

PLAY

VOL. 2



Practical proposals for inclusive games in Early Childhood Education

A RENEWED LOOK AT INCLUSION

An educational project has brought new ways of planning, creating and preparing activities to educators in São Paulo's municipal schools, so that all children are able to play and learn

THE IMPORTANCE OF PLAY • WORKSHOPS TO GET FAMILIES INVOLVED WITH SCHOOLS • HOW TO ORGANIZE SPACE, TIME AND MATERIALS • PLANNING THAT ENABLES INTERACTIONS AND DISCOVERIES • LANGUAGES AND SENSATIONS IN CHILDHOOD • NOTES AND RECORDS FOR REFLECTING ON TEACHER PRACTICE

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PLAY VOL. 2

**Practical proposals for inclusive
games in Early Childhood Education**

Translation
KORN TRADUÇÕES

São Paulo
2020

associação

nova

escola

TABLE OF CONTENTS

6

Everyone should play

The Play Project, by Volkswagen Group Foundation, and its contributions to increase inclusive practices in Early Childhood Education and Special Education in the city of São Paulo

18

The value of autonomy

Tizuko Morchida Kishimoto emphasizes the importance of this type of contextualized teacher training and talks about how the teacher can stimulate freedom of choice and a culture of play

24

Reception and interactions at school

Building relationships between the EMEI (Municipal School of Early Childhood Education) team and families is crucial. In playing workshops, fathers, mothers and guardians become closer to the school community

36

Space, time and materials to experiment

To encompass children's movement and imagination, educators transform environments, make schedules flexible and reinvent the use of simple things

48

Discovering the world through play

The main focus of Curriculum documents for Early Childhood Education is play. When teachers plan with intention, they potentialize learning in their classes

60

A childhood full of sensations and languages

We can rethink about making and playing in inventive ways; we just need to take a more sensitive look at art and various forms of human expression and communication

72

Pedagogical records that help reflection

When teachers make observations, take notes and document everyday events, they open doors for improving their reflections on their practice and for sharing experiences with colleagues

82

Understanding children

Gabriel de Andrade Junqueira Filho says that the richness of Early Childhood Education is found in relationships, and good planning helps identify what children want to know

Dear educators,

We are pleased and happy to present *Play-Volume 2*, created with Nova Escola Association. This publication consolidates Volkswagen Group Foundation's efforts on behalf of education that embraces all differences, valuing diversity. This edition summarizes all actions taken in partnership between the Municipal Department of Education of São Paulo and the NGO *Mais Diferenças*.

Since 1979, Volkswagen Group Foundation has been developing initiatives focused on education and development of communities. We share the vocation of driving people toward their goals. Journeys that decrease differences and provoke change, turning potential into reality. Thus, our performance is focused on three priority causes: urban mobility, social mobility and inclusion of persons with disabilities.

In 2017 and 2018, the Play Project involved 13 Regional Teaching Director's Offices in the city of São Paulo, providing educators with quality teacher training, committed to the inclusion of all children. Besides, we worked side by side with teachers, monitoring pedagogical practices in the educational units taking part in the initiative.

Another important milestone for the field of education was the approval, in 2017, of the National Core Curriculum for Early Childhood Education and Elementary Education (BNCC). The document included play as a fundamental right for learning and development in Early Childhood Education. This choice was based on research showing that, during play, the child strengthens relationships and develops essential skills for the entire life, including creative thinking and collaboration.

Therefore, The Play Project, supported by the Volkswagen Group Foundation, is based on a broad, accessible perspective involving everyone, from children and their families to the school community. After all, inclusion is a task for society.

This edition consolidates the theoretical references of the project and the practical experiences that stood out while it was taking place in the city of São Paulo. We hope that the publication contributes to the multiplication of the Play Project activities in schools throughout Brazil, strengthening the cause of inclusive education and the vocation of Volkswagen Group Foundation to drive increasingly more people toward knowledge.

I wish an excellent and inspiring reading for everyone!



Daniela de Avilez Demôro

Superintendent Director of
Volkswagen Group Foundation



FUN TOGETHER

At the CEU EMEI Formosa, children play with a trainer from the NGO Mais Diferenças in The Play Project activities

Everyone should play

A necessity for each and every one of us. It is upon this pillar that the principle of equal rights is built. Only a careful look at children's individuality and the reality of the school community can provide a worthy education for everyone. Inclusion is a challenge faced every day throughout Brazil. Knowing that, Volkswagen Group Foundation – which since 1979 works to improve the quality of education – has chosen inclusion of persons with disabilities as one of its main causes. That is how The Play Project began, an initiative in partnership with the Municipal Department of Education (SME) of São Paulo and the NGO *Mais Diferenças* contributing to the quality of Early Childhood Education in municipal schools (EMEIs).

Play is essential in children's lives, development and learning. That is the reason it should be in an inclusive concept of schools every day. The quality of play depends on the conditions provided by adults, as explained by Tizuko Morchida Kishimoto, teacher at USP (University of São Paulo) School of Education and academic consultant of the project: "It is possible to potentialize both learning and playing through planned cultural contexts, such as spaces, materials and interactions that enrich and allow the child to choose and be the protagonist, in addition to professionals with a good education." In The Play Project, Tizuko's collaboration included creating the theoretical principles supporting the invitation for selecting those in charge of the teacher training, participation in selecting the NGO *Mais Diferenças*, organizing *Play – Volume 1* and academic consultancy in *Volume 2*.

The team of *Mais Diferenças* brought to the EMEIs various inclusive practices and theoretical references in dialogue with the pedagogical activity. "The articulation between education, study, and experimentation changes it all because they enable activities to be invented and reinvented, taking the context into account. Our purpose was to change the teacher's outlook: instead of adapting the situation to a type of disability, he/she should plan diversified activities so that everyone could play together," explains Carla Mauch, general coordinator at *Mais Diferenças*.



© Picture: Mais Diferenças



Equal opportunities

This is a process in which society's general systems, such as physical and cultural environment, housing and transportation, social and health care services, educational and labor opportunities, cultural and social life, including sport and recreation facilities, should be accessible to everyone. That is the definition of the concept used by the United Nations (UN)*.

At CEU EMEI Luciana Azevedo Pompermayer, it becomes a reality when teacher Débora Carvalho puts Kaynã in an ergonomic baby carrier attached to her own body so the boy, who has multiple disabilities, can play the ball game with his friends. The teacher's careful look - she noticed movement in his legs during an activity in the swimming pool - and inspiration from a video on social media enabled the child to play with everyone else in the yard.

*World Program of Action Concerning Disabled Persons, 1982

© Picture: Arthur Calasans

A new way of looking at inclusion

How to create new ways of playing that include children with and without disabilities? How can children with disabilities help to expand the way of looking to create and invent different ways for all children to play together? Such concerns were taken to the EMEIs participating in The Play Project (see the list on the next page), which involved the teams managing the organization of different teacher training and monitoring strategies for the entire school community. "It is no easy task to achieve effective inclusion; however, it is everyone's right. In our unit, the project contributed

especially to such a change of look, not focusing on the lack, but on the strengths of each person," says the pedagogical coordinator Wilma Helena Almeida da Silva, from EMEI José Roschel Christi.

Before starting the teacher training and monitoring at the educational units (read more about the project steps on pages 14 to 16), a characterization report was created based on research undertaken with principals, pedagogical coordinators, teachers, employees, families and guardians and representatives of various divisions of the Municipal Department of Education (SME). The results of

the characterization research supported the different project steps, identifying sensitive issues in the school's daily life. The teachers indicated, for example, that ignorance about the child's disability, the high number of pupils per class, lack of supporting professionals and insecurity about "dealing with" students with disabilities, Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), Pervasive Developmental Disorder (PDD) and a high level of skills/intellectual giftedness are challenges to implementing inclusive education. Despite of that, the professionals also indicated advances and showed a lot of effort and interest.

The presence of supporting professionals, such as trainees, assistants of school activities (ASAs), and school agents, was considered essential for students with disabilities. However, the reports of the EMEI professionals made clear that it is still important to strengthen and increase the few strategies, resources, and inclusive pedagogical practices to promote the participation of pupils with and without disabilities in activities with equal opportunity. Furthermore, "adaptations" specifically focused on children with disabilities, ASD or PDD or separating them from the group still happens sometimes. "We need practical knowledge: how to plan activities, how to choose proper games, how to create a practical orientation group, how to organize experience reports," revealed a teacher. And The Play Project was planned based on that revelation.

Mais Diferenças prioritized the collective work performed in the educational units with trainees, teachers, managers, teams and communities. During 2017 and 2018, meetings and workshops allowed everyone to strengthen, study and experience inclusive pedagogical strategies and practices, that is, enabling and instigating the participation of all children together, with their singularity and potential. Specific teacher training increased the knowledge of educators in different languages (please see pages 64 and 65), and the organization of games workshops (please see pages 28 and 29) contributed to children's families and guardians becoming even more involved with the school and play.

The Play Project: choosing the participating educational units

Applicants had to meet the following criteria:

- being a Municipal School of Early Childhood Education (EMEI), that is, with children from 4 to 5 years and 11 months old;
- having pupils of the Special Education target public enrolled, preferably with different disabilities, Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), Pervasive Developmental Disorder (PDD) and a high level of skills/intellectual giftedness;
- expressing interest (free membership);
- being committed to mobilizing its team to participate in the project and offering the basic infrastructure (spaces and furniture) for the teacher training activities;
- having a Special Action Project (SAP) on the priority set of themes: play, inclusion, and/or diversity.

Besides, some were chosen* by a Regional Teaching Director's Office (DRE), totaling, therefore, 13 participating units:

- DRE Butantã: CEMEI Professora Leila Gallacci Metzker
- DRE Campo Limpo: CEU EMEI Cantos do Amanhecer
- DRE Capela do Socorro: EMEI José Roschel Christi - Juca Rocha
- DRE Freguesia/Brasilândia: EMEI Nair Correa Buarque
- DRE Guaianases: EMEI Professor Raul Nemenz
- DRE Ipiranga: EMEI Princesa Isabel / CEU EMEI Professora Luciana Azevedo Pompermayer **
- DRE Itaquera: CEU EMEI Formosa
- DRE Jaçanã/Tremembé: EMEI Professora Otília de Jesus Pires
- DRE Penha: EMEI Professor José Rubens Peres Fernandes
- DRE Pirituba: EMEI Fernando de Azevedo
- DRE Santo Amaro: CEU EMEI Caminho do Mar
- DRE São Mateus: EMEI Elis Regina
- DRE São Miguel: EMEI Globo do Sol

*Selection criteria established by the Division of Early Childhood Education (DIEI) and the Division of Special Education (DIEE), and agreed between SME, *Mais Diferenças* and Volkswagen Group Foundation in 2017.

***There was a change of school in the second year.

The value of childhood culture

At CEU EMEI Formosa, the yard is organized to allow children to choose while they are playing. Fabric, clothes and dolls, paints, brushes and balloons provide different experiences for the class

Like many other municipal networks throughout Brazil, São Paulo also undertook studies in 2018 to adapt its curriculum to the National Core Curriculum (BNCC). Accordingly, the Integrating Curriculum of Childhood in São Paulo (2015), still in force, increased and explained its principles, with the assistance of actual scenarios reported by the educational units (EUs), and created the Curriculum of the City of São Paulo: Early Childhood Education (*please see the structuring concepts on the next page*). However, first we need to understand that the biggest challenge of a network like São Paulo's is its size. In Municipal Schools of Early Childhood Education (EMEIs) alone, we have 553 EUs, 1,659 managers, 14,715 teachers and al-

most 215 thousand children. Partner schools of Early Childhood Education, which receive transfers from the city government, sum more than 1,900 units and support almost 270 thousand children. The city is divided into 13 Regional Teaching Director's Offices. "A big challenge is for the understanding of the curriculum to influence everyday practice, because the training is given by the Pedagogical Division to the coordinators, and from them to the teachers; we have many filters before the new information reaches the children," explains Cristiano Rogério Alcântara, director of the Division of Early Childhood Education (DIEI) of SME*, who states the need to decentralize and, at the same time, to ensure quality standards.

* Interview gave in November 2018.



© Picture: Arthur Calasans

Early Childhood Education in São Paulo has continuity because, in the last 17 years, it was led by two directors of DIEI. Its pedagogical direction, inspired by Italian and Hungarian practices, places the child at the center of the learning process, and playing is a priority activity. The SME also counts on consultancy from Brazilian experts, such as Maria Carmen Silveira Barbosa, who wrote in an article in *Play - Volume 1* that "playing is the main manifestation of childhood, produced by those who participate in it. In play, children learn to construct – between real-world and imagination – their culture of play." In the Integrating Curriculum of Childhood in São Paulo, the child is "considered according to historical, social, economic, geographic, political, religious, racial, ethnic and gender specificities and singularities as a subject of rights and producer of cultures."

Another point in favor of the municipal school network is the policy of teacher training and participation schedules included in the Special Action Project (SAP) of each school unit, both paid. Among EMEIs participating in The Play Project, the SAPs fall under one of these three themes: inclusion and diversity, playing as a pedagogical practice, and the curriculum of Early Childhood Education. In their pedagogical and political planning (a document usually referred to as PPP), the view that playing is inherent to the childhood culture is predominant. To provide children with the possibility of expressing themselves and learning through ludic activities is the planning focus of schools, as in this excerpt from EMEI Globo do Sol PPP (2017): "The Early Childhood Education curriculum must be integrative and constructed to involve all players in the educational process, such as families, children, educator(s) and the community. It should focus on play and art, moving away from prescriptive and homogenizing curriculums." The Play Project intended to support such themes further, showing new ways to promote play. This was the starting point and meant the consultants from *Mais Diferenças* were welcomed by school teams, who were curious and looking forward to improving their practice.

3 pillars of the Curriculum of the City of São Paulo: Early Childhood Education

1 Equity

It is a strategy for achieving equality based on recognizing diversity. The focus on equity tries to center attention on the most vulnerable populations. In Early Childhood Education, such focus is aiming at decreasing the gaps in fundamental rights to achieve the full development of infants and children.

2 Inclusive Education

In order to have an effective inclusive education, we need to recognize, understand, and incorporate diversities and differences. The document states that when a school is inclusive, it can play an important role in the struggle against social and racial exclusion. An unequal society produces exclusions. Therefore, the education unit (EU), as a social institution, despite its limits, has a certain autonomy and can contribute to reduce discrimination and prejudice related to differences.

3 Integral Education

The curriculum argues for education that values human multidimensionality and contributes to maintaining the integrity of subjects, valuing feelings, thoughts, words, actions in their relationships, and connections between such subjects and the environment. The articulation of different types of knowledge, languages and learning forms is part of an educational project that involves the experience of different social practices and the children's diverse cultural and expressive manifestations.

Support for overcoming barriers

In recent years, legal concepts and frameworks have been elaborated based on human rights and transformations of society to stop segregation, exclusion, homogenization, and prejudiced concepts related to persons with disabilities. The International Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UN/2007) inaugurated this phase. For the first time in a legal framework, disability was considered as an evolving concept directly related to the barriers imposed by society and the environment, described as follows: "Persons with disabilities include those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others." In this Convention, at least, emphasis on biomedical and rehabilitation aspects have been put behind us.

Respecting such precepts, since 2013, the SME of São Paulo has recognized the existence of multiple childhoods and various forms of being a child, working, thus, to consolidate an inclusive education system in which everyone can have learning experiences according to their possibilities, without discrimination and based on equality of opportunities, as provided in the Curriculum of the City of São Paulo.

"In 2004, the first guidelines related to the support of children with disabilities were published, assuring the right to enroll them in regular schools," reports Silvana Lucena dos Santos Drago, director of the Division of Special Education (DIEE) of the city, considered a reference for inclusive education. "The biggest evolution is seeing enrollments increased, and there is practically no dropping out below the 9th grade," she says. The 13 Centers of Teacher Training and Monitoring for Inclusion (CEFAIs) – one for each DRE – appeared as a response

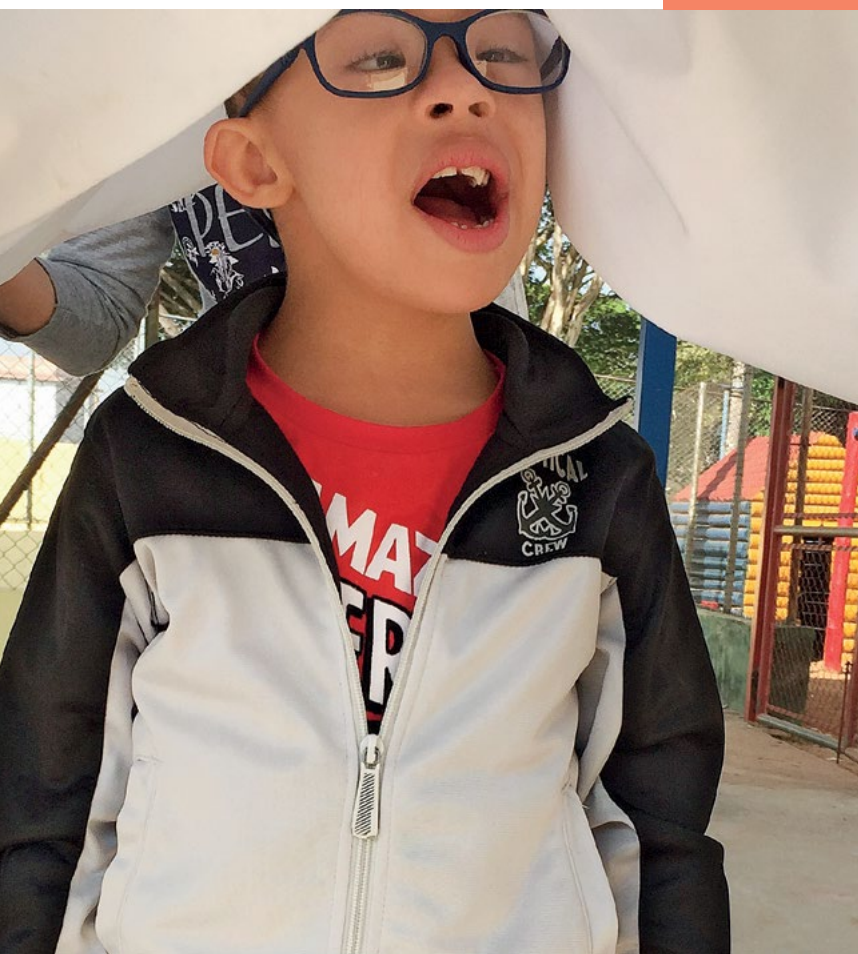
to the decentralization of services, in 2005, in which period the Ministry of Education (MEC) only recognized the resource room. Other advances include creating enrollment priority and the visible development of pupils with disabilities, ASD, PDD and a high level of skills/intellectual giftedness; the Early Childhood Education curriculum, which includes the Special Education thematic; as well as teacher training that "naturalizes the issue of pupils with disabilities in childhood spaces."

