

Physical and sports education in the era of COVID-19: between D.I.D. and outdoor education

Educazione motoria e sportiva nell'era del COVID-19: tra D.I.D. ed outdoor education

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ABSTRACT

Sedentary lifestyle can be defined as the state of man which is characterized by the lack of a minimum recommended daily physical activity, to produce adaptive phenomena that reduce the risk of cardiovascular or disease related to the lack of body activity. In this work, the two Argentine-Italian realities will be compared in order to evaluate possible solutions and remedies especially during the current pandemic in order to prevent possible risk factors for chronic and psycho-physical diseases. Some recommendations will be identified aimed at changing lifestyles and teaching at school, focusing on the real potential of motor and sports activities outdoors, in a natural environment.

Il concetto di sedentarietà si può definire come uno stato della vita dell'uomo caratterizzato dalla mancanza di un'attività fisica minima giornaliera raccomandata, al fine di produrre fenomeni adattivi tali da diminuire il rischio cardiovascolare o di altre patologie legate alla inattività corporea. In questo lavoro si metteranno a confronto le due realtà Argentina-italiana in modo da valutare diverse soluzioni e rimedi soprattutto durante l'attuale pandemia in modo da prevenire possibili fattori di rischio per malattie croniche e psico-fisiche. Si individueranno alcune raccomandazioni volte a modificare gli stili di vita e la didattica a scuola, incentrati sulla potenzialità reali delle attività motorie e sportive all'aperto, in ambiente naturale.

KEYWORDS

Attività motorie e sportive, sedentarietà, outdoor education.
Physical and sports activities, sedentary lifestyle, outdoor education.

1. Introduction¹

The current situation related to Covid, has imposed drastic choices regarding daily life and teaching.

In a context like this, never seen before where the regulations in force require children and adults to behave like keeping distance, wearing masks, and washing their hands often, It is necessary to rethink how to reorganize the teaching of motor and sports activities by designing spaces and activities in order to interact without contacts, as required by current regulations. "The effect of the "lock-down" altered all educational achievements expected for students motor, physical and sports education has been one of the most affected disciplines in particular in primary school" (Coco, D., Casolo F., Supital R. A., Sopranzi S. 2020. P.17).

The experts of the human movement, thanks to their intrinsic familiarity with the concept of resilience and the ability to find useful solutions, in order to educate the movement, In this new scenario they are increasingly studying solutions and organizing motor activities and outdoor sports. A comparison will be made of the current pandemic situation, the sedentary nature and possible solutions in the educational field, bringing together the Argentina-Italy experience.

2. Sedentary lifestyle in child development ages

According to the dictionary of the Royal Spanish Academy, sedentarism is the "attitude of the person who leads a sedentary life"; and sedentary is a life "of little agitation or movement". From the perspective of the exercise-related sciences, sedentarism is the state that implies a lower level of activity than is necessary to maintain a healthy physical condition.

We can also define it as the state that is characterized by the lack of a recommended daily minimum physical activity to produce adaptive phenomena that reduce the risk of cardiovascular or diseases related to the lack of activity of the body (known as hypokinetic diseases).

We know that technological advances encourage the decrease of physical activity in the world population and promote sedentary actions, although they are not the only cause. Data provided by the first National Survey of Risk Factors reveal that 46.2% of the population over 18 years of age in Argentina has a low or insufficient level of physical activity (Comite Nacional de Medicina, 2005). During our free time we are often seated, either in front of the computer or other device, watching television or playing video games. Many of our jobs have become more inactive, with long days sitting at a desk.

The way we travel does not help us either: cars, buses and trains. Now, we might wonder how it is affecting our current sedentary lifestyle, our organism. At the moment, in view of the COVID-19 pandemic, which affects the world, and given that in many European and Asian countries school activity has resumed, but not yet in Argentina (october 2020); it would be possible to question whether or

1 Attribuzione delle parti. Lo studio è il risultato di un lavoro collettivo degli autori, il cui specifico contributo è da riferirsi come segue:

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not school attendance has resumed, increases the risks and consequences of a global sedentary lifestyle already in place.

