



"SMILE WITH HEALTH" PROJECT INTEGRATING TEACHING, SERVICE AND COMMUNITY IN PROMOTING ORAL HEALTH

PROJETO SORRIR COM SAÚDE: INTEGRAÇÃO ENSINO, SERVIÇO E COMUNIDADE NA PROMOÇÃO DA SAÚDE BUCAL

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ABSTRACT: The objective of this study was to identify health promotion (HP) actions carried out in the municipality of Maringá, Paraná, Brazil, including the participation of the Projeto Sorrir com Saúde. This was a descriptive study that sought to identify HP initiatives developed in Maringá/PR through the consultation of official documents, including the Annual Management Reports (RAG) of the municipality from 2006 to 2024 and the corresponding municipal management plans. The city of Maringá has implemented several initiatives focused on health promotion through strategic programs and actions, among which the Maringá Saudável Program, Espaço Saúde, Prefeitura nos Bairros, and the School Health Program stand out. The Projeto Sorrir com Saúde, in partnership with the Municipal Health Department, became involved in these actions through the participation of students and faculty, providing guidance on tooth brushing, diet, correct use of dental floss, distribution of oral hygiene kits and educational materials, and the performance of Atraumatic Restorative Treatment. These initiatives illustrate how cities can integrate different sectors and mobilize the community to prevent diseases, promote quality of life, and strengthen the physical, mental, and social well-being of their population, and the integration of teaching, service, and community through the Projeto Sorrir com Saúde has enhanced health promotion in diverse social spaces, providing meaningful experiences for the training of future professionals and fostering changes toward healthier lifestyles.

KEYWORDS: Health promotion. Health. Intersectoral Collaboration.

RESUMO: O objetivo foi identificar as ações de promoção da saúde (PS) realizadas no município de Maringá/PR, incluindo a participação do Projeto Sorrir com Saúde. Trata-se de um estudo descritivo que buscou conhecer ações de PS realizadas em Maringá/PR. Foram consultados os seguintes documentos oficiais: Relatórios Anuais de Gestão (RAG) do município de Maringá/PR, no período de 2006 a 2024 e planos de gestão municipais referentes ao mesmo período. A cidade de Maringá/PR tem realizado diversas iniciativas voltadas à PS, por meio de programas e ações estratégicas. Dentre as iniciativas, destacam-se o Programa Maringá Saudável, Espaço Saúde, Prefeitura nos Bairros e Programa Saúde na Escola. O Projeto Sorrir com Saúde, em parceria com a Secretaria Municipal da Saúde, passou a participar das ações, com discentes e docentes apoiando na orientação de escovação dental, dieta, uso correto de fio dental, entrega de kit de higiene bucal e material educativo e realização do Tratamento Restaurador Atraumático. Essas iniciativas ilustram como as cidades podem integrar diferentes setores e mobilizar a comunidade para prevenir doenças, promover qualidade de vida e fortalecer o bem-estar físico, mental e social de seus habitantes. A integração ensino-serviço-comunidade, por meio do Projeto Sorrir com Saúde tem potencializado a promoção da saúde nos diversos espaços sociais, oportunizando experiências significativas para a formação dos futuros profissionais, visando mudanças para um estilo de vida saudável.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Colaboração Intersetorial. Promoção da saúde. Saúde.

INTRODUCTION

Health promotion is essential for developing public policies and actions that improve the quality of life and well-being of the population. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), health promotion is defined as a process of empowering populations to increase their control over and improve their health. By prioritizing educational, intersectoral, and empowering actions, health promotion expands the focus of care beyond disease treatment, valuing preventive practices, social participation, and the creation of healthy environments¹. Engaging in health promotion offers significant benefits for both individuals and communities. These actions prevent disease and strengthen social and personal capacities, giving people greater control over their health and living conditions².

The WHO has recognized health promotion, including oral health, as an essential component of sustainable development and health equity. Several countries have implemented health promotion programs to expand access to information, prevention, and healthcare. In Canada, for example, public oral health policies in schools integrate educational activities with preventive clinical care³. In Australia, the Child and Youth Oral Health Services program provides free care and educational strategies for children and adolescents, with a focus on vulnerable communities⁴. In Latin American countries such as Chile and Uruguay, primary care initiatives have included integrated general and oral health actions⁵.

