

RECOMMENDATIONS TO IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

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The COVID-19 pandemic has thrown Latin American education systems into crisis, affecting the learning and comprehensive development of millions of students, including the youngest children attending schools and early childhood care centers.

We also know that the pandemic has a more severe impact on children growing up in poor and vulnerable families, where they do not receive the care and stimulation they need for their proper mental, emotional, and physical development at this key stage of their lives. Therefore, it is essential that societies as a whole decisively undertake and strengthen actions to close these gaps and ensure that all children have access to quality early education.

Within this framework, a group of representatives from ministries and agencies responsible for early childhood education in several countries in the region, experts, and representatives of civil society and cooperation organizations, including CAF, has been working since 2016 to define and implement a Regional Agenda for Comprehensive Early Childhood Development. This agenda seeks to guide countries' efforts to strengthen public policies for early childhood in four areas: intersectorality and financing, quality of services, measurement, and collaboration and partnerships.

In particular, the second agreement of this Agenda calls on countries to "strengthen management for comprehensive, quality, relevant, and timely care for early childhood in the settings where they live."

Based on an analysis of the region's best experiences and available evidence, this group recently released eight recommendations for action to improve the quality of early childhood education: a vision of quality, quality assurance systems, family strengthening, family training, quality measurement, competencies and certification, the revaluation of early childhood education and care personnel, and a regional forum for exchange.

First, defining a vision of quality for early childhood education means reaching legitimate and sustainable agreements at the national level and among strategic stakeholders on the skills, knowledge, and attitudes that children should acquire at this stage of their lives, through an appropriate relationship between their learning and development. Building consensus on the importance of care, love, and protection for the youngest children, on the place of play in learning and comprehensive development, and establishing minimum standards for care are some of the key elements of this vision.

Furthermore, to implement this vision, it is essential to have quality assurance systems that, as intersectoral and interinstitutional representation groups, lead the design of quality standards for

the provision of child care services, while establishing the mechanisms for their implementation , monitoring, and evaluation.

Family strengthening is the third recommendation, and it consists of including actions aimed at promoting the quality of life of families as co-responsible actors in child development in intersectoral work mechanisms. This entails recognizing aspects such as interculturality and the social diversity of the region as fundamental elements of attention, and promoting the progressive implementation of measures to facilitate the equitable distribution of housework and greater participation of men in parental care.

Likewise, family training should be a central focus of early childhood education work. This means developing programs for family training, participation, and empowerment, from a perspective in which the community itself is the primary agent of change for the families within it. These programs should be evidence-based and adapted to the specific contexts of communities, in addition to including all family members and significant adults involved in childrearing.

The fifth recommendation relates to quality measurement. It is essential that countries advance the institutionalization of permanent mechanisms to measure the quality of early childhood education services in order to implement continuous improvement and understand the impact of different programs. These measurements should include both structural standards and process indicators and be linked to other specific evaluation mechanisms. Measuring the quality of early childhood education should be understood as an ongoing process, supported by the respective regulatory foundations and resources for its implementation. It must be based on clear content and objectives, both for measurement and for the use of results, which lead to the corresponding comprehensive improvement plans and inform decision-making and public policy agendas.

Having a competency framework and certification processes for professionals and staff responsible for child care is also a recommendation of the Regional Agenda. The framework should permeate initial and continuing professional training curricula and serve as a reference for defining profiles and for the certification and accreditation processes for competencies. Emotional and social development, knowledge of the child development process, adaptive leadership, and use of tools to generate positive interactions and collaborative relationships with parents are some of the competencies to be prioritized in these frameworks.

The seventh recommendation concerns the revaluation of early childhood education and care personnel, to the extent that their important role in providing quality early childhood education is socially recognized. It is important for countries to generate information on the effectiveness of quality pedagogical practices for this stage, identifying and disseminating good practices and promoting social awareness on the issue.

Finally, it is recommended that public and private actors involved in early childhood care maintain a regional exchange space that facilitates the ongoing exchange of knowledge, the transfer and adaptation of action frameworks that provide feedback to national public policies, and at the same time qualifies decision-making at all levels.