It is scientifically proven that being physically inactive burns fewer calories. This makes you more likely to gain weight, and to lose muscle mass (sarcopenia). Bone failure, which occurs in inactive people, causes bones to lose mineral content. Metabolism can be affected, as well as the immune system, which may not work properly. At the same time, an inactive lifestyle can be a cause of many chronic diseases. By not exercising regularly, you will be increasing your risk of obesity, coronary artery disease, high blood pressure, hypercholesterolemia, stroke, type 2 diabetes, certain types of cancer, osteoporosis, depression, anxiety, etc.

While in adults it has been identified as a risk factor for chronic diseases, results in children and adolescents need some attention. If physical activity is generally recommended on a regular basis to improve health and to facilitate weight control, among younger people, physical activity also promotes optimal growth and development both physically and cognitively. In fact, according to the recommendations of the World Health Organization (WHO), children and adolescents between the ages of 5 and 17 should perform at least 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous daily physical activity.

The child in the first ages is a physically active being, but as the years go on he begins to abandon the practice of physical activity. The 10% of the world's school-age children have excess body fat with an increased risk of developing chronic diseases. A quarter of these children are obese and some have multiple risk factors for developing type 2 diabetes, heart disease, and other comorbidities before or during early adulthood.

In Argentina, 1 out of 10 preschoolers has obesity. However, its detection, its registration and the implementation of measures for its prevention and control do not acquire in primary care the comprehensiveness and extent that this problem demands. In children, because physical activity is an important part of play, it is difficult to make a quantitative assessment of sedentary lifestyle; although we could have a notion investigating the type of game made and the time spent in front of screens as a form of fun. A study that estimated, among other things, the time spent in hours in front of screens (television, video games and computer) in children from 10 to 11 years of public schools in the metropolitan area of Buenos Aires; found that the average time of hours in front of screens was 3.29 hours per day. Of the 1588 children surveyed, 18 per cent spent up to 2 hours per day on screens; 37 per cent spent between 2 and 4 hours; 26 per cent spent between 4 and 6 hours per day; and 14 per cent spent more than 6 hours per day in front of them. Habits are formed early and those children who grow up without the habit of "being active" are likely to be adults with little tendency to physical activity practices. (Ministerio de Salud de la Nacion, 2013)

According to the data included in another work of the scientific study ANIBES (Gil A. Dr, Gonzalez-Gross M Dra. at all. 2015), 55.4% of Spanish children and adolescents between 9 and 17 years of age do not comply with the international recommendations of the WHO for physical activity. In some European countries, 61.0% of children aged 11 to 15 watch television more than two hours a day, according to data from the HELENA study (Healthy Lifestyle in Europe by Nutrition in Adolescence). In addition to the possible negative health consequences that sedentary lifestyle can have at an early age, it seems that these continue throughout the rest of life. Children between the ages of 8 and 18 spend the following amount of time daily in front of the screen, approximately: 7.5 hours immersed in

different entertainment media, 4.5 hours watching television, 1.5 hours in front of the computer and more than an hour playing video games. These data show the contrast that exists with reading books, only 25 minutes per day. (Fundación “Henry J. Kaiser”, 2010).

Age seems to be an important determinant of a sedentary lifestyle, as the group of teenagers spend more time in front of the screen compared to that of children. The results also suggest that the weekend is a priority target to carry out interventions that allow to spend less time in front of a screen, since both the use of television and computer is particularly high these days. In this sense, it would be necessary to promote activities in different areas (family, school or community) as alternatives to these long periods that children and adolescents spend sitting in their leisure time (Gil A. Dr, Gonzalez-Gross M Dra. at all. 2015).

The excessive use of smartphones has been described as having a negative impact on socio-affective interpersonal relationships (Phubbing) and deteriorating health, due to the body posture adopted when using the smartphone excessively; causing an emerging musculoskeletal system condition known as Text-Neck syndrome. From the biophysical point of view, this syndrome, also known as “Turtle Neck Posture” is a consequence of the loss of the natural curve of the cervical spine, secondary to the forward-leaning posture that the head adopts with respect to the shoulders chronically. This new position increases the weight of the cervical joints. Text-Neck Syndrome currently has a prevalence of 86.9% in the child and adolescent population, mostly women. Text-Neck Syndrome is manifested as, cervical pain associated with tension (71.2%), headache (63.3%), irritability (54.5%) and anxiety (50.7%). In addition, ocular manifestations (21%); psychological effects such as irritability, stress, anxiety and depression (82%) (Fares J, at all. 2017).