In Brazil, Law no. 8.080/90 defines health as an essential human right and holds the State responsible for creating the conditions necessary for its realization. In this context, the National Health Promotion Policy (NHPP), established in 2006, expands the role of the health system beyond cure and rehabilitation by incorporating guidelines that promote health in alignment with the principles of the Unified Health System (SUS). The NHPP adopts strategies that reinforce the concept of the social determinants of health. These strategies focus on strengthening autonomy and transforming social structures that affect public health. This approach consolidates the SUS's principles, such as comprehensive care and social participation. These principles are fundamental to a broader, more inclusive approach to health promotion⁶.

The municipality of Maringá in Paraná exemplifies how these principles can be translated into concrete practices, consolidating its position as a municipality committed to the health and well-being of its population. Inspired by the Healthy Cities movement and the Network of Potentially Healthy Municipalities, the municipality adopted an integrated approach to improving living conditions. The creation of the Intersectoral Working Group in 2005 formalized this strategy, uniting department representatives to implement the Healthy Maringá Program.

This program reflects the health promotion principles discussed above. It includes actions focused on physical activity, general and oral health promotion, healthy eating, and disease prevention. These actions are developed with broad community participation. The Health Space event is an example of how Maringá connects different sectors and organizations to raise awareness among the population about the importance of healthy habits, promoting education and awareness in an inclusive manner⁷. Through these practices, Maringá reinforces its position as a healthy city model integrated with health promotion values.

These oral health promotion initiatives have demonstrated significant results in disease prevention, as well as in improving self-esteem and quality of life. Studies indicate that awareness campaigns, health education, and increased access to dental services reduce problems such as cavities and periodontal disease, which are linked to overall health⁸. Since 2008, the "Smile with Health" outreach project has aimed to promote oral health and encourage healthy habits and self-care to prevent oral diseases in families. Through a partnership with the Maringá Municipal Secretariat, the project promotes

oral health in spaces created by the city hall, integrating teaching with services and bringing health to the community. In other words, all participants are subjects of the learning process, including students from educational institutions, professionals, workers, and those receiving care. This is all within the perspective of an integrative, continuous, and dynamic process⁹.

In this context, the objective of this study was to identify the health promotion activities carried out in Maringá, including the participation of the “Smile with Health” Project in these activities.

METHODOLOGY

This descriptive study was conducted through a documentary survey and analysis of secondary sources available in the public domain. The following official documents were consulted: The Annual Management Reports for the municipality of Maringá, state of Paraná, from 2006 to 2024, and the Municipal Management Plans for the same period. Inclusion criteria included published, publicly accessible official documents that directly referenced health promotion initiatives or programs in the municipality of Maringá, from 2006 to 2024. Documents that were incomplete or did not present information directly related to health promotion, as well as materials without clearly identified institutional authorship, were excluded.

The “Smile with Health” outreach project, run by the Department of Dentistry at the State University of Maringá, has participated in community health promotion initiatives in partnership with the Municipal Health Department of Maringá. The project included fourth- and fifth-year undergraduate dentistry students, Public Health Residency Program members, graduate students from the Integrated Dentistry Graduate Program at the State University of Maringá, healthcare professionals, education professionals, dentists, and volunteers.

Based on Resolution 510/2016 of the National Health Council, the study required Research Ethics Committee approval because the data are in the public domain. Therefore, no ethics review number is required.

RESULTS

The Annual Management Report and other documents and materials available on official websites were analyzed. It was found that, throughout history, the municipality of Maringá, state of Paraná, Brazil, has taken three significant actions: The Healthy Maringá Program, the Health Space Program, and the Prefecture in the Neighborhoods Program (Chart 1).

Chart 1. Description of health promotion actions promoted by the Municipal Health Department of the municipality of Maringá, state of Paraná, from 2006 to 2024.

