

0332

INCLUSION AND ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY

Miryam Pelosi

Federal University of Rio de Janeiro, Clinic of Occupational Therapy, Rio de Janeiro/RJ, Brazil

Does a partnership between Health and Education professionals using the resources of the Assistive Technology favor the inclusion of students with cerebral palsy in the regular schools?

From this question, a doctored project was developed linking the knowledge of the Educational, Assistive Technology, Occupational Therapy and Speech Therapy areas into the University of the State of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

There were no policies in Rio de Janeiro municipality favoring the joint action between the Education and Health secretariats, and the majority of the professionals of such secretariats did not know the potentialities of the Assistive Technology as an ancillary tool in the school inclusion process.

In order for the project to be developed it was necessary to know the reality and requirements of the professionals, of the schools, of the students and their families; to prepare Health and Education professionals in Assistive Technology and follow up the support team performing the joint action in the schools.

The study model used was the research-action, and the universe of the research covered 46 teachers, 78 occupational therapists, nine speech-language therapists and 162 students with special educational needs.

The instruments used were questionnaires, semi-structured interviews, records of the participants, photos, films and the researcher notebook.

The results of the joint action showed that the Health and Education partnership allowed a favorable apprenticeship situation to aid the school inclusion.

The introduction of the support team comprised by occupational therapists, speech-language therapist and itinerant teachers contributed for the sensitizing and change of attitude of the teachers, since it brought to the school clarifications on the student and resources which potentialize its skills.

The Assistive Technology brought together teachers and students and assured a more suitable sitting position, allowing the writing, communication, mobility and independence for the day-to-day school activities.

The team contributed with the preparation of teachers, supplementary classes, servants and families and brought up discussions about inclusion, becoming an instrument for continuous education.

The health professionals came closer to the schools' reality and noticed the necessity of converting their actions into the rehabilitation process, making it more focused on the school inclusion.