

### Education and freedom in school health promotion: comprehensive perspectives on political action as a power in school communities

Educação e liberdade na promoção da saúde escolar: perspectivas compreensivas sobre a ação política como potência nas comunidades escolares (abstract: p. 12)

Educación y libertad en la promoción de la salud escolar: perspectivas comprensivas sobre la acción política como potencia en las comunidades escolares (resumen: p. 12)


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We aim to discuss the political action of the school community as a power for health promotion in Brazilian schools of basic education. Therefore, we reflect on the meaning of the exercise of freedom in the promotion of school health in the light of the references of action, freedom and education, tributary of the work of Hannah Arendt, and the reference of education as practice of freedom, tributary of Paulo Freire's work. It is concluded that the promotion of school health is part of the material and symbolic legacy that school transmits through the educational process, and that school corresponds to the period in which we assume the task of preparing the new ones to enjoy the freedom of political action.

**Keywords:** School health promotion. Education. Freedom.



## First remarks

Brazilian public schools have gradually embraced the theme of health promotion as part of their pedagogical activities. On the one hand, this action has produced positive and diversified health practices. On the other, the challenge is to overcome the concept of school hygiene<sup>(d)</sup>, based on the biomedical model<sup>1-5</sup>.

The concept of health promotion entered the limits of school communities – with greater strength to oppose the hygienist legacy – from the second half of the 1980s. Multiple factors contributed in this sense, among which stood out: the expansion of the debate on the democratization of health and education in the national scenario and; the alignment of national policies and international organizations, such as the World Health Organization (WHO) and the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO)<sup>1-3,5</sup>.

Through public policies to promote school health, it is intended to address the vulnerabilities that hinder the development of children and young people, expanding the meaning of their comprehensive education through promotion, prevention and health care; betting on the space that the school understands and its extension in the life span of children and young people<sup>1,2</sup>. Furthermore, in academic production in the health field, the promotion of school health is generally identified with the educational practices and services provided in primary schools<sup>(e)3</sup>.

However, converting health actions into pedagogical practices implies considering the different institutional times and the lack of common protocols to mediate the conception of practices, political and power relations between the health and education sectors; the challenges for producing a common understanding of reality; the approximation between health action and the reality of the school community<sup>2,4,5</sup>.

In this sense, we understand the promotion of school health as an articulated set of knowledge and different knowledges – specialized and everyday / popular – that (re) affirms the centrality of the subjects' practical experience with school communities, with the valorization of primary care in health in the context of their respective territory. Still, this notion allows us to understand the nexus of complementarity between the idea of promoting school health and the public policies defined for this purpose, insofar as it implies recognizing them as an ethical-pedagogical process of articulation of actions, of reciprocal accountability between sectors, which as a political action aims to promote the integral health of school communities<sup>6</sup>.

Is it possible to (re)invent health on the school floor? If policies aimed at promoting school health have this purpose, in order to achieve it, they will need to be built amid the complex and dynamic organization that makes this space, making the different subjects live together, with their ways of thinking and producing health. It is in this sense that we seek to enunciate comprehensive perspectives on political action as a power for health promotion in school communities.

In the first and second sections, we present the theoretical frameworks of “action”, “freedom” and “education”, tributaries of the work of Hannah Arendt, and of “education as a practice of freedom”, of the work of Paulo Freire. We conduct the reflection operating with the rigor of the concepts of action and freedom, because we understand that it is the action that makes the exercise of freedom possible. In

<sup>(d)</sup> Gerson Zanetta de Lima, in his historical study entitled “School Health and Education”, published in 1985 by Editora Cortez, identified that the concept of school hygiene was characterized by the inspection of students' health conditions, prescriptions regarding the conformation of school buildings to the needs of teaching and learning, and dissemination of rules on healthy living for teachers and students. Constantly readjusted to the interests of the political agenda, it became institutionalized and was decisively added to the school curriculum, motivated the training of education and health professionals, the creation of pedagogical devices such as fairs, summer camps, games, among others, remaining ideologically oriented by a political movement that aimed to modernize, nationalize and moralize.

<sup>(e)</sup> Educational practices correspond to health education actions, constituting the organization of pedagogical work. In the National Curriculum Parameters for the Environment and Health, the health contents designate a cross-sectional and interdisciplinary approach to the training of students, based on self-knowledge for self-care and public health. Teaching and learning practices focus on citizen education, solidarity, self-care and responsibility for public



the third section we discuss the meaning of freedom in the political action of the school community in the light of the Arendtian concept of plurality. In the final remarks, we aligned the propositions about the links between education and freedom in promoting school health, highlighting three points: it is part of the material and symbolic legacy that the school transmits through the educational process; the need to assume it as a link of responsibility between the parents of students, professionals in the field of education, health and other people who make up school communities; the understanding of the school community in its relationship with the human condition of plurality, considering that it expresses the fundamental elements for the exercise of freedom in education.