In the face of so much evidence about the sedentary lifestyle of children and adolescents, with enormous risks and consequences for present and future life, there are some recommendations aimed at changing habits of life. Among them, and with the objective of reducing the time in front of the screens it is suggested:

Record how much time your child spends in front of a screen, try to get them to spend the same amount of time being active, be a good model as a parent, decrease your own screen time to two hours per day, discourage children and adolescents from having television in their bedroom, do not leave the TV on as background noise, instead, turn on the radio or have no background noise, suggest other activities, such as a family board game, a puzzle, go for a walk, find activities to do with your time that get you moving and burning energy, encourage other forms of fun such as active games, going to parks or squares, riding a bike, and sharing non-sedentary activities.

The Consensus on Sedentarism of the Argentine Society of Pediatrics recommends, at a minimum, one hour a day of moderate to vigorous physical activity for all children (Sepulveda-Valbuena, C. Ladino-Melendez, L. 2014; Cantera, M. A. y Devis-Devis, J. 2000); Baum, RA. (2020).

3. Reclaiming the spaces and time of motor education at school during lockdown

Before the start of the lockdown following the COVID-19 pandemic, motor education at school was categorically defined by the factors Time, Space and Relationships (Colella D., d’Arando C., Bellantonio S., 2020). If we think of the places where you can practice motor activities, the gym is first and foremost the place and center of activities, but not only, outdoor fields, areas and parks close to the school, paths and equipped areas, bike paths and trails.

These places have always been the “space” for educational dialogue between teachers, families and students. “The interventions of an educator sculptor’ (who wants to obtain a form, designed in advance, from a passive stone pupil, are contrary to the presuppositions of an authentic education), both those of a ‘gardener’ educator inclined to a passive observation of flowers growing naturally in favorable soil” (Milan, 2008, p. 85).

As for the time factor, we had activities that took place during school hours, as well as for example during breaks or canteen and extracurricular activities, all at well-defined and organized times.

The DID (integral digital didactics) has allowed us to follow different modes of activity, of teaching, of being together at school. In fact, DID was not a new discovery because in the literature are reported experiences of special cases, in which it was necessary to bring pupils and families to the school related to problems such as health or inability to reach certain places.

However, we are fully aware that there have been many limitations (Sala M., Scaglioni M., 2020). Where difficulties were already present, especially in some disadvantaged educational contexts, distance education amplified and in some situations worsened existing inequalities, in reference to online connectivity, digital tools and materials, the complexity of supporting children in the new form of teaching presented.

“The motor experience must connote itself as a positive experience, emphasizing the ability to make the pupil, making him constantly protagonist and progressively aware of the motor skills gradually acquired. It must also be carried out as an activity that does not discriminate, does not bore, does not select, allowing all pupils the widest participation in the respect of multiple diversity” (Ministry of Public Instruction, 2007, pp. 73-74).

The motor and sports activities are therefore configured as the goal of an educational path that begins at a young age with the simple game, which grows into game-sport, until it evolves into the real sport. Accepting this educational path allows us to face the values of discipline in a complete and exhaustive way, accompanying the person in his evolutionary growth, intellectual and moral creating the basis for dealing with any emergency and overcoming even the greatest adversities such as the current lockdown.

“The effects of this constant, routine and child-friendly practice can be traced back to three main areas: the prevention of certain pathological situations that are particularly common today, a second that examines the state of form and well-being of the child, and finally the one that studies the contribution of movement in the process of maturation of the cognitive system with its implications on school learning and self-control” (Casolo, Coco, 2019, p. 38).

Therefore it will be necessary to educate the body, movement, emotions, values, rules and sociality, prevention and social integration.

Educating the body, the movement, the emotions: to improve the knowledge of oneself; to contain one’s own competitive charge; to acquire the sense of self-efficacy and knowledge of one’s own body; to respond to the need to relax; improve self-esteem and self-control skills; know how to manage your emotions; know the physiological effects of movement on your body; to improve confidence in their own abilities by recognizing their own limitations and the role of training as research to improve their own performance.

