

## Hospital Toy Libraries in Brazil: their games and toys

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The purpose of this research was to verify the quality of the creation and establishment of Brazilian hospital toy libraries, with focus in their games and toys. Initially, the research identified the toy libraries in pediatric hospitals, in four cities from the southeast of Brazil (almost 2 million inhabitants). After identifying the unities, a self-evaluable questionnaire was applied based on the French Chapter of Quality of Toy Libraries. This questionnaire was build up on 27 items, into four categories: I – Objectives and method of work; II – Daily function; III – Staff; IV – Environment, toys and games. The scale of score varied from 1 to 3. Only six toy libraries were identified; four public and two private ones, even though the Brazilian law requires the existence of toy libraries in pediatric hospitals. Regarding toys and games, the results indicate the highest score in relation to “Hygiene of the environment, toys and games” (3). In decreasing order, the data indicated: “Easy access to games and toys” (2,83), “Respect for safety norms” (2,67); “Definition of human, financial and material resources” (2,5); “Diversity of games and toys” (1,83); “Loan control” (1,67); “Classification” (1,5); “Contact with manufacturers and merchants” (1,33). The average data revealed similar scores for public and private toy libraries (2,11). The greatest obstacles found were: getting support from public or private organizations. The public toy libraries exposed also their difficulties to classify their games and toys, and, the private ones, in easing the access to play stuff. These data can be better understood if analyzed in conjunction with the other categories. Therefore, in I, the highest result concerns the “Existence of a previous diagnostic of the environment and clientele” (77,8%), and, a sharp fall in relation to “Accomplish the project”. Taken into account their different stages (21,1%); the toy libraries revealed that they do not find support for their implementation. In II, the highest scores found were on “Regularity of daily operation and suitability to customers” (86%). In III, the highest scores relate to “Encouraging contact through playing with relatives” (86,4%), showing a friendly staff to customers (81,8%) and promoting spontaneous play. Lower indexes, however, indicate difficulty in using toys and games associated with the “Recovery school” (31,8%). In conclusion, the data show a very low number of hospital toy libraries (six unities for a total of 30 hospitals). The self-evaluation of their qualities of toys and games showed a great difficulty in the development, with lack of support. These pioneering Brazilian hospital toy libraries revealed, however, that their best achievement referred to maintain a good level of hygiene, to facilitate the access, to encourage free play, and, to improve ludic contact with their family.