared between the family and the community, where each actor plays a role in the formation of the adolescent self⁽¹⁾.

The development of the adolescent is strongly influenced by the social inequalities and injustices to which they are subjected, as well as the type of interpersonal relationship prevalent in the various social environments, such as school, group of friends and family. In this context, it is observed that the environment directly interferes in the behaviour and formation of the adolescent. This is a factor of utmost importance in the analysis of the situations of juvenile violence and delinquency⁽²⁾.

The phenomenon of violence, daily shown in the media, has been outlining a scenario of growing concern in society in general every year, making us to reflect on the social determinants of crime and on the accountability of young people as the main actors in the growth of acts⁽³⁾.

Violence and the practice of misdemeanours are linked to the processes of self-identification, facts that end up constituting an identity of the adolescents authors of infractions, permeating their essence and contributing to the formation of their character and in their conducts in the course of a dynamics of power relations and status created in the adolescent imaginary. It is believed that the identity related to the infraction is derived from a social and institutional context from the peripheries and the coexistence in groups, and from the peers connected with crime⁽⁴⁾.

Research indicates that the incidence of infractions committed by adolescents is around 8% of the total number of crimes in the country. Thus, this dimension is far inferior than the exacerbated media focus on such acts. Most of the infractions committed by adolescents are damages to property, and the number of circumstances and acts that threaten life or cause irreversible damage are small⁽²⁾.

Programs aimed at assisting adolescents in conflicts with the law should be included in a broader policy that seeks to reintegrate these young people into their social context of origin, imposing protective measures and/or socio-educational initiatives if necessary, but ensuring his autonomy as subject and citizen, allowing the redemption of the situation of risk and conflict in which they are in⁽⁵⁻⁶⁾. Therefore, the application of socio-educational initiatives regarding adolescents in conflicts with the law should foster and provide access to

schooling and professionalism, access to health and personalized care, and guaranteeing the uniqueness of adolescents⁽²⁾.

The centres of socio-educational initiatives generally have a team of teachers and monitors, nursing technicians or nurses, physical educators, social workers and psychologists. This team is responsible for the whole process of re-socialization of this adolescent and for the development of the educational practices needed for this purpose, generating the first contact of the nursing with the adolescent in the process of institutionalization.

In this context, nursing acts as a protagonist in the process of developing educational practices with these adolescents, raising awareness of the need for reflection on health and its impact on daily life, besides conducting interventionist initiatives according to the demand of the moment and offering support to the family in the issues corresponding to the state of health of the institutionalized adolescents.

It is therefore necessary to unveil concepts linked to the institutionalization and to the infraction, subjective to the adolescence in those circumstances, so that these people can understand their experience and from there, foment new discussions inherent to the subject and its great breadth.

OBJECTIVE

To understand the meaning of being institutionalized and in conflict with the law for the institutionalized adolescent. Our guiding question: How does the institutionalized teenager understand being in conflict with the law?

METHOD

Ethical aspects

This study used the term of free and informed consent, which was signed by the legal guardian of the adolescents authorizing data collection and further publication of the obtained results. The adolescents had the option of not participating in the study, being assured all their rights provided by law, and those who expressed a desire to participate in the study signed a consent term. This research met all the ethical requirements for research with human beings, according to the law in force, submitted to the Brazil platform, with an approval opinion by the Ethics and Research Council (*Conselho de Ética e Pesquisa - CEP*) of the University of the State of Pará.

Type of study and theoretical and methodological reference

This is a qualitative study with focus on phenomenology. Phenomenology was used for the understanding process in this study as a philosophy and research method. The method neither is deductive nor empirical, and for that reason it shows the phenomenon and clarifies it from what appears to consciousness,

from what is given and sought, through what is perceived in what is thought, what is spoken; through the ties that unite the phenomenon with the person and vice versa, showing what needs to be unveiled, elucidating the meaning of what is shown to arrive at the result of what the thing really is.