As a result of the current crisis, the region's governments are working with organizations and civil society actors involved in early childhood education to develop various support plans for teachers

and families. Within this framework, the above recommendations seek to guide not only national, regional, and local governments, but also all stakeholders involved in knowledge generation and the development and implementation of policies and programs for child development, so that all efforts contribute in the best possible way to mitigating the negative effects of prolonged confinement and the current situations affecting physical and emotional health.

STEPS TO MORE EFFECTIVE PARENTING

Steven Dowshen

Raising children is one of the most difficult and rewarding tasks in the world, and one for which you may feel you are least prepared.

Below are nine parenting tips that can help you feel more fulfilled as a parent and enjoy your children more.

1. Boost your child's self-esteem

Children begin developing their sense of self from infancy, when they see themselves through their parents' eyes. Your children absorb your tone of voice, your body language, and all your expressions. Your words and actions as a parent impact their developing self-esteem more than anything else. Praising accomplishments, even small ones, will make children proud; allowing them to do things on their own will make them feel capable and strong. Conversely, belittling comments or negative comparisons with other children will make them feel worthless.

Avoid biased statements or hurtful language. Comments such as "You're so stupid!" or "You act more like a baby than your little brother!" can cause the same damage as physical hitting. Choose your words carefully and be compassionate. Let your children know that everyone makes mistakes and that you still love them, even when you don't approve of their behavior.

2. Recognize good deeds

Have you ever stopped to consider how many times a day you have negative reactions toward your children? You may find that you criticize them far more often than you praise them. How would you feel if a boss treated you so negatively, even if it was well-intentioned?

The most positive approach is to acknowledge children's good behavior: "You made your bed without me asking—that's great!" or "I was watching you play with your sister, and you were so patient." These comments will be much more effective in encouraging long-term good behavior than constant reprimands.

Make it a point to find something to praise every day. Be generous with rewards: your love, hugs, and praise can work wonders and are often reward enough. You'll soon find that you're "cultivating" more of the behavior you'd like to see.

3. Set limits and be consistent with discipline

Discipline is necessary in every home. The goal of discipline is to help children choose acceptable behaviors and learn self-control. They may test the limits you set, but they are essential for them to become responsible adults.

Setting house rules helps children understand your expectations and develop self-control. Some rules might include, for example, no television viewing until homework is done and no hitting, name-calling, or hurtful teasing.

It's a good idea to implement a system: a warning followed by consequences, which can be time-out or the loss of privileges. A common mistake parents make is not following through with consequences. You can't discipline children for a bad behavior one day and ignore it the next. Being consistent teaches them what you expect.

4. Make time for your children

It's often difficult for parents and children to get together for a family meal, let alone spend quality time together. However, there's probably nothing children would love more than that. Get up 10 minutes earlier in the morning so you can eat breakfast with your children, or leave the dishes in the sink and go for a walk after dinner. Children who don't get the attention they want from their parents often overact or misbehave because they are sure they will get their attention.

Many parents find it rewarding to schedule time to spend with their children. Schedule a "special night" each week to be together and let your children help decide how to spend the time. Find other ways to connect, for example, put a note or something special in the children's lunchboxes.

Teenagers seem to require less individual attention from their parents compared to younger children. Since there are fewer opportunities for parents and teenagers to spend time together, parents should do their best to be available when their children express a desire to talk or participate in family activities. Attending concerts, games, and other events with the teenager is a way to convey affection and allows you to learn about other important aspects of your child and their friends.

Don't feel guilty if you're a working parent. Children will remember the little things you do, like making popcorn, playing cards, or window shopping.

5. Be a good role model

Young children learn a lot about how to behave by watching their parents. The younger they are, the more they imitate them. Before reacting aggressively or getting angry in front of your child, consider this: Is this how you want the child to behave when angry? Always be aware that your children are watching you. Studies have shown that children who hit often imitate the aggression model at home.

Model the qualities you want to cultivate in your children: respect, warmth, honesty, kindness, tolerance. Be generous. Do things for others without expecting anything in return. Express gratitude and praise. Above all, treat your children the same way you expect others to treat you.

6. Make communication a priority

You can't expect children to do everything just because you, as a parent, "say so." They want and deserve explanations, just like adults do. If we don't take the time to explain, children will begin to

question our values and motivations, and whether they are justified. Parents who reason with their children allow them to understand and learn without judgment.