The biggest challenge, according to Silvana, is changing the professionals' view. "When you say, 'inclusive pupil' there is some prejudice, it seems that the fact of being there is a generosity," she explains. Thus, the Divi-



sion of Special Education argues that it is the school that needs to organize itself to arrange support and offer projects and programs to welcome the children. "Inclusion is no longer the sole responsibility of the specialized teacher; it is a task for us all." This form of being accessible and available to others is one of the concepts developed in The Play Project, known as attitudinal accessibility. Beyond the physical, this dimension is perhaps the most complicated to ensure, because it depends on relationships with people and their worldviews. Another way to promote accessibility is through resources in games, toys, books and movies, such as audio description, Libras (Brazilian Sign Language), and braille (*read more about the Play Box on page 69*). "There is little on offer. Thus, we encourage the production of materials. Some teachers invent and are bold. With broader repertoires, we hope they can create new ways of acting, feeling more powerful for breaking down barriers and including all children in the activities," says Carla Mauch from *Mais Diferenças*.

During a workshop with the families, a boy with Down syndrome enjoys a game which turns a big cloth into a house and shelters children and adults, at EMEI José Rubens Peres Fernandes



© Pictures: Mais Diferenças

Challenges of Special Education in the City of São Paulo

Enrollments

There are more than 17 thousand children with disabilities, ASD, PDD, or a high level of skills in the regular school network in São Paulo. Of those, only 4,259 are in Early Childhood Education. The family often prioritizes health issues – such as diagnosis, rehabilitation, and the search for a cure –, pushing the right to education into the background. However, the fortification of public policies and awareness has increased the attendance of children with disabilities at EMEIs. Such progress is crucial because language, cognitive, and motor development depend on stimulation from early childhood on.

Right versus necessity

There is a certain "judicialization" in the allocation of assistants of school activity (ASAs). Such professionals are available in the school units based on the assessments of CEFAIs and technical supervisors concerning pupil needs. Family members misunderstand such allocation because the law states that the child is entitled to a carer – especially if he/she has ASD. They file a suit, and the Office of the Public Defender or Prosecution Offices decide it is mandatory. This affects the pedagogical work because often children don't need this assistance.

Medical reports are not the answer

Many teachers think that medical reports are important to understand children with disabilities, ASD, PDD, and a high level of skills/intellectual giftedness and, therefore, they help to plan the work properly. Such attitude crystallizes the opinion that medical science can give guidance to pedagogical practice; it is focused on the disability, and not on the child, his/her interests and strengths. The DIEE proposes that the first person to observe and talk to the family is the regular class teacher. Then, other professionals can be brought in to complement the assessment.

All stages lead to play and inclusion

The Play Project was developed by many hands, aiming to reinvent play for everyone, having as starting points the realities, demands and availability of the families, children, teachers, supporting professionals, management, and teams of the DREs. The beginning of everything was data and information gathering for articulating the actions within the operating context of the Municipal Department of Education. Interviews, meetings, and round table discussions allowed a chart to be created of how play and inclusion occurred, and what the expectations of the educators were. Jointly with SME, they defined strategies applicable to the network profile, guidelines, and national and municipal legal milestones

of Early Childhood Education and Special Education from an inclusive perspective.

"In teacher training and monitoring actions, in the second year, we started to include comprehensive units, near the original EMEIs. Thus, more professionals were able to participate, increasing the range from 13 to 36 educational units", explains Guacyara Labonia, general coordinator of Mais Diferenças. The project had a Monitoring and Assessment Plan for the actions, which resulted in assessment meetings at the DREs, with representatives of the Pedagogical Divisions (DIPED), Center of Education and Monitoring of Inclusion (CEFAIs) and the school management. Find out more about the project stages on the next pages.



© Pictures: Mais Diferenças

Mobilization

"Entering a place with a previous history, with its own organization and ways of operating requires care, attention, courtesy and respect," observes Guacyara. Based on such premises, *Mais Diferenças* started the mobilization stage to involve the DREs and community schools in The Play Project. In June 2017, the launch seminar presented the initiative, its purposes, principles, and actions for educators. Then, at each UE, there were mobilization and awareness-raising events to clarify the relations between educators and families and spread the principles and practices of inclusive play. From the beginning, the desire was to construct a path together, respecting the trajectory of each person and the group. "Therefore, being welcomed and welcoming was essential, as was being open to establishing relationships with different and singular people, with diverse experiences and expectations," says Guacyara.

Teacher training

The strategic focus of the project was on the importance of individual and collective study, writing, reading, experimentation, reflections and analyses of the school for everyone, from educational concepts to accessible and inclusive pedagogical practice. The most highlighted concepts were childhood, rights, persons with disabilities, accessibility, Universal Design, playful adult, shared protagonism, and inclusive pedagogical practice. The educational methodologies were based on inclusive play and experiences related to disabilities, without losing sight of the contexts and resources available in each unit, in line with the legal framework and theoretical issues. The use of different languages, such as body and movement, visual arts, theater, movies, photography, literature and literacy, was present in all meetings. In order to strengthen inclusive pedagogical practices, *Mais Diferenças* produced a resource kit (read more about the Play Box on page 69). A total of 26 resource kits were distributed in the 13 participating EUs and each Regional Teaching Director's Office (DREs).



Monitoring

In regular visits, the consultants from *Mais Diferenças* were able to unite the study and context of the EUs, that is, themes discussed during the education process were introduced as a support to the pedagogical practices planned by the teachers. On-site monitoring at the EMEIs allowed the consultants to be with them to try other paths and make suggestions as to what was being done, with attention paid to inclusion. Accessible and inclusive activities were done previously, as suggestions to be introduced in the planning. "Guacyara took us out of our comfort zone. She often came and joined us in the activity. Thus, we saw that it was possible, and that settled our fears," says Janaína Aparecida Augusto, principal of EMEI Raul Nemenz. The monitoring stage was essential for aligning concepts and practices, potentializing the project's results.





© Picture: Mais Diferenças

Workshops

The children's guardians were invited to special mornings or afternoons at the EMEIs. On such occasions, play activities were scheduled, to value play and increase the understanding of its importance as a human right, also encouraging adults to play with the children, providing interactions between families of pupils with and without disabilities, and strengthening relations with the EU. In the first year, the workshops were given by workshop leaders from *Mais Diferenças*. In the second year, they were planned, organized, and held by the school team, conferring a more prominent protagonist role in the EU. The project consultants helped teachers and managers while planning and during the workshop day. "This year, the team was insecure about what adults would think of playing with homemade playdough and paint. However, participation exceeded expectations: 70% of relatives from all classes attended, we even had to go out and buy extra material. And the feedback was positive," says Nádia Piau, pedagogical coordinator from EMEI Fernando de Azevedo.



© Picture: Leo Oliveira

Dissemination

Two seminars to share inclusive pedagogical practices were held at the end of each project cycle in December 2017 and October 2018. Early Childhood Education professionals and dozens of educational units from the city attended the events, which included thematic lectures and workshops. The purpose was to promote the exchange of reflections and learning about planning and playing games and pedagogical activities involving all children. The 13 attending EMEIs from the The Play Project systematized some of their experiences in banners exhibited during the II Seminar "Sharing Inclusive Pedagogical Practices" and, later, in the lobby of the SME building. The banners had accessible versions shared on social media, with resources such as translation to sign language, narration, and audio description.

The Play Project: range and impact of the activities

1,087
professionals trained

4,291 adults and
children taking part in the workshops

113
Educational Units involved:

More than **1,000**
hours of pedagogical monitoring

13 hub schools,

23 comprehensive schools and

77 educational units taking
part in the Seminar “Sharing Inclusive
Pedagogical Practices” (2018)

6,549 pupils
directly benefited (enrolled
at the 13 hub schools)

7,719 pupils directly benefited
(enrolled in the 23 comprehensive schools)

What have we learned?

- It is possible eliminating the attitudinal barriers of prejudice and discrimination.
- The contact with various languages enabled significant experiences and multiplication of such practices in the classroom.
- Playing provided the construction of a living play culture, which is diversified and continuously reconstituted.
- Because it is live and dynamic, the culture of play teaches us that there is no recipe or model to be followed. Everyone is unique; each educator is a researcher and a creator and learns from the children and the other playing adults in this shared protagonist role.
- Trying to build such a culture of play enables the right to play and provides a complete childhood for everyone.

Content exhibited in a banner created by the team of
CEMEI Prof.^a Leila Gallacci Metzker



© Picture: Arthur Calasans

The value of autonomy

TIZUKO MORCHIDA KISHIMOTO organized the academic articles published in *Play – Volume 1* and has been an academic consultant for The Play Project, by Volkswagen Group Foundation, since its initial proposal

She trusts in the effectiveness of teacher training – initial or continuing – in context, that is, within the schools. Tizuko Morchida Kishimoto is a professor and senior researcher from the School of Education at University of São Paulo (USP), and for several decades has worked with training Early Childhood Education teachers, conducted research and published books and articles about play, pedagogies and childhood cultures. She has coordinated educational activities with national and international organizations. And also traveled to discover pedagogical practices and culture of play in countries such as Japan, Sweden, France, Portugal, Belgium and England. Her research group Integrated Concepts of Early Childhood Education, from USP, has shared experiences that have inspired changes in the performance of many teachers. Due to her essential contributions to the field, her name was recommended by the Ministry of Education (MEC) to Volkswagen Group Foundation after it became clear that a project would be designed for increasing the quality of inclusion in Early Childhood Education. Since it began, The Play Project initiative has encouraged participative pedagogy. "If the teacher doesn't have autonomy, he/she can't change spaces, times, and practices and give autonomy to children," she emphasizes.

What is participative pedagogy?

In the first place, it assumes that everyone, managers, teachers, and the school community share the same concept of child and Early Childhood Education. Then, conditions and a rich context must be provided so that the child can play, learn, develop, and express him or herself. If the teacher doesn't have autonomy, participative pedagogy is impossible. The involvement of management is vital, since, with limited space, few materials, and little time, there is not much to be done. This became clear when, at USP, we organized two groups, one group of supervisors and principals and one group of teachers. The discussions with such professionals were part of the project Integrated Contexts of Early Childhood Education, created in 2000, derived from my collaboration with Mônica Appezzato Pinazza and Júlia Oliveira Formosinho, from Portugal, who was the source of inspiration. With the support of USP degree, master's, Ph.D., and postdoctoral degree students, we gave training within the schools' contexts. At that moment, we realized that monitoring practices at EUs is more effective, as *Mais Diferenças* did in The Play Project.

What is missing in the interconnection between Early Childhood Education and Special Education?

In public policies, the integration between services focused on early childhood such as health care, psychological and social services, and education is lacking. However, above all, clear concepts are missing. Maria Teresa Mantoan says that each child is different and entitled to be different. This is in the educator's mind; however, in practice, the opposite occurs since, generally speaking, the Brazilian public network classifies the Special Education children instead of giving opportunities to everyone (with and without disability) to experiment and play together. Thence arises another question: does the teacher have strategies to do it? It is difficult because, in the relationship pedagogy, she needs to open her heart to welcome this child, to see what he/she wants and can do. Welcoming him/her is essential; simply putting them in the same space is not enough, because nothing happens.

And what is needed for something to happen?

We need initial teacher training that is effective and contextualized ongoing training within the EMEIs. We need to understand what it means to include the child and give equal opportunities, but to maintain the differences of each of them. The same happens with play. If I'm in the same environment, with the same materials, doing the same as the other children... it is not playing, it is repeating, imitating. However, that usually happens when the pedagogy is transmissive, with scheduled activities within times and spaces that are almost the same for everyone. The most important issue of play is the role of the protagonist, making scripts, deciding what to say, what to do, and for that, the player needs to have choices. Here in Brazil, it is accepted that each grouping needs only one classroom and all groups visit the same playground. This is totally inappropriate if we need the child to experience different realities.

What is the situation of the initial teacher training for Early Childhood Education in our country, and how could quality improve?

It is a historical issue because the practice existing in the Normal School* was replaced by academic studies in universities. Instead of professional education, Brazilian Pedagogy courses

“Teacher training in context, by means of participative pedagogies, values the professionals, as it finds out what they know and how they act. Based on this knowledge, it leverages their practice”

*Teacher training that was given after highschool level, focused in professional practice

are limited to transmitting theories and, thus, intended to educate ten types of teachers. How is it possible to manage so many profiles? In England, teachers have a good general basis in higher education. Then, on a two-year post-graduate course, they gain a degree in Early Childhood Education. There is a specialization since a baby is different from a 3-year-old infant, who is different from a 7, 8, and 9-year-old child. This education specialization would be welcome here in Brazil. In other countries, it is a full-time course (here, it is a course of three to four hours per day) and is professionalizing from the beginning. In Japan, for instance, the student-teacher teaches a class one hour per day, and then two hours and so on, until teaching full time. It is also worth thinking about a professionalization affecting personal education and bringing professional ethics for the Pedagogy student. Only then will he/she look for the best form of educating each child.

In this aspect, what is the importance of specific teacher training, such as The Play Project?

The project is vital because it values the most important premise of the National Curriculum Guidelines for Early Childhood Education (DCNEI), that is play and interaction, the focus of the pedagogical practice. And it also emphasizes play including all children. During the teacher training, the *Mais Diferenças* team took pains to offer what the teachers of EUs didn't know and to understand the difficulties and specificities of each context in order to suggest possible activities. The EMEIs professionals realized that and changed their actions. The great value of contextualized teacher training, by means of participative pedagogies, is that it values the professionals since it verifies what they know and how they act. Based on this knowledge, it leverages their practices.

What are the main concepts of play and childhood development that all Early Childhood Education teachers should know?

There are many concepts of play. The belief persists that play is spontaneous, and we don't have to do anything for the child to play;

however, this doesn't result in childhood development. On the other hand, when the teacher takes a game thinking about mathematical reasoning and wants the child to use the material in a certain way, then this teacher is "pedagogizing" the play, which doesn't result in development either. Authors nowadays – including pedagogues, psychologists and sociologists – concluded that the important thing is giving freedom and autonomy to the child to decide with whom, with what, and in which way to play. At this time, the child enjoys an imaginary situation, adds data to the context, creates a model of a hero, reads a character, and uses codes acquired by playing with peers. When he/she appropriates this culture and expresses it in his/her own way, using imagination, the child develops. According to Vygotsky, play needs to be a free decision, but when the adult creates conditions and supports the play, the child enters a new level of development.

What are the main difficulties in implementing inclusive public policies in Early Childhood Education?

We need to hire teachers that monitor the child's routine, preferentially on a full-time basis. The school needs to implement shared management because teacher training is not enough if the principal fails to change the placement of classrooms or to use the external areas. All change processes need a structure that supports the new proposals; otherwise, the good practices die out. Something that affects the quality of education of children with disabilities is the team's stability. The longer it remains stable, the better. Another issue is the teacher-pupil ratio. In other countries, typically, they have 15 children for up to two teachers. Here, we have 30 or 35 and only one teacher! It makes a huge difference.

How to encourage interaction between the children? What could be practiced at EMEIs and remains poorly explored?

There is a negative characteristic: all spaces of EMEIs are occupied. It prevents something known as alternation – we need spaces and time for the children to be with their class, to be together with other classes and even

movements where they can choose what to do in certain places. In Japan, I saw older children inviting the 3 or 4-year-olds to buy the paper candies that they made. The teachers organized a little box with paper money for that. A class even invited another class to a theater presentation. There was a diversity of activities allowing such interactions during the day, without a fixed and timed period. In Brazil, there is a lack of external spaces and internal spaces. Here, the building model is repeated for the EMEIs; in Europe, they put an architect together with a health professional and a pedagogue to plan. In the Italian region of Reggio Emilia each school is different. Besides, children love animals, and in many countries, this interaction occurs. Here we come up against the zoonosis inspector, who says that this contact is dangerous. We update curriculums; however, we don't define infrastructure rules nor make financial, human, and material resources available for the modifications to become effective.

The interactions between adults and children at school are determining. What type of attitude doesn't the Early Childhood Education teacher have, but should value?

A very positive attitude is being interactive and funny. However, in order to do so, the person needs the experience of play, and not everyone has that. Attending a course enables learning with others, and the attitude can change. On the other hand, initial education may even kill off the adult's playing childhood, because they are introduced to teaching on an institutionalized basis. The childhood culture can be produced among the children, who tell stories, play games, build toys. However, there is a culture born from interaction with the adult. For instance, when they retell a story that they heard from their teacher or build prototypes with the teacher's participation. According to Maria Carmen Barbosa, the culture of play is part of a broader culture. If I want to enrich childhood culture, I need to bring other cultures, other stories, heroes, princesses and games and give opportunities for the class to recreate based on such references.

“Something that affects the education quality of children with disabilities is the team's stability. The more stable, the better”

What is culture of play?

It is a culture connected to play in which, for instance, I take on a character or decide depending on my imagination. Childhood culture is a larger thing, to which the adult contributes. The adult supports the child when he/she tells a story, showing a different way of painting, drawing, dancing. Together with the children, they give opportunities for them to own the knowledge, recreating their own culture. Then, the childhood culture includes a culture of play; however, the greatest one, which embraces both, is world culture.

Speaking of cultures, did you see differences between the childhood in various countries?

Each country has a culture, and it produces nuances even in kindergartens. Based on research about play in Japan and Sweden, in Sweden, boys and girls have a lot of autonomy, but they prefer playing individually or in pairs. And the Japanese value the collective; the children like playing in groups. That's why the school is organized this way, in small groups. In a class with 30 children, they can have ten types of projects happening at the same time; the teacher is only giving support. And the groups do activities without the teacher's presence, since he/she may be checking on another group at that time. The teacher gives independence because children are doing their projects in external environments, building with earth and sand.

“We need to make culture models available and provide sufficient material, and time for the child to experiment and continue the same activity the next day”

Autonomy is a current issue; how should the school position itself?

Here in Brazil, in the name of safety, we are preventing child development. In a culture like ours, we are overprotective: we can't leave them with scissors, knife, fork... In Japan, when they are 3 or 4 years old, they handle handsaws, knives, cut cardboard, create their projects. Here everyone is afraid that someone will get hurt or lost. There isn't autonomy to leave, or even to get material. It is forbidden to go to the bathroom without authorization; often, even this time is collective; that is, there is a lack of autonomy for everything. We need to rethink it and trust more in the ability of children.

How is it possible to enjoy the external areas and elements of nature in playing?

