

## Teachers' perceptions of drug use by students: an exploratory, qualitative study in São Paulo, Brazil

Presenters:  
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Riding the Wave of Change to Health Care: Interprofessional Collaboration and Caring for Substance Use Disorders

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## A bit about me



- Undergraduate nursing studies
- Educational training
- Faculty member
- Masters' degree in psychiatric-mental health nursing.
- Full-time doctoral studies, focusing on prevention of drug use by adolescents.

## International collaboration



- Professor Dr Stephen Strobbe was recently in Brazil, as an invited, visiting professor as part of an ongoing collaborative relationship between the College of Nursing at Ribeirão Preto, and the University of Michigan School of Nursing.

Ribeirão Preto  
• 313 km 194 miles  
from São Paulo State  
capital (São Paulo)



## Ribeirão Preto, São Paulo, Brazil



## Characteristics of Ribeirão Preto



The city is the center of one of the richest regions in Brazil

- Population 600,000
- Center of commercial and service industries
- A leader in agricultural industry
- One of the richest regions in Brazil
- Subject to great disparity in wealth
- Average income
- University center, with a focus on health care

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### University of São Paulo Ribeirão Preto College of Nursing EERP/USP

World Health Organization  
Collaborating Centre

for Nursing Research  
Development  
Since 1988



Rho Upsilon Chapter of  
Sigma Theta Tau  
International Honor  
Society of Nursing



Partnership with  
OAS/SENAD  
Research Training  
Course on Alcohol  
and Drugs for Nurses  
from Latin America  
and Portuguese-  
spoken African  
Countries



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### University of São Paulo at Ribeirão Preto College of Nursing - EERP/USP



Publications by EERP Journals



SMAD

Electronical Journal Mental Health Alcohol and Drugs

- 2005: First issue published
- abstracts published in three languages:
- Portuguese, Spanish and English

Publication frequency: quadrimonthly

Official Journal for scientific dissemination of the University of São Paulo at Ribeirão Preto College of Nursing – WHO Collaborating Center for Nursing Research Development

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### University of São Paulo at Ribeirão Preto College of Nursing - EERP/USP



#### Undergraduate Programs

- Bachelor's Degree in Nursing (4 years)
- Bachelor's Degree and Teaching Diploma in Nursing (5 years)

#### Graduate Programs (Master's and Doctoral programs)

- Four graduate programs:
  - Fundamental Nursing
  - Psychiatric Nursing
  - Public Health Nursing
  - Inter-Unit Doctoral Program in Nursing (Doctoral degree only)

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## Demographic Data




Distribution of students among regular courses according to teaching program, November 2012.

Teaching Program	Number of students
Undergraduate	538
Masters and Doctoral	408
Post-Doctoral	14
Specialization	71
<b>Total</b>	<b>1031</b>

Sources: Undergraduate, Graduate, Academic Support Sections and Departments - EERP/USP

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## Psychiatric Nursing



- Research Areas:
  - Health education and human resource training
  - Studies about the conduct, ethics and knowledge production in health
  - Alcohol and drugs use and abuse
  - Psychiatric nursing: the patient, the disease and therapeutic practices
  - Mental Health Promotion

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## Brazilian Public Health System

The Unified Health System

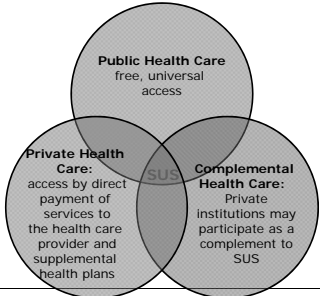
### “Health is a right of every citizen and a duty of the State”

- dynamic
- complex
- health system
- decentralised management
- community participation

Principles of health as a citizen's right and the state's duty

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## The Brazilian Health System



**Public Health Care**  
free, universal access

**Private Health Care:**  
access by direct payment of services to the health care provider and supplemental health plans

**Complementary Health Care:**  
Private institutions may participate as a complement to SUS

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## Organization of health services

- *Primary care*
  - Reorganisation of primary clinics to focus on families and communities and integrate medical care with health promotion and public health actions
  - Family Health Program
    - one physician, one nurse, one auxiliary nurse, and four to six community health workers
    - Community Health Agents Programme

(Paim et al., 2011)

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## Organization of health services

- *Secondary care*
  - Problematic → often given to individuals with private health plans
  - Highly dependent on contracts with the private sector (diagnostic and therapeutic support services)
  - Psychiatric Reform Law → to deinstitutionalise and reinforce the rights of individuals with mental illness
    - Reduction of psychiatric hospital beds
    - Creation of community-based psychosocial care centres