Make your expectations clear. If there's a problem, describe it, express your feelings, and invite your child to work together to find a solution. Don't forget to mention the consequences. Make suggestions and offer alternatives. Also, be willing to listen to your child's suggestions. Negotiate. Children who participate in decision-making are more motivated to follow through.

7. Be flexible and willing to adapt your parenting style

If your child's behavior frequently disappoints you, it may be because you have unrealistic expectations. For parents who think in terms of "what's right" (e.g., "By now, my child should be using the potty"), it may be helpful to read about the topic or talk with other parents or child development specialists.

A child's environment impacts their behavior; therefore, you can change that behavior by changing the environment. If you continually have to say "no" to your 2-year-old, find a way to restructure the environment so that fewer things are off-limits. This will be less frustrating for both of you.

As your child changes, you'll need to gradually adjust your parenting style. Chances are, what works for your child today won't be as effective in a year or two.

Teenagers tend to look more to their peers and less to their parents for role models. However, don't neglect to guide and encourage your teenager and provide appropriate discipline while simultaneously allowing them to become increasingly independent. And take advantage of every opportunity you have to build a relationship.

8. Show that your love is unconditional

As a parent, you have the responsibility to correct and guide your children. However, the way you express your corrective guidance has a great influence on how a child receives it. When confronting your child, avoid blaming, criticizing, or finding fault; all of these can undermine self-esteem and lead to resentment. Instead, make an effort to nurture and encourage, even when you discipline your children. Make sure they know that, although you want and expect better next time, your love is unconditional.

9. Be aware of your own needs and limitations as a parent

Face it: you're not a perfect parent. As the head of the household, you have strengths and weaknesses. Acknowledge your abilities: "I'm loving and dedicated." Promise to work on your weaknesses: "I need to be more consistent with discipline." Try to have realistic expectations for yourself, your spouse, and your children. You don't have to know all the answers; be forgiving of yourself.

And try to make parenting a manageable task. Focus on the areas that need the most attention, rather than trying to tackle everything at once. Admit when you're feeling burned out. Take time away from parenting to do things that will make you feel happy as a person (or as a couple).

Focusing on your needs doesn't make you selfish. It simply means you care about your own well-being, another important value for your children to model.

Nutrition for Children: Guidelines for a Healthy Diet

Mayo Clinic

Introduction

Nutrition for children is based on the same ideas as nutrition for adults. We all need the same types of elements, such as vitamins, minerals, carbohydrates, proteins, and fats. These are all collectively referred to as nutrients. Children need different amounts of specific nutrients at different ages.

The best diet for children's growth and development takes into account their age, physical activity level, and other characteristics. Review these basic children's nutrition tips, based on the Dietary Guidelines for Americans (Dietary Guidelines for Americans) most recent.

Foods that are rich in nutrients and have little or no added sugar, saturated fat, or salt are considered nutrient-dense. If the diet is based on nutrient-dense foods, children get the nutrients they need and generally consume fewer calories.

Consider these nutrient-dense foods:

- **Proteins.** Choose seafood, lean meats and poultry, eggs, beans, peas, soy products, and unsalted nuts and seeds.
- **Fruits.** Encourage your child to eat a variety of fruits, whether fresh, canned, frozen, or dried. Choose canned fruits labeled as packed in their own juice or light syrup; this means they contain little added sugar. Keep in mind that a quarter cup of dried fruit counts as one serving of fresh fruit.
- **Vegetables.** Serve a variety of vegetables, whether fresh, canned, frozen, or dried. Choose peas or beans and pair them with colorful vegetables every week. When choosing frozen or canned vegetables, choose lower-sodium options.
- **Grains or cereals.** Choose whole grains or cereals, such as whole-wheat noodles or bread, oatmeal, popcorn, quinoa , and brown or wild rice.
- **Dairy products.** Encourage your child to eat and drink low-fat or skim dairy products, such as milk, yogurt, or cheese . Soy drinks fortified also they count as dairy .