Educating in values, rules and sociality: accepting victory / defeat; knowing how to win with style and know how to lose with dignity; respecting and recognizing the function of rules; loyalty as an essential sporting value, of one’s own role and

that of others; recognize the importance of sociality and solidarity; know how to withstand fatigue; know how to wait and accept frustration especially in the most difficult moments; know the safety standards in the sport; to put the respect of the adversary before the achievement of the objective; to know the relationships and the cultures of local tradition; to respect one's own role to ensure an orderly play; to improve the knowledge of others; to want to be together beyond the sport, to help each other; to knowing how to forgive and forgive oneself; to maintain the absolute correctness in the use of supporting substances.

Educating in prevention and social integration: countering the tendency to isolate oneself and to close in on oneself; seeking the sport that is best suited to one's own person, which allows one to have goals and real interests to pursue; prevent bad and habits; live the gratuitousness of the activity and the satisfaction of playing together to give a healthy taste to life; to make a strong commitment to do better and to live the dedication in daily life in accepting the sacrifice to improve and strengthen the character; to always try to give the best to motivate the commitment; to stay together and to live the friendship, to fight passive attitudes, by promoting inclusion and integration; enhance the diversity of each person and, through the common commitment to the achievement of an objective, breaks down cultural barriers and prejudices difficult in other areas, support the individual by the group in cases of need even outside the field.

Moreover, EUPEA claims that (European Physical Education Association 2020):

Physical Education curricular time must be ensured at least to the level established prior to the crisis. Physical Education should not be confused with a single and unstructured offer of physical activity/physical fitness (as the one offered by the digital media). Physical Education must be taught by professionally trained and qualified teachers for this purpose. Physical activity facilities, both indoors and outdoors, must be reserved for the curricular Physical Education lessons. The face to face Physical Education lesson is the only way of learning physical activities and to maintain control and quality. Physical Education must be delivered by asuring the principles of eclecticism and inclusion. Physical Education must rise above the challenge of the crisis, whilst respecting national health guidelines. Schools and teachers adopt safe practices in relation to safe for pupils and equipment, in accordance with School Board policies. At national and local levels, representatives of the physical education profession must work with politicians, parents, school directors and decision makers, to achieve the demands. We hope that physical education can continue to offer children and young people experiences of a broad and balanced quality during and after the Covid-19 situation.

4. Physical education and motor activity models in comparison Italy-Argentina

Two totally different concepts from the outset on the importance of physical education, sport and motor activities.

Argentine Model: motor activity is guaranteed to the entire population by the Argentine school system since childhood (childhood school from 3 years up to 17 years then the last year of high school) with a compulsory weekly charge in curricular time, lessons can be charged solely and exclusively to motor science graduates; the spaces used for school activities are mostly outdoor brushes such as large sports fields with and without tools and large open-air gyms inside the school assigned to recreational and sports activities; for this reason the entire school system families, managers, pupils and teachers find it natural to take

lessons in motor science outdoors, Therefore, even during the colder days they are used to cover themselves well and not to suspend the lessons, the students bring a bag with towel and soap to wash hands and face after the lessons; in addition, there are theoretical lessons on rainy days.

The most important purpose of physical school work is the preservation of health and the harmonious development of body. For this purpose, the exercises to be used should be those with general effects on the entire organism, which improves circulation, breathing and metabolism, without hypertrophic muscle mass. Finally specifies that exercise school should be run outdoors should not be dangerous, should be collective and pleasurable (Brest, 1922). Curricula, objectives and skills are carefully planned and formulated by experienced professors on the subject for each cycle. In addition to the hours scheduled at school, there are numerous cultural and sports centers in the area with closed and open spaces for sports, the value of sport and active lifestyle is present in the majority of the population and is lived in a natural way and is passed on from generation to generation (Casimiro, A. J. y Pieron, M. 2001).

We can think that this model has been successfully carried out also thanks to the pedagogical medical model of Dr. Enrique Romero Brest (1873 - 1958) and his tireless work to promote the teaching of sport and physical activity in Argentina.

