

## Psychomotor Skills in Children from 3 to 4 Years Old, Guidelines for their Development in Cuba

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### Abstract

An investigation was carried out on the psychomotor development in children from 3 to 4 years of the Educate your Child Program, which provided a methodological conception of this process, made up of four basic components: the theoretical references, a system of games and exercises, the moments for its realization and a system of professional improvement for the preparation of teachers. These components constitute a system because of the interrelationships that are established between them. The aforementioned conception is the theoretical support of a Methodology that has favored the preparation of teachers and families for the stimulation of psychomotor development in children. A pre-experiment was carried out that allowed verifying the results obtained with the application of the Methodology, also supported by workshops with teachers and families.

**Keywords:** Psychomotor Development; Sports Team

### Introduction

The subsystem of Preschool Education begins in the Infant Institutions and in the Non-Formal Way. For the country, carrying out exercises from an early age has great significance and institutional programs and Educa a tu Hijo are observed. This program is a Cuban educational alternative, a prelude to primary education, it was created from the fact that children's institutions were insufficient to serve children 0-6 years who did not attend them.

It is an educational program that takes the family and the community as pillars for its realization and that, with an intersectoral approach, under the coordination of the educational sector, and the National Institute of Sports, Physical Education and Recreation [1], structure and designs actions to provide comprehensive care to the child from the mother's pregnancy period.

Joining the Educate Your Child Program allows the development of moral qualities and values such as emotions, feelings, interpersonal relationships and norms of behavior, knowledge of the world of objects, spatial relationships, body expression and others.

Psychomotor education, at the initial level, must be a continuous experimentation of the child with the environment that surrounds him, likewise the parents or school environment must be the main axis for the child to learn to develop properly, which have as aim to teach them through exploration. At the preschool level, playful global psychomotor activity is a priority because it allows the child to continue with the organization of their body image through what is evidenced and serve as a starting point in relation to the development of their perceptual analysis attitudes. Therefore, psychomotor education should be considered as a basic element in education.

One of the main axes of psychomotor development is psychomotricity, which gives a logical significance to movement and allows the child to integrate and coordinate the functions of psychic life with movement, becoming a learning process, which is why it is essential. It is important for the four-year-old to develop their coordination and motor skills, because through this they not only achieve psychomotor learning but also develop various learning for their daily life.

This article is the result of a scientific investigation, originated by deficiencies in the psychomotor development of children due to the use of inappropriate exercises, limited methodological preparation of teachers and families due to the limited variety of games that stimulate psychomotor development in children 3 to 4 years of the "Educate your Son" program. From the application of the aforementioned methodology, a valuable teaching instrument was provided to the teachers and the families of the children in the sample, who showed greater independence and psychomotor effectiveness in the activities carried out both in the educational institution and within the family.

To carry out the research, a sample of 10 teachers, 20 families and 49 children of both sexes from the Versailles community was studied.

### Developing

The research offers a methodological conception of the teaching-learning process of psychomotor development in children from 3 to 4 years of the Educate your Child Program, which is based on foundations from Philosophy, Sociology, Pedagogy and Psychology, as well as its concretion in Physical Education. As philosophical-dialectical support, the postulates of the materialist dialectic are assumed, particularly, Marxist-Leninist.

In sociological referents, the relationship between the individual and the social is considered as a complex system, since it occurs in the development of the personality itself. For this author, this is an essential mechanism for the full socialization of man, as a process that must promote communication, personal exchange and group interaction.

From Psychology, the support offered by the theses about the social origin of higher psychological functions that led Vygotsky [2] to propose the mediated structure of these functions is significant. The postulates of Rubinstein [3] on the character of the will are also considered, taking into account that every act of will responds to an oriented action, and occurs under conditions of internal conflict of contradictions and tendencies and is transmitted by the consciousness of the personality. The existence of the will in the subject is conditioned by the fact that it has important objectives and tasks. "The more significant and attractive they are, the stronger your will, the more intense your desires, the more tenacious your ambition to realize them. For the human being, everything that is related to their needs and interests is significant". (p.557).