Try to limit your child's calories from the following:

- **Added sugar.** Naturally occurring sugar, such as that found in fruits and milk, is not added sugar. Some examples of added sugar are brown sugar, corn syrup, corn syrup, and honey. Check nutrition labels to avoid added sugars. Choose cereal with minimal added sugar. Avoid soda and other beverages with added sugars. Limit juice intake. If your child drinks juice, make sure it's 100% natural, with no added sugars.

- **Saturated fats.** Saturated fats come primarily from animal foods, such as red meat, hot dogs, poultry, butter, and other full-fat dairy products. Pizza, sandwiches, hamburgers, and burritos are common sources of saturated fats. They are also abundant in desserts like cakes and ice cream. When cooking, look for ways to replace saturated fats with vegetable and nut oils, which provide essential fatty acids and vitamin E.
- **Salt.** Most children in the United States consume too much salt in their daily diets. Salt is also called sodium. Salt can be hidden in sandwiches, where sodium from bread, meat, condiments, and dressings accumulates. Processed foods, such as pizza, noodle dishes, and soup, often have high amounts of salt. Encourage your child to eat fruits and vegetables between meals, instead of chips and cookies. Check nutrition labels and look for products with low sodium content.

If you have questions about children's nutrition or specific concerns about your child's diet, talk to your child's healthcare provider or a registered dietitian.

FROM 2 TO 4 YEARS OLD: DAILY GUIDELINES FOR GIRLS

Calories	From 1000 to 1400, depending on the level of growth and activity
Protein	2 to 4 ounces (56 to 113 grams)
Fruit	1 to 1 1/2 cups
Vegetables	1 to 1 1/2 cups
Grains or cereals	3 to 5 ounces (85 to 141 grams)
Dairy	2 to 2 1/2 cups

FROM 2 TO 4 YEARS: DAILY GUIDELINES FOR CHILDREN

Calories	From 1000 to 1600, depending on the level of growth and activity
Protein	2 to 5 ounces (56 to 141 grams)
Fruit	1 to 1 1/2 cups
Vegetables	1 to 2 cups
Grains or cereals	3 to 5 ounces (85 to 141 grams)
Dairy	2 to 2 1/2 cups

FROM 5 TO 8 YEARS OLD: DAILY GUIDELINES FOR GIRLS

Calories	From 1200 to 1800, depending on the level of growth and activity
Protein	3 to 5 ounces (85 to 141 grams)
Fruit	1 to 1 1/2 cups

Vegetables	From 1 1/2 cups to 2 1/2 cups
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Grains or cereals	4 to 6 ounces (113 to 170 grams)
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Dairy	2 and 1/2 cups
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FROM 5 TO 8 YEARS OLD: DAILY GUIDELINES FOR CHILDREN

Calories	From 1200 to 2000, depending on the level of growth and activity
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Protein	3 to 5.5 ounces (85 to 155 grams)
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Fruit	1 to 2 cups
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Vegetables	From 1 1/2 cups to 2 1/2 cups
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Grains or cereals	4 to 6 ounces (113 to 170 grams)
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Dairy	2 and 1/2 cups
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FROM 9 TO 13 YEARS OLD: DAILY GUIDELINES FOR GIRLS

Calories	From 1400 to 2200, depending on the level of growth
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	and activity
Protein	4 to 6 ounces (113 to 170 grams)
Fruit	1 1/2 cups to 2 cups
Vegetables	1 1/2 cups to 3 cups
Grains or cereals	5 to 7 ounces (141 to 198 grams)
Dairy	3 cups

FROM 9 TO 13 YEARS OLD: DAILY GUIDELINES FOR CHILDREN

Calories	From 1600 to 2600, depending on the level of growth and activity
Protein	5 to 6.5 ounces (141 to 184 grams)
Fruit	1 1/2 cups to 2 cups
Vegetables	From 2 cups to 3 and 1/2 cups
Grains or cereals	5 to 9 ounces (141 to 255 grams)

Dairy	3 cups
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FROM 14 TO 18 YEARS OLD: DAILY GUIDELINES FOR GIRLS

Calories	From 1800 to 2400, depending on the level of growth and activity
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Protein	5 to 6.5 ounces (141 to 184 grams)
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Fruit	1 1/2 cups to 2 cups
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Vegetables	2 1/2 to 3 cups
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Grains or cereals	6 to 8 ounces (170 to 226 grams)
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Dairy	3 cups
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FROM 14 TO 18 YEARS OLD: DAILY GUIDELINES FOR CHILDREN

