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## **INTEGRATIVE REVIEW: PREVENTION OF TEENAGE PREGNANCY AND COMPETENCIES OF THE NURSE TO THE PROMOTION OF HEALTH**

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### **ABSTRACT**

**Objective:** Analysis of the scientific knowledge produced by nurses related to teenage pregnancy based on the competencies of the promotion of health recommended by the Galway Conference. **Methods:** An integrative review on the literature based on the Pubmed and Cinahl database was conducted, and the sample was developed using nine studies that mention nursing activities, which promote health and early pregnancy prevention. **Results:** these studies demonstrate paths to the care/caring of the nurse, differently from the biologist, but facing an educative model, which aims to the promotion and maintenance of a state of health and life to the teenager. **Conclusions:** It is necessary the continuous performance of studies that motivate the discussion of this specific area of knowledge, aiming to the improvement of the assistance given to the teenager.

**Keywords:** Nursing; Teenage Pregnancy; Adolescent; Review Literature as a Topic; Promotion of Health.

## **INTRODUCTION**

Nowadays, the health of the adolescent and the early pregnancy constitute essential topics that generate interest and proportionate debate in the field of health. This happens not only because of biological and epidemiological aspects that define the general health profile of this group, but also, and above all, the enlargement of the concept of health and the conceptions of health promotion, linked to the quality of life, reproductive and sexual rights, gender, domestic violence and youth leadership<sup>(1,2)</sup>.

The teenage pregnancy is one of the most worrying occurrences related to adolescent sexuality. It is considered a social and public health problem in virtue to the implications that arrive from this event, such as the maintenance of poverty and the harmful effects to the mother's general health, and the concept that, especially between the ages of 10 and 14 years old, the risks are even bigger<sup>(1,2)</sup>. In Brazil, teenage pregnancy and its complications represent the main cause of mortality among adolescents between 15 and 19 years old, being the third main cause of death among women, just after homicides and car accidents<sup>(3,4)</sup>.

It is considered that teenage pregnancy has a multi-casual origin; actions of promotion and prevention must consider the vulnerability, gender, intersectorial and the socio-family network perspectives, with an approach center into the sexual education, beyond the biomedical view, considering the subjectivities: values, beliefs, attitudes and desires<sup>(3,4)</sup>.

The conception that Nursing has a health-disease process, and its nature influences significantly its action. In face of this re-signification and reformulation of its competencies (knowledge, abilities and attitudes) through the proximity of this new paradigm of promotion of health, a need of studies that mentioned these aspects of prevention of teenage pregnancy arose.

In June 2008, in the Galway Conference, in Iceland, it was instituted a consensus in relation to the international collaboration under the development of essential competencies to the promotion of health. Competency is understood as a combination of attributes that allow the individual to execute a group of tasks in a certain appropriated standard<sup>(4)</sup>.

In the consensus, it was identified the competencies of eight domains to the promotion of health: catalyze the change, leadership, evaluation of necessities, planning, implementation, evaluation of impact, advocacy and partnerships. In the Conference, is was reaffirmed the concept of promotion of health described in the Letter of Ottawa, as a process to capacitate people to enhance their control over their health and its determinants<sup>(6)</sup>.

Within this context, it is fundamental the visibility of scientific research related to the competencies of nursing in the frame of adolescent health promotion and prevention of teenage pregnancy and that justify the interest in developing a integrative review of the literature of studies which involve these competencies.

Therefore, this study aims to analyze the scientific knowledge produced by nurses referred to teenage pregnancy towards the competencies to the promotion of health mentioned in the Conference of Galway.

## **METHODOLOGY**

This is an integrative review that gives opportunity to a summary and a previous analysis of empirical and/or theoretical literature in a wide understanding of the phenomenon and by the possibility to reunite different data of different types of research lines<sup>(7)</sup>.

For the performance of this study, the following steps were taken: identification of the topic and elaboration of the guiding question; establishment of criteria to the selection of the sample; definition of the information to the extracted from the selected studies and categorization of the studies; evaluation of the studies included in this integrative review and, in the end, synthesis of the understanding<sup>(7,8)</sup>.

Considering the problematic of the research and to guide the present review, the following pilot question was generated: "Is the knowledge produced by nursing towards the promotion of health of the adolescent referring to teenage pregnancy congruent to the competencies of the promotion of health revealed in the Conference of Galway?"