The proper thing would be to have spaces to hide in, such as parks, because children love it. In France and Sweden, I saw them picking up leaves. Then, they drew the leaves with ribs and colors, and built a dry tree in the classroom, reproducing nature. That is giving good references. In Portugal, a teacher made many notes of the children playing. Once, she noted that they had fun stepping on the shadows of their friends. She asked them if they would like to study shadows. After saying yes, they started together to bring

up suggestions about the topic. And one suggestion was the activity of building a toy, throw light on it, and drawing its shadow. In this event, the drawing of the shadow was the language that the child used to communicate his/her project and investigations. What that teacher did is something that Reggio Emilia calls *progettazione*, which is different from planning. In that "projecting," the child's idea is materialized with the adult's support, through his/her expressions and languages (drawings, record books, imitations, talks). Loris Malaguzzi (1920-1994), a pedagogue who started the Reggio Emilia idea, based it on the philosophy of John Dewey (1859-1952), who shows that the process of reflection involves investigation and that infants are able to do it; and on Célestin Freinet (1896-1966), who talked about the importance of groups and choices. This is very different from what we usually do here; the teacher has in mind that he/she needs to plan – from the beginning of the year or on a monthly basis – everything that is going to happen or to create a project based on superficial comments of the children. It has nothing to do with Reggio Emilia's practices, which are seeking authentic interest, manifested continuously in daily life at the kindergarten.

What is the importance of unstructured materials, and how should they be used in Early Childhood Education?

In the 1960s and 1970s, we started the practice of using scrap due to a lack of materials. However, we only had little boxes, which were glued to each other, because children could only glue or paint... We don't have the practice of using big boxes, refrigerators, stove, for instance, because they need to be worked on with cutting objects. In Early Childhood Education, it is important to make available big fabrics, with various textures and colors. For mounting a tent, I can use a table. We need to be creative in showing children how to make things with the materials that we have. It is this adult culture that is valid to reveal or to seek references outside the school. In Italy, children visit sculptors and learn different techniques from them. There, each child receives 1 kilo of clay... Here, unfor-

tunately, 1 kilo is divided, and they can only make tiny things. If we take the class to visit an exhibition, we will show a broader culture to increase their creativity. We need to make culture models available, provide enough material, and time for experimenting. It is important to allow an activity to continue the next day. However, it is common for teachers to use a ready-made formula. Thus, the child doesn't see a process and doesn't have any idea about differentiated processes. They only learn how to overcome a challenge, such as making a clay doll that stands, with practice, with time and by watching others. The adult can bring references in video, with the assistance of new media. Of course, we know that the teacher needs time to investigate and resources for that, as well as proper training and salary. Some people collect materials for the classroom. A teacher in Portugal gathered loose pieces of asphalt in the street, and children painted them; they turned into works of art. However, we need to provide a base and also time for boys and girls to learn different forms of making. Creation is a process of making and remaking, which is not limited by a tight schedule, without returning the next day to the same drawing, painting, sculpture...

How can and should “the one hundred languages” be developed by Brazilian educators?

If the educator doesn't have training in various languages, how will he/she use them? Theater, music, painting, fabrics, sculpture, all that requires specialized courses. Even the oral language is not privileged because the teacher talks more and allows fewer opportunities for the child to talk. In other countries, the adult talks less... In Japan, I interviewed a teacher who said that you have to turn half your back while you see what is going on, not telling, "do this, do that." Simply provide the material. And I saw how much she made materials available for the next day because she followed-up the projects, paid attention, realized what they needed, and put the materials closer. That is another problem that we have in public systems. Few spaces are not shared, so it is not possible to

leave work in progress. Another custom that we see abroad is that it is part of children's routines to organize and clean the classroom after playing. Thus, they learn to pick up trash and to organize the toys.

There have been more barriers between teachers and a truly inclusive attitude.

What do we still need to overcome in order to promote actual inclusion?

We don't have a praxis, practice grounded in concept. In other words, there is the knowledge that needs to be directed for action, and its engine is attitude. However, we need public policies to get there. Firstly, we must value teachers and give them the autonomy to organize spaces, time, and materials. And continuing activities or artwork the next day is essential when you talk about inclusion because the child improves through continuous experience. Inclusion is a right of everyone and the right to the difference. However, there is a lack of understanding of the meaning of this sentence. The act of giving everything equally to everyone doesn't respect differences. The principle of equality is only complete with the idea that everyone is different, singular. The principle of democratic equality is only complete when you have the right to the difference guaranteed, which is the opposite of what they are doing in the inclusion of Special Education children into Early Childhood Education. With true understanding about the work of inclusion at schools, *Mais Diferenças* took teachers out of their comfort zone and obtained inspiring models during The Play Project. The teacher training and monitoring showed pedagogical practices resulting in more active participation by the children – such as offering the floor or walls covered with paper and different materials and leaving each one to make their decision on what to use and how they are going to express themselves. Giving alternatives contributes to education that believes in the child's potential, who has his/her knowledge and needs autonomy to make decisions. The choices planned by adults open a range of opportunities and new experiences for children and help enrich childhood cultures.



TIME TO MAKE ART

During a workshop at EMEI Prof. Raul Nemenz, the children and their relatives were having fun assembling paper toys

Reception and interactions at school



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Establishing interactions with the families in a co-responsible way is very important and part of the welcoming process when the child starts Early Childhood Education. However, even defending the inclusion paradigm, the school often continues to decide alone what is good for the families and not **with** them. A lot is said about the lack of structure in families; about, sometimes, how negligent they are about the education of their children; about how educators must take on more and more responsibilities.

It is essential to reflect on what space for action and sharing is being constructed with relatives and families and assess it. Depending on how we welcome and how we are welcomed, we build impressions about the place, people, and relationships. Thus, it is worth keeping doors open every day for parents and guardians to enter the unit, participate in school life, and to know about the teaching and learning process. Furthermore, it is valid to propose workshops and other experiences so they, alongside children and educators, have the experience of playing, testing new possibilities of painting, drawing, learning songs etc. According to Guacyara Labonia Guerreiro, general coordinator of *Mais Diferenças*, when the school creates these opportunities, it strengthens ties with the families and their commitment to childhood development, which occurs in various fields, not only at school.

Rethinking how guardians of children with disabilities have been welcomed and supported is also a job for those who educate. Referring families to centers of support for inclusion and public health care services is common in networks with inter-sectoral collaboration, such as São Paulo's. Sometimes, afraid of the paths that their children will need to take, they need, even temporarily, more attention and frequent evidence that the child can be challenged and develop more and more. "There are no barriers when we reflect on the possibilities of each of them," says Guacyara.

Building relationships and trust

At EMEI Prof. Raul Nemenz, families pay attention to the instructions to build a kite. After they are done, the toy is tested by guardians and children in the yard

Sensitivity and availability are two important ingredients for the school to be welcoming. When these characteristics are served to the relatives with a cup of coffee and a slice of cake, even better! Considering that school is the quintessential place of relations between people, it is obvious that a cozy, pleasant environment for daily life to take place in the best way possible helps to build and solidify relationships. Parents and pupils need to feel comfortable, an integral and important part of the school. "I like my daughter's school because when you go there and want to know how the chil-

dren are, they let you in," says Marinalva Alves Casado, the mother of Maria Eduarda, five years old, enrolled at EMEI Professor Raul Nemenz.

Welcoming attitudes from the managers when receiving relatives create many benefits, including some concerning children's development. This is also a manner of recognizing that parents are the first educators of their kids and, therefore, they have a lot to contribute – with the knowledge that they build in their interactions – to the teaching-learning process of children.

At EMEI Globo do Sol, parents can enter freely, mainly because most of them leave their children when they are still very little, three years old, under educators' care. "They expect to know us, know how the routine of their children works. Some mothers even asked to go with the children on excursions, and we allowed it", explains Rosimeire Aparecida Ferreira dos Reis, pedagogical coordinator. She believes that when you create ties with the community, a reliable relationship is established, continuing over time and affecting children positively. "In the workshops that we hold, we serve coffee, cookies, chocolate milk, and fruit for the parents to try and feel that they are welcome. We have even served lunch. Getting people together during the meal helps to create bonds", she says. At the event, on a Saturday, the relatives could have the daily experience of their children's mealtimes, served in the cafeteria, discovering the menu, the flavor of meals, and meeting the kitchen staff.

Welcoming the Early Childhood Education children well is a commitment that schools must keep with the community. In addition to being the first socialization experience of children, it is there, at the EMEI, that the identity of each one is created. When they arrive at Globo do Sol, the educator Eliberton de Jesus da Silva tries to welcome the children with the most attention possible. He picks up those who arrive crying, instructs the class to put their backpacks in a specific corner of the classroom and, those who wish can already choose the toys. "I give a little of myself for each child," he says.



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The arrival of Lara

When Lara started at EMEI Professor Raul Nemenz, her mother, Gláucia Mendes de Aguiar, had a lot of concerns. How would her daughter, who has been blind since she was a baby, manage the daily routine at school? Would the classmates invite her to play? How would she go to the bathroom? What about the activities in the classroom, would she have anything to do? Before that, when the girl used to go to day-care, everything was easier because her mother worked at the unit. Thus, one way or another, she and her daughter were close all the time. "I was her teacher and the teacher of her twin sister, Laís, for two years," she says. In the beginning, Gláucia was afraid and insecure. "Like every mother feels when her child changes school. However, I feel it twice as much because of the visual impairment", she says.

To Gláucia's surprise and happiness, Lara was received very well by the educators and classmates and included in the routine of Raul Nemenz – and soon she became very active and participative. "She didn't even know how to go upstairs because I didn't let her. I kept my daughter in a bubble, but today she does many things in every corner of the school. She goes to the bathroom alone, does round dances... she has autonomy. I learned to let her live without overprotection and to trust the school and in the adaptations that they offer her", says the mother. The first contact with braille was at the EMEI, through games and playing. That was another barrier that the educators were able to make Gláucia overcome. "Since I strongly believe that she will recover her eyesight, I was postponing this learning and thought I was unable to help her." The girl, who is very smart, soon became interested, and today, in the 1st year of Primary School, is learning to read and write in braille.

Lara (seated) plays in a workshop at EMEI Prof. Raul Nemenz with her twin sister, Laís. Smart and interested, today she is learning to read and write in braille

Playing is ageless

The team at EMEI Fernando de Azevedo was organizing itself to prepare workshops with the children's families and guardians and to highlight the value of playing when it was time to make the invitation. "We wanted everyone to participate. We knew that it would be important and fun. However, insecurity was in the air: what would their reaction be when they were invited to miss a day at work to... play?" says Nádia Piau Almeida, pedagogical coordinator. Guacyara Labonia Guerreiro, general coordinator of *Mais Diferenças*, explains that the relationship between family and school is, historically, delicate. "Typically, parents are called when there is a problem. We need to change this logic and establish partnerships in order to collaborate with childhood development", she says.

To the delight of the educators, many families answered the call, and the meeting was successful. It was also valuable to clarify to parents the importance of games, playing, and toys. According to Nádia, many of them expected their children to be already doing tasks related to writing, reading and Mathematics in Early Childhood Education as if that was all that was important. "Playing is not a waste of time; it is a language that teaches various contents for the human being. Early Childhood Education is a stage for itself, with defined purposes. It is not a preparation for Primary School", she says.

At the event, four workshops were held: homemade play dough, painting on plastic film, dancing, and painting with diluted gouache. Adults and children enjoyed them all to the utmost, reinforcing affectionate and trusting relationships. "While they played, we heard parents saying affectionate things, supporting and encouraging their children. They really dedicated themselves at that moment",



says Nádia. According to her, when school and families are partners, learning, which is not a unilateral process, happens with more intensity and benefits. "When parents realize that what school does is interesting for them, the child feels valued," she says. Closer to the EMEI, the relatives have the chance to discover the intentions of the pedagogical activity and connect with other aspects of their children – how they interact and explore the school space, which is their quintessential space. According to the mother of five years old Leônidas, during the workshops, it was clear how the boy, who has Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), really interacts and assumes a protagonistic role.

At EMEI Fernando de Azevedo, the families were invited to attend painting workshops. When they play together, mother and daughter reinforce their ties, valuing the learning process



nist role in games with his classmates. And for Rian, six years old, who has cerebral palsy, the experience of having his mother at the EMEI helped him to get more involved in the activities. At the same time, it allowed the educators to observe his behavior when his mother was present and learn from that.

A playground full of sound

At CEMEI Leila Gallacci Metzker, those responsible for the children also enjoyed a different day in their routine when they answered the invitation to a day playing as a family. "They were called to collaborate with the organization of a sound playground for the school with recycled materials and scrap," says Maria Tereza Martins Mora, the principal's assistant. A workshop of painting on plastic film was also held – thus, families could split their time between one activity and another. "The idea was, without hurrying, for three

hours, to have children and adults enjoying the companionship of each other, learning new sounds, textures and sensations. A unique moment for building relationships between them and the school", she says.

Sometime before the event, parents were asked to send materials such as spoons, pans, keys, plastic pipes, among others. When they arrived at the EMEI, everything was already cleaned and selected. "We explained what a sound playground is and explored sounds that we can produce with our own body. We clapped hands on our chests, clicked our tongues, etc. Then, everyone was invited to research possible sounds with the materials, to build sonorous objects and to create rhythms with them", explains Maria Tereza. Finally, everything was painted with spray paint. In December, the sound playground was inaugurated, a space that increases play and allows everyone to participate.

At CEMEI Profa. Leila Gallacci Metzker, this family built from scrap some objects that make sounds. The workshop was organized together with educators of The Play Project

Precious meetings

Various relatives participate in the workshops held during the project in 2017 and 2018. Here, they help produce an Abayomi, a doll from African tradition

At CEU EMEI Professora Luciana Azevedo Pompermayer, the children's relatives were invited to participate in a workshop, on a Saturday, to produce *Abayomi* dolls. After the initial contextualization of such toys, parents and children used their imagination and selected black, colorful, and patterned fabrics. After discovering the *Abayomi*'s story – that does not have seams, only knots and braids – everyone was able to create their own, giving them personality with the chosen fabric. A tradition from African culture, *Abayomi* dolls were invented by African women during trips on board of ships that transported people from that continent to be enslaved in Brazil. They used to tear pieces from their skirts to make the dolls as toys, a proof of love and protection for their children.

The workshop proposal was very appropriate for bringing families together at scho-

ol. *Abayomi*, in Iorubá (an African language), means "precious meeting." According to Eneida Cristina de Faria, pedagogical coordinator of the EMEI, the idea of holding this workshop met an important proposal developed by the school's team: presenting the children with themes that value human diversity. "The ethical and racial issue is crucial for us, and we are always trying to talk about this in the classroom. We thought that it was a great opportunity to reinforce that, together with the families, helping to deconstruct possible stereotypes and prejudiced opinions", says Eneida. The guests, according to her, were delighted with the time spent with their children. "And the kids loved it, feeling proud of sharing something that they did."

Families should have a distinguished role on the day of workshops at EMEI Elis Regina, so the educators proposed they give a show. Literally. Invited to register to show off their talents, the parents presented three shows: one with Elis Regina's songs (sung and played to the sound of a guitar), another with the song *Família* (composed by Arnaldo Antunes and Tony Bellotto and played on a guitar by



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a father) and the third with children's songs (to the sound of a recorder and a guitar by another father and sung by the school's children). Then, the families were challenged to participate in a duel of magicians – play driven by the lyrics of a song by the band Palavra Cantada. Each child got a magic wand, and the adults were given confetti. Following the song, they transformed their parents into animals, and they had to dance, imitating the chosen animal. Then, the roles changed. They threw confetti at the children, who had to pretend. "Imagine the happiness of the little ones while playing with something magic with their family. Also think about the adults' fun in feeling free while jumping, dancing, turning into worms, monkeys, throwing magic powder at their children...", says the pedagogical coordinator Daniele Brito da Silva. The group was divided into two and alternated between this activity and the workshop of painting on plastic. Daniele says that the adults praised the initiative and said they wanted to visit the school more often. The occasion was also important to inspire the guardians to play with children at home – it was clear that there is no need for anything elaborate. Just to encourage creativity.

"It is like this: someone gives the adults the right to have time, to play with their children and with their inner child, and they find themselves again," says Guacyara



The magic carpet activity entertains children and mothers at EMEI Prof. Raul Nemenz

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Living with the difference

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Inclusion in education cannot simply be a synonym of children with and without disability occupying the same space at school. We need more: interaction between them, familiarity. "For that to happen, mediation by educators is essential. They are responsible for maintaining a respectful environment in the situations experienced by the class", says Guacyara Labonia Guerreiro, from *Mais Diferenças*.

Quando crianças com e sem deficiência têmWhen children with and without disabilities have the chance to experience daily interaction, everyone wins: they learn that nobody is equal to anybody, that differences are not a problem. They grow-up with a more sensitive and respectful view of the other, cultivating empathy. Contact with differences also brings significant gains for

the teaching-learning processes. Inclusive education requires and enables changes in concepts and practices for educators. "The Play Project helped to reflect on how to include. Before that, we were sure that we worked inclusively. We were wrong; we used to separate pupils, even just in discourse", explains Maria Tereza Martins Mora, the principal's assistant at CEMEI Profa. Leila Gallacci Metzker. She mentions the example of a teacher: "Before that, she used to say that she had 23 children plus one 'inclusion'. Today, she says that she has 24 pupils, that's all." In her text *Infância e Diferença na Escola (Play - Vol 1)*, Maria Teresa Eglér Mantoan argues that school teams should aim toward the concept of equality of rights, where a child with disabilities or perturbations is not classified or separated from the others.

After exploring the movement of paint on the magic carpet, Milena picks up her friend Miguel, who has cerebral palsy. Both usually play together in the playground of EMEI José Roschel Christi – Juca Rocha

Children face and accept disabilities

"What is that on your foot? Does it hurt?" asked the classmates of Emanuely, five years old, when they saw her without shoes at school. In daily life, she walks, runs, jumps normally. However, the fact that she was barefoot drew the attention of the class to her feet, amputated because of an accident. With the peculiar simplicity of children, the girl explained what happened. Everyone started to play again. Children receive this kind of information and talk about it openly. "For them, the fact of Emanuely not having toes makes no difference. Playing is what they want," says Maria Tereza.

Thiago, four years old, has ASD. EMEI Fernando de Azevedo is the boy's first school. Very resistant to interaction with other children, he is respected by his classmates, who always invite him to play, but know when to leave him alone. And Adrielly, five years old, who also has ASD, likes playing, hanging out with others, and interacting with the group. Enrolled in the same institution, it is also the first time that she has attended school. "Thiago and Adrielly are two great examples of the fact that being children with ASD doesn't make them equal children. Both are singular and should be treated as such", explains the coordinator Nádia.