Calories	From 2000 to 3200, depending on the level of growth and activity
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Protein	5.5 to 7 ounces (155 to 198 grams)
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Fruit	2 to 2 1/2 cups
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Vegetables	2 1/2 to 4 cups
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Grains or cereals	6 to 10 ounces (170 to 283 grams)
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Dairy	3 cups
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CHILD TRAFFICKING

COLSECOR Foundation

Trafficking is one of the worst forms of child labor. Although exact figures are unavailable, according to ILO estimates (in 2005), between 980,000 and 1,225,000 children are in forced labor as a result of trafficking.

ILO Convention No. 182 (1999) on the Worst Forms of Child Labour classifies trafficking as "forms of slavery or practices similar to slavery" and is therefore one of the worst forms of child labour, which must be eliminated urgently, regardless of a country's level of development.

Child trafficking, whether within a country, between countries, or across continents, is closely linked to the demand for cheap, docile, and malleable labor in certain sectors and by certain employers. When child trafficking occurs, the working conditions and treatment to which children are subjected largely violate their human rights. These conditions are characterized by unacceptable environments (unquestionably the worst forms of child labor) or by work that is hazardous to children's health and development (hazardous work that is also among the worst forms). These forms range from camel jockeying, bonded labor, child domestic labor, commercial sexual exploitation and prostitution, drug trafficking, the use of children in armed conflict, and other exploitative forms and slavery-like practices in the industrial sector.

Human trafficking continues to be a serious violation of human rights, and children are the most vulnerable. Worldwide, approximately one-third of the identified victims are children. In our country, the issue gained visibility with the disappearance of Loan Danilo Peña, but two months

after his disappearance, the State has not taken any concrete action to combat this scourge. Argentina has never had a robust support and prevention system for these crimes, and the aggravating factor is that the few strengths it had were either dismantled with the arrival of the new government or have begun to be questioned, putting public policies at risk.

What are the characteristics of the crime and what are the most vulnerable victim profiles? Which countries have made significant progress in the fight against child trafficking? What is Argentina's outstanding agenda, and how does it compare to other regions? These are some of the questions that guide us in a new Public Agenda of the COLSECOR Foundation , in its commitment to respect for human rights and in a special month for children.

According to the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, human trafficking is the "recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, abduction, fraud, deception, the abuse of power or a position of vulnerability, or the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another, for the purpose of exploitation." It establishes that "such exploitation shall include, as a minimum, sexual exploitation, forced labor or services, practices similar to slavery, servitude, or the removal of organs."

The numbers are shocking: one in three victims of trafficking worldwide are children . In the last 15 years, the crime's prevalence has increased from 10% to 30% globally . This number was driven by online "hunting and fishing," armed conflicts, natural disasters, and rising child poverty, according to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC). This is "a multi-billion-dollar criminal activity that has taken advantage of globalization to expand its networks. Sexual exploitation, forced labor, and domestic servitude, to name a few, are the most common forms of exploitation by those who exploit the vulnerabilities of people living in marginalization and poverty," adds the report from the renowned international organization.

UNODC's work shows that, worldwide, the majority of people prosecuted and convicted for trafficking continue to be men (six out of ten). Offenders can be members of organized crime groups, individuals operating on their own, or small, opportunistic groups. The research also indicates that traffickers have integrated technology into their business model at every stage of the process, from recruitment to victim exploitation.

Which areas have the highest incidence? Based on data collected from 148 countries, UNODC was able to record 534 different trafficking flows worldwide. In Latin America, routes from South America to Central America, from Central America to North America, and from the Caribbean to South America have been detected. The Organization has also found cases of victims being transported from South America to East Asia, Europe, North Africa, and the Middle East.

However, the United Nations emphasizes that victims are often trafficked within geographically close areas, and one of the main ways they enter trafficking networks is through family members and friends . Girls are predominantly victims of sexual exploitation, while boys are more often exploited in forced labor, such as in agriculture or domestic service.

