



# EARLY CHILDHOOD COMES FIRST



November 2009

Special Edition

## National Early Childhood Alliance Assembly - A Huge Success!

On the last week of October, Brasília – the country's capital – was stormed by the theme Early Childhood. Representatives of organizations from all over the country were reunited in the city for the National Early Childhood Alliance Assembly (RNPI) and for the Early Childhood and Peace Appreciation Week. Educators, Health Professionals, Scholars and several other kinds of professionals show up to represent their organizations on the Network's Assembly and to participate on the several activities provided by the Appreciation Week, which was created by the newly created Permanent Commission for Early Childhood matters in the Federal Senate. Over 40 people from several states joined in for the Assembly to discuss, among other things, a work plan for 2010, a strategy of dissemination and presentation of the National Plan for Early Childhood and to influence on advocacy politics for Early Childhood. The Alliance has also elected a management group, which will support the executive secretary on decisions and actions related to the Alliance.



The group at the garden of the Casa de Retiros Assunção

After every participant presented themselves, the following partners had the opportunity to make a presentation of their current projects:

**Angêlica Goulart (Xuxa Meneghel Foundation)** – Angêlica presented the **Don't Hit, Educate** program, a campaign against physical punishment, about which she told the reasons for its creation – to stop the trivialized practice of violence, that it's being transmitted and perpetuated for children as the most plausible way to resolute conflicts. The program includes a law project that intends to punish the people responsible for these aggressions.

**Márcia Barr** – Spoke about the **Commission for Early Childhood of the Federate Senate** and its activities, like the proposal of doing the Early Childhood and Peace Appreciation Week and the creation of forums to debate violence against children. According to Márcia, the objective of this Commission is to work as a "living organism which will always support the Early Childhood matters".



Renato Kajita, Pastoral da Criança

**Renato Kajita (Pastoral da Criança)** – Renato presented the work done by the Pastoral, which is based on using **Data from the 2010 census, in partnership with IBGE (Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics) and the University of Pelotas**. He explained that, working this way, the Pastoral has become more efficient on defining which communities need help and what are their most urgent needs. The Pastoral assistance goes from advocacy to building day cares.

**Luzia Torres (Childhood Institute)** – **The Creation of a Early Childhood State Network on Ceará** was Luzia's theme. She's explained us that the Network articulates governmental organizations and civil society so that projects related to Early Childhood can be elaborated and executed.

**Viviane da Silva (Marista's Network of Solidarity)** – Viviane presented the social work of the Marista Network, formed by the Marista's Brothers and the community, in partnership with civil societies institutes and the public government. The Network acts on services and programs, on social projects developed on social centers, schools, universities, hospitals, communication centers and on editing material related to early childhood. It has 29 social centers and 1 defense center (Curitiba), 500 collaborators and 9.400 children, teenagers, youngsters and families. It has its own monitoring workshop for the rights of children and teenagers, articulation in forums and networks. The goal is to consolidate an institutional pro-

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posal for the defense of children and youngsters, compromised with their valorization.

**Luiza Batista (Safe Kids)** – The Safe Kids Coordinator presented alarming data about what kind of accidents our children are suffering, as well as their consequences, which will affect their social and professional lives. When presenting the causes of the accidents, Luiza also presented the way to prevent them from happening, or at least diminishing their chances of happening.

For more pictures of the event, click [here](#).



Luiza Batista, Safe Kids

### Presenting the Staff and Projects

The activities continued with a historical of how the Executive Secretary was formed, a presentation of its new members, Lilian Moraes and Samir Mendes, and what were the activities done from February to October 2009 – the creation of a blog, folder and newsletter.

The journalist Ciça Lessa, from the ANDI Brasil Network, presented a communication plan for the Alliance. The goal of this plan is to increase the elaboration and integration of national politics for children of until 6 years old, as well as monitoring and evaluating its performances. The plan will also seek to consolidate and spread information about the theme, as well as organize social and political activities for accomplishing the proposal.

So these goals can be accomplished the Alliance will count with a newsletter, covering all media related with early childhood. There will be commentaries, contextualization, criticism and contribution of other visions; there will be a replication of the Communication Workshop as a Network Strategy – the first was done in São Paulo, other three are currently under negotiation; a interactive website; a RNPI Portal with theme areas (collective construction, shared knowledge); a member area - open networks; newsletter + commentaries, among other tools.