The checked databases were: the Biomedical Literature Citations and Abstract (PUBMED) and The Cumulative Index to Nursing and Allied Health Literature (CINAHL). The

bibliographical search took place between the 1<sup>st</sup> and the 15<sup>th</sup> of November of 2010, considering the specificities to access to databases and using terms or keywords or Health Sciences Descriptors (HSD) and Medical Subject Headings (MESH) in the same order for all databases: "Nursing and prevention and Pregnancy in Adolescence".

The search was conducted by two nurses, professors of the first year of the doctoral program, with over four years of experience in the study of the subject. The professionals have already participated in this type of study before, including with academic background in database research during their doctoral program and in free courses by the Portal of Brazilian University Level Enhancement Coordination (CAPES, in Portuguese).

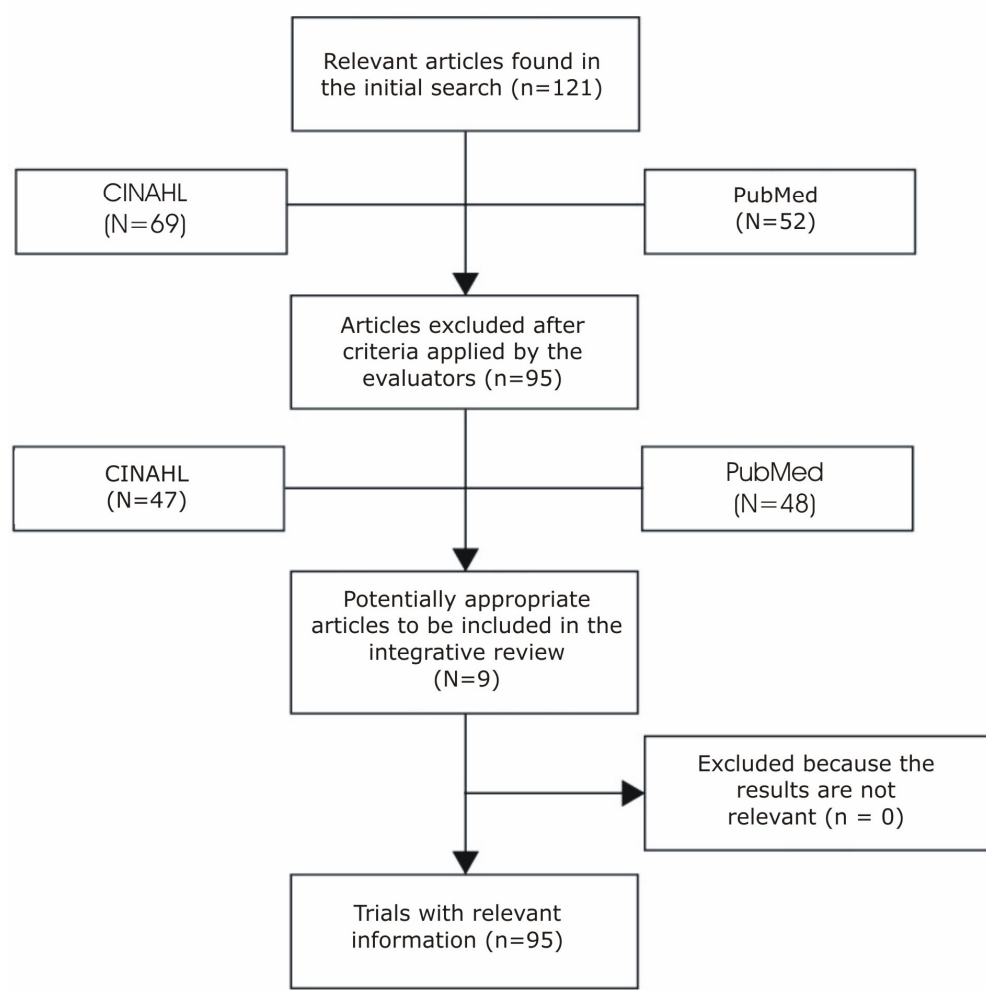
For the selection of the sample, the evaluators used the following criteria for inclusion: articles available electronically, published in journals on the abovementioned search machines, in Portuguese, English or Spanish languages; that aimed to the pilot questions and that responded the objective of this study. Excluded from this research: editorials, letters to the reader and studies that did not state topic at least relevant enough to the objective of this review.

## **RESULTS**

In a initial search, 121 articles were found, 69 in Cinahl database and 52 in Pubmed. From the articles, after the reading of available abstracts, 47 publications from Cinahl were excluded, as well as 48 from Pubmed. In the end, nine articles were read to the fullest and all answered the pilot question and then became the final sample of this review.