As pedagogical foundations, the principles of the teaching-learning process of Bermúdez Morris [4] are established, including the unity between the protagonism of the student and the direction of the teacher, the link between education and life, the social environment, work and the process of personality education, the unity of the instructive, the educational, the affective and the cognitive in experiential learning, the unity of individual and group learning and the unity of activity and communication.

From the didactic-methodological postulates, the conception provided is based on the work regulations elaborated by INDER, when it refers that work in Physical Education is developed with two senses: as prophylactic work, the maintenance of health and the use of the physical exercise as a fundamental means to reduce the risks of certain diseases, contributing to a massive extension of physical activities [1]. The importance of physical activation and the practice of sports is taken into consideration for academic performance [5], as well as for the health of those who practice them [6].

Within the Theory and Methodology of Physical Education establishes "the proper selection and ordering of physical exercises, systematic application, individualization and dosage" [7]. Ibarra, S., *et al.* [8] also work on this problem, but specifically, for boxers.

In social, educational or promotional work, the needs and motivations that justify doing it are often clear, and even the objectives of the actions. What frequently causes the greatest difficulty is how to do it, how to achieve the objectives, how to adequately work on a certain topic with a specific group of people, how to define the stages, how to define the stages of a medium or long term, how to articulate the contents of a program aimed at many people with individual needs and rhythms, etc.

On the subject of psychomotor skills, several investigations have been carried out, for example those carried out by Pérez-Santana, H. [9], Pirazán, M., *et al.* [10] Obando, A. [11], means the development of 'motor skills and emphasizes the importance of the psychomotor area in the intellectual development of the child. Other authors, such as González, C. [11], have also addressed motor skills. This author has intentionally worked it for children between one and six years old.

The authors studied mean the details and differences between fine and gross motor skills, as well as the activities that must be carried out for the development of both [12]. The scholars of this problem also propose actions for the family, exercises and games for the development of motor skills, but in none of the cases is a methodology taken into account that allows for a better preparation of teachers and the family in this regard.

The methodological challenges, although they imply the search for technical tools, of course, must be assumed with the definition of criteria and methodological principles that allow structuring an entire work strategy: planning, designing, executing, evaluating and systematizing orderly and coherent processes that have a cumulative logical sequence and resulting in a qualitative transformation from which it was started.

The methodological conception for the solution of the problem raised comprises as basic components:

- Theoretical starting points
- Characterization of the game system and exercises to be applied.
- Moments to carry out the exercises.
- Professional improvement system: (System of methods to be used for the study of the psychomotor development of children aged 3 to 4 years old).

The starting theoretical references include: to) The didactic-methodological principles of Physical Culture, described by Calderón. (2006), are:

- Principle of consciousness - activity.
- Sensory-perceptual principle.
- Principle of affordability and individualization.
- Principle of systematicity
- Principle of dynamic and gradual increase in demands.

Its main laws

- Exercise law.

- Law of the unity of the organism and the environment.
- Law of the reciprocal dependence of the quantitative and qualitative changes that take place in the organism,
- Law of the unity of theory and practice.
- Law of sensory and rational knowledge.

The concept of exercise from a psychological and educational point of view.

### Characterization of the role play system and exercises to be applied

Role plays and exercises allow the fullest incorporation of all parts of the body in the movement, avoiding the one-sidedness of the load, thereby achieving a generalized influence on the child's body. Its main characteristics are:

- The games must allow a freedom of action, a naturalness and a pleasure that is difficult to find in other activities of the child.
- They must promote positive emotional states.
- They will contribute to develop the imagination, creativity and psychomotor possibilities, since in the activities that children reproduce during the game there is always participation of their thinking.
- They will stimulate rapid performance and physical effort in each action; hence they develop motor skills.
- Intellectual abilities will also be developed, although learning through play should never diminish the child's enjoyment and independence when playing.
- The intellectual tasks must be related to the movements to be executed so as not to affect the dynamism of the game.
- They must maintain the required motivation at the child's age.