Phenomenological research, with the application of the Heideggerian analytic-hermeneutic movement, demonstrates a great affinity with Nursing research for valuing the subjective, the phenomenon and what can never be quantified. It is a reflexive and theoretical method, which makes it possible to understand the meanings pointed out by the deponents in their daily lives, allowing us to unveil the meanings attributed by the individual and expand the possibilities of care in health and nursing⁽⁶⁾.

Methodological processes

Before the data collection of the study, an extension project was developed with the institutionalized adolescents, involving recreational activities, educational practices in health, visits to the laboratories of anatomy and physiology of the local university, among other sports and didactic activities. This 4-month period, which corresponds to the adaptation time, favoured the rapprochement of researchers and adolescents, a greater participation, support and openness of the deponent to the guiding question of the research, besides providing answers capable of expressing the institutionalized adolescent at that moment.

The universe of this research was of 15 adolescents who underwent socio-educational measures of hospitalization with deprivation of liberty in the Socio-educational Assistance Foundation of Pará State (*Fundação de Atendimento Socioeducativa do Pará*), in the city of Santarém, with varying sentences ranging from 06 (six) months to 01 (one) year, according to the severity of the infraction and behaviour of the adolescent in the hospitalization unit. The deponents were 05 (five) adolescents from the universe previously mentioned and who participated in the activities of adaptation and rapprochement with the research team. For the guarantee of the anonymity each deponent was codified with the name of a regional fish.

Included in this study were the adolescents who, during the study, fulfilled socio-educational correctional procedures and participated in the educational and recreational activities with the researchers. We excluded the adolescents who refused to participate in the adaptation activities, who for some reason were obeying internal penalties of the institution and those who fulfilled other types correctional procedures without total deprivation of liberty.

The phenomenological interview was used to collect the statements of adolescents participating in the study in the institution of their hospitalization, recorded for later transcription of the speech, with notes from the field diary. The guiding question of the research created the question that guided the interview process: "What does it mean, for you, to conflict with the law?"

Research Scenario

The study took place in a Foundation for Socio-educational Assistance in the northern region of Brazil. These foundations have as mission to coordinate and execute the state policy of socio-educational assistance for adolescents and young

people who have committed infractions, as well as assisting their relatives, guided by integral protection doctrine.

Collection, organization and analysis of data

The interviews took place during 2015, and were analysed between 2015 and 2016. We used audio recording for later transcription of the interviews, followed by the linguistic dynamic of each deponent for the validation of the speech transcriptions.

Martin Heidegger's method of existential analysis was used to understand the meaning of the adolescent's experience of being institutionalized and in conflict with the law.

To unveil the meanings present in the discourses of the adolescents, we sought support in the three moments of the comprehensive analysis suggested by Heidegger: The first is description, when the deponent was interrogated and led to speak freely about the phenomenon researched; In the second moment the reduction, when judgments about pre-established conceptions about the theme were prevented from taking, selecting the essential parts for the construction of the units of signification and in the third moment the phenomenological comprehensive analysis⁽⁹⁾.

The path of the phenomenological analysis of Heidegger's method has as its first moment the vague and median understanding of adolescents about the meaning of being institutionalized and in conflict with the law. This understanding, in Heidegger, is characterized by the analysis of the meanings expressed by the deponents, and it seeks to describe the phenomenon as it is shown, because the being is only presence, being-in-the-world, when it is understood. This first moment of the analysis reveals the factual dimension of the phenomenon. The transcription of the information starts by listening, considering all the notes, referring to the non-verbal language, observed during the interview, the procedure of reading and re-reading the description, thus arising the units of signification⁽⁹⁾.

Then, the second methodical moment called hermeneutics was developed, which constitutes the interpretative analysis based on the thought of Martin Heidegger that, from the concept of the adolescent being in conflict with the law, one seeks in the understanding of the meanings the possibility of unveiling the senses of being. This movement allows us to move from the ontic, factual dimension, to the ontological, phenomenal dimension.

Therefore, the analysis was based on the units of signification, discussed and analysed based on the philosophical referential. Finally, it is the search for being, no longer as merely elaborated categories, but as existential structures capable of showing the phenomenon in yourself.