The strategy to data collection of the articles included in this integrative review has arisen from an instrument adapted to the theme of this study, with the following topics: identification of the article, location of the source, objectives, characteristics of the study, population/sample, results and conclusions<sup>(8)</sup>. Below, the representative flowchart of the search done:

**Image 1. Representative scheme of article search. Fortaleza, 2011.**



The results are presented in a spreadsheet format, and then analyzed according to the correlations, such as the necessary competencies to execute the practice of the promotion of health, established by the eight domains of the Conference of Galway.

The characteristics of the selected material, all from nurses who are authors or co-authors of the articles, it was observed that the majority of the publications are recent. In 2008, there were four articles, and in the period of 2007, 2004, 2003, 2002 and 1988 only one paper was identified per year. The United States is the country with more scientific contributions of the topic, with four identified articles, followed by Spain and England, United Kingdom and China, all with one publication each, such as the table as follows.

Table 1: Description of studies included in the integrative review. Fortaleza, CE, 2011

Database	Article identification number	Author	Year	Origin
CINAHL	1	Yako EM; Yako JM	2007	England
	2	Scott AA et al	2004	Spain
	3	Hand H	2008	USA
	4	Amanda M	2008	Spain
	5	Nuttall D	2008	United Kingdom
PUBMED	6	Garwick AW et al	2008	USA
	7	Tsai YF, Wong TK.	2003	China
	8	Porter LS	1988	USA
	9	Doswell WM	2002	USA

The predominant line of research was the exploratory and descriptive one, with a quantitative approach, confirming that this approach is increasing within the nursing scientific production scenario.

The Conference of Galway gave opportunity to define the competencies to the promotion of health, which names the importance of academic qualification, as it constitutes an advance in a sense to give direction and preparation for this practice (4). Table 2 presents the studies analyzed by the domains and competencies of nursing to the promotion of health.

Table 2 – Distribution of studies according to domains and competencies of nursing for the promotion of health. Fortaleza, CE, 2011.

Domains	Competencies/Articles
<b>Catalyze Changes</b>	Promote the education in health (1,5,7,8)
	Perform sexual advisory (1, 2,3, 7)
	Capacitate adolescents, parents and teachers (1,3,7,8)
	Establish links and trustiness with the adolescent, communicative competency (3,5,7,8)
	Promotion the relationship among the nurse, adolescent and family (3,7,8,9)
	Promote the empowerment and elevate the self-esteem of the adolescent (1, 5,6,7)
	Establish social and emotional support (1,7)

<b>Leadership</b>	Promote the mobilization and participation of the adolescents (1) Stimulate the communication of the nurse, adolescent, family and teachers (1,5,6,9) Generate evaluation (6,8)
<b>Evaluation necessities</b>	<b>of</b> Identify the determining factors/Vulnerability (1,2,3,5,6,7,8) Set the epidemiological profile (1,3,5,7) Recognize teenage pregnancy rates (1,2,3,5,7) Identify the reasons to not use contraceptive methods (1,3,4,7,8,9)
<b>Planning</b>	Plan supportive actions to the adolescent towards self-help and safe-sex practice (1)
<b>Implementation of actions</b>	Develop actions of empowerment (7) Strengthen the content of school curriculum (2) Promote strategies of access to health services and (1,2,3) Generate groups of adolescents (1,3,5,6,7,8,9) Protect attention to the adolescents in service (1) Work in multimodalities/multistrategies (6)
<b>Impact Evaluation</b>	Evaluate activities for the promotion of health (7, 9) Evaluate the tendency of teenage pregnancy (1,3,5,7) Evaluate access to contraceptive methods (1,7,9)
<b>Advocacy/ Defense</b>	Identify the reality of pregnancy and measures of prevention (2) Guarantee secrecy, privacy and confidentiality (3,5,7,8)
<b>Partnerships</b>	Articulate and establish partnerships between families, school and community (1,3,4,5,6,7,8) Establish partnership with the units of reference/secondary (5,8) Promote partnerships with other professionals/multidisciplinary (5,8,9) Strengthen partnerships between the nurse and the adolescent (1,4,7) Establish partnerships with religious institution (1,7,8)

## DISCUSSION

Based on the previously demonstrated results, the discussions were based in eight domains to the promotion of health, already mentioned: catalyze changes, Leadership, Evaluation of necessities, Planning, Implementation, Evaluation of impact, Defense of Cause and Partnerships.