(Paim et al., 2011)

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## Organization of health services

- *Tertiary and hospital care*
  - high-cost procedures → contracted private sector providers and public teaching hospitals
  - 69.1% of the hospitals are private → 38.7% of beds in the private sector are available to the SUS through contracts

(Paim et al., 2011)

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## Drug use policy

- SUS
- Guided by the National Drugs Policy (2006)
  - Preventing drug misuse
  - Promoting treatment
  - Recuperation of addicts

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## Drug use policy

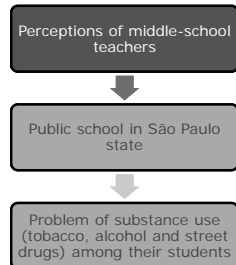
- Psychosocial Care Centers (CAPS)
  - Open-community health services
  - Treat people suffering from: mental disorders, psychoses, severe neuroses
  - CAPS-Ad → for patients with alcohol and other drugs abuse



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## Purpose of this study

- The purpose of this study was to examine the perceptions of middle-school teachers in a public school in São Paulo, Brazil, concerning the problem of substance use (tobacco, alcohol and street drugs) among their students.



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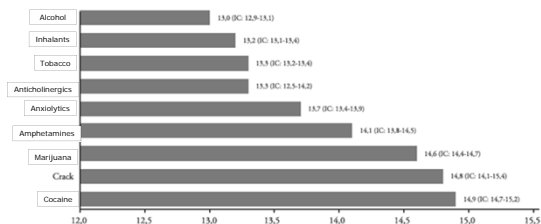
PREVALENCE OF DRUG USE (%)

KIND OF DRUG	LIFETIME	PAST YEAR	MONTHLY	FREQUENTLY	HEAVY
Alcohol	60,5	42,4	21,1	2,7	1,6
Tobacco	16,9	9,6	5,5	0,7	1,5
Marijuana	5,7	3,7	2	0,3	0,4
Cocaine	2,5	1,8	1	0,2	0,2
Crack	0,6	0,4	0,3	0	0,1
Amphetamines	2,2	1,7	0,9	0,1	0,3
Inhalants	8,7	5,2	2,2	0,2	0,3
Anxiolytics	5,3	2,6	1,3	0,1	0,1
Anticholinergics	0,5	0,4	0,2	0	0
LSD	1	0	0	0	0
Ecstasy	1,3	0	0	0	0

- Prevalence of drug use among 50.890 middle school students of public and private schools from 27 Brazilian capitals.

(Carlini et al. 2010)

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- Average age of first drug use among 50.890 middle school students of public and private schools from 27 Brazilian capitals.

(Cabrero, Neto, Feresca, Carlini, 2004)

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## Ethical considerations

- This study was approved by the County Ethics Committee of Ribeirão Preto School of Nursing, University of São Paulo
- All participants (middle school teachers) provided signed, written consent
- All files were de-identified

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## Method

- Qualitative study
- Exploratory
- Action research
  - systematic collection and analysis of data for the purpose of taking action and making change (Greenwood & Levin, 1998)
  - Paulo Freire

Papa, Mayr, 2006

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## Method

- Setting
  - Public middle school (grades 5 to 8)
  - Low-income area in Ribeirão Preto, São Paulo, Brazil
    - Less than one salary (\$ 280,00 monthly) per family
  - Total student population of 310

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## Participants characteristics

- Number:** 17 teachers (61% of the total faculty)
- Gender:** 53% were male
- Religion:** 47% Catholic, 12% Evangelical, 12% Spiritists, 25% no one
- Marital status:** 59% single, 29% married, 12% divorced
- Employment:** 64% are employed by the public service; the others have employment contracts

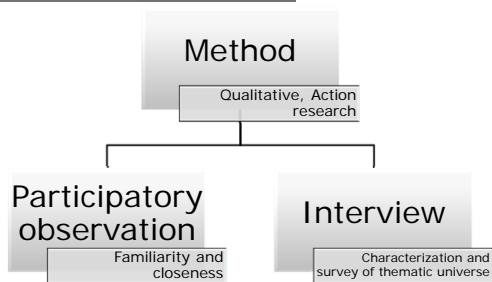
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## Participants characteristics

- Degree:**
  - Geography (17.5%)
  - Biological sciences (17.5%)
  - Letters (23.5%)
  - Mathematics (12%)
  - History (6%)
  - Music (6%)
  - Physical education (6%)
- Teaching experience:** 11 years (range 1 to 20 years)
- Workload:** average of 41.8 hours per week