Italian model: the motor activity of the population still occupies a secondary place in the Italian school system. Motor lessons are the responsibility of the teachers who occupy different roles in the curricular subjects between the hours assigned to physical education.

The physical activity of children (kindergarten and primary school) is carried out in a discontinuous way and with different criteria between regions; some institutions invest funds to bring to school "external motor experts" paid per project; motor activity is usually carried out in school gyms, the priority of use of gyms in school complexes usually waits for elementary school students, also see the lessons frequently suspended by teachers for various reasons (recovery of hours for other backward subjects, suspension for indiscipline of pupils, ineligibility for distance from the plexus, lack of availability of the teacher to motor activities, etc.) and "free play" without long-term goals.

"Motivation increases as a result of the student's self-understanding and self-direction. The clear visibility of the individual program, a quality that allows you to show your own progress supported by the collaborative attitude of the teacher, creates a unique chain reaction: motivation – achievement – strengthening the concept of self; This in turn strengthens the motivation and produces a continuous reaction. Observations, corrections and stimuli provided at the right time can lead to long-term motivation" (Muska Mosston, 1988).

It is noted that some actors in the school system families, managers and teachers find it natural to skip the lessons of physical education, a phenomenon difficult to reflect in statistical numbers because they are not "suspended" on the registers or justified or recovered. In most of the Italian territory there are no lessons of motor education in the open air, in fact some teachers find resistance in proposing outdoor activities for reasons of long periods of dressing of the students, fears of accidents and diseases, lack of habit (Le Boulch, 1991).

For middle schools instead (11 years and up to 17 years) is guaranteed with an obligatory weekly charge in curricular time, the lessons can be charged only and exclusively of graduates in motor science; the spaces used for school motor activities are mostly closed-off gyms of large size with and without tools and it is also planned to use sports facilities to which teachers and pupils go on foot to

perform outdoor activities; In addition to the hours scheduled at school, there are cultural and sports centers in the area where you can play sports with the payment of a membership fee, the choice to participate in an activity in the afternoon and the costs of keeping younger generations in motion fall on the citizens.

Italy is faced with a moment of decision-making on the politics and culture of the human movement; the current critical issues such as: teachers who do not specialise in motor and sports skills and who are covered by one of the basic subjects for the full education of children of advanced age who are not in line with UNESCO's guidelines for quality physical education, the lack of precise guidelines for teachers to follow during school sports activities, lack of short-term and long-term planning as well as a lack of culture and interest in motor activities and in promoting an active lifestyle. At European level there are activities that are mandatory for children and young people including free-body gymnastics and games, athletics, swimming and dance (Belgium, France, Germany, Austria and Hungary).

5. Environments and motor activities

The recent situation, which changes from week to week, linked to the Covid, has unfortunately forced drastic assessments in health, economic, political, changing the habits of daily life and teaching from school to university.

We need to be able to educate the human movement, in a new scenario, in which we need to study solutions and organize motor and sports activities in new forms, outdoor education can be a valid model to follow.

To date there are no scientific studies and research that confirm the long-term consequences of pandemics on physical activity and sedentary lifestyle, but there is data on how natural disasters have had a direct negative impact even in the following three years. (Drobnic, Franchek, 2013).

In addition to the safety issues mentioned above, literature and daily experience see outdoor activities as a stimulating and motivating tool, that will allow you to recharge your energies to return with more concentration to the study by strengthening the paradigms related to motor activities.

Through this work we will try to reflect on the importance of motor games performed outdoors and make people aware of the disorderly growth of urban spaces. More and more we see the almost disappearance of green areas in the cities absorbed by the pressing cementification.

The motor and sports activities carried out outdoors are useful for educational purposes, but also for the psychological, emotional, cultural and social development of every child.

The denomination that best summarizes, the educational meaning of motor activity, the contribution that it offers to the overall education of the person is, however, that of Motor Education, understood as (Lipoma M., 2014, p. 197-198):

- the set of intentional or implicit processes capable of sustaining individual maturation and of fostering the learning of skills and competences specific to the human movement. Motor education includes physical, intellectual, cognitive, emotional, motivational and socio-relational dimensions.
- Its aims are the attainment of awareness of the meanings and values of corporeity and movement, the development of responsible autonomy and the free expression of personality, with a view to the adoption of a healthy lifestyle.

