The ArtScience program and the formation of “Popular Junior Health Agents” for fighting zika, dengue and chikungunya.

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This work describes our experience in training children from primary schools in Rio de Janeiro for controlling the A. aegypti, aiming to prevent arbovirosis such as zika. Based on the “ArtScience program”, we developed a method to prepare “Popular Junior Health Agents”, by means of theoretical and practical workshops. Pilot workshops were performed in two private basic schools for children from 2nd to 5th grade. The learning outcomes attained by the students after the workshops were: 1) to recognize the Aedes and the potential places for the mosquito development at school and home and to perform procedures to clean them. 2) to be capable of completing the “Ten Minutes Against Aedes” official chart and to be able to create their own schedule charts based on their individual realities, for the continuous control of mosquito focus and 3) to multiply the knowledge obtained. About 364 children participated in workshops (between 6-9 years old). The genus of captured and observed mosquitoes by the children using an insect aspirator in both schools were Culex and Aedes. Females of Aedes aegypti were captured by the children in both schools as confirmed by analysis made in the Oswaldo Cruz Institute. The children also identified potential sites of mosquito focus such as drains without screen, manhole covered by standing water and gutters with large amount of leaves presenting accumulated water. At the end of the activities, the official schedule charts (total = 728) were sent home in the appointment book to be explained and passed to parents and building managers by the children. The charts “doing the ten minutes schedule chart yourself” (total = 364) were used by children at home and at school. Both schools are maintaining control activities with the children. This experience showed the great potential of the ArtScience program to prepare “Popular Junior Health Agents” against arbovirosis opening the possibility of expanding this program to the public schools.

Key words : Zika, ArtScience, Popular Junior Health Agents

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