Júlia, five years old, has multiple disabilities. She has attended EMEI Globo do Sol with the same group of friends since she was three years old – they all maintain a strong relationship. "They hold hands to help her, choose the toys together. They find ways of communicating. Children don't look for trouble; they find solutions", says the pedagogical coordinator Rosimeire Aparecida Ferreira dos Reis. When she came to school, Júlia didn't walk. Despite of that, the class teacher believed in her potential. Since the first day, she said that she could learn to walk. It didn't take too long. With the support of her classmates and educators, she started to go upstairs in the unit. And she also surprised her mother when she did the same at home. Today, Júlia communicates using sign language; she can put on slippers and shoes, pick up and put on her glasses and hearing aid. She likes playing in the



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sandpit. And she usually tries new materials, such as charcoal, which she tested with her class on the classroom floor, lined with paper. The assistant of school activities (ASAs) had an essential role in the girl's development. The close relationship between family and school too. Rosimeire says that whenever there are activities at EMEI Globo do Sol, there are Júlia and her father, participating actively in the games together and hanging out with the other families. That is how it should be.

Júlia and her father participate in workshops at EMEI Globo do Sol. The multiple disabilities are no barrier for the girl, who plays and interacts with the school community

“When I was a child, I lived in a street with buses passing. So my mother didn't let me out. I used to climb the big avocado tree in the backyard and played with anything. Using clothespins, for instance, I made puppets. Today I know that I used to play with what we call unstructured toys.

I have been working with Early Childhood Education and Primary and Elementary Education classes for 11 years. Currently, I work with 3-year-old children. At school, we must welcome the childhood world. Thus, I let the play happen; I watch the little ones explore daily elements using their imagination and inventing games. I encourage them to use play dough, scrap and other materials and watch how they transform them. It is even possible to play with the wind. I tied crêpe paper to a tree; the strips were swaying. The children found it funny and loved the movement. Play, in my opinion, is so important for them that, for me, there isn't a right day to take toys to the school. If they do, it is because they need to hold the object with them, and my role as an educator is to welcome them. I also consider playing as a way of learning and communicating – they put their anxieties, afflictions and fears in a scene when they play. I usually say that playing drives their lives, and, for that reason, I enter their fantasy world, a very particular and rich place.

At EMEI Globo do Sol, Enzo, five years old, is one of the children under my responsibility. He has Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and is very integrated into the group. Most of the children take one week for adaptation. In Enzo's case, the initial welcome lasted one month. I realized that he was constantly angry; however, if he put on his backpack, he felt a little better, apparently feeling safer. He used his backpack as a transition object. Because of Enzo, I changed the way of interacting with the class and the routine too. I explained everything with more detail: the snack, the games, the materials. Thus, he felt safer. After three months, he put the backpack aside and started to play with his classmates.

One day, the boy's father picked him up at school and saw him playing. He was surprised. He said that he didn't play with his siblings at home. I think that the way we listen to him and welcome him at the EMEI makes him feel comfortable. The other children in the group don't treat him differently – ASD isn't an issue for them. In one event, the girls were building a house with boxes. Enzo pulled down half of the house, and they soon included him in the play. 'He is the monster,' they said. Enzo didn't understand the symbolic language and pulled down the construction because he likes doing it. However, there was interaction, and this was the goal that I wanted to achieve.

My job is to monitor the development of infants, in addition to playing with them every day. They need someone to help them to express and know the world – and doing by so, in my opinion, I am truly privileged."

© Picture: Arthur Calasans







PAINTING AND FLYING

The girl is swinging held by spandex fabric and spreads the paint with syringes, brushes, and her hands. The children take turns, and the result is a collective work of art



Space, time and materials to experiment

Work in movement

The project Segni mossi encourages the production of graphisms while the children are moving or participating in games and play with their bodies. Its creators, the visual artist Alessandro Lumare and the choreographer Simone Lobefaro, both Italian, are interested in the experiences aligning body knowledge and artistic expression. The Facebook page of the project shows pictures, texts and links to YouTube videos. Some of them were presented in The Play Project training and inspired activities such as the one shown in this picture.

Inspiration. Ideas. Planning. If they are well-coordinated, these elements contribute to the creation of inclusive practices and increase opportunities for children. Used to take a hammock to the playground and to let the class of Early Childhood Education swing, teacher Rejane Sorrentino, from EMEI Fernando de Azevedo, said to the principal: "I want to hang the children up." The idea came after watching a video presented by Aldine Nogueira, educator at The Play Project. The principal Ana Paula Moreno acquired the spandex fabric to be tied to the kiosk beam. Suspended, boys and girls using syringes filled with watery gouache swing back and forth and leave marks in the non-woven fabric stretched out on the floor. Then, they intervene with brushes or their hands, feeling the texture of the paint and mixing colors while they swing. The relationship between child and context is reciprocal: the body in movement affects the drawing, while the drawing moves the body. "The quality of Early Childhood Education depends on using a high level of sensory perception, which is a characteristic of pre-school children. That is why they should pay attention to light and colors, smell, hearing, and tactile elements, all important for the sensitive definition of the space", comments the teacher Tizuko Morchida Kishimoto, from the University of São Paulo (USP).

Playing also occurs with the kids that are filling syringes, who start to draw on their own bodies and their friends. Rejane is calm and encourages the exploitation for 50 minutes in the playground. What seems to happen naturally is the result of some variates: the professional has experience; participation in The Play Project teacher training made her propose new ideas; the school management supported the activity; the children complied; everything was planned, but not guided. And the little ones enjoyed it a lot.

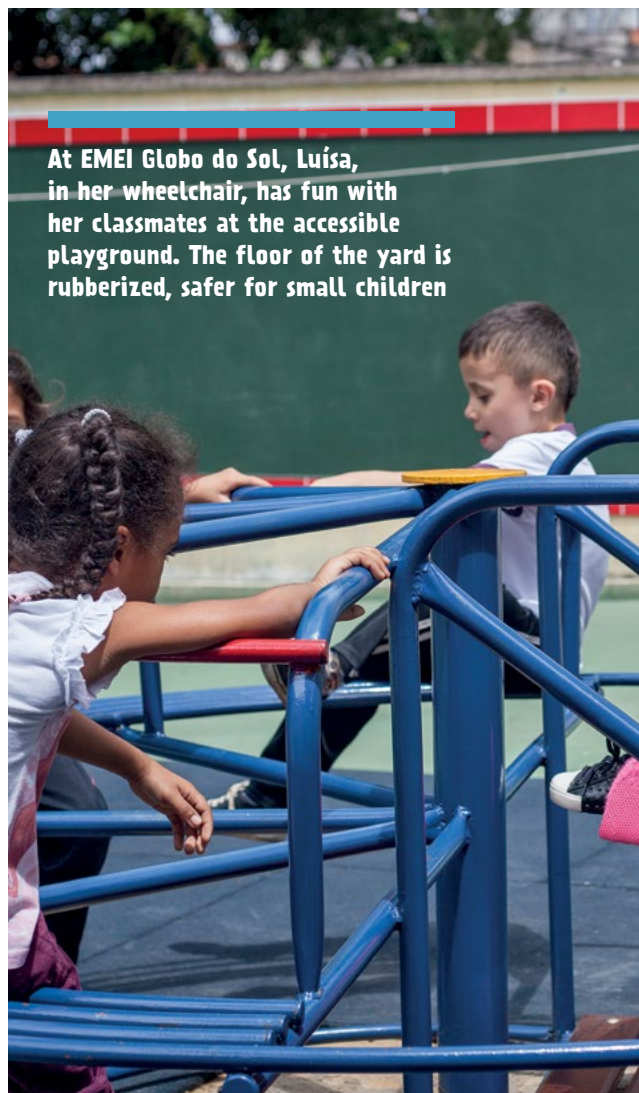
© Picture: Arthur Calasans

Schools designed for children

In urban agglomerates like São Paulo, the lack of leisure, the distance from public parks, the limited space in housing, often without a backyard, and unsafe streets restrict childhood. Such reality transfers great responsibility to daycare centers and Early Childhood Education schools: these places enable children to play. An expert in organizing spaces for Early Childhood Education, Maria da Graça Souza Horn, a retired teacher from the Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul, says that it is vital to organize spaces that are playfully challenging, giving children the time they need for interaction. They experience the challenges while exploring materials distributed in the classrooms, yards, corridors, and multiple activity environments. For the teacher, the educator's role is essential since it is he/she who observes and creates interesting, cozy, and playful places.

Before changing environments, however, the right of access and participation of pupils with disabilities and the entire school community needs to be guaranteed. One of the exercises proposed to managers and teachers participating in The Play Project teacher training was putting themselves on the shoes of children with a disability. "Revitalizing the playground was my first action as principal. But it is always challenging to prepare the school to be truly inclusive. We realized that our accessible toy is isolated, without an appropriate path between toys. Besides, little rocks in the yard make the locomotion of wheelchairs difficult", observed Homero Ferreira Magalhães, the principal of EMEI Elis Regina, in São Mateus. When analyzing architecture and mobility at school, firstly, one should consider that in Early Childhood Education, children are little, and their perspective concerning the spaces is different. Their perception of the

© Pictures: Arthur Calasans



At EMEI Globo do Sol, Luísa, in her wheelchair, has fun with her classmates at the accessible playground. The floor of the yard is rubberized, safer for small children

dimension, expansiveness and size of things is very different from the perception of adults. Lowering the area to exhibit school and art work on the corridors, for example, to the height of the eyes and hands of children, can be a direct consequence of putting ourselves in their places.

Buildings constructed especially for EMEIs in the city of São Paulo follow two basic principles: accessibility and Universal Design. The concept of accessibility is recent in Brazil, entered the legal framework in the year 2000, upon the enactment of Laws

Solutions for the most common problems

The Guide of Space Accessibility for Schools, available at MEC's website, describes the most common problems and lists solutions for each environment of the school, exemplified in illustrated infographics. See in bit.ly/brincar2 manualaccess



10.048/00 and 10.098/00. It creates practices contributing to guaranteeing the right to come and go, to be in the spaces, communication, information and pedagogy. Simplifying, we can say that accessibility enables us to remove barriers. And they go far beyond space barriers. In the Policy of Special Education in the Perspective of Inclusive Education of the City of São Paulo, the barriers are defined as follows: any impediments, obstacles, attitudes or behavior limiting or preventing the exercise of rights to educational participation, enjoyment, fruition,

accessibility, freedom of movement and expression, communication, access to information, understanding and circulation (*to read about the various dimensions of accessibility, please return to page 13*). Universal Design is a concept which arose in the architecture and design of products in the 1970s, in the United States. Based on seven principles (such as equitable use, flexibility of use, and being simple and intuitive), it indicates that the designs, products and services should be designed to be enjoyed by everyone. That is why it is called universal.

Universal Design is seen in large stairs, with comfortable-sized steps and anti-skid floor, protection grids, and handrails at two heights on both sides. On the floor, contrasting colored marks

Freedom when exploring external areas and the corridor

Boys and girls scream and run away after jumping in the river where an alligator and a shark live. Both water and animals were drawn with chalk on the cement floor by them or by adults invited to participate in the make-believe. Investigating questions of teachers make the little ones scribble new figures and run around them again. The scene could happen in any schoolyard, but it depends on having freedom to create. It is key to many discoveries and interactions. Playing also shows the environment force – in this event, the external space – as the third educator, according to the idea of the creator of the Reggio Emilia Early Childhood Education proposal, Loris Malaguzzi (1920-1994). It is the environment that enables the expression of the imagination when it initiates movement, action and thought. The cement accepts new scenarios each day, and a culture of play shared between the children is revealed in the joy of running away from imaginary creatures.

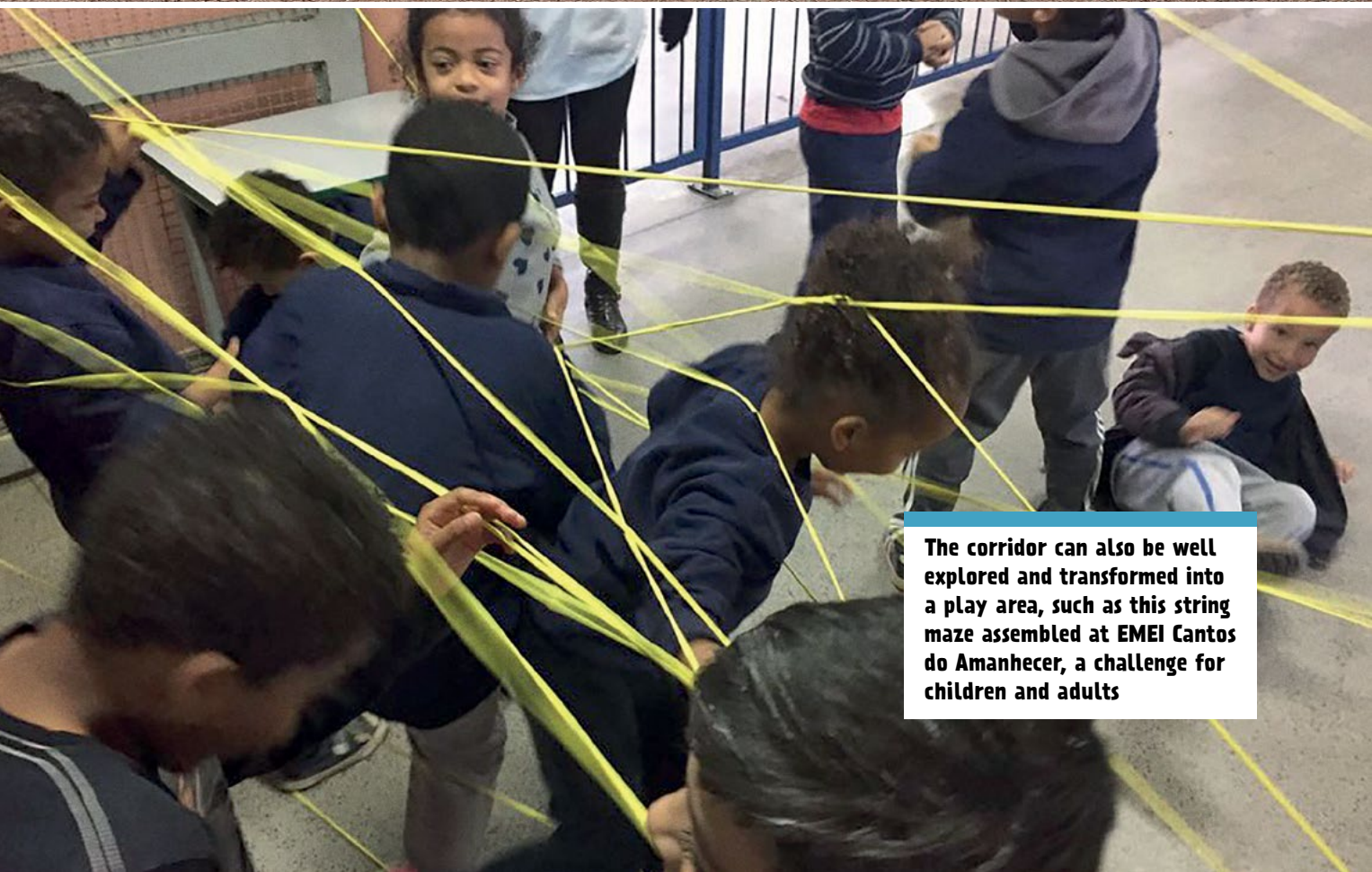
Experimentation in external areas is encouraged at EMEI Globo do Sol, where a muddy ravine turns into a slide with the help of plastic tarps and fruit trees allow the children to be familiar with avocado, blackberry, guava, sugar cane... At the back of the garden, the teacher leads each one of her pupils, step by step, to walk on a narrow wall. On one side, boys bath dolls in washbasins; on the other side, girls beat pans with spoons. The backyard is used thanks to meticulous organization. "Since we work on a full-time basis, we have the challenge of not repeating activities in the same class. Thus, a weekly spreadsheet enables morning and afternoon planning to be viewed", explains the pedagogical coordinator Rosemeire Reis.

Between 11 am and 3 pm, there are 11 groups for eight spaces, which requires that pairs of teachers agree on what to do, and their classes play together in exclusive multiuse yards at the school.

Such situations do not happen at the Unified Educational Centers (CEUs), where garden, theater, sports courts and even swimming pools are shared with the school community. "Here we have a CEI (*daycare*), an EMEF (*primary and elementary school*), and the EMEI. The playground is shared with the CEI, and other activities are on a timeline, where schools and classes take turns", explains Patrícia Araújo Almeida, pedagogical coordinator of EMEI Cantos do Amanhecer. To increase the utilization of places owned by the EMEI alone, an idea came from the funny report of a teacher. When she warned a boy: "You can't run here," she heard the following answer: "Huh, but it is the corridor, isn't it?" (*The Portuguese word corridor is the same noun as runner!*). The group started to consider using this passage space, which is wide, tall, and long. Two proposals were organized by the consultant Arthur Calasans, from *Mais Diferenças*. In the first one, he stretched thick plastic on the corridor floor, made paints, brushes and ice lolly sticks available – he didn't give any directions to teachers or children, and the classes started to leave the classrooms to try the texture, the mix of colors and painting freely. There were about 55 children taking turns over 20 meters of plastic. "The activity was all about our project, which considers the child and his protagonist role," says Patrícia. The second intervention was stretching colorful fabrics at a diagonal angle, making a sensitive barrier and stimulating forms of passage (touching with the face, the body, slipping under it). At the end of the corridor, flexible stretched wires formed a string figure. Generally considered by teachers as a place of body control, the corridor became a place of autonomy for the children, with actions that could benefit their perceptual sensibility. After that, in addition to taking better care of this space, children look at it as a path, which can bring them surprises and adventures.



In the playground of EMEI Fernando de Azevedo, children can run comfortably with crêpe paper ribbons in their hands and explore the movement of the wind. Open and extensive areas require previous agreements on rules to ensure everyone is safe



The corridor can also be well explored and transformed into a play area, such as this string maze assembled at EMEI Cantos do Amanhecer, a challenge for children and adults



Drawing while laying down and using body movement (proposal of the project *Segni mossi*) requires open spaces. In this event, Carlos, a child with disabilities, can participate, handling chalk and crayons at EMEI Cantos do Amanhecer

© Picture: Arthur Calasans

Time to rethink classroom organization

A classroom with a fixed arrangement has a space language that supports the view of the child without autonomy, without his/her own knowledge, and requires the adult's guidance. "In the 1990s, playing had a time and a place and toys were shut in cupboards. Teachers used to choose and instruct children on how to use them", says Tizuko Morchida Kishimoto. She observes that play includes a decision-making process, and it just happens in an environment planned for children that have the freedom of choice. It is these choices that benefit the culture of play, according to Gilles Brougère, a teacher of Education Sciences from the Paris XIII University. The interests and needs of the children should

be considered, and, for that, spaces require constant reorganization.