	HEALTHY MARINGÁ	HEALTH SPACE	PREFECTURE IN THE NEIGHBORHOODS
Period	2006 to 2008	2006 to 2017 2022 to 2023	2022 to 2024
Objective	Increase public involvement in solving local problems, inform people about the health and illness situation in the region, increase residents' sense of belonging and	Improve the quality of life for Maringá residents by offering physical, cultural, sports, educational, nutritional, and citizenship activities. The municipal	Bring citizenship policies to everyone, especially those in socially vulnerable situations and those who have difficulty moving around the city. Provide free monthly services to people in various Maringá neighborhoods.

	HEALTHY MARINGÁ	HEALTH SPACE	PREFECTURE IN THE NEIGHBORHOODS
Period	2006 to 2008	2006 to 2017 2022 to 2023	2022 to 2024
	their sense of responsibility for solving community problems, enhance the development of citizenship, and improve the quality of life.	administration promotes the community's health and quality of life through these initiatives. One such initiative is the "Health Space," revived by Maringá City Hall in May 2022.	
Actions and strategies carried out	• Creation of community gardens • Conducting healthy cooking workshops • Facilitation of sports, entertainment, and family planning activities, especially for young people.	• Blood pressure measurement • Blood glucose and HIV/AIDS testing, vaccinations, and collection of material for cervical cancer screenings • Anthropometric assessment • Guidance on nutrition and smoking, and animal vaccination • Children's recreation.	• 'Green Currency' Project • Pressure measurement • Blood glucose test • Actions to combat dengue fever • Haircuts • Distribution of popcorn and cotton candy • User registration in the Electronic Information System • Job vacancy announcement • Information about digital work cards • Consult your National Driver's License and documentation • Traffic directions • Educational games for children about traffic and mobility • Mini Urban Mobility vehicle for photos • Guidance on consumer rights • Recreation <i>Jump</i> Classes • Presentation of the actions and goals of the City of Maringá 2023 • Guidelines on petitions • School patrol • Safety guidelines • Female protection guidance • Book and toy exchange fair • Exhibition of sustainable products • Exhibition on native bees • Mobile Unit of the Drug Policy Directorate - Children and Adolescents • General guidance and distribution of educational materials on legal and illegal drugs • Specific guidance for children and young people on legal and illegal drugs, as well as specific referrals for this group in case of vulnerability identification • Single Registry • Distribution of seedlings <i>City Tour</i> Promotion • Referral for enrollment of 1st to 5th grade of elementary school <i>Ipplam</i> actions • Neighborhood improvement suggestions • Veterinary guidelines
Actions and strategies focused on Oral Health	• Oral hygiene and nutrition guidelines and delivery of tooth brushing kits.		

Source: Annual Management Reports of the municipality of Maringá, state of Paraná.

DISCUSSION

Health promotion is a concept that encompasses actions aimed at improving the quality of life for the population, going beyond the provision of healthcare services and incorporating preventive and educational strategies⁷. In Maringá, state of Paraná, several public initiatives have been developed with this goal in mind, including the Healthy Maringá Program, the Health Space event, and the Prefecture in the Neighborhoods Program. Although these initiatives all share the purpose of promoting the well-being of the local population, each has specific characteristics that determine its scope and impact.

The Healthy Maringá Program is an ongoing initiative that encourages healthy habits through sports, healthy eating, and professional support. The Health Space event was held in partnership with higher education institutions, non-governmental organizations, and departments of health, transportation, the environment, education, sports, and women. Other partners included local health councils, neighborhood associations, artisans, and local businesses. The event aimed to raise community awareness about the importance of disease prevention and health promotion by offering free health screenings and providing information on health, nutrition, physical activity, and healthy habits. Similar to the Healthy Maringá Program, the Prefecture in the Neighborhoods Program is implemented in different communities throughout the municipality and region. Its main objective is to provide health, citizenship, and social assistance services to areas with limited access to care units^{11,12}.

Thus, although health initiatives share the goal of health promotion, they can differ in their approach, frequency, scope, and impact. The Healthy Maringá Program and the Prefecture in the Neighborhoods Program sought long-term changes by raising awareness and encouraging the adoption of healthy habits. In contrast, Health Space focused on educating the population through events and interactive activities.

