

Why Assess the Risk-Related Behavior and Pro-Social Behavior in Children Ages 4 to 6 Years?

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Abstract

The article evidences an assessment of the prosocial and risk-related behaviors in children of ages 4 to 6 years from a public school in the locality of Ciudad Bolívar, Bogotá. The main interest converges in evidencing the conducts of the minors that will begin their primary studies as well as preventing and intervening in the risk-related behaviors. By preventing and intervening, it is avoided that the aggressive conducts lead to complex effects on the physical, social, cognitive and emotional development of the infants.

Keywords: Assessment, Behavior, Children, Cooperative Work, Prosocial, Risk, Social Skills.

INTRODUCCIÓN

In adolescence and adulthood, any type of aggressive behavior consolidated since childhood can manifest itself. As the infancy and adolescence code states, from zero to six years old the main foundations of the minor's and the future adult's development are established in the cognitive and emotional environment as well as in the social environment [1].

This means that the knowledge of the first infancy are crucial not only since they set the basis for the children's development but also in terms of learning prosocial and aggressive behaviors through referents such as family, the school, friends, teachers, the environment, social interaction or communication methods, which are behaviors that children are prone to imitate [2]. These are the early circumstances and experiences that shape the child's personality. The family is the first socializing agent that favours the adequate behaviors to educate and potentiate adequate skills and social relationships [3]. These aspects are an essential influence for the development of the child [4]. In this manner, the infant builds the skills for life.

Learning can be beneficial or detrimental for the children and future adult, since there is a great chance that he does not receive an adequate learning, loving and warm setting, appropriate nutrition and intervention in the right moment during his first years. The minors can show future problems in behavior, academic disinterest, school dropout, delinquency, violence, non-compliance to norms, use of substances that

affect the organism, drug addiction and instability in work and emotional aspects [5].

In the first infancy, precocious prevention and conjoint intervention by the family, different professionals and the school are crucial to contribute to the socialization process. The assessment of prosocial and risk-related behaviors enables a follow-up on children to strengthen the capacities and skills that generate prosocial conducts and reduce the risk factors (violence, aggressiveness, antipathy, exclusion and inadequate behaviors) that can be evidenced and manifested in children at an early age [6].

Hence, it is important to assess prosocial and aggressive behaviors that can be seen in children of ages 4 to 6 years as students of the Public School of the locality of Ciudad Bolívar in Bogotá.

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this work are to assess the prosocial and risk-related behaviors of children of ages 4 to 6 years to determine the risks and behaviors that predominate in this population and intervene at an early stage of evolutionary development.

METHODOLOGY

Type of study

A simple descriptive study was made to assess the level of prosocial and aggressive behaviors in children of ages 4 to 6 years in a public school located in the locality of Ciudad Bolívar in Bogotá.

Participants – sample

The chosen participants were 55 children (32 boys and 33 girls) signed in the school from ages 4 to 6 years due to convenience, disposition and availability. They belong to socio-economical strata 1 and 2 (which are the two lowest strata in the country).

Materials - Instruments

Assessment of behaviors in children from 4 to 6 years old with the manual for socializing school agents.

The survey on behavior assessment of children 4 to 6 years old included in the manual for socializing school agents was used [7].

RESULTS

Assessment of behaviors in children from 4 to 6 years old with the manual for socializing school agents.

The prosocial and risk-related behaviors were assessed, leading to the following results in terms of the percentage of risk factors: without risk - 42 students (76%), on the verge of risk – 6 students (11%), intermediate level of risk – 7 students (13%) and high level of risk – 0 students (0%). The percentages are shown in the following Figure