RESULTS

Through exhaustive immersion in reading the transcription of the speeches of the adolescents interviewed, significant elements of the expression of the being about the lived experiences were detected, thus allowing the construction of units of signification. In these units the speeches significantly express what the adolescents think, perceive, feel and behave in relation to the phenomenon researched. They correspond

to the ontic dimension of the phenomenon and to the analysis based on the concepts of the philosopher Martin Heidegger and also corresponds to the ontological dimension, that is, the meaning that is revealed.

Category 01: Units that reflect institutionalization and deprivation of liberty as a result of an error or something bad and causing damage...

In this category the adolescents presented in their verbalizations a contextualization about the process of institutionalization and the meanings that each one brings about being in deprivation of freedom and how it impacts on its being:

My opinion is that, well, I don't even know how to explain, but I know it's not good, the guy gets stoned [...] it's not good, the guy gets stuck [...], but only "falling down" to know what it is, but I do not wish this for anyone [...]. (CURIMATÁ)

It's something bad [...] it's ugly for me. We do no good for other people [...] it means to beat others, kill, walk with a kid, beat others [...]. (DOURADO)

It's not good at all, but it was an accident [...] I don't feel very good, but it's better to pay for what I did than to owe to the justice [...]. (PINTADO)

It must not be a good thing, or we would not be knocked up [...] but it's bad because we are away from our family, this is terrible [...]. (TUCUNARÉ)

[...] the guy is behind bars without any perks [...] I want distance from here [...] I've lost my freedom [...] I see it like this: a guy who suddenly has lost his freedom [...] I've lived many good moments, at school, which is the best anyone could ask for, I used to play, play soccer, fly kites [...] Yeah, the guy has an easy life [...] unworried about his mom, his relatives; a guy who has a good life [...]. (CURIMATÁ)

[...] I'm living behind the bars, I wish to be free again [...] I've lost my freedom [...] when I was free I used to stay at home, sometimes I would go out over there [...] freedom is to be outside... to live free [...]. (DOURADO)

[...] now I'm here, waiting to leave this place [...] I've lost friends, and my freedom, which was a great thing I had [...] It was so good, to enjoy freedom... yeah, the guy can walk on the street knowing he doesn't owe anything to anyone in the whole city [...] Yeah, the guy can go out, do whatever he wants to. (PINTADO)

We are away from our family, this is terrible [...] We had a group of friends to play, get together with people from school to play with the other group from the other school. (TUCUNARÉ)

Category 02: They comprehend the current moment of institutionalization as an opportunity to restart and a moment to design a future with endless possibilities...

This category was put up based on the verbal reports of the adolescents about the damages caused by the infractions and on the reflection about the context of the institutionalization process as an opportunity to change and redirect the future for a better life:

If the guy gets out of prison and change, stop to fool around, he will certainly recover himself. The guy must enter society, not steal or kill, obey the law, do the right thing, search for God [...] I say to people that when I leave here, society will look at me differently, not considering who I was but how much I've changed inside here [...]. (CURIMATÁ)

I've already learnt a lot. I'm studying now, I didn't use to study out there, but now I am and this is important for me too. I'm learning to read [...] I want to help my father at this job, I don't want to come back to where my mother is [...] In the future, I just want to help my father [...]. (DOURADO)

I've earned many things here, I'm learning more [...] everyone has a chance to change [...] and when I leave this place I'll see to it that I make no more mistakes [...] I don't want to commit any infractions anymore, no, I wish to live a good life, raise my son and work to never again make a mistake [...]. (PINTADO)

I think it's worth it, because it is a real institution, but it gives you support for when you leave here and for you to create a new life out there [...] I'll continue my studies and come back to my family [...]. (PIRARUCU)

Category 03: They realize the importance of bonds and family orientation in the process of becoming an adolescent...

In the process of reflection and externalization of feelings, adolescents show through their reports the importance of family in the process of constituting their identity while adolescents, along with other social institutions such as schools and churches, acting together to guide and educationally show manners and styles of living.