Nature is an excellent companion of discovery and the child surrounded by greenery is and will increasingly be a child curious, attentive, able to grasp all the nuances of existence, without fear of the “new” and will become more confident. It is nature itself with its characteristics that attracts the child this form of movement, already affirmed by the french historian Hébert (1936). The experiences that children can have in outdoor spaces broaden their horizons and foster learning that is necessary to grow and socialize with greater self-confidence.

“Children today often have balance problems, they stumble and fall because they are not allowed to have sufficient motor experiences, they are insecure, awkward and tend to move less and less” (De Anna L., 2013, p. 230).

The adult has the duty to make this growth possible and it is necessary to strive to improve the world close to us so as not to have more anxieties and fears either from the adult for the young, or from the young.

There is a big difference in the behaviour of children who are forced to take the break in class even more if it is called “short break” and of the children who take the break outdoors in the garden. The teachers pursue the objective of carrying out the educational-ministerial programs, at the expense of the physical and mental need to pause, the interval is therefore called short, as if it were already too much time to reserve.

“The educational environment, in other words, must be an inhabited space and not immediately, a place that involves the body in action, participation, research and discovery, a real facilitator of action, which guides and supports personal learning experiences” (Ceciliani A., 2019. p. 117).

It often happens that children in the classroom get bored, for example, by isolating themselves to make a drawing or by undertaking unstructured “games” in which they almost certainly end up fighting or risk getting hurt. They are restless and even sad children. Taking them outdoors could be a solution. In fact, the same children brought into the outdoor environment are hardly isolated or perform sedentary activities. Their need to move freely leads them to express their corporeality (Coco D., 2014), creating engaging, creative and group games; all this to the advantage of the mood and motivation to continue teaching in the classroom with a more relaxed and productive attitude.

“The environment makes a decisive contribution to the development of the Kindergarten age, together with the fact that in this age group we learn mainly through the senses and the handling of materials. The learning of concepts that occur naturally in the external environment, is through the active exploration of the natural environment, using the senses” (Valentini M., Guerra F., Troiano G., Federici A., 2019. p. 424).

Moreover, we live in a situation in which the media often give misleading messages that also affect parents, who derive from television and advertising a simplified and distorted conception of the child in particular on his needs and demands. “More and more children represented on television seem like miniature adults who act, think, speak and dress like adults, which in many cases are the adults of the show business” (Oliverio A., Oliverio Ferraris A. 2011. p. 94).

The learning that is done playing together with other peers are numerous and of different nature. Playing with an adult is not the same as playing with a peer. In most cases, adults tend to take the initiative and solve problems that arise as the game progresses.

“The sense of freedom in the child’s game is a central element difficult to define with a single word or a simple expression.

It is a complex concept in which a number of factors converge. There is in the

first place a typical and invigorating form of pleasure, but moreover it is motivated, imaginative, spontaneous, active, free from the impositions or the rules of the adult. It has the advantage of involving the child in its entirety: large and fine movements, emotions, intelligence, imagination, individual growth and social interaction. Produces a state of physical and psychological well-being that allows you to counteract the effects of stress, improve mood, stimulate self-esteem and social relationships” (Barton, J., Pretty, J. 2010, p. 110).

6. Parents and contexts for playful-physical activities muffled

The game also offers an ideal opportunity for parents to engage fully with their children. Despite the benefits of playing for both children and parents, free play time has been greatly reduced for some children (Ginsburg K.R. 2007).

Many families successfully navigate the wide range of their commitments without sacrificing parent-child time as high-quality time (Mahoney JL, Harris AL, Eccles JS. 2006). The ability of families to maintain the essential parent-child time may be compromised by this hasty lifestyle, since the commitments are too much. In these families, excessive planning can lead to less emotionally competent children even if well protected (Ginsburg K.R. 2007).

Too busy parents, unfortunately, miss the opportunity to spend quality time with their children, in which to stay together often delegating the school, grandparents or babysitting the tasks that belong to them. Some of the best interactions occur during downtime: talking, preparing meals together and working on a hobby- manual activity or artistic project, doing sports together or being fully immersed in a child-centred game (Ginsburg K.R. 2007).