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## Method



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## Participatory observation

- The researcher becomes part of the process being observed and immersed in the reality of the social situation with the participants
- 45 hours of observation
- Written field notes
- Collected information:
  - My reception on the school
  - Relationship between educators
  - Approach to the subject drugs with students

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## Interviews

- Semi-standardized
- One-to-one
- Flexibility, facilitates different levels of language, explores hidden meanings and understanding
- Digital recorded
- Amounted 8h53min (average about 31,7 minutes each)

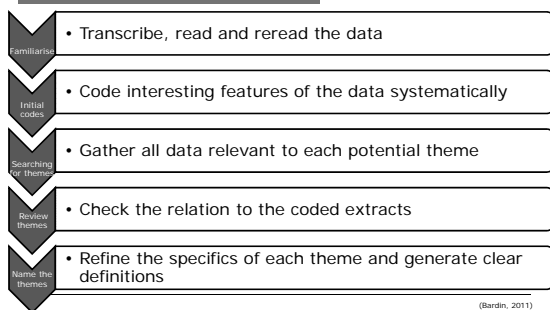
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## Method of data analysis

- Data were transcribed, word-for-word
- Content analysis
  - Systematic coding and categorizing
  - Thematic analysis: identifies, analyzes and reports themes

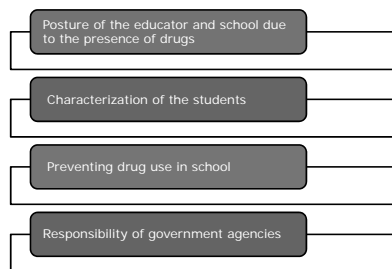
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## Thematic content analysis



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## Perception of the problem of substance involvement



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## Posture of the educator and school due to the presence of drugs

**Sub-themes** ATTITUDES TOWARD INVOLVEMENT WITH DRUGS BY STUDENTS  
 The first thing that the school tries to do is **talk to the student**. The child is going that way why has no one to care for her. (...) What can the school do more? Be **talking with parents**? If parents are cool they support the school and help (...) In most cases, the family also has involvement with drugs, the child is just one more that will help in drug trafficking. You talk to the child, the family. And in the latter case (...) **forwards to the Council protect**. (E17)

FEELINGS AGAINST THE PERCEIVED CHARACTERISTICS RELATED TO DRUG USE OR KNOWLEDGE OF FAMILY AND SOCIAL SITUATIONS OF THE STUDENTS

**I'm sorry for the children**. Currently, they have grown up in this world with drugs, for them is a normal thing. It is this feeling that, we have a situation that you **do not have much to do**. Why is the case when the family does not use, you talk with the family, take attitude in school, but when not, what will you talk to the child? Do not use, it does hurt, he/she says "My father uses, my mother uses". (E08)

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## Posture of the educator and school due to the presence of drugs

**Sub-themes** SENSE OF DANGER THAT SUCH EDUCATORS FEEL EXPOSED FACE PROXIMITY WITH SITUATIONS OF DRUG TRAFFICKING  
 Because we get through **without protection**. I leave here and I know of their lives, but they are out there. I know he uses drugs, I know he's there, but, and when I leave here? You never know what kind of student. Because sometimes **presents fear**, we come across them in the street. **I was very scared**. (E15)

INTEREST IN OBTAINING INFORMATION ON PREVENTING DRUG USE

It's important to us to get information, so that we can **pass on to students**. When it comes a new drug, the student asks what was the composition. We seek to know, but it is important to have information. (E07)

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## Posture of the educator and school due to the presence of drugs

Sub-themes

### INTEREST IN TAKING PREVENTIVE ACTIONS

I would like to have **examples of how to talk, how to deal** with a person who is in drug use (...) There not occurred the students arrive that way, but it may one day come and I will not know how to intervene. (E010)

### INTEREST IN ARTICULATE THE SUBJECT MATTER PROVIDED WITH CLASSROOM

I could **see movie** of what actually happens, what happens to the lung of them, what happens to the head, with the mind (E06)

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## Characterization of the students

Sub-themes

### SOCIAL BACKGROUND OF STUDENTS

We see much **disregard for the child's outfit**. The child was going away from here, when it was full-time schooling, and arrived the next day accusing headache. We wondered why, "because **the last time I ate here was at school the day before.**" (E017)

