

THE GARDEN OF MY HEART, A SPACE FOR LEARNING AND HEALTH CARE

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ABSTRACT

At the El Corazón Educational Institution in Medellín, an organic garden of medicinal plants was implemented to mitigate physical and psychological discomfort of students, promoting natural infusions and strengthening collaborative work. The project, based on the Participatory Action methodology, fosters meaningful learning and agroecological awareness.

Keywords: School garden. Medicinal plants.

INTRODUCTION

At the El Corazón Educational Institution, an official school attached to the Ministry of Education of Medellín, Colombia, the following experience has been lived with elementary school students.

Day after day, during the school day, a considerable number of young people go to the coordination in search of a painkiller that would mitigate their indisposition and general discomfort. Thus, a group of teachers decided to identify the causes of these visits and inquired through a virtual and a physical survey. For this survey, 50 students were taken as a sample. The findings were as follows: young people manifest both physical and psychological symptoms; Among the most frequent are: drowsiness (37.8%), low mood (33.3%), colic (20%), gastritis (6.5%) and dizziness (2.4%). According to the above, research is carried out on medicinal plants that present active sites that reduce the different discomforts, from the preparation of infusions and that can be grown in a school garden.

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OBJECTIVE

General objective: To implement an organic and sustainable garden of medicinal plants in the El Corazón Educational Institution, in the municipality of Medellín, in order to provide students with natural drinks that mitigate some discomforts presented during their stay at the school

Specific objectives:

- To inquire about the different physical and/or psychological discomforts presented by elementary school students during the school day
- Determine the aromatic plants that can reduce or remove the physical and/or psychological discomfort of elementary school, middle school and middle school students
- Build a school garden with medicinal plants, making use of seeds and seedlings in order to make it sustainable
- Implement a manual where the active function of medicinal plants is explained, in order to make infusions to provide students with discomfort

METHODOLOGY

For the development of the school garden and therefore, that of the project, the Participation Action (PA) methodology is established, through which medicinal plants are planted. In accordance with the above, the entire educational community is actively involved: students, teachers, parents and administrative staff. Through the joint identification of needs, collaborative planning, practical execution and collective reflection on the process, the aim is not only to create a productive green space, but also to create a sustainable green space that fosters meaningful learning, teamwork and awareness of agroecology and the traditional use of medicinal plants. Based on this methodology, the empowerment of the participants is strengthened, making them the protagonists of their own learning and the development of a project with tangible benefits for their school environment, their psychological well-being and their health.

DEVELOPMENT

The school garden is a project that was born from the heart for the Heart, the result of a dialogue between teachers and students of the 11th grade, who in the heat of an academic activity, express the desire to organize the garden, gaining strength as a personal and

institutional proposal and then, it materialized thanks to the collaborative work, effort and dedication of students of the 8th grade. 9th and 11th, some parents, graduates and teachers.

In 2015, a small cultivation of lettuce began, then in 2017 and 2018 a wide variety of vegetables were grown: carrots, beetroot, zucchini, lettuce, onion, among others, but, with the passage of time and due to the needs detected in the student population, according to surveys and inquiries from teachers, it was decided to cultivate medicinal plants with the aim of providing them with some aromatic infusions. according to the symptoms presented: menstrual cramps, headache, drowsiness, flu symptoms, states of anxiety, gastritis, etc.

How can we not look back, when it begins with a conversation to pass the time, to take this activity as a life project where this space is appropriated to strengthen collaborative work, care for nature and obviously the academy, because for three consecutive years, this garden has inspired restless young people to participate in the institutional science fair, who have inquired about:

Year 1. What medicinal plants were in the context and could be grown in the institution?

Year 2. What is the use of medicinal plants and how to prepare them?

Year 3. What was the cosmetic use of medicinal plants and how to make these products?

The most significant achievement is the love that the students and teachers have taken, who are included in such a wonderful work: "tilling the soil and seeing how a seed feeds hearts".

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

As a result, a garden was built with medicinal plants -prontoalivio, acetaminophen, lemongrass, mint, lemon balm, mint, chamomile, basil, marjoram, rosemary, anise and citron-, from which infusions are made for the students, and with this, try to reduce the ailments they present. To date, more than 1000 students have been served in two years.

Teamwork has been strengthened – between students and family-school – since it is necessary to join forces to develop, maintain and care for the school garden, with its multiple medicinal plants.

The school garden has been recognized at the institutional level, as a significant project, for its presentations at the internal level at science fairs and, externally, at an international congress.

The dynamization of some classes of Natural Sciences, Mathematics and Spanish Language, since they make use of the space of the garden, to promote learning in specific

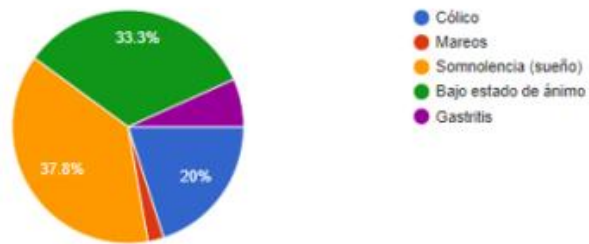


topics, such as: soils, taxonomy, active sites of plants, geometry, statistics, typology and textual production.

Image 1. Ailments presented by students

1. ¿Cuál cree usted que es la dolencia física que más sufren los estudiantes de la I.E. el Corazón

45 respuestas



Results obtained from physical and virtual survey.

Image 2. Starting the construction of the orchard



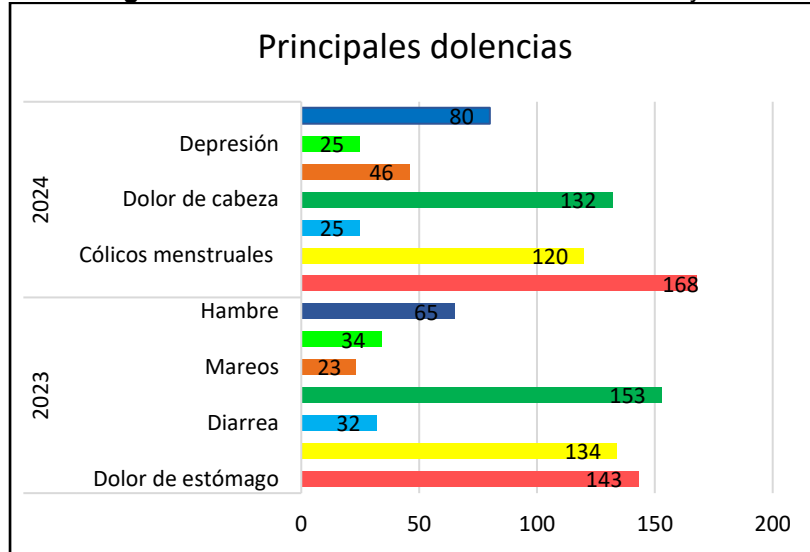
Institutional space and students are shown adapting the terrain

Image 3. Student taking infusions



Student with stomach pain. He is taking mint infusion

Image 4. Number of students served in the last two years



Between 2023 and 2024, more than 1000 elementary and elementary school students were served, who had different physical and psychological ailments.

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