### Projects and partnerships

Vital Didonet, coordinator of the RNPI Executive Secretary, presented the projects and partnerships that the Alliance is establishing. Among them, are the financing provided by the Van Leer Foundation and the partnerships with the C&A Institute, with the Center for Popular Representation (CECIP) and with the World Forum Foundation through the Global Leaders Project, of which Maria Thereza Marcício, Gustavo Amora and Vera Melis are part of.

Vital has stressed that what is being developed is a concept of financial support together with partnership, enabling the financing institution to participate actively of the projects.

On the second day of activities, it was suggested a deadline for the elaboration, publishing and launching of the National Plan for Early Childhood; A Management Group was elected, constituted of 12 membership organizations (ABEBÊ, Aliança pela Infância, AELTC, CECIP, IC&A, IFAN, IPA Brasil, Zero a Seis Institute, OMEP, PIM, Pródiabéticos, UNDIME), and three surrogates (Rio de Janeiro Childhood Education Community Network, Citizenship Cradle, Monte Azul), and the subject of the expansion of the Alliance was discussed. About that, it was suggested that the Management Group should establish criteria about the expansion, considering regional, cultural and ethnic representativeness of the different children rights.

## New Law Projects Approved in the National Congress

It has been approved by the Federal Senate, on the 10/28, the Untying of Union Revenues (UUR) percentage. The decision, which was made by unanimity and added to the Constitution, will gradually remove the UUR from Education's budget, until it is no longer charged, in 2011. The way it is now, the government can withhold 20% of all the revenue.

Other proposals were presented in the session. Besides the UUR removal, the Senate approved a law that makes it mandatory for kids from 4 to 17 years old to receive a formal education (before, it was mandatory for 6 to 14 year-old kids). This measure has cause controversy among the activists of civil society.

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Institutions like UNDIME (National Union for Education's Municipal Managers), see it in the long run, as something beneficial for early childhood. According to them, making it mandatory will serve as a strategic factor so that early childhood managers will be able to effectively act on that frame of age (4-17). Other institutions worry that this measure may cause a split on early childhood's education, leaving the 0-3 year-old age frame in second plan. Another subject that is being discussed is that a inversion of principles – the right to gain education or the obligation of it? – might be happening. Since 1988, it is included in the Constitution that the State is obliged to supply education, but this measure hasn't been fully fulfilled. So, the State is making it mandatory, as if the responsibility for kids not being in school is due to lack of interest, a matter that would only be resolved through obligation.

The National Early Childhood Alliance grows stronger by these debates, showing that, in essence, we are all fighting for the children's best interests and learning from different opinions and political views.

About this debate, read more at <<http://www.redeprimeirainfancia.blogspot.com/>>

## Childhood and Peace Appreciation Week - Opening

Vital Didonet did the opening lecture for the technical matters of the Early Childhood and Peace Appreciation Week, held at the Federal Senate. The RNPI Assembly was interrupted so everyone involved could watch the event. Vital made a retrospective of the Seminar and of the Appreciation Week, the former performed in 2007 and the latter in 2008, so that the participants could get familiarized with the event. He also talked about the advancements expected for this year's edition. The event has been organized by the permanent Commission, created by the Federal Senate's Presidency Ordinance, which ensures its continuity and further deepening of the studies and debates about early childhood and peace culture.

Professor Vital has exposed the vision that enlightened and guided the choice of themes for the Week: a closer look on the children of this diverse country, meaning, a look on the individuality of the Brazilian children and their lives' story, biographies and social and cultural relations that express diversity as something to be treasured.

His conclusion was a relation between the place where the Appreciation Week was held, the Federal Senate - with all of its diversity of visions and propositions of relevant themes for the country - and an excerpt of a poem of Thiago de Mello: "...because is of childhood, Leonardo, that the world needs the most".

## Presentation of the National Plan for Early Childhood



From left to right: Monica Mumme, Maria de Lourdes Magalhães, Vital Didonet, Gustavo Amora e Adelaide Jóia

The Early Childhood and Peace Appreciation Week program included the presentation of the National Plan for Early Childhood. This presentation was done on the Petrônio Portella auditorium by Vital Didonet (RNPI Executive Secretary), Maria de Lourdes Magalhães (CONANDA – National Council for the Rights of Children and Teenagers), Monica Mumme (CECIP – Creation Center for Popular Representation), Adelaide Jóia (Millennium Fund) and mediated by Gustavo Amora (RNPI Executive Secretary).