In the field of oral health, these three initiatives raised awareness about the importance of oral hygiene and the prevention of oral diseases. Activities included educational lectures, distribution of oral hygiene kits, and campaigns encouraging the use of preventive dental services in the municipality¹¹. This approach aimed to create long-term changes in population habits, reducing oral health issues and promoting healthier lifestyles.

In partnership with the Municipal Health Department, the Smile with Health Project began contributing to these initiatives. Students and faculty participated by guiding toothbrushing, diet, and proper flossing. They also provided oral hygiene kits and educational materials, such as pamphlets and folders. Furthermore, integration between teaching, service, and community (TSC) was evident and played a fundamental role in health promotion initiatives. This allows students of the Smile with Health Project to actively participate in health-promoting initiatives, generating experience that strengthens their education while providing them with practical experience and direct contact with the population. This also contributes to the quality of health services provided. This collaboration fosters joint work among students, faculty, and professionals, ensuring that academic training aligns with the community's real needs^{13,14}. It promotes the development of competencies following the National Curricular Guidelines, preparing future professionals to provide more humane and effective care.

For educational institutions, the TSC provides more practical, contextualized training by immersing students in real-world scenarios from their earliest years of study. Direct contact with the community and health services fosters the development of essential professional skills, strengthening socially grounded learning¹⁵. The presence of students and faculty enables them to experience the realities of service and have greater contact with the population. This is a proposal for socially grounded training based on the SUS. Teaching-service-community integration in the health field occurs in the

relationship between teaching (faculty and students), service (professionals, workers, and managers), and the community (users, the general public, individuals, and families)¹⁶.

Spaces such as the Healthy Maringá Program, the Health Space, and the Prefecture in the Neighborhoods Program are privileged settings in the higher education training of health professionals. These spaces enable the sharing of experiences between students, professors, professionals, managers, and the community. They also establish a link between those involved in the student-team-community tripod. Furthermore, they strengthen health through educational actions that prioritize health promotion and disease prevention^{17,18}.

The presence of students and faculty in healthcare services contributes to the ongoing development and stimulation of professionals, encouraging the adoption of new care strategies. Furthermore, interaction between academia and healthcare services promotes the implementation of innovative, evidence-based practices, thereby improving service efficiency¹⁹. For the community, this integration allows for greater involvement in the care process, promoting autonomy and shared responsibility for health. The connection between the population and healthcare professionals strengthens the bond between the different actors in the system, ensuring that interventions are culturally appropriate and effective²⁰. Thus, integrating education, healthcare services, and the community is essential for transforming healthcare practices in Brazil. This integration contributes to training better-prepared professionals, improving services, and promoting the population's health.

The results of this study have important practical implications for strengthening oral health promotion at the municipal level. The study shows that intersectoral strategies involving projects like the "Smile with Health" initiative can expand the population's access to promotional, educational, and preventive actions. This model can be adopted by other municipalities with similar socioeconomic characteristics. Active participation by students, professionals, and community members proved an effective strategy for promoting behavior changes and establishing healthy habits, indicating that teaching, service, and community integration should be encouraged and incorporated into local policies. Furthermore, the data reinforce the need for continued investment in public policies that prioritize collective, sustainable actions to ensure the continuity of interventions and the formation of citizens who are more aware of the importance of self-care and oral health. These findings support managers, health professionals, and educators in improving their practices and planning to increase the effectiveness of oral health promotion actions within the context of primary health care.

CONCLUSION

Through initiatives such as the Healthy Maringá Program, Health Space, and Prefecture in the Neighborhoods Program, it illustrates how cities can integrate different sectors and mobilize the community to promote quality of life, prevent disease, and strengthen the physical, mental, and social well-being of their residents.

The "Smile with Health" Project has contributed to training future professionals by providing experiences that integrate academic knowledge with health promotion actions. Furthermore, the project serves as a practical example of how the principles of health promotion can be applied in a local context. It has the potential to generate positive, sustainable impacts by encouraging practices that promote a healthy lifestyle.

Further research is suggested to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of health promotion actions in the community. One limiting factor in conducting this study was the lack of scientific literature on the health promotion actions carried out in the municipality of Maringá, state of Paraná, over the years.

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