Child vaccination against COVID-19 in family health units of a municipality of Pernambuco

A vacinação infantil contra COVID-19 em unidades de saúde da família de um município Pernambucano
Vacunación infantil contra COVID-19 en unidades de salud de la familia de un municipio de Pernambuco

RESUMO
Objetivo: Relatar a importância do processo de acolhimento da vacinação infantil da COVID-19 em unidades de saúde. Método: Trata-se de estudo descritivo, exploratório do tipo relato de experiência vivenciado por enfermeiros (as) residentes de quatro unidades de saúde da família em um município do estado de Pernambuco no período de fevereiro a março de 2022 durante a campanha de vacinação infantil contra a COVID-19. Resultado: A campanha, por ser direcionada ao público infantil, houve a necessidade de criar um ambiente acolhedor e lúdico para que ela acontecesse, visando deixar as crianças tranquilas, seguras e compreendidas em suas singularidades. Conclusão: Desse modo, percebe-se a importância da imunização infantil para a redução da rede de transmissão da Covid-19, salientando que a vacinação ainda é o mais eficaz na prevenção da doença, bem como na redução de sua gravidade. O acolhimento e a ambiência são ferramentas indispensáveis durante a vacinação do público infantil.


ABSTRACT
Objective: To report the importance of the process of receiving the childhood vaccination of COVID-19 in health facilities. Method: This is a descriptive, exploratory study of the experience report type experienced by nurses residing in four family health units in a municipality in the state of Pernambuco from February to March 2022 during the childhood vaccination campaign against covid-19. Result: The campaign, as it is aimed at children, there was a need to create a welcoming and playful environment for it to happen, aiming to make children calm, safe and understood in their singularities. Conclusion: In this way, the importance of childhood immunization is perceived to reduce the transmission network of Covid-19, emphasizing that vaccination is still the most effective in preventing the disease, as well as in reducing its severity. Reception and ambiance are essential tools during the vaccination of children.


RESUMEN
Objetivo: Informar la importancia del proceso de recepción de la vacunación infantil de COVID-19 en los establecimientos de salud. Método: Se trata de un estudio descriptivo, exploratorio, del tipo relato de experiencia vivida por enfermeros residentes en cuatro unidades de salud de la familia de un municipio del estado de Pernambuco, de febrero a marzo de 2022, durante la campaña de vacunación infantil contra la covid-19. Resultado: La campaña, por estar dirigida a los niños, se vio en la necesidad de crear un ambiente acogedor y lúdico para su realización, con el objetivo de que los niños estén tranquilos, seguros y comprendidos en sus singularidades. Conclusión: De esta forma, se percibe la importancia de la inmunización infantil para reducir la red de transmisión de la Covid-19, destacando que la vacunación sigue siendo la más eficaz para prevenir la enfermedad, así como para reducir su gravedad. La recepción y el ambiente son herramientas esenciales durante la vacunación de los niños.


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INTRODUCTION

Infectious respiratory diseases with great potential for dissemination are a challenge for public health, especially among young people and adults. In early December 2019, a series of pneumonia cases of unknown cause emerged in Wuhan, Hubei Province, China. After analyzing material from the patients’ airways, a new Coronavirus (2019-nCoV) was identified, later renamed the virus causing Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2). 1

It is also noteworthy that COVID-19 is considered a public health emergency, with high mortality rates in different age groups. 2 Another factor that draws attention is the underreporting of cases, since mild cases, easily confused with other flu syndromes, or asymptomatic cases tend to go unnoticed, further increasing the transmission network. 3

In the current context, all countries are looking for ways to make the population aware of the severity of the pandemic in order to reassure them about the actions that must be taken at an individual and collective level to combat this virus. 4 In this context, it is important to highlight that there are several actions that can contribute to the reduction of COVID-19 cases, for example, encouraging the use of masks, social distancing, broad dissemination of knowledge about the pathology and appropriate treatment, as well as the broad immunization of the population, including young people and children in the vaccination campaign. 5

Furthermore, welcoming in the immunization environment is configured as qualified listening, a citizen and humanized attitude granted to all users who seek the Health Unit, as well as in the reorganization of the service’s work process. With this, it is favorable to create more humanizing environments for the practice of vaccination, especially for children, since it promotes vaccine effectiveness and health promotion during the current pandemic situation. 6

With this, in the Brazilian panorama, it was announced in early 2022 the inclusion of children aged 5 to 11 years in the National Plan for the Operationalization of Vaccination against Covid-19 (PNO) by the Ministry of Health. The pediatric use of the immune system is associated with indirect protection of the population, as it will increase vaccination coverage and decrease the spread of SARS-CoV-2, in addition to post-vaccination adverse events are rare in the evaluations conducted and less frequent than the risk of complications and death from COVID-19.
effects and mistaken theses about the rate of immunizations that are being adminis-
tered in the immunization program against covid-19, being, therefore, the reason that is leading Brazilians to reject a specific immunobiological agent. At this juncture, the objective of this work is to report the importance of the process of receiving the childhood vaccination of COVID-19 in health units.