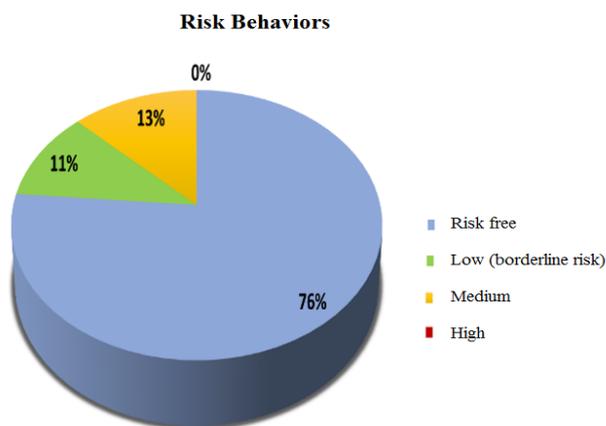


Figure 1. Level of risk-related behavior. Source: Authors

According to the questions included in the survey, the five risk-related behaviors with the highest frequency are shown in the following table.

Table 1: Most frequent risk-related behaviors.

| Frequency | Risk Behavior Item |
|-----------|--|
| 59 | Very agitated (a), always running and jumping. Does not know how to remain still. |
| 55 | Uneasy. Worried about many things. |
| 52 | Tends to work alone. |
| 50 | Has low concentration in comparison to other kids in his age. "Does not keep the attention in one single thing." |
| 47 | Disapproves of what his partners do. |

In terms of the assessment of prosocial behaviors, the results obtained with their corresponding percentages are the following: low prosocial behaviors, 2 students (4%),

intermediate level prosocial behaviors, 14 students (25%), high level prosocial behaviors, 21 students (38%), very high prosocial behaviors, 18 students (33%).

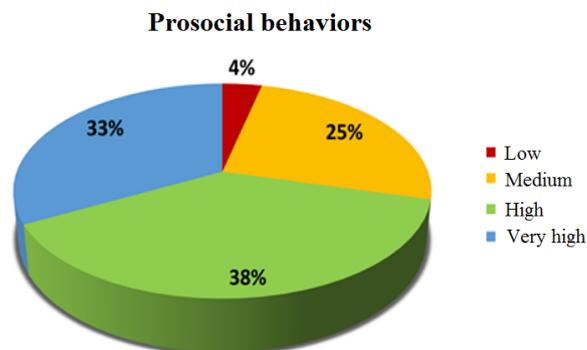


Figure 2. Level of prosocial behavior in percentage. Source: Authors

As shown by the chart and the table, the five prosocial behaviors that presented the lowest frequencies in the study were:

Table 2: The most frequent prosocial behaviors

| Frequency | Prosocial behavior item |
|-----------|--|
| 52 | Shows sympathy towards a child that has made a mistake. |
| 55 | Tries to stop a fight or dispute between children. |
| 60 | Spontaneously helps to pick up the objects that another child left on the floor. |
| 63 | Spontaneously excuses himself after breaking something. |
| 64 | Takes the opportunity to value the work of a less weak child. |

CONCLUSIONS

In this study, the five risk-related behaviors that occur more often are the following: very agitated, always running and jumping, does not know how to remain still; uneasy, worried about many things; tends to work alone; low concentration capacity in comparison to the children in his age; does not keep the attention on one single thing; disapproves of what his partners. The five most frequent behaviors are related between them, in aspects such as: uneasy, inattentive, prefer to work alone over cooperative work and disapprove of their partners.

With precise results of the risk-related behaviors, an immediate prevention and intervention can be made by the professionals to the children in the assessment of aggressive risk-related behaviors. Another positive aspect of the assessment is to know if the risk-related conducts are associated with conduct disorders, attention deficit disorder or hyperactivity, challenging negativist disorder, explosive disorder, Asperger syndrome. These disorders tend to turn into chronic when the

family or the school and the specialist do not intervene immediately.

The most frequent prosocial behaviors in the group were the following: shows sympathy towards a child that made a mistake; tries to stop a fight or dispute between children; spontaneously helps to pick up the objects left by other on the floor; spontaneously excuses himself after breaking something; takes the opportunity to value to work of a less weak child.

Finally, it is noteworthy to mention that the priority of the teachers and other staff members of the institution is the development of social, emotional, spiritual and cognitive skills and competences that enable the coexistence and harmony in the classroom.

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