My mom and dad warned me of what could happen [...] my family is like a circle, it's fundamental [...] it's like they're a pillar [...]. (CURIMATÁ)

[...] I used to study and be motivated by my parents. They were there with me, giving me support [...] I'm a 17-year-old adolescent, but I'm about to be a father and I have to think more about my life from here on [...]. (PINTADO)

I've always lived with my parents [...] went to the evangelical church [...] when my mom would take me [...]. (TUCUNARÉ)

[...] I used to go to the church of Peace, evangelic, with my mom... I'll go back to my family. I'll listen to the advices my parents give me [...] because if I had listened to my mother's advices, their advices [...] I wouldn't be here [...]. (PIRARUCU)

DISCUSSION

The meaning of being in conflict with the law gains sentimental repercussions of something not good, it is something bad, which has a direct relation with the pain felt by the people who commit infractions. Some adolescents express that these infractions run out of their understanding once they are asked about the experience of being institutionalized. However, it brings individualized comprehension of the individual, the

person who lives the phenomenon; the perception of the person in time, of living the infraction, where only the self can be unveiled, although it cannot explain the deep evil caused by the infraction and the consequences of conflicting with the law.

We believe that, in this context, violence has a meaning that can be translated into a profound relation with developing roles and identities in the life of adolescents. This brings to light questions related to gender, sexuality and the determination of violence itself as a production of the adolescent ego in the face of situations of adversity (or not) experienced⁽¹⁰⁾.

The understanding of something bad generally runs through the enforcement of punitive actions. The socio-educational initiatives impact the adolescent in a distinct way according to the personal development of each one. Some adolescents reflect social suffering while understanding situations of distress and pain as social experiences rather than merely individual problems⁽¹¹⁾.

Studies show that intentional violence is influenced by social and environmental factors, as well as other conditioning and determinant factors. Aggressive and violent behaviour is the result of the interaction of these factors, leading the adolescents to commit acts and infractions that will affect throughout their life and contribute to the (trans)formation of their being⁽¹²⁾.

The psycho-affective expressions in the adolescents are translated through feelings such as sadness, anguish, a feeling of emptiness immediately preceded by physical-organic and cognitive expressions, causing direct implications in the way they are guided and communicate in their daily lives⁽¹³⁾.

Thus, it is necessary to address vulnerability related to violence, given the complexity of the phenomenon and its multifaceted and socially determined aspects, in a perspective capable of valuing the determinants and social conditionings of the health-disease process, surpassing the quantified risk values and favourable conditions, passing through illness as a subjective and abstract phenomenon in relation to the daily life and the context of violence in the life of the institutionalized adolescent. Nursing is one of the protagonists in understanding this phenomenon through its holistic and multidirectional perspective⁽¹⁰⁾.

The freedom outlined here also involves being close to the family, to the beloved ones. Freedom, for some of the deponents, is related to being outside the institution, where any place for them is better than there, and in any place that is not there, one can put into practice that much-desired freedom. In this context, considering the great importance given to being free, deprivation of liberty can interfere directly with the health-disease process of adolescents and their families, and it is up to the Nurse and other members of the health team to promote the reception of them and their family, providing moments of listening, approach and interaction that aim at addressing the aspects inherent to the health promotion of this group.

The enforcement of punitive actions, from warning to hospitalization, must be based on a work oriented towards an autonomous moral conscience, which may incline the subject to consider the improper and disrespectful act in relation to established social contracts and rights of all the people, thus allowing a greater reflection of the infringing self on the damages caused to the other while a social being⁽²⁾.

Adolescents understand freedom as one of the greatest riches a person can have. In all the meetings of the adaptation period, freedom appeared with sadness, always associated with loss, of the perks they had in the family, of friends who disappeared, of the right to come and go at the moment that suited them best as if someone, or something, i.e., the infraction had taken this valuable good from their lives as a penalty or punishment. Moreover, they mentioned the idleness present in their daily life becoming a moment of great anguish for the long awaited dream.