**Catalyze changes:** This domain allows the transformation by the individual and collective capacitating project in a sense to improve health. This way, the competencies of the nurse are faced to the promotion of teenage protagonism in identifying and confronting the macrodeterminants of the

process health-disease, changing them favorably through the exercise of citizenship<sup>(5)</sup>.

The competencies of nursing directed to these domains have been present in the majority of the publications, highlighting the importance of the education of health and to the counseling based on the tendency and the sexual development of the adolescents, their rights and responsibilities (1,2,3,5,7,8). The educational process of the promotion of health of the adolescent must be systematic and collaborate for the decision-making process, such individually as well as collectively, towards a perspective of a healthy life<sup>(6)</sup>. It is also stressed the insertion of the family during this process.

**Leadership:** The world context imposes inevitable changes to nursing that needs to acquire new abilities, information and domains while dealing with emerging technologies, and the first of them that the nurse must dominate is the leadership tool<sup>(10)</sup>.

In the domain of leadership, the nurse competencies present in the studies point to the necessity to promote the participation of the adolescent, the family, the school and the community in the impediment of teenage pregnancy, stimulating the communication in community (1,6,8). Moreover, stimulate and motivate the teenagers towards a reflection of their responsibilities and compromises that come from early maternity and fatherhood<sup>(1,4)</sup>.

The nurse when next to the family has a privileged position to assume the leadership of the development, implementation and evaluation of programs of promotion of health centered in this scenario (8). This leadership allows and amplifies the perception of the adolescent, the psychosocial behaviors and low self-esteem, signs and symptoms of stress, uses of substances, devalorization of the one's self by the negative self-image, identity crisis and an invisibility feeling within the family.(9)

**Evaluation of necessities:** The term evaluation of necessities is used to describe the process of data collection to plan and organize actions. In this sense, it is imperative to consider the adolescent and the environment in which he/she is inserted in a wider perspective<sup>(8,9)</sup>. In the studies, the competencies of the nurse should help to identify determining factors of teenage pregnancy, vulnerabilities, reasons to not use contraceptive methods, establish epidemiological profile of the pregnancy and also of



morbimortality, violence, suicide, obesity and illicit drug consumption, considered one of the biggest vulnerabilities (1,3,4,5,6,7,8,9).

In studies that mentioned the prevention of teenage pregnancy in repetition, reports show that the first pregnancy was an accident (2,3), few admitting the practice of unprotected sex, which is done without a reflection of possible consequences (3,8), some others believed pregnancy wouldn't happen with them, stressing the exclusion of the man in this belief and his refusal to use any preservative (1,2,6,8). The results demonstrate that teenage pregnancy had a negative impact in many aspects, such as familiar, educational, occupational, conjugal experience of many youngsters and did not express any happiness to have their babies in such early age (1,8).

Many reasons are referred to the denial of use of contraceptive methods in some studies, and among them, the deficit of information about contraception and the risks of undesired pregnancy, lack of family planning, moral questions related to the church that did not defend the use of contraceptives, justifying that contraception induces to promiscuity (1,3,8).

It was also reported some barriers to the access to services and contraceptive methods; a certain fear of parents as the teenagers did not want the them to know they were sexually actives; the fear to collateral effects as the adolescents believe they could get ill and have future complications; irregular use of the method, mostly because of oblivion (1,8); inexperience and lack of ability to wear condoms (3).

**Planning:** In relation to planning, the competencies of this domain are faced to the development of plans, with measurable objectives and aims and identification of new strategies<sup>(2,9)</sup>. A study focuses the importance to prioritize the planning the supportive actions towards the adolescent's self-care and the practice of safe sex (1).

The planning must be done as part of the routine of nursing towards the meaning to promote sexual and reproductive health of the adolescent and prevention of teenage pregnancy. The active and autonomous participation of the adolescents, family and teachers in this planning, the execution and the evaluation of actions that contribute, decisively to the efficiency, resolution and positive impact<sup>(2,4)</sup>.

**Implementation of actions:** The implementation of actions, fifth domain of the Consensus of Galway, facing the effective and efficient fulfillment of strategies of the improvement of health and management of human and material resources<sup>(5)</sup>. In the process of decision-making, in the phase of implementation of interventions, the nurse must incorporate the positive results of the practice, with the competencies to strengthen the content of school curriculum (2), amplifying the strategies of access of the adolescents to the health services and to contraceptive methods (1,2,3), and create and maintain groups of adolescents (1,3,5,6,7,8,9).