Vital Didonet began the presentation talking about the premises of the National Early Childhood Alliance, its formation and goals. The National Plan for Early Childhood, one of the Alliance's oldest and main goals, is a way to assist the Government when attending to the rights of children between the ages of 0 to 6 years old. Vital also presented the main principles, guidelines, characteristics and how the Plan is being built.

Maria de Lourdes Magalhães shared her joy of participating in this event, representing CONANDA, a member of the National Early Childhood Alliance whose primary function is to propose national politics for children and teenagers. In this context, it has worked on the elaboration of the National Plan for Early Childhood, and will present its actions on the 8<sup>th</sup> National Conference about the rights of children and teenagers. Monica Mumme talked about the concept of child that the Plan defends: a citizen, entitled to rights, singular and diverse in an universe culturally, geographically, and socially varied as Brazil is. Adelaide Jóia exposed some of the actual content of the Plan, its different approaches and chapters.

## Early Childhood in Latin America — Meeting in Cali

The Executive Secretary, represented by Vital Didonet, was present in the Consultative Group Network for Early Childhood in Latin America. The meeting took place in Cali (Colombia) and it was held on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> of November. Vital also participated of the Early Childhood World Forum, about Society and State, from the 3<sup>rd</sup> to the 6<sup>th</sup> of November. One of the meeting's objectives was to define the plan of work for the next years. Given the diversity of the organizations, the proposed outlines put together different contributions. One of them, is to progressively become a Network of sub regional and national Networks. This will certainly mean a greater exchange of expertise with the National Early Childhood Alliance.

At the Forum, Professor Vital Didonet presented the building process of the National Network and the formulation of the National Plan for Early Childhood. The RNPI is unprecedented on Latin America due to the diversity of its organizations and amplitude of its members, as well as the strong exchange, mutual support and routing of an aggregate duty, which is the National Plan for the Early Childhood. The Technical Secretary of the Network's Consultative Group has manifested the will to get closer to the ECNN, envisioning a mutual cooperation.

## Congress in Uberaba - Early Childhood, Human Values and Peace

Between the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> of november, the National Early Childhood Alliance was represented on the 1<sup>st</sup> Early Childhood Brazilian Congress and 1<sup>st</sup> State Week for Human Values and Peace at Uberaba – MG. The event's goal was to discuss the importance, implications and public policies regarding early childhood, as to awake people's conscience and sensitivity over the matter. The creator and organizer of the event is Lourival dos Santos, President of Uberaba's City Council Chamber. Lourival is also the mind behind the creation of the *Vivência em Valores Humanos Para um Mundo Melhor* Institute (Experience in Human Values for a Better World), an organization that works with mothers, educators and other people involved in early childhood. Over the last years, the Institute has been providing support for thousands of children and mothers, from human values points of view, and promoting peace.



Lourival dos Santos, creator and organizer of the event

The Congress was attended by several people and representatives of organizations connected to the network. Lisle Luce presented the newly created Permanent Commission of Early Childhood of the Federal Senate and spoke about the importance of this Congress to make the early childhood theme stronger in a state and municipal level. Gustavo Amora's opening lecture presented strategies of advocacy for early childhood also on state and municipal levels. A speech directed to social entrepreneurs, such as education and health professionals and local politicians. Dr. Laurista Corrêa Filho, Pediatrician and a specialist on Children and Women's health, presented a lecture about neural science relating it to early childhood matters.

The event was closed with a cultural walk featuring children from the Municipal Centers of Childhood Education. It was delivered to the "perfect baby", meaning the first child born right before the event, the key to the city.

For more information about the *Vivência em Valores Humanos* Institute, visit: [www.mundomelhor.org.br](http://www.mundomelhor.org.br)

For more information about the event, visit:

<http://www.jmonline.com.br/novo/?noticias,6.POL%CDTICA,18114>

Site: [www.primeirainfancia.org.br](http://www.primeirainfancia.org.br) / Twitter: [@RNPI](https://twitter.com/RNPI) / [redeprimeirainfancia.blogspot.com](http://redeprimeirainfancia.blogspot.com)

### Executive Secretary Staff

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**Gustavo Amora**

**Samir Mendes de Mello**

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