"I've always been bothered with infants seated in chairs in front of tables; in my opinion, it is a restriction," reveals Marta Parisi, who has been a teacher of Early Childhood Education for 37 years. At EMEI Globo do Sol, she removed such furniture from the classroom years ago, and it was never put back. "Children are free to choose where and what to play, and for how long they want to stay in that room. They need to sit on the floor and build, then run with the airplane that they assembled, so the playing makes sense", reflects Marta, who counted on the management's support for removing cabinet doors in her classroom. Thus, children have access to materials and toys. Taking a critical look at how the furniture is organized and give it new uses can be surprising. Who doesn't remember how good it was playing cabin? They are assembled using non-woven fabrics to "close" the sides of the tables. Organized in a row, tables or chairs also turn into tunnels. "The teacher's role is essential in this process because playing is not innate and requires proper environments for children to learn to play with each other and be able



to teach new plays to each other," emphasizes Tizuko. That is how peer culture happens in practice, a concept studied by the American sociologist William Corsaro.

Consider the presence of children with disabilities increases the possibility of reinventing spaces. Lining the floor with paper, for instance, allows children with mobility limitations to draw with colorful chalk or charcoal even when they are lying down. For their classmates, the fact of drawing in this different perspective enriches the experiences and values the identity of each child through playful expression. The freedom to create, express, choose, and authorship is one of the pillars of the childhood protagonist role, which is encouraged by the Municipal Department of Education, in São Paulo. "We need to let the child live his/her childhood without giving directions or ready-made activities. There is a common-sense which tells us we need to guide or control them or have a final production to show", explains Mônica Sassi, trainer of pedagogical coordinators from the Regional Teaching Director's Office of Pirituba/Jaraguá. Schools in the city of São Paulo that are already ad-

vanced in such concept have reorganized external spaces in "backyards for playing." Inside the classrooms, the rearranging of "play corners" can be done by any educator. Maria da Graça Souza Horn suggests some play corners in her text *A Organização do Espaço e suas Relações com o Brincar (The Organization of Space and its Relations to Play)*: the home corner has objects enabling scripts such as cooking, eating, sleeping, taking care of dolls, taking the baby to the doctor. The construction corner requires a free space for the children to be able to assemble structures with construction blocks, boxes, fabrics and miniatures. And the reading area must be cozy, with carpet, cushions, arm-chairs, a good variety of books, magazines, puppets, and resources for telling and retelling stories. A corner dedicated to the arts offers materials for drawing, painting, modeling, cutting, and gluing and should be close to sinks, have coatings that are easy to clean, and be wide enough to let the productions dry. Ideal conditions don't exist, of course. It is worth looking at the context of each school and understanding their possibilities for proposing new and exciting alternatives.

In the classroom of teacher Rejane at EMEI Fernando de Azevedo children are playing hanging clothes on the clothesline. In the background, pieces of colorful non-woven fabric turned into hammocks and a cabin

Common materials from a new perspective

Pieces of charcoal and a floor covered with kraft paper are good enough... put a class with more than 30 children on it and stop to observe. A boy hits his charcoal on the floor to see how it crumbles; two girls rub their hands, which became black, vigorously on the paper. Others make circles, some of them make a path and step on it. The act of drawing can be replaced by new experiences of graphic languages (*see the examples on the next page*). When you believe in the child's ability to recreate, even materials commonly available at school provide new perspectives. Expensive resources are not necessary for children to express themselves. However, it is worth offering support to encourage different actions. Painting a wall, regardless of the material, is different from painting on the floor or on the table. The contact with textures – from clay to inks with glitter – opens different types of making and new creations.

The Italian designer and artist Bruno Munari (1907-1998), researcher of childhood and creativity, says that the mentality of individuals is formed early and that, in the early years, children discover the environment by means of their sensitive receivers, realizing tactile, thermal, sonorous, olfactory sensations... "I love working with unstructured materials, like boxes, pans, bowls, spoons and cans. A sound playground can be assembled offhand with such elements", teaches the teacher Marta Parisi. At EMEI Elis Regina, a boy with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) was delighted by a string and rolled himself up entirely, the action excited his classmates. Attentive to this, the teacher Aline Vicentini proposed to the class a string figure. "Over the years, we usually repeat ways of making activities that work. Thus, it is important to update the view and the repertoire and try out new paths," she says.

The 5-year-olds at EMEI Prof. Raul Nemez hold sheets of paper in pairs and move the gouache ink on the surface, to the sound of music

© Picture: Mais Diferenças



© Picture: Rejane Sorrentino

At EMEI Fernando de Azevedo, a figure or toy is chosen by the child. With the teacher's help, it is positioned to allow its shadow, projected on the paper, to be outlined with felt tip marker pens



© Picture: Mais Diferenças



© Picture: Rejane Sorrentino

In order to make a mural, just put the paper on the wall and let the drawing be done at a vertical angle. **Vitória**, from EMEI José Rubens Peres Fernandes, didn't hold the pencil or brush in works of art and movement. However, she agreed to try the charcoal

Some supports create ephemeral work. So is the creative process and the playtime while drawing in the sand or earth with "a pencil made of a branch" and adding rocks and leaves to it (playground of EMEI Fernando de Azevedo)

“**P**lanning different activities for stimulating children is delightful for me because I don't like routine. I entered this EMEI in 2014. Since then, the school's management has embraced my ideas, allowing me to create and try things out. In addition to hanging up the children in my class, who are five years old, so they were able to paint while swinging (*see page 37*), I also proposed using movement with the help of a skateboard, which I borrowed from one of them. Lying with the belly on the board, they could scribble on the floor with colorful chalk while they moved back and forth. I go a lot to the playground with the class, and we see nature a lot. In the activities, I leave them very free, allow them to let go, and even to paint their own bodies. I warn the parents that their children will come back home dirty and painted that they should send them to the EMEI wearing old clothes. Up to this time, I haven't had any complaints from the families. I also work on the limits beforehand, and the children know how far they can go. Within the classroom, I also privilege playing and movement. I usually tie non-woven tapes in the legs of tables, like a hammock, and they hide and curl up down there. This string figure works on body expression and laterality. Another habit of mine is organizing corners, such as the reading one, the house one, the beauty one, and the construction one, where they can use their imagination, interact, choose objects, create and express themselves in their way. The classroom was already assembled with fixed corners, but not anymore, respecting the afternoon teacher. Nevertheless, I use the tables and turn them into stations for playing. In my class this year, we have Thiago, diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). At the daycare, his mother caught an educator screaming at the boy; then, she lost trust. Initially, it was tough here at the EMEI because she sent the child crying, and he didn't move away from the entrance. In the welcome period, I tried to sensitize him and make him discover little things. The first time that he agreed to go to the seesaw, Thiago loved to feel the movement. I filmed and took pictures of all his achievements. His mother was becoming delighted with the possibilities that we gave to her child. Within six months, he cried because he wanted to come to the school and not to stay home. His mother even went back to work; that is, it changed the quality of life for both. For him, it is a victory handling a brush and keeping calm next to a child that is swinging back and forth. Before that, he was bothered by everything, he couldn't even touch the paint. I know that Early Childhood Education is a basis, and most of the things that they experience here are a structure for what will come in the next step. The important thing is that they live such moments with pleasure. And I hope that they will turn into good memories of their childhood.”





Discovering the world through play

NEW USES
At CEU EMEI Formosa, paper rolls, boxes, fabrics and balloons turned into toys and potentialized the class' learning

All children play. It is natural and one of their biggest necessities. "Feeling safe and welcome is enough for the child to play, even alone," says Marie Claire Sekkel, professor of the Psychology Institute from the University of São Paulo (USP). Great Education philosophers, such as Friedrich Froebel (1782-1852) – creator of the kindergartens – and Lev Vygotsky (1896-1934), emphasize in their works the importance of play. The first one was the pioneer in defending that playing is an act with a profound meaning. And the second one said that the activity provides conditions for changes in awareness, and that it is possible to learn with the use of imagination. Vygotsky studied the development process of children with disabilities, and, already at that time, he was a big defender of Inclusive Education. e, já em sua época, foi um grande defensor da Educação Inclusiva.

The theorists concepts and the practices that came after them consolidated play as the most important focus of Early Childhood Education. In the National Core Curriculum (BNCC), for instance, playing appears as a right to learn, as well as five other rights: interacting, participating, exploring, expressing, and knowing themselves. The rights of learning converse with inclusive pedagogical practices and the richness that diversity, difference and inclusion provide.

When planning, the teacher should consider the possibilities of play. "If the child's play occurs systematically in educational institutions and, also, if such action is affected by the contexts where it happens, the educator needs to reflect about the effects of his/her actions, considering how they affect the children's play," say Mônica Appezzato Pinazza and Meire Festa in the article *Formação do Brincante para uma Pedagogia Lúdica (The training of the adult player for a playful pedagogy)*, from *Play - Volume 1*. Therefore, planning diversified games is vital to ensure that children with and without disabilities can play together. The intentionality, the participation of the teacher, and the inventions made by him/her are crucial. "I always try to expand the games according to the class' interests and to use well the time that we have," says the teacher of CEU EMEI Formosa Andressa Iñigo (see page 58).

© Picture: Arthur Calasans



At EMEI Fernando Azevedo, the moments of free playing are part of the routine. The variation of spaces and materials available shows the teacher's intentionality

Planning and learning every day

“Depends on what the teacher is planning and the situation,” answers the pedagogical coordinator Marly Gonzaga, from CEU EMEI Caminho do Mar, when asked about what the best ways of organizing a classroom and intervening during an activity are. Behind the affirmation, there is the concept of pedagogical intentionality.

Although children play without the intervention of an adult, the educator must make plans, both in moments of free playing and other differentiated moments, in addition to assuring that children with and without disabilities, ASD, PDD, and a high level of skills/intellectual giftedness can participate in both. “The teacher should have an organi-

zation that takes into account macro issues – such as the national curriculum references – and other specific ones, such as the needs and interests of each one in the class," says Guacyara Labonia Guerreiro, general coordinator of *Mais Diferenças*.

At CEU EMEI Caminho do Mar, children draw in several ways: on the floor, on the wall or using tables, while songs of varied rhythms play in the background. It can seem that it is a simple activity; however, it is the materialization of long planning that influenced the concept of this moment. "At the beginning of the year, we always choose a theme to work with all classes," says Marly. In 2018, it was Playing and Creating, Making Art, and Producing Culture. Based on this theme, educators started to investigate languages and strategies arising more interest among the children in each classroom. Some groups dedicated themselves to appreciating and exercising photography, others created art ateliers.

Grounding each project and activity, there should also be guidelines for the educational network. In the case of the city of São Paulo, where CEU EMEI Caminho do Mar is located, the guideline comes from the Curriculum of the City, conversing with the National Code Curriculum (BNCC), approved in 2017. Before such recent references, other ones were already effective, such as the National Curriculum Guidelines for Early Childhood Education (DCNEI) of 2009. The novelties brought by BNCC and that should appear in the state curriculums – and, in some cases, municipal curriculums – are mainly about the way that the document is organized. Therein, there are six learning rights for Early Childhood Education (*please read the next table*). "They are different ways for children to learn," clarifies Paulo Fochi, professor of the University of Vale dos Sinos (Unisinos) and author of the two first versions of the BNCC, which introduced such organization. Within the school, all actions made explicit by the verbs should be covered: in addition to play, the interaction, the identity construction and the individual and collective expression should be considered in all proposed activities.

Learning rights according to the National Core Curriculum (BNCC)

1 Interact with other children and adults in small and big groups, using different languages, increasing the knowledge about himself/ herself and about others, the respect towards the culture and concerning differences between people.

2 Play every day in several ways, in different spaces and times, with different partners (children and adults), increasing and diversifying his/her access to cultural productions, his/her knowledge, imagination, creativity, emotional, body, sensitive, expressive, cognitive, social and relationship experiences.

3 Actively participate, with adults and other children, both in the school's management planning and activities proposed by the educator at the performance of everyday activities, such as the choice of games, materials and environments, developing different languages, and creating bits of knowledge, making decisions and positions.

4 Explore movements, gestures, sounds, forms, textures, colors, words, emotions, transformations, relationships, stories, objects, knowledge about culture, in different areas: arts, writing, science and technology.

5 Express, as a dialogical, creative and sensible individual, his/her needs, emotions, doubts, hypotheses, discoveries, opinions, questions through different languages.

6 Know himself/herself and build his/her personal, social and cultural identity, developing a positive image of himself/herself and the groups that he/she belongs to, in different experiences of care, interactions, games and languages lived at the school institution and in family and community contexts.

The experience as a basis of Early Childhood Education

Beyond the rights, the purposes of learning and development are organized in fields of experience (*please see the table below*). Such fields arose based on the tradition of Italian institutions and, more specifically, from the City of Reggio Emilia, known throughout the world for the quality of the support provided in early childhood. They were inspired by the concept of experience created by the American philosopher John Dewey (1859-1952), who refers to moments lived, and that they might increase the possibility of living new experiences.

Not everyone knows this, but the Kindergarten of the Normal School Caetano de Campos, in São Paulo, was where concepts such as those of Dewey and Froebel were put into practice between 1923 and 1935 by teacher Alice Meirelles Reis. In order to be able to observe and register (with beautiful pictures!) the children in her class, her first requirement was to have a fixed classroom for a full-time period. Alice was an educator with innovative pedagogical practices. Tra-

ditional games such as sailing a paper boat in a water tank were accompanied by songs and poems about sailing. And the children's interest, together with the proper materials, allowed them to build a boat with big blocks, broom handles, and bedsheets as a sail. At the time, in the classroom, the teacher used to organize several playing corners, and the 30 children divided themselves into groups according to their preferences. Activities such as woodwork, gardening, cooking, cleaning the classroom, having contact with pets, and books at the classroom library led to more significant experiences, autonomy development, and imagination and creativity expression. "She created a kindergarten model within the public school. It is a pity that she didn't have the power to institutionalize it", comments professor Tizuko Morchida Kishimoto, from the University of São Paulo (USP), author of a book about the educator.

At the time, Alice already applied principles of Inclusive Education, such as diverse activities and using the different senses, as well as the fields of experience currently endorsed by the BNCC. For managers and teachers, using those fields of experience as a planning basis requires training. "The biggest risk is that the teacher regards the fields as knowledge areas, or subjects, such as in Primary and Elementary Education," says Mariane Falco, a Ph.D. student of the USP School of Education. The idea is that this fields and purposes of experience should not be understood as subjects or points of arrival but that they enable educators to envision languages, skills, contents, themes, materials, and other factors that guide their planning and allow children to develop according to their possibilities and interests.

Fields of experience, according to the BNCC

1. The self, the other and we
2. Body, gestures and movements
3. Traces, sounds, colors and shapes
4. Hearing, speaking, thinking and imagination
5. Space, time, quantities, relations and transformations

Learn more at novaescola.org.br/base



© Picture: Arthur Calasans

Actions in different areas

Several fields of experiences can be addressed in the same activity. When suggesting that children paint and draw in different surfaces with different materials, the fields "Body, gestures and movements" and "Traces, sounds, colors and shapes" are applied



© Picture: Mais Diferenças

Reading and much more

Reading groups facilitate several learning rights. In the inclusive reading mediation held by Mais Diferenças at CEU EMEI Cantos do Amanhecer, the book *Quero Colo*, by Stela Barbieri and Fernando Vilela, was presented in paper and multiple accessible formats

Everyone plays with everyone

At the class of 5 years olds of EMEI José Roschel Christi – Juca Rocha, it's teacher Marluce Peixoto who has the most fun playing the popular Brazilian game *Escravos de Jó*. Circle games are her favorite. "I taught children how to play 'pass the ring,' which my mother taught me. Then, I decided to do some research on this game online and found a song that could be played with it, so I brought it to the classroom, too," she says. It is excellent to find teachers who like to play like Marluce. "Sometimes adults find it hard to leave their role and take part in games," says Maria da Luz Costa Milan Veiga of *Mais Diferenças*.

Some experts defend that humans never cease to play throughout their lives. "Games become more specific. Metaphors, for instance, are a type of game," says Marie Claire Sekkel, from the Psychology Institute of University of São Paulo (USP). However, in Early Childhood Education, it is important that adults join in games and interact with boys and girls. "For childhood educators, it is vital that they train as a person who plays and promotes the children's right to play," say Mônica Apezatto Pinazza and Meire Festa. Therefore, The Play Project promoted different activities to motivate adults to play – among themselves and with children.

One of the advantages for adults in taking active participation in games is becoming closer to children. "It is no use telling children to read; I need to read with them. It's the same thing with games," says Marluce. Another advantage is the opportunity to increase repertoire and possibilities. "All adults are like a content that children want to learn," says Gabriel de Andrade Junqueira Filho, professor



© Picture: Arthur Calasans

at the Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul (UFRGS). When children see an adult making a new movement or creating a new way of interacting, they tend to imitate it, both when making the same movement and when facing the challenge of trying it.

However, observing the relationship between adults and children is not enough. Even the way that the classroom is organized should be, when needed, guided by the educator. "The act of playing should be the main thing in educational contexts of early childhood, but it is vital to note that those contexts are not 'neutral' at all and that playing, when considered as a result of interindividual relations and, of course, culture, also implies social learning," say Mônica and Meire. In



public schools, children with and without disabilities, as well as those who are black, indigenous, white, Brazilian, and foreigners interact every day. Thus, these places are fertile land for childhood cultures to multiply.

In most activities, the children can organize themselves in groups. "If you let them, they get organized on their own," says Marluce. "My role is increasing the repertoire." Marly Gonzaga, the pedagogical coordinator of CEU EMEI Caminho do Mar, suggests, during teacher training sessions, that teachers observe the groups formed within the class and think about alternatives, as applicable. Besides, making new propositions is vital: the class' routine should be filled with activities involving the class as a whole, such as conver-

sation rounds; activities involving smaller groups, such as symbolic games; and activities that can be done in pairs or individually.

The pedagogical intentionality should always consider inclusive perspectives. "In teacher training sessions and monitoring at the EMEIs, we realized that teachers started to come up with games for everyone in their planning, and this is great," says Guacyara Labonia, of *Mais Diferenças*. The newly created proposals should allow everyone to participate and interact with their peers. Among the activities of the The Play Project, drawing while lying on the floor was an activity thought out so all children could draw in different positions, including children on wheelchairs.