The teacher must always consider and process the information obtained from the performance of games and exercises by children.

The methodological conception takes into account the following moments to carry out the role plays and exercises:

- **First moment:** The child will be told the explanation of the task to be carried out during the activity.
- **Second moment:** The explanation of the task is repeated to the child, at the same time that it will be demonstrated.
- **Third moment:** The family member will carry out the activity together with the child.

### Professional improvement system

The methodological conception of the teaching-learning process of psychomotor development in children from 3 to 4 years of the Educate your Child Program is guaranteed through a system of professional improvement for the teachers involved. Here are some proposals.

Postgraduate courses on

- The psychomotor development of children aged 3 to 4 years old.

- The Educate Your Child Program.
- Family participation in the psychomotor development of children.
- Exercises and games for the psychomotor development of children from 3 to 4 children.

Methodological training on

- Planning and dosing of the Educate Your Child Program
- The class with children from 3 to 4 years old in the Educate Your Child Program
- The methods and means used in the classes.
- Work with the family.

Exchange workshops on psychomotor development in 3- to 4-year-old children from the Educate Your Child Program.

- National and provincial events on psychomotor development in children from 3 to 4 years of age from the Educate Your Child Program.
- Specialized conferences on the subject.

Master's studies

- The teacher's preparation for the psychomotor development of children from 3 to 4 years of the Educate Your Child Program.

PhD thesis on the subject.

The methodological conception is represented as follows

This theoretical conception is the main support of a Methodology for the psychomotor development of children between 3 and 4 years of the Educate your Child Program, elaborated with the aim of preparing teachers and families to stimulate psychomotor development in children from 3 to 4 years of age. 4 years of the Educate Your Child Program through the different joint activities.

The Methodology was organized in four stages

- Stage 1: Diagnosis
- Stage 2: Planning
- Stage 3: Execution
- Stage 4: Evaluation.

At each stage, objectives and actions were specified for its development.

### Diagnostic stage

### Objectives

- Determine the indicators of the diagnosis to be carried out
- Detect the achievements and difficulties that children present in psychomotor development.
- Clarify the causes of the appearance of difficulties.
- Determine the developmental potentialities of children.

### Actions

- Specify as indicators (those used in the diagnosis of the research):
  - Psychomotor development of children.
  - Amplitude and fluidity of the exercises.
  - Teacher preparation.
  - Family contribution.
- Observe the joint activities of the Educate Your Child Program.
- Apply the children's psychomotor measurement test.
- Interview teachers
- Survey the family
- Verify the knowledge that teachers have about the methodological conception.
- Exchange workshop with teachers about their knowledge of the methodological conception and favorable or unfavorable criteria on the application of activities for psychomotor development in children from 3 to 4 years of the Educate Your Child Program.

### Planning stage

#### Objectives

- Analyze the results obtained with the diagnosis corresponding to the previous stage.
- Project the activities to be carried out to resolve the negative results that have been obtained in the diagnosis.
- Consider the activities to be carried out with the family, as well as role plays and exercises with the children for their psychomotor development.

#### Actions

- Carry out a collective analysis with the teachers to let them know the results obtained in the diagnosis.

- Hold a brief meeting with the family so that they learn about the important diagnostic results for them.
- Plan, in correspondence with the results of the diagnosis, the holding of a specialized conference with the family to offer guidance that will enrich their preparation and participation in the Educate Your Child Program.
- Determine the most convenient role-plays and exercises to apply for psychomotor development in children from 3 to 4 years of the Educate Your Child Program.

### Execution stage

#### Objectives

- Prepare the family for the application of role plays and exercises with the children.
- Execute role plays and exercises that contribute to psychomotor development in 3- to 4-year-old children from the Educate Your Child Program.

#### Actions

- Carry out an activity with the family that prepares them for the application of role plays and exercises with the children.
- Apply the following role-plays for psychomotor development in children from 3 to 4 years of the Educate Your Child Program.

#### Motor game: walk in the zoo

- Skills to develop walking, work time is 15 to 20 minutes of 3 to 4 repetitions and two weekly frequencies.
- Language skills: Singing.