**METHOD**

This is a descriptive, exploratory study of the experience report type experienced by Resident Nurses from four family health units in a municipality in the state of Pernambuco. Held from February to March 2022, during the childhood vaccination campaign against covid-19 in children aged 5 to 11 years 11 months and 29 days.

Our experience, with an immersion character, took place in Family Health Units (USF - Unidade de Saúde da Família) Cristo Redentor, USF Catamarã, USF Jardim Piedade 2, USF Santa Felicidade, located in the Municipality of Jaboatão dos Guararapes-PE. According to IBGE estimates in 2021, the city has a population of 711,330 people and a population density of 2,991.82 inh/km² and an HDI of 0.717.

The actions took place in a planned way together with the minimum team (Nurses), Nursing Technicians, Community Health Agents (CHA), doctor and dentist, the multidisciplinary team of the Residency Program in Primary Care and Family Health and with professionals from the Family Health Support Center (NASF - Núcleo de Apoio à Saúde da Família). Health professionals were responsible for promoting the reception and initial auscultation of young people and talking to family members about the importance of vaccination, as well as helping in the observation room after immunological application.

At first, residents and volunteer professionals who worked in the different roles of vaccination technician, supporter and registrar. The vaccination campaign had as instruments to carry out the plans and methods created by the Municipal Health Department together with the Ministry of Health, in order to establish goals and plans for the immunization schedule for children and adolescents.

Performed according to the unit’s routine and schedule, vaccination takes place in the morning together with the observation room for children who have been vaccinated. These perform a recreational activity while being observed for 20 minutes, in case they show any reaction to the vacci-
ne. The inclusion criteria were: children between 5 and 11 years of age, residing or not in the area covered by the selected health units, whether or not to monitor the child’s health in the selected health units and if the young person does not have flu-like symptoms. The exclusion criteria are: Children who are not in the recommended age group, children who are not accompa-
nied by legal guardians, incomplete documentation and young people with flu-like symptoms.

The entire environment of the USF was organized to attract young people and stim-
ulate the process of humanization in a healthy way. In this way, several strategies were developed to attract children to carry out immunization, such as the active search through the CHA, dissemination in child-
care consultations and promoting dialogue with the family in home visits. In addition, banners for taking pictures, handing out certificates of courage and professionals were introduced at the observation site to promote the playful process with children.

Following the ethical precepts estab-
lished by Resolution 510/2016, which deals with the Regulatory Guidelines and Norms for Research Involving Human Beings in Human and Social Sciences. We emphasize that because it is an experience report, based on the experiences of different subjects, there was no need for submission to the Research Ethics Committee.

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

The multiprofessional residency program in Primary Care and Family Health (PRMABSF - programa de residência multiprofissional em Atenção Básica e Saúde da Família)

The multi-professional residency program aims to train professionals with a broader view of the individual and collective singularities of society, through inter-
professional and intersectoral learning, enabling enriching experiences. The multiprofessional residency in Primary Care and Family Health (PRMABSF) was im-
plemented in the municipality of Jaboatão dos Guararapes-PE, in 2016, and activities are carried out in the primary care sectors.

The fifth group of PRMABSF began its activities in March 2021, composed of nurses, physiotherapists, physical education professionals, nutritionists, speech therapists, social workers, psychologists, phar-
macists and occupational therapists.

Vaccination against the Covid-19 pan-
demic virus was started in 2021 and sent for application of doses throughout the Brazilian territory, in this way, all resident professionals of the program supported vaccination. However, nursing residents had opportunities to closely monitor the work, performing immunizations in driver-thru and also in the territory in which they are inserted.

And, like all health professionals involved in this process, they had the opportu-
nity to experience the Covid-19 pandemic, observing the need to create strategies to carry out vaccination coverage activities, according to the health promotion of the entire population.

**Vaccination coverage in the Covid-19 pandemic in Brazil**

The health promotion process was one of the ways to fight the Covid-19 pandemic virus, such as the recommendation of hand washing, use of face masks, social distancing, among other restrictive measures. In addition, since the Covid-19 pandemic was announced by the World Health Organization (WHO) in March 2020, there has been a race for treatments and vaccines around the world to prevent this disease.