In make-believe, interactions between children and their peers and the organization of groups according to their interests should be prioritized



At CEU EMEI Formosa, teacher Andressa Iriigo plans the activities but also leaves room for the children to decide their own paths

Shared protagonism

Until not long ago, the teacher was the central figure of the entire process: he/she was the one to guide pupils, step by step, throughout what should happen in a classroom. More recently, this protagonism was passed on to pupils: they became the center of discussions and, in the classroom, the main players of their own learning. For teacher Gabriel de Andrade Junqueira Filho, no perspective seems to be adequate, especially in Early Childhood Education. Even changing up players is

not enough because the supporting player is not valued in the pedagogical relation. "What we want is a situation where teachers, children and knowledge share the role of protagonists all the time," defends the expert (*read the complete interview on page 82*).

Sharing protagonism involves planning situations carefully, but also allows boys and girls to drive the activity according to their interests. It is like making a plan that is "a little complete" and "a little incomplete". Marly Gonzaga, of CEU EMEI Caminho do Mar, tells

us about a day when, in a follow-up activity of The Play Project, pupils were invited to draw with different supports – on the floor, on the walls, on the tables – using paper of varied sizes. "Suddenly, children were running around in the classroom while scribbling the paper on the wall," remembers the manager. On the day described by her, the teacher's intention was demonstrated in the organization of the space (attaching papers to the wall, placing them on the floor and the tables) and the materials (paper of several types, various sizes and textures), but what to do within such environment and with such resources was a decision made by the children, and what happened was a surprised even to the pedagogical team.

At the EMEI Juca Rocha, consultant Maria da Luz Veiga, of *Mais Diferenças*, encouraged the teacher to perform an activity known as 'magic carpet.' Together with the children, they threw paint (primary colors) on a big transparent plastic. Then, they could play by stepping on the carpet and mixing up the paint, creating new colors. "In the very beginning, one of the girls said: 'Cool, a flying carpet!'" remembers the consultant. Comments and actions can be amazing and they require the teacher to be sensible. They become clues of how to conduct an activity. Maria da Luz says that, at that moment, she embraced the child's comment and stimulated a flying carpet game. "We grabbed some fabrics to include them in the initial proposal, and, suddenly, we were playing a make-believe game that I didn't see coming," she says.

Teachers' interventions are vital for situations in Early Childhood Education to become, in fact, experiences that promote learning. "The educator should identify the interests and games and be able to expand them," defends Mariane Falco, a Ph.D. student at USP. This starts by recognizing themes that excite the class and providing resources, readings and possibilities. Again, the goal should be to ensure that, in those expansion proposals, children continue to be the protagonists.

© Picture: Rejane Sorrentino



Variety is important: children should be given different options of materials and spaces and be left to choose which ones they will use and how. Girls of EMEI Fernando de Azevedo

© Picture: Arthur Calasans

PROFILE **Class of 5 years olds at CEU EMEI Formosa**

From curiosity about animals to a caterpillar project

The class of 5 years old at CEU EMEI Formosa, as most of the groups at that age, was always very curious, whether about the poster of planet Earth brought by teacher Andressa Iñigo, or the bugs that they found in the school's playground. Knowing about this interest, Andressa had an idea for a project called *How Will Tomorrow Be?*, which would be proposed to all groups. She collected some caterpillars that lived in the *manacá-de-cheiro* (*Brunfelsia uniflora*) at her mother's house and some leaves and took them to the school.

Boys and girls were fascinated by the bugs, which were unknown to them until that moment. Several classes received a bowl with a caterpillar, the trigger for a long project about those and other animals. The children named the caterpillars – Andressa's class named it Barbie – and monitored its lifecycle a little closer: from its caterpillar stage to the cocoon formation to the transformation into a butterfly. In moments of relaxation with peers, before class started, the topic of conversation was often the caterpillar: its characteristics, routines, name, and other curiosities.

The class also researched more about the bug, which became a classmate. "Does it poop?" "How does it turn into a butterfly?" "What does it eat?" were some questions asked by the children in the conversation rounds mediated by the teacher. "I always create a dynamic for the discussions," says Andressa. The group's investigations and interests outspread. Children could appreciate the artworks *Manacá*, by Tarsila do Amaral (1886-1973), and *The Garden*, by Spanish artist Joan Miró (1893-1983), make drawings, research with the teacher's support and read stories as *A Primavera da Lagarta*, by Ruth Rocha. "The purpose was always to create experiences to help them learn. I could just tell them a bunch of facts about caterpillars, but seeing them developing caught the class' attention," says Andressa. This is an example of an emerging curriculum, which derived from the children's interest, and the expansion of their experiences was an intentional act of the teacher, aiming at new ways of learning.

The interest around the caterpillar grew and expanded: at home and in the playground the children started to have a closer look at bugs and make their own investigations. "Many times, they brought the animals into the classroom to take pictures and learn more about them. I remember that once they were fascinated by ant trails, seeing one behind the other. They were also careful not to hurt or kill the bugs," remembers the educator.

The project was so successful that the EMEI decided to plant nine seedlings of *manacá-de-cheiro* to stimulate nature watching. Andressa's class ended it performing a play based on Ruth Rocha's book. "Now, they become filled with joy whenever they see a butterfly and say: 'Look, it's Barbie!', as they miss the caterpillar that lived in our classroom," she says.





MODELING AND PLAYING

This is the first time that a class at EMEI Elis Regina experiments with the texture of this material and the children try to express themselves through clay

A photograph of two young children, a boy and a girl, sitting at a table and playing with clay. The boy is in the foreground, wearing a blue shirt, and the girl is behind him, wearing a green shirt. They are both smiling and looking at their work. The table is covered with a yellow cloth, and there are various tools and containers around them.

A childhood full of sensations and languages

Small children have ideas, opinions, questions: they are "made" of many thoughts and ways of playing, talking, and listening. And they have many forms of expression. However, when they are at school, usually only oral and written skills get any attention, which devalues their way of looking at the world and reacting to it. Another important issue: one can only learn through stimulation and activation of all senses. The problem is that this idea, which is defended by Loris Malaguzzi, author of *The Hundred Languages of Children*, is usually set aside. The different languages can be verbal and non-verbal and include movement, literature, theater, music, collage, playing, building, painting, drawing, movies... The symbiosis between molding with a relevant quantity of clay and playing, for instance, benefits the free expression through movement, production of forms, and orality. Languages provide more quality to the collective playing. After all, they enable human interaction, socialization, expression and communication.

The richer and the more creative the games, the more the children will learn. Thus, why not suggest painting without brushes, using the body for spreading the paint or strings for dripping them on a surface? And what about subverting the canvas position, placing it on the floor or above their heads? When we invest in different languages, everyone's vision becomes more sensitive, and we are inspired to rethink the everyday doing and playing and making it more innovative. According to Maria Carmen Barbosa, in *Práticas Cotidianas na Educação Infantil – Bases para a Reflexão sobre as Orientações Curriculares (Daily Practices in Early Childhood Education – Basis for Reflection on Curricular Orientations)*, small children understand the world through relations they establish with people, objects, situations, the use of different expressive languages. Materials, objects and tools chosen by the adult in this process promote different repertoires, vocabularies and cultures for the child.

Poetry and criticism

(...)

**The child has
a hundred languages
(and a hundred hundred
[hundred more])
but they steal ninety-nine.
The school and the culture
separate the head from the body.
They tell the child:
to think without hands
to do without head
to listen and not to speak
to understand without joy
to love and to marvel
only at Easter and at Christmas.
(...)**

Excerpt of the poem *The One Hundred Languages*, by Loris Malaguzzi, founder of the Reggio Emilia Approach

© Picture: Maggi Krause

Hands talk and feel

Danilo Santos and Guacyara teach "Um, dois, feijão com arroz (a Brazilian nursery rhyme)" in sign language for the class. With his arm raised, Eduardo, who is deaf, participates actively.

Imagine how much an entire group can learn and have fun when it participates in bilingual activities like those developed at EMEI Professora Luciana Azevedo Pompermayer by Danilo Santos, consultant for *Mais Diferenças*. Danilo, who is deaf, mediated a bilingual reading session, that is, a reading session in Portuguese and Brazilian Sign Language (Libras). There are no Libras teachers at the school, and Eduardo, six years old, is the class' only deaf child. Right after that, everyone was invited to play *Cada Macaco no Seu Galho* (Every Monkey to Its Branch). Circles were drawn on the classroom floor. When Guacyara Labonia Guerreiro, from *Mais Diferenças*, who accompanied the experience, placed a monkey puppet on the branch, children had to jump inside the circle. When the monkey was taken from

the branch, they had to jump outside the circle. Meanwhile, Danilo made corresponding gestures. Finally, the pair proposed a new ball game. Everyone had to count to ten (with their voice and their hands, gesturing the numbers learned) while they passed on the ball. Whoever had the ball when the children reached ten should leave the circle and start helping to count in the two languages. "Every time we invest in a new activity, we present the world in a new light for the children. Languages enable us to create bridges with them and provide those with disabilities with new means to communicate," explains Guacyara. Eduardo and his classmates are a proof of that.

Tridimensional objects help the class "feel" a story. At EMEI Elis Regina, the book *The Bear's Speech*, by Julio Cortázar, about a bear who lives in a building and moves through the plumbing, was read. The publication, in several accessible formats, is available at the website cti.org.br. Seated on a carpet and blindfolded, the children listened to the narration recorded in the bear's voice. Guacyara, who mediated the activity, brought a pipe and a teddy bear for everyone to touch them and feel the story differently (see picture on page 68). There were no blind pupils in the classroom. "We learned that accessible activities should not be planned only when we perceive a disability. We need to privilege collective games and explore different languages," says Daniele Brito da Silva, pedagogical coordinator at the EMEI. That day, Pablo, five years old, who has an Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), took his blindfold off during the activity and touched the pipe and the bear to feel the story in his own way. Then, the children were invited to explore the theme again with their hands. With clay, they made bears and pipes... and were free to model fruits and vegetables, puppets, and other things they could mold with that material.



© Picture: Maggi Krause

“We cannot see the disability before we see the person. It is senseless.”



©Picture: Arthur Calasans

Argentine author and illustrator Gusti Rosemffet attended the II Seminary of The Play Project, in the discussion and workshop "I transform myself while drawing. What about you?," in São Paulo. He lives in Barcelona, Spain, with his family. His son Malko, 11 years old, has Down syndrome. Recently, Gusti released in Brazil the book *Não Somos Anjinhos (We are not little angels)* (ed. Solisluna). He is also the author of *Mallko y Papá* (ed. Océano Travesía), winner of the Bologna Ragazzi Award, in the Disability category. Gusti leads WinDown Association, in Spain, which advocates for art as an inclusion alternative.

Why do they treat people with Down syndrome like they were angels?

Seeing them as big, special and fragile people is a stereotype. When I was with Malko, I've heard: "They are always so sweet." But I have difficulties like any other father. Apart from having Down syndrome, he is an 11-years-old boy. He doesn't like to sit down for eating, going to bed early, sometimes he gets angry and doesn't like sharing his pizza. If we want to be inclusive, we shouldn't be throwing labels around. People with disabilities are people.

In the book *Não Somos Anjinhos*, you write: "When I came home, mummy and daddy didn't know what to do

with me." Welcoming a child with a disability in the classrooms concerns many educators. What do you have to say to them?

It is normal to be confused in the first days. This is not easy for the teacher and the child. I recommend a lot of patience, talking to people close to the child to get to know him/her better and understand his/her preferences. It would be good to research about the reactions that the child may have and may seem crazy at first. Most of the time, those are a way to communicate. And one has to understand that children with disabilities will face difficulties at school like any other.

What is the main characteristic of the artwork performed by people with disabilities?

It is a myth to assume that they are more sensitive to art than other people. At WinDown Association, we welcome many people with intellectual disabilities. After a while, we realized that their entire lives, someone else always makes decisions in their places. So, we have been working as facilitators to help them express themselves how they want, using the language and materials of their choice. We also try very hard to allow two people to relate and learn with each other, which is a massive advantage for anyone, with or without disabilities.

Horizons beyond the school walls

Honoring cultural activities can contribute to thoughts on how to educate in different ways. Therefore, The Play Project organized visits to two important cultural spaces in São Paulo—Pinacoteca do Estado and Museu Lasar Segall—and took the teachers to the International Book Biennial to find more accessible books and participate in an illustration workshop. "Those are experiences that provide references for inspiring activities at school," says Carla Mauch, general coordinator of *Mais Diferenças*. At Lasar Segall, a group heard the artist's story and about how he painted the migrant figure. "We talked about welcoming foreign students and how this could be explored to let everyone learn a little more," says Carla.

Educators from the EMEI Globo do Sol visited Pinacoteca, encouraged by Rosimeire Reis, the unit's pedagogical coordinator, and it was also enriching. "Going to Pinacoteca complemented our Special Action Project (SAP) about art," she explains. The group appreciated, with Arthur Calasans, photographer and consultant of *Mais Diferenças*, works by Jean-Michel Basquiat (1960-1988), Hilma af Klint (1862-1944), Jackson Pollock (1912-1956), and the famous Black Square by Kazimir Severinovich Malevich (1879-1935). Rosimeire says that, in addition to learning how to read an artwork, the group was able to talk about abstractionism, techniques of painting, and choice of colors.

Back to Globo do Sol, teacher Sandra da Silva Santos suggested that each child should paint a landscape inspired by the work *Paisagem*, by Aldemir Martins (1922-2006), reproduced in a book. "It was interesting to learn each child's interpretation of the same image and see the colors and elements that they



© Pictures: Mais Diferenças

used," she says. Victor Hugo, five years old, has multiple disabilities and used his mouth to paint. "During the task, he laughed a lot, showing off his pleasure," says the teacher. Considering the boy's reactions, it is interesting to think about the use of art to externalize sensations and express feelings.

Abstract art can also induce one to reflect on childhood. When they came across Malevich's Black Square at Pinacoteca, the teachers were questioned about what they saw. One teacher said: "I hate to see it empty. I want to fill it with many things." And a child in the group simply said: "There is nothing in this painting." According to Calasans, it is interesting that teachers think about the children's opinions and accept that view that easily assumes the existence of nothing. During an educational moment, when they



© Picture: Volkswagen Group Foundation

were observing Mark Rothko's works – an artist who works with two colors and uses one of them as background –, some teachers said that they did not see anything. This time, Calasans questioned: "And when we are in front of a child with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)? Is it that way too? Do you feel that you don't see anything?". When we see an abstract painting, and we don't have any information about it, we don't know what the artist expects, we become distressed. "In the case of children with autism, if they don't talk much, we need to try to understand their bodies, letting them tell us how to read them, how to interpret them," he explains.

In training sessions, Pollock's works sparked conversations about the movement of children's bodies. Like the artist's painting, children's bodies should not be

controlled, and it is vital to learn to interpret their gestures. Pollock is a good reference for working with children because he used to place the canvas on the floor and step on it for painting, throwing himself in it, walking on it. "The artist worked with intent and explored freedom at the same time," explains Susie Alcoba, educator at *Mais Diferenças*. At EMEI Caminho do Mar, teacher Esther Paiva Dias da Silva tried the Pollock way of creating with the class. After learning references, the children painted with paint tubes, sticks, strings and balls. Bianca, six years old, has ASD and enjoyed feeling the paint. She painted her work on paper because she felt more comfortable doing that. "I only make flexibilizations when necessary. Bianca is developing in her own rhythm," explains the teacher.

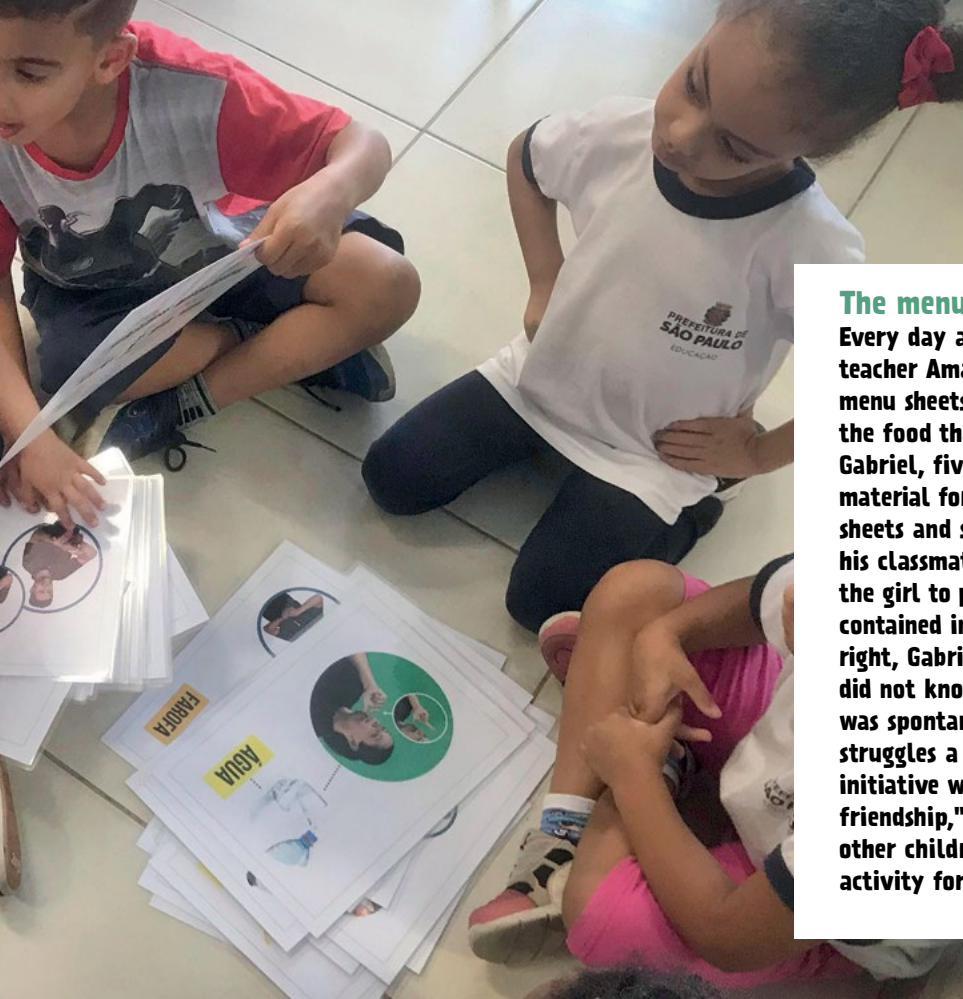
Teachers of EMEI Elis Regina and EMEI Globo do Sol visited Pinacoteca do Estado as part of their training. Above, children paint with body movements, using paint and plastic, in a different experience

Inside a box, inspiration for playing

The Play Box, distributed to all schools that are part of the project, includes more than 50 selected items. Its purpose is being an extensive material collection for educators to play and study about playing and issues related to diversity and equal opportunities. In addition to generating ideas, inspiring the creation of new games, and creating new uses to everyday objects, the Play Box will expand the repertoire of adults and children and help them play together – people with and without disabilities. "We develop those materials, especially because we know that there aren't enough accessible and inclusive toys. In addition to stimulating the use of different languages, the box also suggests a new way of looking at children who play differently, with more sensitivity," says Guacyara Labonia Guerreiro, general coordinator of *Mais Diferenças*. Schools that aim to be inclusive need to provide more materials and reinvent their uses so that all children can learn together. In *Creativity and Creative Processes* (1987), Fayga Ostrower (1920-2001), teacher, painter and illustrator, helps us understand the importance of offering and making plenty of materials available for children to experience, investigate, imagine, create and express themselves, both in regards to themselves and their relationship with their surroundings, the world and culture. "Imagination needs to identify with materiality to be creative (...). However, it always includes a person's individual point of view, his or her perspective on the broad phenomenon of human beings, his or her own humanism. It's that person's values in life that guide his or her thoughts and actions."