The extremely frenetic and compulsive lifestyle of today’s adult generations, dictated by the demands of work, daily commitments and the consumer society, does not, however, take into account the needs of children, that would require rhythms respectful of their growth needs and attention to their psychophysical well-being.

Although it is correct that adults watch over children while playing to avoid accidents, it is also important to let a good part of the games be spontaneous and dictated by the initiative of the child rather than by the direction of adults, sensitizing parents to movement games that promote the health and physical well-being of a good functioning brain of a growing body.

In addition, if a parent observes the child playing or joins him in a game recommended by the children, he has a great opportunity to see the world from the point of view of his son and to move in a world produced by him to meet his needs. This opportunity will change shape as the child grows, changes attitudes and needs, as in group play where children learn to share, to bargain, to clarify conflicts, to defend themselves, to accept responsibilities, to recognize the rules to adapt so that the game can proceed more or less harmoniously.

“The motor experience must be characterized as a positive experience, highlighting the student’s ability to do, making him a protagonist aware of the motor skills acquired, without discriminatory forms and allowing everyone the widest form of participation while respecting diversity” (L. De Anna, 2013, p. 239).

Excessive apprehension leads parents or often even teachers to take all possible precautions to make up for the fact that their children or pupils peel even just one knee and, starting from the first steps, Then we come to the prohibition of children to move freely, to fall and rise, to roll and climb, to try new sports activities, so as to be sure that these do not bring even the smallest damage.

Parents do not realize, however, that this attitude is extremely harmful for children: even the most trivial fall, the loss of balance, the failures in trying to make a precise movement, are elements that encourage the proper development of children, progressively, they learn to make the most of their potential. In fact, at school this is mediated between the excess of protection and the challenge with their own potential.

“In learning, competition can also be used, which “is a profound motivation of the human being, as it expresses the need to assert oneself, to overcome oneself with victory over oneself or over others” (G. Giugni, 1986, p. 83).

“Movement games play a role in preparing for entry into the social context and are important for identity validation. There is not only physical pleasure produced by movement, but also the possibility to know each other, to show others their skills and inventions” (Oliverio, A., Oliverio Ferraris, A. 2011. p. 119).

7. Nature elements and motor and sports activities

To start games outdoor engines you do not need to have who knows what equipment and facilities. In these circumstances it is possible to organize structured activities with elements related to safety that can bring nature and emotions in total safety. But in the natural environment you can find many stimuli, the best equipment are in natural materials such as trunks, logs, stones, and also as regards the soil, with mud, sand, rocks, with depressions and unevenness. The things children want to find in an outdoor environment are (White R. Stoecklin V. (1998):

- water; streams; rivers; vegetation (trees, bushes, flowers, grass); animals, pond creatures and other living things; sand, better if it can be mixed with water; natural colours, diversity and changes (for example, leaves and fruits in the seasons); places in which to sit, climb, lean, hide; different planes, angles and corners, trunks or crevices that allow to not be seen, camouflage; structures, equipment and materials that can be manipulated or modified in reality or fantasy, branches, stones, remains of various kinds.

“Sun, snow, water and wind, as elements of nature, must have their own place in the physical evolution of the child. In the field of motor education, therefore, we try to go out as often as possible to play outdoors. In addition to the playground, the lawn and the park, the forest is also an ideal environment to move around. In it, while educating in movement, you can also explain simple concepts related to flora and fauna. If some children already know a playground, they can pass on their experiences. Children are stimulated by the environment to overcome obstacles, to measure their strength and to invent sequences of movements adapted to the needs of movement. Soil elements and elevations are used in the lesson” (Firmin. Messmer 2003. p. 3)“.

Today, most children live what an authority has defined: a prison childhood (Francis, Mark au Kathryn Devereaux 1991). Children are disconnected from the natural world outside their doors. Louv (2005) calls the condition that today's children live as a nature deficit disorder.

