

VIDA NOVA: AN EXPERIENCE OF COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

Fatima C. Oliver¹, Marta Aoki¹, Stella M. Nicolau²

¹University of Sao Paulo, Sao Paulo - Sao Paulo, Brazil, ²Federal University of Sao Carlos, Sao Carlos - Sao Paulo, Brazil

This is a twenty-minute video, with subtitles, aimed at portraying the experience of assistance, teaching and research undertaken by a partnership between a health service, a community center and a university occupational therapy research group. Edited in 2007, it is designed to present this journey to different audiences to better understand the life of people with disabilities in their social-cultural context. It is also meant to develop interventions with this segment of the population by means of resources from the health service, local community and the university.

It seeks to present the importance of making contact with and better understanding the social-cultural context of people with disabilities as a form of structuring reflection and action by professionals, students, leaders and people with disability themselves.

The practical activities shown are grounded on the universalization of the care, on the development of citizenship and on the access to fundamental rights by people with disabilities. There are scenes of interventions such as the individual follow-up of people in their homes, creation and organization of groups ('coexistence' groups and production of collective projects: mosaic and jewelry), debate forums and cultural activities.

These strategies seek to mobilize the health service, people with disabilities, their families and the community leaders, so that they may, based on the proposed interventions, consider the necessities and demands of this segment of the population, who live with intense restrictions to their autonomy and social participation.

People with disabilities, professionals, students and community leaders present their point of view on the activities they carry out and their motivation for participation.

The experience is presented as a challenge and, in part, as a utopia: the constitution of social practices (services, teaching and research) to recognize the difference and diversity represented by the disability, not only in the form of inequity and suffering but mainly as a possibility of life.

The video illustrates a way of building assistance, education in rehabilitation and occupational therapy projects, by articulating resources and distinct and interdependent knowledge. It can sensitize communities, professionals and health, education and social welfare managers, to new experiences of assistance to this population.