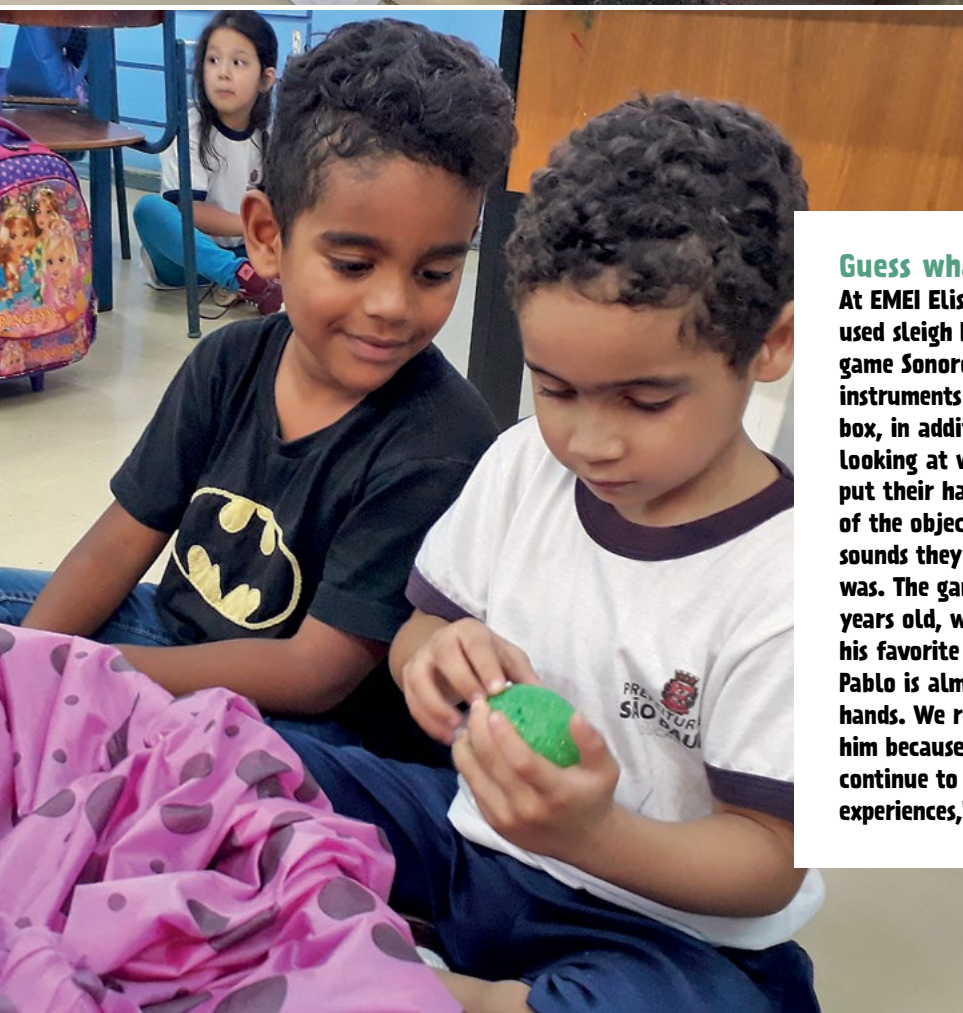


© Picture: Mais Diferenças



The menu joined the game

Every day at EMEI José Rubens Peres Fernandes teacher Amanda Capuchinho presents accessible menu sheets and talks to the children about the food that will be prepared for them. Once, Gabriel, five years old, decided to use the material for something different. He grabbed the sheets and seated next to Leandra, four years old, his classmate with Down syndrome. He invited the girl to play, asking her to name the food contained in each sheet. When she got the answer right, Gabriel cheered. When she was wrong or did not know the answer, he'd tell her. "That was spontaneous; I didn't plan it at all. Leandra struggles a little with language, and Gabriel's initiative was very welcomed. Both have a strong friendship," says Amanda. The game caught the other children's attention and became a fun activity for the entire class.



Guess what! Those are sleigh bells!

At EMEI Elis Regina teacher Aline Vicentini used sleigh bells from the Play Box for the game Sonorous Surprise Box. She placed musical instruments and sound books inside a cardboard box, in addition to the sleigh bells. Without looking at what was inside, the children had to put their hand in the box. When they touched one of the objects, they had to listen carefully to the sounds they made and try to find out what it was. The game caught the attention of Pablo, five years old, with an ASD. Sleigh bells were always his favorite toys. "Slowly, we are finding out why Pablo is almost always covering his ears with his hands. We realized that noises don't always upset him because he is interested in sonorous toys. We continue to observe and provide him with sonorous experiences," says the teacher.



© Foto: Maggi Krause



© Pictures: Mais Diferenças

Blindfolded, children of EMEI Elis Regina felt the pipe and the teddy bear in a reading session with tridimensional objects. Inside the Play Box, there are pedagogical toys and materials for inclusive activities

The entire collection was selected based on respect to diversity, but this does not necessarily mean special pieces that should be used only by children with some disability. "They are often common items. The suggested use is what makes them accessible and inclusive," explains Guacyara. A wood juggler puppet that jumps around, known as Mané Gostoso, is an excellent example of that. Children with cerebral palsy find it interesting: they can move it easily by pushing the stems against each other. The central theme of the books in the box is Inclusive Education, art and playing, of course. Some of them are exclusive for teachers, aiming to train teachers and expand their cultural repertoire. Others are children's books in printed and digital versions in several accessible formats. Inside the Play Box, there is the Inclusion Movie Box for working the cinematographic language, encouraging the creation and use of audiovisual collections with accessibility resources – audio description, Brazilian Sign Language (Libras), descriptive subtitling, and accessible menu.

All schools that took part in the project experienced a moment of training and

exploration driven by the teachers when the Play Box arrived. At EMEI Elis Regina, pedagogical coordinator Daniele Brito da Silva organized this recognition stage at the beginning of the year, once a week, during the teachers' hours of study. The idea was that everyone should get to know the toys, books, and other materials and think about how to use them. "I suggested attaching the school name to each of them and making a list for inventory. When they assumed control of the organization process, they were all involved in exploring the materials," she says. The group also talked about where they would put the box. Initially, they decided to leave it in the pedagogical coordination room. Then, the collection was transferred to the teachers' room so that it would be accessible to everyone.

When they spoke about the work that could be done with the children, the educators discussed the possible uses of each item, and an important point was raised: would any items be used only by children with disabilities? Daniele says that many teachers said no: for them, the intent of the Play Box is to encourage everyone to play together.

Treasures of the Play Box



© Picture - Mais Diferenças

Inclusion Movie Box

- 1 guide with information and activity suggestions for the teacher.
- 5 DVDs of Brazilian animation short movies (*Seu Dente*, *Meu Bico*, *O Anão que Virou Gigante*, *Imagine uma Menina com Cabelos de Brasil*, *Menina da Chuva e Os Olhos do Pianista*).
- 3 Script and Action playing cards: a card game with images and words in Portuguese and braille. It stimulates the possibility of telling different stories and new ways of playing. It comes with a CD with audio descriptions of the rules and pictures on the playing cards.
- 1 Stop Motion set, assisting the comprehension of the frame by frame movement in movies. 38 photographs are organized in sequence, retaken, and reproduced with the photographic camera quickly, creating an audiovisual product.
- 2 Flipbooks: a booklet with images organized sequentially. When one flicks through the pages quickly, it creates the illusion of movement, like an animated sequence.
- 1 Thaumatrope: one paper disk, with two sides and a different figure on each side. It is tied to a stem and, when it is spun quickly, the pictures seem to blend into one.
- 30 textile blindfolds: for different experiences.

Read more about the Play Box items at bit.ly/caixa-brincar

Book Kit

Educational titles

Inclusão Escolar: O Que É? Por Quê? Como Fazer?

Maria Teresa Eglér Mantoan

One of Brazil's greatest experts in school inclusion, Maria Teresa contextualizes the references of the Special Education policy and concepts that expand inclusion understanding, in addition to discussing challenges and paths.

Por Que as Folhas e Frutos Caem? De Onde Vêm as Borboletas?

Ângela do Céu Ubaiara Brito and Tizuko Morchida Kishimoto

This book is the result of Ângela's Ph.D. Thesis, advised by Tizuko, consultant of The Play Project, and it is a great book that helps teachers to plan and act considering the children's interests.

Registro na Educação Infantil. Luciana Esmeralda Osteto

The assessment issue is a challenge, especially in this school stage (Early Childhood Education): what to assess? What should be done every day? This book reflects on assessments and writings of education professionals and guides the planning and problematization of the pedagogical practice.

Elogio da Escola. Jorge Larrosa

The author organized and gathered texts by relevant contemporary education philosophers who defend public schools. The book comes with a DVD with three movies about education.

Eco-Arte com Crianças. Anna Marie Holm

This book presents suggestions for pedagogical practices and experiences with small children. It is a beautiful, inspiring work that suggests working with many nature elements – including wind and rain – and scrap. The book is explanatory and provides detailed instructions.

PROFILE **Márcia Nascimento** supporting teacher and inclusion monitor at CEFAI

“When I was a teacher of a regular first-year class of in Primary Education, I had a pupil with ASD, another one with intellectual disability, one with a cleft lip, and another one with absence seizures. I wasn't paralyzed by them; quite the opposite: they made me want to learn more about Inclusive Education and use a lot of creativity to teach them, especially the child with ASD, who made a permanent impression on me.

Today, I am a supporting teacher and inclusion monitor at the Center of Teacher Training and Inclusion Monitoring (CEFAI), and my role is to monitor the work done at the schools of the network and to help teachers overcome difficulties they face regarding children with disabilities and the process of teaching and learning. I lead the production of whatever is necessary and can be done at schools, as well as organize training sessions and come up with ideas and materials – such as plastic fruits for children who are blind or vision-impaired and inclined floor plans to help those with motor impairments. My duties also include analyzing reports with the pedagogical coordinator, visiting classrooms, and assessing support possibilities for promoting access to the curriculum.

I have been monitoring the classes of EMEI Prof. Raul Nemenz for three years. There, our work has results because despite the lack of a room of resources in the school, we exchange a lot of ideas and assess what works and what is possible to use in the classroom. We trace strategies together, always based on the fact that there isn't a recipe for handling persons with disabilities. We need to respect the singularity of each one of them.

Lara, 7 years old, was one of the children enrolled in 2017. Blind, she didn't have any idea of concepts such as large, medium, and small, high, and low. She didn't know how some animals look like. We had many challenges ahead! In order to help her with the concepts, we used string, so that she could know the size of someone considering the extension of the line. We also offered plastic pieces so that the girl could understand the body of a penguin through the tact. And we explored a lot the oral description, asking her classmates to describe the animal. To help Lara contact the reading and writing world, I took to the schoolbooks in braille and titles of Fundação Dorina Nowill, which include a pen that makes audio descriptions of images and reads text aloud. Lara also counted on a wooden braille alphabet and tactile braille made with ping-pong balls and egg boxes, simulating the braille cell. All of that was essential for her being able to follow the classmates in the first writing attempts.

Now Lara is studying in another school, and at this unit there is a professional that takes care of Specialized Educational Support (SES). The girl already uses a braille typewriter and does homework like any other pupil. The work performed with her makes clear that we need to believe that everyone can learn, and that we should facilitate everyone's learning."

© Picture: Arthur Calasans





Pedagogical records that help reflection

The activity is planned meticulously: each step and each guideline is created by the teacher. In the classroom, everything goes wrong. The class is not engaged, the material doesn't work as expected, and soon the play ends. Situations like that are not uncommon in classes of Early Childhood Education. "Children surprise us all the time," says Wilma Helena Almeida da Silva, pedagogical coordinator of EMEI José Roschel Christi – Juca Rocha (*please read her statement on page 80*). In order to handle the everyday challenges of such a stage, we need to plan, perform the activity, note, reflect, and plan again. By doing that, we can slowly assure that the practice is improved and adapted to the needs and interests of the group and of each child. When the teacher is concerned to maintain good pedagogical records, it is possible to increase and improve the reflections about the teacher's actions.

Concepts of interactions and plays are the core of planning. In addition to being a children's right – as determined by the National Curriculum Guidelines for Early Childhood Education (DCNEI) –, they are a source of discoveries and learning in this age. "In the child's relationship with the world, the act of playing is present even when adults don't understand or "allow" it as play. Play presumes to create a hypothetical situation, which cannot be controlled nor fully assured by the adult," said the researchers Mônica Appezzato Pinazza and Meire Festa in the article *Formação do Brincante para uma Pedagogia Lúdica (The training of the adult player for a playful pedagogy)*, in *Play – Volume 1*.

Thus, when creating activities involving play, one should assume that the protagonist's role is shared between children and adults. "It is essential to take time and space for the unusual to occur," explains Maria da Luz Milan Veiga of *Mais Diferenças*. The teacher is responsible for organizing the room and space, selecting various materials, and presenting a proposal, but what will happen depends on the class. "If we plan too much and want to control everything, we just get frustrated," says the coordinator Wilma. Therefore, it is essential that, in the planning, there is always a full part and an empty part.

ALWAYS AT HAND
Notes and remarks are essential for assessing the progress of pedagogical proposals and planning new activities

© Picture: Arthur Calasans

Attention to documentation

During the activities, it is worth paying attention to the conversations and interactions of children. An exchange of ideas reveals many things about learning

A curious speech, an unexpected interaction with the materials, make-believe that rises the attention: the daily life of Early Childhood Education is full of situations that are, at the same time, simple and very powerful. "There is a complexity in working with children that is not always visible to everybody," says Paulo Fochi, professor of Unisinos and coordinator of the Observatório da Cultura Infantil (Observatory of Childhood Culture) (Obeci). It is here that the records enter: their function is to show the dynamics that happen within the EMEI to families, colleagues, children of the group, and the teacher. "How to talk about such 'common things,' or even better, how to surround them, to bring them out, remove the shell where they are arrested, how to give them a sense, a language: they finally should talk about what they are, what we are," pro-

vokes the French novelist Georges Perec in the text *Approaches to What?*

Débora Carvalho, a teacher who works with 5 and 6-year-olds at CEU EMEI Professora Luciana Azevedo Pompermayer, is always trying to gather information about daily life in class. "I take a lot of pictures and videos, but I usually write notes," tells her. The images show the pupils' participation, the interactions performed and the results of plays. In the notes, there are her perceptions and sentences of the children. "They always say surprising or curious things, which I write down not to forget," says Débora.

Everything is consolidated in a notebook where the teacher's writings complement some pictures selected by her and some production of the group. Differently from the gradebook and the seminary, which have specific functions for the school and the Educa-



tion Department, such material helps teacher improvement. It is shared only with the pedagogical coordinator. Its purpose is to give inputs to enable her to evaluate the work developed and plan new situations for the children.

The idea of making pedagogical records is not new. There are reports about "journals of activities" since the 1930s, made by recreationist teachers that worked in the Parques Infantis (Playgrounds) of the City of São Paulo (institutions before the EMEIs). Over time, the identity of such materials changed and increasingly assumed the function of reporting the development of children and serve as a support for the reflections of teachers. Even today, researchers, technicians of departments of Education, school managers and teachers still think a lot to decide on how to create such records, and what is the best way to use them.

The main reference comes from Italy — the country famous for the quality of Early Childhood Education offered in the city of Reggio Emilia. There the records are part of the idea of pedagogical documentation. It is made of three main pillars: observation, documentation and interpretation for planning. The concept is

based on the principle that the teacher should maintain a curious look while observing, to understand how the children interact and how the learning process occurs. Such observation — as well as other materials — originates the documents that, later, are used by the teacher for creating new situations in the classroom.

One of the high values of pedagogical documentation is **not to guide** the look and record based on the teacher's expectations. "In the Brazilian tradition, we usually have previously stipulated purposes and observe children only to verify their achievements," explains Mariane Falco, PhD student of USP School of Education.

Changing the way of looking can also deeply change the material created by the teacher every day at the school. Instead of listing only what children can do or not, they start to record discoveries, interests and behaviors of the class. Such more individualized observation and without a single standard to be achieved is closer to the contemporary conception of Inclusive Education, which should consider the characteristics, interests, and personal stories of each child of the group.

Based on the children's production, it is possible to verify if the activity's proposal was clear, and if it created engagement. Pictures taken at EMEI José Rubens Peres Fernandes





At CEU EMEI Profa. Luciana Azevedo Pompermayer, teacher Gilda dos Santos checks the notes of previous days when she does the planning

Gathering images and videos is an important step, but it should not be the only one. "Having a lot of files saved in the cellphone is not enough if they are not used somehow," emphasizes Mariane Falco, PhD student of the USP School of Education. Their main purpose is giving feedback on the teacher's work, but they can also be shared with other educators, with the families and even the pupils.

Creating narratives is a better way to use these records. The teacher's look, together with pictures, videos and productions from the pupils, allows and enriches a full report of plays and activities. "There are several communication strategies that can be used: panels, portfolios in the video, printed portfolios, short stories, among others," clarifies Fochi (*please read the next page*).

Inside their own school, educators and children can be invited to see such records. It is possible to make a clothesline photo display or to show some videos to the children. "They point out things that the teacher didn't see. They say: 'I remember doing it' or 'My friend played in another way,'" says Mariane. The hours of collective studies are useful for sharing records with their colleagues. Based on activities that didn't work well or were successful, they can externalize their perceptions, their questions, and suggest new approaches. Such an exchange may point out the manners of qualifying both the record made by the teacher and the practices developed in the classroom. The teacher Amanda Capuchinho, of the group of 3 and 4-year-olds at EMEI Professor José Rubens Peres Fernandes, checks the records by the end of the class to think in manners to evaluate her own work. "I remember a child that was not used to participate in music rounds: she usually got up and didn't engage. One day, in a specific song, I realized that she started to move her hand. I wrote a note about the song, and we started to hear it more often and I asked her to teach the movement to the classmates," remembers Amanda.