The first people to be vaccinated were individuals with comorbidities, the el-
Vaccination of Covid-19 in children

In January 2022, vaccination against Covid-19 was started in children between 5 and 11 years 11 months and 29 days, after the National Health Surveillance Agency (ANVISA) approved its use throughout the Brazilian territory. Initially with immunobiologics produced by Pfizer institutes and then with Coronavac. 17

Thus, bringing this reality to the childhood vaccination campaign that has been taking place in Brazil against covid-19, it becomes even more challenging, since parents or guardians of children feel insecure, afraid of possible vaccine reactions, since the dissemination of false information against the vaccine is recurrent in all social media, although there are no contraindications of immunobiologics for children. 19

In this sense, there was a need to create a welcoming and playful environment, where the child feels calm and understood in their singularities, in which it is fundamental. 19 And it is in this way that vaccines have been carried out in children at the Family Health Units (USF) in Jaboatão dos Guararapes-PE.

Starting with the ambience, which is one of the guidelines of the National Humanization Policy (PNH - Política Nacional de Humanização) and is understood as the organization of healthy and welcoming workspaces, and understanding that the physical space must be in tune with a health project aimed at welcoming, resolve and humane care. 20

Another important element in the construction of this space is the playfulness since they are activities that refer to games, arts and games, providing the freedom to create and recreate free actions, which refer to the spontaneity of the human being. 21

Thus, in the childhood vaccination campaign at USF, the space was organized in a creative and playful way and resources were used such as colored balloons at the entrance, children’s songs, videos, welcome sign with drawings, board games, games, coloring pages with colored pencils, felt-tip pens, crayons, everything to make the environment as peaceful and fun as possible, supervised by parents and/or guardians and one or more health professionals, depending on availability. 22

Reception was also one of the challenges in this campaign, it is one of the guidelines of the National Humanization Policy (PNH), consists of an ethical posture of listening to the user in his complaints, recognizing him as the protagonist of the process and in the responsibility for the resolution and with that at all times and all professionals must be open to welcoming. 23

The USF professionals, not just the nursing staff, were instructed before the start of the campaign with a meeting to explain everything about how the campaign would take place, what the audience was, the need for prior registration, number of children per day, spreadsheets containing user information, among other issues, so that the entire team was aligned to help users, clarify doubts when necessary and solve problems that may arise.

The need for coordination between the team, from scheduling to take the vaccine to the twenty minutes of observation after application in the health service, were recommended by the Ministry of Health, in addition it is important to reinforce that the medical professional is in the service, in case of any eventuality. Therefore, children continue to be observed, performing playful activities for entertainment. This moment is important for childhood vaccination to take place, as it increases the safety of parents, and provides better adherence to vaccination coverage in the territory. 24

In this perspective, the management of actions carried out in the vaccination campaign is essential, since the bottles contain 10 doses to be applied and care must be taken with the number of children, to avoid wasting the immunizer or users going to the USF and not being able to be vaccinated due to lack of doses, and the correct filling of the vaccination card, as well as adequate nutrition in the Municipal Information System for immunobiologicals. In this way, the professional nurse is
The difficulties encountered in this process are many, ranging from the lack of commitment of some parents and/or guardians of the child not to take him/her on the requested day to be vaccinated, as well as their refusal to carry out the vaccination, since the circulation of negative news about immunobiologics is easily available to the public, and the active search for ACS by children is something that slows down the process a little.  

Furthermore, it was noted that the great challenge is the fight against fake news, widely disseminated on social networks, which creates insecurity in parents and guardians of children and has hindered the broad adherence of the population to the vaccine. Leading the team to create strategies to convince this audience, also through social networks, work groups, at times of consultations/reception and active search for users by community health agents. Even in the face of difficulties encountered in vaccination campaigns, such as Fake News that end up generating resistance from the population, we must encourage the community so that children are immunized. And, with that, significantly reduce transmission by the Covid-19 virus.

From this perspective, even with all the organization to carry out vaccines against Covid-19, there is still resistance on the part of the population to apply the immunobiological, in which clarification and support from the media, social facilities such as schools, Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), community leaders, churches, among others, enabling the importance of vaccination in children, and thus preventing the spread of the Covid-19 virus and moving towards a possible end of the pandemic.

CONCLUSION

The construction of this report arose from the need for an experience that integrates theoretical and practical knowledge in the solidification of scientific learning acquired in the training components. And residency as a program that has a teaching modality provides professionals with this correlation between theory and practice. In the same way, we can see the importance of childhood immunization to reduce the transmission network of Covid-19, remembering that vaccination is still the best and most effective in preventing the disease, as well as reducing its severity.

The importance of the involvement of the multiprofessional team in all stages of vaccination, dissemination, articulation and strategies to make vaccination less traumatic with the creation of a playful, fun and welcoming environment, in addition to all other bureaucratic processes, is highlighted, such as filling in data systems, registers, spreadsheets. The nursing team is also worth mentioning since it is directly involved in all the planning, from the application of vaccines, dilution and avoiding missed doses and leftovers.

Finally, it is considered that this experience contributes to the process of training residents, since they are actively participating in all stages of the vaccination process, as well as we observed that the reception is an indispensable tool, since the child and the parents feel more confident about the safety and the information received by the health professional.

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