Development of the activity: The teacher explains an imaginary trip to the zoo on foot where the children must make different sounds or animal movements, they must move in different directions. This game involves:

- Complexity of the exercise: They should walk to the front, to the side, backwards.
- Familiarize the child with the toy.
- Describe the toy.
- Motor activity.
- Rules: Walk on an incline and run back.
- Media to be used: Toys, pictures and video.

#### Motor game the beach and the crab

- Skills to develop: Quadruped and crawl.

Development of the activity: The teacher explains through an image situation a walk to the beach emphasizes the movement of the crab and its movement based on this context, explains the skills and with a song encourages the child to carry out the activity. This game involves:

- Familiarize the child with the toy.
- Describe the toy.
- Motor activity.
- Means to be used: Song the little crab went out for a walk and toys
- Complexity of the exercise: Perform Quadrupeds in front, back, then crawl and crawl back.
- Rules: Variant: Running back.

### Motor game the player

- Skills to develop run and catch.

Development of the activity: The teacher shows a photo of a ball game, explains that at the time of batting they must run at the teacher's voice or signal, draws the bases on the ground, shows them how they should run and catch the ball. This game involves:

- Familiarize the child with the toy.
- Describe the toy.
- Carry out motor activity.
- Complexity of the exercise: The skill is emphasized in the coordination of arms and legs.
- Media to be used: Sheets, cardboard pieces as a base
- Rules: Variation: Throw, run, and catch.

### Motor game throwing fish

- Skills to develop throw.
- Familiarize the child with the toy.
- Describe the toy.
- Carry out motor activity.

Development of the activity: Take a walk to the aquarium through a sheet where the fish have to be fed in a pond by throwing food at it according to the ability shown by the teacher to be executed by the children.

- Means to work: A Swedish drawer or cardboard box, cardboard fish and plastic toys.

- Rules: Variation: Throw, run, and catch
- Complexity of the exercise: To be able to throw into the box with one hand, with two, from the front, from the back, at a distance of 5 cm.

**Motor game: Moorish horse**

Skills to develop climbing

- Familiarize the child with the toy.
- Describe the toy.
- Perform psychomotor activity.

Development of the activity: they are encouraged to imagine riding Elpidio Valdés' horse and they need to get off it in the way explained and demonstrated by the teacher

- Media to be used: Sheet, trunk, or a Swedish drawer
- Complexity of the exercise: Getting to the middle
- Rules: Walk back.

**Motor game: the helicopter**

- Skills to develop climb.
- Language skills. Sing short songs, speak, describe, narrate.
- Familiarize the child with the toy.
- Describe the toy.
- Carry out motor activity.

Development of the activity: Take an imaginary trip in a helicopter that will take them for a walk, but for that they must climb a ladder, the teacher guides them in the execution of the activity.

- Means to use ladder or trellis, take them to a park.
- Complexity of the exercise: That they manage to climb the ladder.
- Rules: Go up and down the ladder

**Motor game: the jumping man**

- Skills to develop jump

- Describe the toy.
- Carry out motor activity.

Development of the activity: The teacher uses the imaginary processes and tells them that they have to discover where the rabbit is and that each one must jump as they are.

- Complexity of the exercise: Perform a jump upwards, towards the front, with each leg.
- Media to be used: Pictures, toys and song
- Rules: Jump in pairs and run back.

Develop with the children the following exercises for psychomotor development:

- In Physical Education, if the motivation is related to a walk in the field, the children will be invited to walk, to collect the fruits of a tree by opening their hands to pick them up and close them by detaching it from the tree.
- In elementary notions of Mathematics, if the motivation is related to the visit of the athletes, for the children to select the colors that they will wear in their suits at the end of the activity, they will be proposed to take the materials one by one using only the index finger and the thumb for athletes to see how well they do walk.
- In Mother Tongue, if the motivation is related to Mother's Day, the children are proposed to make an object to give to mother.