The purpose of recording

A curious observation of the class helps telling stories about the children's development. In Inclusive Education, the record is vital: shared practices can inspire other educational units since inclusion is a new process in many realities. At EMEI Nair Correa, the generous look evidenced Artur's achievements, from the class of 5 and 6-year-olds. The videos made by the teacher Cecília Whitehead showed an advancement in socialization, which occurred upon the interaction of the other children with him. "In the beginning of the year, Artur just threw toys. One day, the rest of the group made a round for throwing back the toys," she says. Other advances occurred in the oral language. "Previously, he talked about himself in the third person. Recently, he started to say, 'I want' instead of 'Artur wants,'" remembers her. Everything duly registered.

“One needs to ask questions about the work and about the boys and girls”



Paulo Fochi is a professor at Unisinos, coordinator of the Observatório da Cultura Infantil (Observatory of Childhood Culture) (Obeci), and is one of the authors of the first editions of the National Core Curriculum (BNCC). A reference in Early Childhood Education, today he researches about the approach of the pedagogical documentation, incorporating the records as a pillar. He talks about this theme below.

What are the pillars of the pedagogical documentation?

There are three pillars: observation, documentation, and its interpretation for designing the pedagogical work. In records, it is not about only observing if the children achieve a predetermined standard or not; on the contrary. Recording demands clarity of the teacher about his/her view of childhood, about learning and, based on them, looking at the class and making open questions about the work and about the boys and girls. Then, recording what he/she observes in order to reflect and plan activities.

What is the difference between documentation and the record?

The record is gross material: I am talking about videos, pictures, notes on class activities. The documentation is part of

the assumption that the children are not anonymous anymore, they have their identity, and that we, as educators, think about them and our practice. It requires records, but it is not limited to them. It also concerns the educator's understanding of that note, and it cannot be empty, without questions.

What are short stories?

In 80% of the time, the documentation is used to give feedback about the teacher's work. In the remaining 20%, it is used to communicate about the children's experiences. It is in this second aspect that I propose the exercise of writing chronicles of one page, with a brief text and three or four pictures about a daily situation, showing the richness of what the children live, and the complexity of the work developed in Early Childhood Education. With Obeci's educators, we agreed to try to make a short story per week and to fix it at the classroom door, where the parents can read it. After a while, we gathered all stories in a sort of journal, showing the daily life and the development of the children as a group. For the educator, it is helpful and pleasant to write such narratives. I usually indicate the book of chronicles *Nu, de Botas*, by Antonio Prata, as a reference for this kind of writing.

To keep valuable moments

Teacher Débora Carvalho lets the girl record the moment while she takes Kaynā, who has multiple disabilities, to the playground. In the next page, the teacher's notebooks

The dynamics are intense: children play in the classroom. Each one is concentrated in playing differently. In each side of the room, there are significative and precious interactions. Over time, such happenings can tell their paths. The same occurs many times, from arrival until the time when they leave every day. How to manage to propose activities, participating in them with the class, and make records as well?

The first guideline followed by Débora Carvalho, teacher of the group of 5 and 6-year-olds at CEU EMEI Professora Luciana Azevedo Pompermayer, is not to despair: in each activity, she observes and makes records about some pupils. "Pictures, notes and videos made

by the teacher are not intended to account on the entire reality, only part of it and under the view of who is observing," explains Mariane. The observations of the teacher – always partial – are kept in a notebook and are always close to her. There, Débora's impressions are organized, as well as other materials gathered every day, such as pictures selected by her, drawings, and paintings of the children. The idea is that such content is a basis for planning classes and to create individual assessments made on a half-year basis. It is necessary to take some care if one wants to achieve such purposes. Please find below some suggestions for assuring that the records meet different needs..

1 Rely on other views over your practices

With the popularization of mobile phones, pictures and videos started to make part of our daily life. However, we need to be careful to use mobile devices. The first rule is not to let the act of taking pictures or filming shift the focus from the teacher's work. During the activities, it is essential that the adult plays with the class and makes interventions to increase the play. For that, it is worth changing who captures the moments: in addition to the teacher, interns, available colleagues of other classes, managers, and even the children may take such a role. Such rotation allows new ways of seeing , and people may observe things that the teacher wouldn't. "I remember a video of a conversation that I watched another day. In the video, it is possible to see that when I turn my back, the only child that didn't attend the play asked to talk, and I didn't listen. I was sad because of this, but later I could reflect on how to be more careful to avoid this kind of thing," says Débora.



© Pictures: Arthur Calasans

2 Incorporate the pupils' productions

Drawings, doodles, paintings, sculptures made with blocks or play dough; everything that children produce says a lot about them and their development. When she assembles a notebook with her records, Débora incorporates the works developed by the pupils and her notes. With this strategy, it is possible to observe – even in a different way – the performance of the pupils that weren't close to her during the activity.



3 Select what is more important

The ease of taking photos and filming results in a large volume of information gathered. It is necessary to ensure that the number of files doesn't disturb the teacher's work. It might be overwhelming to analyze all the records to observe the pupils' involvement and evaluate his/her own practice. "A lot of forgotten pictures are useless and do not complete the function of the record," defends Mariane. Débora selects the main images and glues them in the notebook. Thus, she assures that information and highlights about each activity are in the same place, and she can consult it whenever she wants.

4 Exercise observation and writing

The way of observing the children and the manner that all is noted should also be the focus of the teacher's reflection. Sentences with focus on describing what the pupils can achieve or not – based on predefined standards – should be out of the scene and give space to narratives about the day with the children. The way they talk, act in each moment, and the questions raised form the scenes that help to understand how the development and learning of each one happens. "Exercising writing of more poetic narratives that highlight extraordinary aspects of the daily life is also a pleasure for the teacher," points out Paulo Fochi.



PROFILE Wilma Helena Almeida da Silva
pedagogical coordinator at EMEI José Roschel
Christi – Juca Rocha

“

I have been working as a pedagogical coordinator in this school for 16 years and with teachers that have been here even longer than this time. Nevertheless, we feel continuously challenged. The children present us with new challenges every day and take us out of our comfort zone. In this scenario, we feel the constant necessity of studying and discussing in the group about our routines.

I always say that my leading attribution is to organize continuous teacher training. Weekly, we have eight-hour classes for collective meetings and another three-hour class where teachers study, plan, and systematize their practice. We meet every day and rotate activities such as readings, debating about videos and movies, sharing of practices and challenges, and collective planning. In the two last ones, we thought of initiatives where all classes are involved, inspired by The Play Project. First, we make suggestions; then each teacher and group of children is responsible for giving the collective proposals the identity of the class. Thereafter, the team is invited to think together about activities that were successful or problems that we had

The notes are an essential part of such a process. One of us writes a report about each meeting, and it is used as a basis for planning the guidelines for the following training. The record materials of teachers are essential to share practices and to plan. We fill out official books; however, notebooks and personal schedules are essential for more complete and free writing. Together, we define some models as reference, but each teacher has autonomy for organizing his/her records as he/she thinks it's better. Also, to describe the activities before performing them, we stimulate to gather pictures, videos, and notes about how the activity happened and how the children's participation occurred. The idea is gathering inputs for assessing our work, attesting the development of children, and presenting to the families what happens when their children are here. Making posters, such as those exhibited in the Seminary of The Play Project*, is also a fundamental strategy because it increases our conversation with other institutions that are often working on issues similar to ours.

My work is to observe the planning and records and help to qualify them. Before that, teachers used to make adaptations for children with disabilities based on the initial planning. Nowadays they are more concerned about assuring moments of play with all children's participation. They started to think about activities allowing that the protagonist role between children and adults is shared; that is, they let boys and girls also help decide about what happens at school. We are learning that this opening is essential to avoid teacher's frustration. Children are very spontaneous and wish to propose paths for the activities while they participate in them. As coordinator, I included such dimensions in the reading of materials produced by the team, and I make interventions for assuring that such aspects are accomplished."

* See the banners with the experience of the EUs in an accessible format: bit.ly/banners-accessiveis





Understanding children

GABRIEL DE ANDRADE JUNQUEIRA FILHO performed a lecture about the shared protagonist role at the II Seminary Sharing Inclusive Pedagogic Practices, at the auditorium of Memorial da Inclusão, in São Paulo

How to know what is more interesting for Early Childhood Education children? Gabriel de Andrade Junqueira Filho, pedagogue, master's degree, and Ph.D. in Education from PUC-SP, wrote a book about the subject. *Linguagens Geradoras: Seleção e Articulação de Conteúdos em Educação Infantil* (Generating Languages: Selection and Articulation of Contents in Early Childhood Education) is already in the 8th edition and approaches a conversation between teacher, pupil and knowledge in this schooling stage. He proposes a manner of understanding children, so the teacher can be able to identify meaningful contents for them.

Professor of UFRGS School of Education, Gabriel came to São Paulo to attend the closure event of The Play Project in 2018, invited by Volkswagen Group Foundation and Mais Diferenças. The theme of his lecture involved the educators in a very modern discussion: after all, who should assume the protagonist's role in Early Childhood Education? Using the pedagogical triangle of Jean Houssaye (2007), who puts in vertices pupil, teacher and knowledge, he questions why only one should be chosen to lead the protagonist role. "In this case, the other two assume supporting roles, and I don't want this to happen," says Gabriel.

What is the shared protagonist role?

Everyone can and needs to assume the protagonist's role. Such as observing, suggesting, analyzing, leveraging hypotheses, or deciding, assuming a protagonist role is a way of participating in the community life where we live. The Education has been working with a rotation of protagonist roles in the pedagogical relation – once the teacher, once the pupil, once the knowledge –, where, in each turn, only one of them gets the protagonist role and the others assume supporting roles. It strengthens the logic that one of them points the direction, and the other ones follow it, one of them says what to do, and the other ones obey... Today we talk a lot about the children's protagonist role – and they must be recognized as such –, but I defend the shared protagonist role, where the three elements of the pedagogical relation continue the path while holding hands.

How can we put this in practice?

The image that the adult has about children determines their places and the action in the pedagogical relation. If he/she considers them powerful, creative, capable, he/she recognizes them as assuming a protagonist role and wants for himself/herself the same protagonist role. Apart from devaluating the teacher, the concerning trend that focuses on the exclusive protagonist role of children prevents the participation of the adults in the relationship. This has direct consequences at planning because it is assumed that the teacher doesn't have to plan, just follow the children that they will show where to go and organize the work. Otherwise, I believe that both need to walk together, paying attention to each other, producing knowledge, clues, impressions about each other. Adult and child are peers, as well as peers regarding the knowledge that took them to the school. According to Hannah Arendt (1906-1975), we cannot leave children with their resources, but we also cannot close our eyes for the new and unpredictable things they show us.

Schools go one way and children another way, how to approximate these two realities?

EFirstly, we need to be sure of what the school wants for and with the children. The educa-

“We need to be sure of what the school wants for and with the children. Educators cannot fail to make choices for them. That is one of the ways of exercising the protagonist role”

tors cannot fail to make choices for children – and this also teaches them to make their own choices. This is how teachers exercise their protagonist role: it is the teachers that, initially, decide what classroom's collection to use, the time spent in the yard, the knowledge objects that will be presented and explored, and the learning situations. However, I also propose that the adult analyses the practices of such choices together with the children for assessing if they make sense or if they need to be revised, transformed. In Rio Grande do Sul, for instance, a teacher told that they changed the lunch schedule, which was organized by rounds in the cafeteria, because it did not seem to be working anymore. After talking to the adults of the team, they decided to consult the children, asking in the classrooms: "Who is already hungry and wants to have lunch?". The children paused to see if they were hungry or not, and if they rather continue playing. Based on such change, children, together with their teachers, started to define if they preferred to have lunch in the classroom or in the cafeteria. The professionals trust in their capability to decide and, therefore, boys and girls also felt safer and more supported. So what is the knowledge that is challenging and approximating these two subjects of the pedagogical relation? Hunger! That is a perfect example of a shared protagonist role.

In Early Childhood Education, how can the teacher find out what children “want and need to know”?

This is an expression that I used in my book *Linguagens Geradoras*. It is a type of translation of a sentence of the North American semiotic Charles Sanders Peirce (1839-1914): "What exists insists." What we are searching is not the interest or a passing desire, but what is the result of the meeting between curiosity and necessity, that is, what is essential, urgent. It is widespread, when he/she works with projects, that the teacher is confused with the identification of the authentic interests of children. After one or two pieces of evidence indicating that they are interested in worms, a project is organized for learning more about the animal and, two days after starting it; they don't want to know about worms anymore. Why does this happen? The teacher did a hurried reading of the situation, not engaged, and without criterion. In daily life, it is possible to organize the work to identify what is significant for the life-history of that group.

But how can the teacher find the insisting interest?

The strategy is to take good care of the “the full part of the planning”, based on which the teacher introduces himself/herself to the children by the choices and proposals he/she makes to them. The full part works as a strategy and a teacher's tool to generate data about children, due to their interactions with the teacher's choices and proposals - it

“The adult is a content that the child wants to learn. And every child is a content that we need to interpret and know to understand and relate to”

is a research that happens all the time. It is an articulation work, interpreting the signs made by children in their interactions and productions with different languages: the time when the child is engaged in each activity, his/her relations with the other children of the group, the roles that he/she represents in the make-believe plays, with whom and with what he/she plays at the yard.

Please explain the concept of the “full part of the planning”.

It contains the teachers' view of the world that he/she selected to receive and welcome her group and also present himself/herself to the children. Thus, the two parties of the pedagogical relationship start to know each other. The child, when interacting with the full part, shows his/her world's interpretation, which the teacher wants and needs to know so much to continue planning the work. Some people mistake the full part for mandatory contents or minimum of contents. This is not about it, because it would operate as a prescription and not as an instrument to create data about children.

What about the empty part?

The empty part starts in the relation between the three elements - teacher, child and knowledge. However, already on the first day at school, it is completed by the interactions between children and teachers, between the children and contents-languages. The empty part will be completed by predictability and surprise, tradition and authenticity, repeat and update, reproduction and originality, fear and daring, joy and sadness... everything produced based on the meeting between subjects and knowledge.

Please clarify what you understand as content-language.

My inspirations are the concept of the language of Charles Sanders Peirce and the programmatic content of Paulo Freire (1921-1997). Peirce says that language is any performance, production, operation of the human being in nature. That is to say; everything is language. Then, for me, everything is content and, therefore, can be learned, taught, known, created.

Paulo Freire, on his turn, says that content is all about the teacher talks with the pupils. I say that talking is content, just like the organization of the classroom and yard physical space, the group's routine, the unfurl, rules and the combinations, telling stories, music, painting, drawing. And, the teacher – an adult – is content that the child wants to learn. And every child is a content that we need to read and know to understand and relate to.

The National Core Curriculum (BNCC) listed experience fields in its Early Childhood Education document.

What do you think about it?

I consider that the BNCC's choice for the experience fields is strategic. What they want to avoid is the prescriptive character traditionally accompanying the curriculums organized by contents, as occurs in the Primary and Elementary Education. However, BNCC's choices reinforce the dichotomy between form and content and accept the alternation of the protagonist's role in the pedagogical relation. The curriculum focus changes from the perspective of the teacher to the child. In the book *Linguagens Geradoras* as I propose, otherwise, that teacher and pupil assume the protagonist role, sharing the protagonist role of the relationship both between themselves and the knowledge, which cannot be read only as prescription, but also as an opening to the world.

How can the teacher record such pedagogical relation that balances the three players?

I am a huge fan of books of records because they store and disclose part of the protagonist role of the subjects involved in the studies concerned. In each project, there is a path of investigations that need to be documented, which works as a memory and as a trigger of new questions. I also like the short stories a lot, which were presented by the pedagogical practices of the Reggio Emilia region, Italy, and disseminated by Paulo Fochi (*please read the interview on page 77*). It is a powerful resource of observation and notes that make little things about the children's daily lives at school special. It is worth to report, for in-

“One needs to have availability and intentionality to meet the other and get surprised. The best part of life is the unusual, the surprise”

stance: Which hypotheses did children have about the knowledge object? What was studied? How did they search for information about the theme, and based on which situations and elements did they find answers for the questions?

What is your message to teachers and managers of Early Childhood Education regarding the improvement of quality in the child-adult relation?

I have two messages. The first one is studying! There are many important academic papers waiting to be read by people who are hungry for knowledge and learning. In addition, it is essential making such readings turn into attitude, practice, pedagogical action. The second one is to be available and intentional in meeting the other one with freedom to get surprised by everything that can happen. The best part of life is the unusual, the surprise. It is also applied to all children, with and without disabilities. We are meeting each other not just for confirming and celebrating or lamenting a hypothesis about the other person, but also for being delighted with the beautiful things that come with knowing him/her. Such authentic meeting with children – especially those with disabilities, ASD or PDD – helps us to know more about relationships, the protagonist role and to improve the quality of the relationships between individuals and between individuals and knowledge.

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Graphic design: Balão Editorial/Victor Malta

Translation and revision: Korn Traduções

Cover photos: Arthur Calasans

We would like to thank the teams of the Municipal Department of Education (SME) of São Paulo for the contributions to this publication.

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This edition is the English version of *Caderno Brincar – Volume 2*, published in Portuguese in 2018.

Dados Internacionais de Catalogação na Publicação (CIP)
(Câmara Brasileira do Livro, SP, Brasil)

Krause, Maggi.

Play : vol. 2 : practical proposals for inclusive games in Early Childhood Education [livro eletrônico] / Maggi Krause, Beatriz Vichessi, Wellington Soares Silva ; translation Korn Traduções. – São Paulo : Associação Nova Escola, 2020.

ePub

Título original: Caderno brincar : volume 2 : propostas práticas para brincadeiras inclusivas na educação infantil

ISBN 978-65-991118-1-5

1. Brincadeiras infantis 2. Educação inclusiva 3. Educação infantil 4. Família e escola 5. Jogos educativos 6. Prática pedagógica I. Vichessi, Beatriz. II. Silva, Wellington Soares. III. Título.

20-37084

CDD-371.9

Índices para catálogo sistemático:

1. Brincadeiras e jogos : Educação infantil e inclusiva 371.9
Cibele Maria Dias - Bibliotecária - CRB-8/9427



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nova
escola

ISBN: 978-65-991118-1-5

TD



9 786599 111815