The prevalence of trafficking in children is similar in countries of different socioeconomic levels. What does change is how countries configure their response systems. This is one of the main findings of a report presented by the Argentine foundation Red por la Infancia, based on indicators developed by *The Economist Impact*. "Out of the Shadows" provides a comprehensive snapshot of child trafficking, assessing 60 countries (representing 85% of the global child population). These variables measure how governments prevent or respond to child sexual abuse and exploitation, one of the most common forms of child trafficking. Trafficking and sexual abuse are not just any crime. Sexual violence has been defined by various international organizations and courts as a form of torture, due to the serious consequences this conduct has on the victims.

Regarding the region, the report for Latin America and the Caribbean summarizes data from nine countries: Argentina, Brazil, Peru, Colombia, and Venezuela in South America; Mexico, Guatemala, and El Salvador in Central America; and Jamaica. In the table, our country ranked 50th globally and last (9th) regionally.

Key indicators included the level of legislation, public policies and programs, the adoption of effective protection measures, victim support systems, and the justice process from the initial response to case resolution, among other aspects. "Out of the Shadows" indicates that Latin America and the Caribbean scores above the global average in response to sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA) of children and adolescents, but below in prevention. This strong performance is due to a robust health care system adapted to the needs of children and adolescents (as highlighted by Argentina's universal health care system); a judicial system adapted to the needs of children and adolescents; and the implementation of comprehensive social protection programs (as demonstrated by Brazil and Mexico).

Our country has several strengths, such as its adherence to international conventions and victim support laws. And, as noted, it ranks first in healthcare, thanks to its free public health system and its response to children and adolescents. In turn, Argentina's Comprehensive Sexual Education (CSE) policy in schools "was highlighted as an excellent Argentine practice worldwide as a tool for preventing child abuse. It is important to highlight its role in a context where it is unfortunately being discussed today," said Paula Wachter, executive director of the Network for Children (Red por la Infancia), a local initiative that fights for the fulfillment of children's rights and to eradicate child abuse in all its forms, after presenting the report for Latin America and the Caribbean on the radio program "La Patria de las Moscas."

However, Argentina's weaknesses outweigh its strengths, which is why it receives a poor overall score. First, one of our country's biggest problems is the lack of data to accurately assess the problem; therefore, the full extent of child trafficking is unknown. This weakens the response and prevention frameworks that should be provided by the various State bodies. In this ranking that combines "data availability and monitoring and support capacity," the highest ranking in Latin America was Brazil (15); Argentina was ranked 53rd.

According to the report "Out of the Shadows," Argentina does not have a good score in the justice process, that is, a process that respects children's rights and does not offer an opportunity for re-

victimization that further aggravates their situation. "There, we have one of the lowest levels of trust in the world. People don't trust that the justice system will provide an adequate response, so there is less incentive to file complaints," notes Wachter . On this point, Brazil was again the highest ranked in the region at 5th worldwide; Argentina was 45th. The neighboring country is the only country in South America and the Caribbean that requires judges, prosecutors, and all personnel related to the justice system to have special training on interventions tailored to children and adolescents, sexual abuse cases, and trauma-informed approaches.

Brazil has another strength: a national plan with a designated and protected budget. Regardless of who holds political office, childhood policies are not affected. Mexico also has robust public policies. Colombia is the country in the region with the highest score for protection legislation (13); Canada and the Nordic countries also have very good prevention programs. "There are many countries we can look to," adds the executive director of the Network for Children.

Wachter presents a very worrying figure that refers exclusively to the problem of sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA). "Our greatest debt is to have a national program to eradicate this form of violence, which affects approximately two million children in Argentina ." Furthermore, our country lacks a basic, cross-cutting protection protocol for different sectors where children spend a lot of time (such as schools or clubs). A vote was attempted last year, but opposition sectors did not provide a quorum.

The Loan Case: What Does It Reveal? The investigation into Loan's disappearance in Corrientes, which includes a hypothesis of human trafficking, has highlighted the dismantling of several state programs against this crime . Between March and April of this year, the provincial representatives of the National Committee to Combat Trafficking were dismissed. Furthermore, the Ministry of Justice's Victim Rescue and Support Program spent almost 90% less than the same period last year. This is in addition to other victim protection programs that were cut. There were also layoffs in the National Rescue Program and the 145 telephone line, as detailed in this *DiarioAr* report .