### Evaluation stage

#### Objective

To evaluate the results obtained with the games and exercises applied for the psychomotor development of children.

#### Actions

- Evaluate the psychomotor development obtained by children with the application of role plays and exercises through the psychomotor measurement test.
- Carry out a comparative analysis in relation to the results obtained in the diagnostic stage.
- Specify the aspects of children's psychomotor development that should continue to be worked on.
- Consider the role played by the family in the application of the Methodology.
- Determine what new actions to take to improve the role of the family and the psychomotor development of children.

The Methodology for psychomotor development in children from 3 to 4 years of the Educate Your Child Program also has a system character, since its purposes can only be achieved through the set of elements that constitute it and their relationships, which is impossible achieve with the mere independent sum of each of them.

A pre-experiment was carried out to assess the feasibility of the main theoretical and practical results of the research whose results.

Through observation, the teachers carried out an assessment of the form and independence that the students are reaching in the behavior of the psychomotor development, they identify new regularities by showing the impact of the psychomotor development exercises that start from the update of the diagnosis initial until your feedback. The results are expressed here:

- As part of the results, a questionnaire was applied to the 42 Physical Education teachers of the Educate Your Child Program in June 2019, to determine their assessments regarding the applied methodology.

The results obtained “with very significant figures from the statistical point of view” show that:

- 100% of the teachers consider that the methodology meets the necessary requirements to attend to the psychomotor development in children from 3 to 4 years old during the class of the Educate Your Child Program.
- 100% of the teacher’s state that the proposed objective of the methodology corresponds to the needs and potential of children from 3 to 4 years old, being a path that contributes to psychomotor development during the class of the program educate your child.
- Applying the Methodology, the teachers made a final diagnosis and carried out a comparative analysis of the results obtained in the initial diagnosis.

The results obtained were the following

- The preparation of teachers and families to carry out the Educate Your Child Program.
- In the interview with the 10 teachers, 9 (90%) found the generalization and irregularity of the guidelines they receive for adequate care for the psychomotor development of the children they attend, highlighted by the positive results of the 20 observations made; 9 (90%) were evaluated of B and 1 (10%) of the stimulation of the assimilation levels 8 (80%) evaluated of good and 1 (10%) of regular; a deeper and more effective preparation was achieved to such Effects 9 (90%) workshops and 9 (90%) training 2 (20%) courses and postgraduate courses as a way to improve their performance in the activities they develop.
- Of these 10 teachers, 9 (90%) have 3 years of work, 1 (10%) have no experience due to having started working in this course, 3 (30%) are in their second year, 4 (40%) in the third year of the bachelor’s degree, 2 (20%) in the fourth year of the Bachelor’s Degree in Physical Culture and they are between 22 and 29 years old.
- The involvement of the families was efficient, given the knowledge that they were taught about the psychomotor development of children from 3 to 4 years of the Educate Your Child Program.
- In the 20 family members of the children, their knowledge about the factors that intervene in an adequate work of value for the psychomotor development of their children and the need for 19 (95%) to receive appropriate guidance to achieve this important objective, that 19 (95%) liked the program for the preparation that children receive to form their age-specific psychomotor skills, 18 (90%). Likewise, the massiveness of these activities and their knowledge 19 (95%) about the materials that they must provide for these activities and approximately all the family members 20 (100%) considered the treatment that teachers give to children as affective. The psychomotor development in children from 3 to 4 years of the Program.
- In this research, it was possible to overcome the skills in the psychomotor development of the children of 3 and 4 years of the Versailles sports team, it is shown that the scores obtained are located in the categories according to the normal risk levels, 78%, where these 22% have normal psychomotor development at risk and 0% are delayed.