The delimitation of the existential analysis of deprivation of liberty, in the face of other possible interpretations of the phenomenon, reveals a situation, where it is necessary to question whether these adolescents in their existence can become the object of evaluation in the examination of their inner life through a cupidity analytic way of looking at the states of the soul and its depths. At the heart of these considerations is the ontological characterization of the being-for-the-having in the proper sense of the experiencer, with the achievement of an existential concept of being deprived of freedom⁽⁹⁾.

Adolescents who often experience violent and dramatic situations, in addition to the violence caused by their own being, need to be welcomed in the collective health so that nursing initiatives be guided by a process that offers space to maintain dialogue, without judgment of values and based on ethical precepts, recognizing the vulnerability to which the adolescent is exposed, and directing care and guidance according to the specific needs of the case⁽¹⁴⁾.

Self-awareness as a factor for power, for change is the starting point for adolescents to understand and overcome (or not) their fear of going after a process to change and take on a new life, with all the risks it may present.

The adolescents who experienced hospitalization due to a infraction express in their speech the hope of a better future, dream, idealize their moments of freedom and design their paths. They experience a dreamed, desired, fantasized freedom and, at no time, do they envisage the possibility of having this freedom again interrupted by the practice of a new infraction.

Nursing, as a science of care and health promotion, with the other members of the health team working in the socio-educational units in the context of the adolescent's hospitalization, develop playful activities and educational practices in health that allow the adolescents to reflect on their health and other's, and the importance of this state of well-being in people's daily lives. It is essential to think about the alternatives of care and emancipation to these adolescents, ways of instrumentalizing them for the continuity of life in the post-hospitalization, seeking to develop skills, such as: self-criticism, empathy, self-control and social and interpersonal skills through activities directed at the adolescents and their family, and in programs involving technical staff and institutional monitors⁽¹⁵⁾.

The representational perspective of the self in the offender adolescent demonstrates the relevance of the active role adolescents can play in relation to their own reality. The constructions of representational nuances of deprivation of liberty reveal perspectives of changes, plans and dreams of a new life, which include: work, leisure, peace and freedom. In this

scenario, it is extremely important to implement intersectoral initiatives to achieve greater success in relation to the universe of the infraction, acting in a synergistic way with the development of new policies that guarantee different perspectives to these adolescents⁽¹⁶⁾.

The reflection on a new beginning is a way of being, or can be for the various possibilities offered within the hospital. Resorting to the scope of everything everyday experience perceives as an instance of change, legitimate the own awareness of the process lived and the alternatives for improvement⁽⁹⁾.

It portrays the way of being, deprived of freedom, in a way that excludes the possibility proper to the self, in face of the routines of institutionalization. It shows this moment as a milestone of transformation of the adolescent in conflict with the law for the adolescent who will have new opportunities to take other paths and build a new history. In this sense, nursing should guide its actions in health promotion and healthy development in front of the institutionalization, the social and family reintegration of the adolescent and in the prevention of new infraction acts through the development of educational and play activities that allow the adolescent to reflect about these situations⁽¹⁷⁾.

Adolescents seek explanations to be experiencing the process of institutionalization as a result of an infraction. They blame themselves, look for the guilty people, they are sad, thoughtful, they report to the period before their hospitalization and they deeply regret not having heard and answered their family appeals. Adolescents look at the past because they are trapped in that temporary moment of a familiar experience that will never be forgotten, that will always be present in their personal history, in their "ex-ist", in a daily life abruptly interrupted by institutionalization.

When questioned about the infraction act and its significance, adolescents make a move back to the past in chronological time, referred to the time in which they lived in the familiar warmth. They describe the counsels, support, and incentives as some of the resources that families have given up to direct their path in a different direction than the one they did.

These factual meanings of family support guard the meaning behind the adolescent behaviour. Thus, revealing the hidden meanings of the expression of meanings tied to the familiar living together is the opposite of facticity. It is like removing the veil of the mask and apprehending the phenomenal dimension of human experience, and its implication in this familiar context as the basis for the development of cognitive and social skills of the adolescent⁽¹³⁾.

