

Abstract

Health Education as a Social Technology in Tackling Geohelminthiases Experience with School-Aged Children [†]

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Introduction: Geohelminthiases, classified as neglected tropical diseases, remain a persistent public health challenge, particularly in regions marked by social inequalities, inadequate sanitation, and substandard housing. In this context, health education emerges as a crucial tool for preventing and managing geohelminthiases, enabling critical appropriation of knowledge, transformation of daily practices, and strengthening of community engagement. Conceived as a social technology, health education extends its reach by adopting participatory methodologies aligned with local realities, fostering shared responsibility among students, families, and education and health professionals. **Methodology:** The project is conducted by the Federal University of Mato Grosso (UFMT) from 2025 to 2027 in public schools in the Guia and Aguaçu districts and the Alvorada neighborhood of Cuiabá, targeting children aged 5 to 10 years. To engage with the local context, conversational circles, coproparasitological surveys among students, and socioeconomic assessments of families are employed. These approaches identify prior knowledge about geohelminthiases as well as participants' living and health conditions. Research was approved by the Research Ethics Committee under opinion number 7.582.357/2025. **Results:** School activities facilitated significant engagement with students, revealing both existing knowledge and common questions regarding geohelminthiases. Conversational circles effectively promoted active participation, with children sharing experiences related to personal hygiene, water use, and soil contact. Illustrative characters representing major geohelminths were developed as a pedagogical strategy, enhancing comprehension and creating a playful learning environment. **Conclusions:** The experience underscores the importance of health education strategies that are contextually relevant and age-appropriate, fostering both critical knowledge acquisition and shared responsibility in health care.



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