- The language component of psychomotor development despite having improved its score is the lowest, coordination being the minimum of the score and motor skills was the highest score.
- In language, the children's emotional expression, they improved their character, they became more friendly and less in their behavior during activities.
- In motor skills, greater perception was observed in their psychomotor movements, more control of their impulses and affectivity with their peers, they gained will, autonomy, security that allowed them to achieve socialization and support from others through defense mechanisms in correspondence with the behavioral profiles that are defined at work. The combination of the coordinative activities and the affective command of the Physical Culture teachers of the Educate Your Child Program were decisive for their emotional development from their intelligence and the formation of their personality.
- In psychomotor coordination, balance, coordination and rhythm were dramatically improved, in perception, rhythm exceeded his visual and auditory sense, his neuro-hyperceptive-motor behaviors, laterality, the sense of directions and definition of their corporeality and perception regarding the time and space of each child.
- Results of the user criteria applied to the Physical Education teachers of the Educate Your Child Program.

The results obtained with highly significant figures from the statistical point of view show that

- 100% of the teachers consider that the methodology meets the necessary requirements to attend to the psychomotor development in children from 3 to 4 years of the Educate Your Child Program.

### Generalization of the results

From the indicators used to evaluate the results obtained with the application of the Methodology, it can be confirmed that

- It made it possible to increase the preparation of teachers and families to carry out the Educate Your Child Program.
- The Methodology allowed raising the psychomotor development in children from 3 to 4 years of the Program.

Critical opinion workshop method

These workshops have been considered methods that corroborate the effectiveness and validity of the research contributions.

### Workshop with teachers

#### Objective

To exchange criteria regarding the validity of the Methodology for psychomotor development in children from 3 to 4 years of the Educate your child Program.

#### Work procedure

The treatment of the contents related to the psychomotor development of the children under study was an important part of the workshop. After analyzing what they knew about the subject, the teachers offered criteria about the methodology, how they valued it, how they had experienced it and what they had reflected on it.

According to the teachers' evaluations, it was found that

- The Methodology offers more preparation to teachers on the psychomotor development of children.
- It contributes to a greater preparation of the family by the teachers.
- It is evident that, although there are teachers with doubts and fears of failing in this task, there is greater interest in their improvement in issues related to the psychomotor development of children.
- The procedures shared criteria on the importance of their preparation for the direction of the teaching-learning process of the psychomotor development of children from 3 to 4 years of the Educate Your Child Program.
- The topics addressed and the techniques used were favorably accepted by teachers, mainly due to their involvement in psychomotor development.
- The teachers insist on the need to continue developing activities with the family in order to increase their preparation for a better participation in the process.

### Workshop with the family

#### Objective

Obtain criteria from the family on the results obtained in the psychomotor development of their children.

#### Work procedure

An exchange was held with family members related to the children's psychomotor development. The most important part of the workshop were the criteria offered on the psychomotor development of children before and after applying the Methodology.

#### The most important were

- The families shared their knowledge about the factors involved in adequate work of value for the psychomotor development of their children.
- Topics taught about the need to receive appropriate guidance to achieve this important goal.
- It was evidenced that they like the program because of the preparation that children receive to form their age-specific psychomotor skills and their knowledge of the materials they must provide for these activities.
- They considered as positive the affective treatment that teachers give to children.
- The aforementioned aspects have made it possible to verify through the method of experts the validity of the Methodology for psychomotor development in children of the Educate your Child program.
- From the indicators used for the evaluation of the results obtained with the application of the Methodology, it was possible to increase the preparation of teachers and families to execute the Educate Your Child Program and increase the psychomotor development in children from 3 to 4 years of age.

### Program

Critical opinion workshops were also held with teachers and the family, which confirmed the results of the pre-experiment and corroborated the progress made in the psychomotor development of the children and a higher preparation of teachers and family members to contribute to it.

### Conclusion

The theoretical references of the research carried out allowed to assess the importance of the teaching-learning process of psychomotor development between 3 and 4 years of the Educate Your Child Program, which was enriched with the methodological conception provided in the research that allowed a characterization of the games of roles and exercises to be applied with children and other aspects of importance for their psychomotor development.

This Conception theoretically supported the Methodology for psychomotor development in 3 and 4-year-old children belonging to the Educate Your Child Program, which allowed to enhance their comprehensive training, as well as the greater preparation of teachers and family.

The research demonstrated the feasibility of both contributions, theoretical and practical.

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