There are innumerable risk factors in the daily life of this group, especially in the family context, making adolescents learn early how to deal with various conflicts that may interfere in their cognitive and social development. Hence, it is extremely important to develop a work that includes the adolescents, the family, the school, the community and the professionals in their environment, so that the support, limit and affection can be guaranteed, as opposed to the experiences of violence and risk to which they are exposed⁽³⁾.

The institution, in an indirect way, brought adolescents early maturity, broadening their vision of the future and conception of the world. Many of them did not experience their

own childhood, are spending their adolescence in an institution and see in the future an opportunity to reward lost time and opportunities.

The decision leads the person from the pre to the existence of a situation, delimiting the existential structure of power or the desire to be aware of what is right. It is pointed out in some passages, a certain tone of regret for not having listened to their parents' advice and they indicate this fact as one of the main reasons for entering the world of crime. However, they affirm that once they pay their debts with justice, they will return to the familiar warmth: the consistent environment of Peace and Security that is quietly designed to be free.

Although adolescents are aware of the risks present in the infraction, greater investments are needed for health education, considering that the lifestyle adopted in adolescence can have a significant impact on their health in adulthood and the importance of valuing this context for reflection of the health-disease process in front of the institutionalized adolescent. Nursing, as a science that values health education as a tool for care, is able to act directly in response to these demands, guiding paths and possibilities for health promotion in the scenario at hand, developing lectures, educational games, group dynamics, discussion groups and other activities that can be translated into a reflective educational moment⁽¹⁸⁾.

Regardless of the context in which adolescents are, whether it is familiar or fulfilling a socio-educational measure, educational and preventive initiatives must be based on the reality and experience of each one, considering their individual values and constructions, strengthening the concepts attributed to what is bad and causes damage. Nurses can act as mediators of this process of reflection, directing the adolescents to the (re)construction of their being after deprivation of liberty.

Study limitations

This study presents as a limitation the fact that it was carried out only with adolescents in deprivation of liberty initiatives and who had committed serious infractions. We suggest that further research be produced involving other groups of adolescents in conflict with the law, deprivation of liberty or other socio-educational initiatives, in order to broaden the perception of the meanings attributed by the group in question.

Contributions to the nursing, health or public policy sectors

We believe that the performance of nurses along with the institutionalized adolescents reflects the creation of a space for health promotion actions against the context of the specific determinations of the health-disease process of this group, enabling bidirectional gains through the opening of a new dimension for the care of the adolescent health, in face of the social problematic of the infraction act and to subsidize the construction of new perspectives on the nursing care provided to this group.

Thus, this study contributed to unveil the need for nurses to approach the institutionalized adolescents with the purpose of ensuring the creation of spaces for conversations and debates about the possibilities of caring for oneself and the other, through various preventive aspects, including dynamics of promotion of a non-violent and peaceful culture.

Occupying or building areas of action complement nursing as a science and as a practice of caring, and foster new discussions about the dimensions of care of the category and the role of nurses in the different environments that require the plurality of perspectives on the various factors that interfere in the illness and, in this case, in becoming an adolescent with health, even if institutionalized.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

In this study, the use of the phenomenological method made it possible to reveal the meanings of being deprived of freedom, through the experience of the adolescents who committed an infraction.

For them, the meaning of being in conflict with the law goes far beyond a simple word, act or behaviour. It is something deep that only those who experience the phenomenon are able to reveal, referring to the losses and damage

suffered by deprivation of freedom as a split in the process of becoming an adolescent and live the nuances of adolescence in all its context. The process institutionalization and deprivation of liberty provokes in adolescents the externalization of innumerable feelings, longings, desires and personal conflicts that add up and become the meaning of becoming an adolescent in conflict with the law, given the different perspectives that arise, allowing the understanding of the perception of the mechanisms of subjectivity that involve the institutionalization of the adolescent, motivated by the infraction act.

In order to understand this experience, it is necessary for society and health professionals to leave aside their established preconceptions and create an approach to this group, with the perspective of sharing ideas, activities and practices capable of guaranteeing equity to care for this group and to provide initiatives that help adolescents to understand that they are the subject of their own process of change.

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