According to data from the Argentine Ministry of Justice, between 2019 and 2023, 5,227 victims of trafficking were rescued in Argentina. There were 9,067 interventions carried out on the territory, 1,072 referrals for further assistance, 118 assistance coordinations, and 13 victims returned to their countries of origin. These actions are clearly not enough, but the results could be poorer if cuts in strategic areas continue.

With the signing of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime more than twenty years ago , countries around the world recognized the urgency of combating human trafficking. Argentina is one of them: it adopted the Convention on the Rights of the Child in 1990 and incorporated it into the National Constitution in the 1994 reform. However, it was not until 2005 that the country passed a Law for the Comprehensive Protection of the Rights of Children and Adolescents (National Law 26.061), in accordance with United Nations guidelines. However, the Argentine State does not comply with this legislation on a very sensitive point: the prohibition on the sale and purchase of children is not a crime classified in our country's Penal Code, as is the crime of human trafficking for the purpose of exploitation. (Article 145 ter of the Penal Code).

In 2007, a presidential decree created the National Program for the Prevention and Eradication of Human Trafficking and Assistance to its Victims, and the Office of Comprehensive Assistance to Victims of Crime of the Attorney General's Office (OFAVI) adopted a contingency plan against human trafficking. All of this was dismantled with the new administration, hence the importance of developing long-term policies, rather than actions whose continuity depends on the current administration.

“ At the legislative level, there are still serious shortcomings, such as the lack of classification of certain crimes, such as the buying and selling of children and adolescents . There is also no system for recording and monitoring the prevalence of cases that would demonstrate the State's commitment to understanding and addressing the problem,” summarizes Wachter , of the Network for Children .

The main obstacles to combating child trafficking include insufficient legal and administrative infrastructure, the difficulties the crime creates on digital networks, a lack of awareness campaigns and preventative measures, and the need for public awareness of the seriousness of the problem. Empathy seems to surface for a time, while the issue gains visibility on the media and political agenda, as has happened in so many cases, to cite the example of Guadalupe Lucero in 2021 or now the case of Loan.

Human trafficking, and especially child trafficking, is an emergency that requires an urgent and coordinated response from different branches of government. Governments, legislators, the judiciary, along with international organizations and civil society, will have to intensify their efforts to ensure that human rights are a priority on the public and political agenda for all people, but especially for the most vulnerable: children. Child trafficking is one of the most serious manifestations of violence, and, as UNICEF emphasizes , "the true nature of a country is reflected in the way it treats its children; when they suffer, all of us as a society suffer."

PREMATURE BABY CARE AT HOME

When the baby can breathe without oxygen and reaches an appropriate weight (generally over 2,000 grams), they no longer need the warmth of the incubator (it maintains a stable temperature), can suckle, and, if there are no other problems, will be ready for discharge. It is recommended that parents educate themselves thoroughly before going home with their child about the care they require, the medication they need (name, dosage, dosage, etc.), feeding, etc.

Returning home with a premature baby: tips Once home you will need to:

Take extreme hygiene measures and wash your hands thoroughly before touching the baby.

Avoid contact with many people, who can carry germs that can affect the baby.

Prevent sudden temperature changes. It's a good idea to prevent them from getting too cold, as they may not be able to control their temperature in the first few days.

Monitor feeding and weight. They may not cry when hungry (the immature nervous system means they don't know when they're hungry), and it may take them longer to feed. Feedings should be small and at frequent intervals. If bottle-feeding is preferred, you can offer them a softer nipple specially designed for premature babies, which reduces the effort required to suck.

Monitor the frequency and consistency of your stools. If you are constipated or have diarrhea, consult your doctor.

A premature baby needs a quiet environment, with dim lighting and no noise.

When handling the baby, keep in mind that his neck is not yet strong enough to support his head properly, and you will need to hold him carefully to secure it in some way.

Smoking should not be allowed in the vicinity, as premature babies are more likely to suffer from respiratory illnesses.

Your baby will likely need to see the pediatrician more often, as their growth and development may require special monitoring.