### MOTIVATIONS AND CONSEQUENCES RELATED TO DRUG USE

Why do boys just messing with drugs? **Consumerism**. The teenager wants to have the shoes, want to have expensive shoes, nice clothes, car or bike, cash out, dating, can not work, the father did not send him money, where do you think he'll get? (E05)

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## Characterization of the students

Sub-themes

### EASE ACCESS TO DRUGS

But know that they mess with drugs, (...) we hear of cases they ask to go drink water and go into the **bathroom to consuming this drug.** (E07)

### REQUESTS FOR HELP FROM STUDENTS TO EDUCATORS

Students asking almost a help because they have **family members who are drugs users** occurs more with those from middle school (...) you will rebuke him and he says "My mother did not care about me, sometimes she gets drugged." You do not know until when it is true, but I've heard students saying, "My dad is even drugged, so I will not do anything." **Complaining**. Even 12, 13 years they complain, then do not complain more. **Keep to themselves.** (E16)

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## Characterization of the students

Sub-themes

### SALE OF ILLEGAL DRUGS BY STUDENTS

And trafficking absorbs a large part due to these teens who pay. There was conversation with a student who asked, "Teacher, how much you earn," I say and he replies, "I make more than you, because I sell drugs there and **I get much more than you.**" (E05)

### FEATURING THE FAMILIAR UNIVERSE OF STUDENTS AND HIGHLIGHTS THE EASE OF ACCESS TO DRUGS

Outside the **family lives in that environment**, practice sales (...) There is not how to work with the family, because sometimes that selling is food that they will take home. (...) Students do not have perspective.

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## Preventing drug use in school

Sub-themes

### STUDENTS ALREADY FACING DRUG USERS OR WHOSE FAMILIES ARE NOTORIOUSLY INVOLVED IN THE USE OR 'SALE' OF ILLICIT DRUGS

We already see students until the sixth year coming to an opposite understanding, because they grew up watching his father and mother to use. Speaking of prevention for the student at the time is sometimes tricky. Show him the **consequences they will have**, because they can still be **alerted** to this, and they will be able to not want to have the same result that other people have. (E06)

### CONCEPTS OF PREVENTION OF DRUG USE

Prevention is to **anticipate** (...) a supposed problem not to happen. Within school prevention projects is working with **dialogue** and realize that we have this condition (E04)

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## Preventing drug use in school

Sub-themes

### APPROPRIATE TIMES TO PERFORM THEM IN THE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT, EMBODIMENTS AND ISSUES TO BE ADDRESSED

So grab a **text** of something that happened, a **video** (...) Getting like a friendly chat (...) **dialogue, exchange of information**, if you count a few of you, they perceive as a thing of us and what can happen to everyone. (E17)

### OBSTACLES TO THEIR PRACTICE IN THE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT.

Make a project to talk to the student, "you can not mess with drugs?" It will not do, he leaves his home and will **face the same problem at home**. (...) The student has **parents** when it comes to school, we see that they are **more problematic** than the student. (E05)

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## Responsibility of government agencies

Sub-themes

INTERSECTORAL APPROACH INVOLVING THE USE OF DRUGS AMONG STUDENTS

It is a problem that goes **beyond the school**. What is the role of the **authorities** in that? You will hold a boy who has been arrested three times he was caught selling drugs on the street, but was a student of the school. As he is a minor (to get caught), release it. (E05)

IMPOSSIBILITIES ACTING SCHOOL THAT REQUIRES ACTIONS OF OTHER BODIES AND PUBLIC PROGRAMS

Students could have other **opportunities if the community offered**, if the city offered. (E09)

CRITICAL POLICIES AS THE DEFINITION OF GUIDELINES WITHOUT AGREEMENT WITH PRACTICAL ACTIONS UNDERTAKEN

It takes the **child to the court**. It is the **only** occurrence and has no more because it is a minor. What will he do? Follow up with a social worker? Do we have so many social workers to work with it? (E02)

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## Conclusions

- Teachers actively participated in exploratory, qualitative research concerning substance use among middle school students in São Paulo, Brazil.
- Teachers were also receptive to the idea of an intervention to help prevent substance use among their students.

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## Conclusions

- With the results of this first part of the study was possible to organize an educational intervention with the teachers.
- This findings can help to make specific intervention in the school and, facilitates the perception of teachers who work in schools which social reality is similar and can increase public awareness about the school needs of support from family and community to do drug use prevention actions.

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## Thank you!

COMMENTS

QUESTIONS

SUGESTIONS



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