In this way, the actions of promotion of health must be implemented in instigating, creative, motivating and innovative ways, able to stimulate the adolescent to participate in the educative process, counting with all the options and available resources in the community<sup>(2,8,9)</sup>. One article mentions that consistent messages should be transmitted in many diverse formats to reach the youth as a whole, and also calls attention to work with multistrategies<sup>(6)</sup>.

To form a group to work the sexual and reproductive health towards the empowerment of the adolescent was one of the most present competencies in this domain, emphasized that the incentive to the participation of the pairs constitute in a positive kind to prevent teenage pregnancy (7, 8). The sexual education revealed in a group of adolescents permits a positive result, by participation, reflection and capacity to comprehend the importance to lead a sexual life with responsibility and by the self-determination of protection of the pair<sup>(2,3,4)</sup>.

**Evaluation of impact:** The evaluation of impact analyzes the reach of efficiency and the impact of the programs and policies of the promotion of health<sup>(9)</sup>. The studies establish the competencies of this domain, facing the evaluation of the activities of promotion of health, reduction of teenage pregnancy rates and the access to the contraceptive services and methods (1, 3, 5, 7,9).

**Defense of cause:** The act or process of defense, the support to one's cause, is related to the conquest of rights. This act aims to create positive attitudes to decision-making process and leadership towards the improvement of general well-being, promotion of health and individual and community empowerment<sup>(2,9)</sup>.

The defense of cause is an action that the nurse must work on, motivating the adolescent to act deliberately under the name of his/her own health and well-being, and in the guarantee of his/her own rights referred to the accessibility to health services, as a whole, and actions that promote the empowerment, autonomy and self-care (7,8). In this domain, the competency in higher evidence was the advocacy related to the availability of contraceptive methods and to the ethic aspects of secrecy, privacies e confidentiality (3,5,7,8,).

**Partnerships:** The attention to the health of the adolescent should not be limited to the activities developed only in the area of health, as no organization isolated is able to fulfill all the necessary actions to assert the health and the development of the teenagers. Bonds and partnerships are essential to the creation of the conditions of protection and maximization of potentials of all<sup>(2,4,10)</sup>.

The promotion of health, emphatically the prevention of teenage pregnancy, need a cooperative labor in the improvement of impact and sustainability<sup>(2,3)</sup>. Therefore, the competencies in this domain demand articulation and establishment of partnerships with the families, school and community (1,3,4,5,6,7,8), with the units of references (5,8), with other professionals (5,8,9), between the nurse and the adolescent (1,4,7) and with the religious institution (1, 7,8).

The school constitutes a promising and favorable environment to the human development, and it is shown as an important partner to the sector of health and community, in the sense to reinforce the necessary conditions to the promotion of health of the adolescent, with the inclusion of many topics of health in the everyday of the school<sup>(1,2,3)</sup>. It is an environment that amplifies the opportunities of access to the educative, cultural, sport, leisure and income generation activities (5,6,7,8). The participation of the parents is also needed in these environments <sup>(2,3,4)</sup>.

## **CONCLUSION**

The nine articles analyzed allowed to present the nursing interventions to the promotion of health of the adolescent, with emphasis to the prevention of teenage pregnancy, and point out the merging points of these interventions and the necessary competencies to execute the practice of promotion of health, described in the eight domains of the Consensus of Galway.

All domains were patented in the papers, especially: catalyze changes, evaluation of necessities, implementation of actions and partnerships. In synthesis, the nursing competencies to the promotion of sexual and reproductive health and prevention of teenage pregnancy aim a multidisciplinary action straight to the adolescent, in partnership with the family, school and community, considered pillars of sustainability of a construction and consolidation of a project of life and postponing of parenthood.

The results promote a reflection of the necessity of the nurses to deepen their knowledge through research to amplify the competencies of teenage pregnancy, mainly the domains of planning and advocacy, with little evidence in the studies, as well as the performance of these same studies in Brazil, because there isn't any Brazilian research in this topic that answer the criteria of this integrative review.

The teenage pregnancy is a significant social and health problem, because of physical, psychological, social and economical implications. Strategies to prevent teenage pregnancy constitute a challenge. Studies show paths in the care/caring of the nurse, differently from the biologist, moreover turned upon the education that aims the promotion and the maintenance of a certain health and life state of the adolescent. This new format demands from the nurse a certain qualification and development of new competencies, giving priority to, in the nursing practice, abilities and attitudes that attend this perspective, faced to the promotion and education of the health of the adolescent.

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