“In his opinion, the more often he is confined to an artificial environment, the more the human being needs – in order to maintain his mental and physical health – a compensatory contact with nature” (Oliverio A., Oliverio Ferraris A. 2011, p. 81). Dramatically we also report another very important study to confirm even more what was said, in fact in a research conducted by the Children's Hospital and Re-

gional Medical Center in Seattle (Healey 2004), every hour spent a day in front of our well-loved television by preschoolers increases the chances of them increasing by 10 per cent before the age of seven, attention deficit disorder and concentration difficulty.

Children while in contact with nature are creative and imaginative. Creativity rests on a thought that explores in several directions, not yet having pre-established solutions, children naturally have this kind of mental attitude. Children have an innate creativity that they develop over the years, also favored by the fairy tales that are told to them; teachers must encourage them to creative thinking through the free expression of design and play but without detaching them from reality; Children tend to imagine fantastic worlds to venture into.

“The proposed activities range from proposals on the main basic engine schemes such as walking, running, jumping, climbing, balance, pushing, pulling, lifting, carrying, throwing, attack and defend to the execution of moments of collective activity such as the execution of coordinated movements, dances and games that require large spaces such as taking, sparrowhawk, castle, scalp, hunting with numbers. They are all easily proposable, utilitarian and concrete activities that, if well used, will give positive results in the improvement of the great cardio-circulatory and respiratory organic functions (functional aspect), in the harmonic development of the skeleton, muscles and joints (structural aspect), in the improvement of conditional and co-ordinative motor qualities (utilitarian aspect) and the adaptability required by living in contact with nature and by a considerable effort of will and active participation (moral, psychic and character)” (Casolo F., 2019. p. 504).

Children experience a joy at every discovery they make: this gives them a sense of dignity and satisfaction, which encourages them to always seek new sensations from the environment and makes them spontaneously observers. Children are naturally curious and explore the environment both to allow them to discover new things and learn from observation from the space that surrounds them, and to encourage them to continue and maintain a good relationship with the real full of surprises.

“Creativity is a spark that ignites in the right mental conditions, conditions that a strong incentive seems to spoil” (Gray, 2015. p. 143).

The child enters his symbolic world and represents him. “The Symbolic is all that semantically refers to something else, it is also what unites, which brings together what is presented as separate. Going through the different stages of the symbolic game, of “pretending to” the child transfigures the materials and puts himself on stage, telling himself in other ways and with other languages, which otherwise would risk to remain inaccessible and as such, split. Always in this place, the child seeks the measure, the competition and the result both individual and pursued through the collaboration and comparison typical of team games” (Gamelli, 2004. p. 58).

“Another paradox is that the game is serious but not serious, true but not true. By playing you enter a realm physically located in the real world, where you use the tools of the real world, which often affects the real world and which the participants define as real, yet somehow that realm is mentally separated from the real world” (Gray, 2015. p. 162). Motor-sports education in the natural environment has multiple educational purposes, which affect the overall maturity of the student and mainly concern (Pignato, S., 2014, p. 55):

- the development of the student’s personality, autonomy and sociality and the growth of the team’s participatory spirit;

- the activation of the experimental operating procedures (hypothesis, experimentation, verification) in concrete and strongly involving situations;
- the initiation of fundamental cognitive processes (observation, understanding, storage, application);
- the reinforcement of the modalities of passage from the concrete thought to the formal thought through an adequate control of the space-temporal relations;
- respect for different forms of life.

In the light of what has been argued so far, the physical and sport activity at school will tend increasingly to coincide with the concept of outdoor school physical activity. It must be clear, however. That spending time outdoors, playing in the trees surrounded by nature, requires specific skills both for the students and for the teachers in charge of the group.

8. Conclusion

In the past years nature was a real school of experiences, it was she who dictated the times and places of the games, dangers and challenges, the seasons did not dictate whether to be locked up or not in homes. Today, all this must have a central role in the teacher both for safety issues and to make children fully benefit from the advantages of outdoor activities.

The time spent in contact with nature increases the ability to respond in an uncoded context, facilitates experimentation, stimulates the senses, increases proprioception and promotes freedom of bodily expression.

The disruption of our way of life, imposed by Covid, has allowed us to re-evaluate and rediscover the relationship with nature and the motor and sports didactic experiences that we will be able to experience for the benefit of our students to respond to the advancing sedentary lifestyle since the child development age.

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