**TITLE:** "MICROBIAL STAMP": AN EXPERIENCE REPORT ON MICROBIOLOGY PRACTICES IN SCHOOL WITH STUDENTS FROM THE  $4^{TH}$  GRADE

**AUTHORS**: FELIX, I.C.G.; BRITO, A.B.; NUNES, B.E.B.R.; MELO-NETO, R.D.; TAVARES, B.E.D.; OLIVEIRA, T.F.; SILVA, L.A.; LIMA, J.V.M.R.; QUEIROZ, A. C.; DUARTE, A. W.F.

## **INSTITUTION:** UNIVERSIDADE FEDERAL DE ALAGOAS, *CAMPUS* ARAPIRACA, AL (AVENIDA MANOEL SEVERINO BARBOSA – CEP 57309-005, ARAPIRACA – AL, BRAZIL)

## ABSTRACT:

The microbiology is the scientific area that studies the microscopic beings that, although are intrinsically related to our lives, they are not visible to the naked eve. This fact corroborates with the difficulty of understanding this science by children and its teaching, since the young public requires more visualization and handling for the learning, which puts us in the face of the challenge of integrating new teaching strategies and approach between microbiology and playfulness. The approach of the children's public with science is of great relevance, as introduces the child to scientific knowledge and instigates its curiosity to the investigation of new themes, making the learning process more stimulating and enjoyable. In view of this, we used a practice related to Microbiology to demonstrate the need for hand hygiene on an elementary school (Escola de Ensino Fundamental Jayme de Altavilla), in the city of Arapiraca-AL, with students from the 4<sup>th</sup> grade. The experiment, called "Microbial Stamp", consisted of the use of Petri dishes with nutrient agar as growth medium, where the children stamped their hands without any previous hygiene. Before the experiment, the students were questioned if their hands were clean, which would only be answered with the result of the experiment. After the students stamped their hands on it, the Petri dishes were sealed and taken to the laboratory, where they stayed incubated at 30.0 °C for 7 days. After this period, we returned at the school with the Petri dishes, and the children could observe that there was growth of bacterial colonies, filamentous fungi and yeasts that were in their hands at first, even if they were apparently clean. From this experience it became simpler and more stimulating to teach and understand both the existence of microorganisms, where they are, their functions, as well as the importance of hand hygiene, since that empirical knowledge provided support for the theoretical content. It is also clear that the use of practices such as this one in the elementary school environment, enables the creation of circumstances that facilitates the comprehension, even of the most abstract themes.

Keywords: Microbiology education, children education, hand hygiene

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