### **Hannah Arendt's and Paulo Freire's contributions to (re)thinking the promotion of school health from the perspective of freedom in education**

In Arendtian thought, freedom is understood as a demonstrable fact whose manifestation is subject to the existence of a public domain, politically assured, as a concrete space where it is possible for people to carry out their actions and speak their words to each other. Word and action are not separate, they need to establish an instance of power whose foundation is in the relationship and in the possibility of creating new realities. Freedom is not an attribute of the will, “but an accessory of doing and acting”<sup>7</sup> (p. 213).

In Arendt, freedom concerns the human capacity to act and, in the public sphere, its potency is manifested to the extent that joint action can imply decisions on common issues – the experience of plurality. The power to decide on common matters exists only because the action is carried out in the common space, in front of other people, aiming at a certain persuasion, but also being subject to the reaction, contingency and unpredictability of the action. Freedom, therefore, also expresses a gift, the possibility to initiate, to introduce something new into the world. Nevertheless, “the *raison d'être* of politics is freedom, and its domain of experience is action”<sup>7</sup> (p. 192).

Freedom presupposes political action. Arendt<sup>8</sup>, however, proposed a split between politics and education. How, then, could the scope of education be a space for action and freedom? We believe that, in a way, it did so when she called parents and teachers to take responsibility for education, as an affiliated attribution to responsibility for the world. We refer to the moment that precedes the classroom, the moment to dwell on education and decide on its directions<sup>(f)</sup>. Couldn't parents, teachers and other members of school communities take the promotion of school health as a common issue, as part of the material and symbolic inheritance that must be transmitted to students through education? It was from this point that we sought reciprocity in the references of Hannah Arendt and Paulo Freire, because, for both, the meaning of education is not separated from the political commitment of responsibility to the shared world.

We remember that the point where Arendt<sup>8</sup> separated politics from education – to safeguard its fundamental task – is different from the point where Freire<sup>9,10</sup> approached – deconstructing education as an instrument of political domination to think of it as a power for freedom. In addition, we are unaware of any Freirean reference in which the classroom is affirmed as a political space in the sense that Arendt<sup>11</sup> conceived the

health. The services cover the health conditions of the students, with clinical and psychosocial assessment.

<sup>(f)</sup> Health promotion from a conceptual point of view involves a broad conception of life, it targets the individual and the collective, it is based on autonomy, self-care, quality of life and an education that goes beyond the walls of the school, it needs to involve the whole in accountability practices for education and health promotion. Thus, it is essential that this concept is understood within the family and community



public domain where plural opinions are confronted. But for Freire<sup>9,10</sup>, any conception of education has a political, ideological orientation. And, because education has a political orientation, the school, especially the public one, is a space where community participation fits and where it should exist. Can it be said that Arendt<sup>8</sup> discredited the fact that the concepts of education are linked to political guidelines? Or that public education does not lack community participation?

If freedom is exercised through political action, admitting it in promoting school health presupposes the occurrence of interfaces between action and education; as well as it presupposes that, in some way, freedom and education are linked. However, bringing freedom and education within Arendtian thought is not a simple task, as Arendt<sup>8</sup> itself widened the distance between one and the other by arguing that education should be separated from the realms of public life and politics in order to not to ruin their fundamental task: to introduce new people into the world of material and symbolic achievements that precede them, enabling them to take responsibility for their continuity, conserving and renewing it.

However, birth<sup>(8)</sup> sustains a link between freedom and education, since education, when competing to introduce the new into this world, operates on the uniqueness of each one of them aspiring to prepare them to make something entirely new emerge in the world, what could only happen in the freedom of political action. In this sense, the challenge of education is, then:

to contribute so that freedom – that which breaks out into the world built with the birth of each human being – can in fact be realized and not remain only as a possibility<sup>12</sup>. (p. 467)

Thus, education corresponds to our attitude towards birth, which must be understood as an event typical of the common world, where it needs to be felt. According to Arendt, in the field of education:

what concerns us [... is] our attitude towards the fact of birth: the fact that we all come into the world at birth and the world is constantly renewed through birth.<sup>8</sup> (p. 247)

So, when we claim birth as a fact of the common world, we can assume the responsibility of, in education, through its pedagogical devices, helping the young to prosper the gift of freedom that is given them by birth<sup>13,14</sup> In this sense, education is the place, in terms of space and time, where we prepare them “in advance for the task of renewing a common world”<sup>8</sup> (p. 247).

For Arendt, “the essence of education is birth”<sup>8</sup> (p. 223), because educating is welcoming new people into a world that is unknown to them; bequeath that world to them so that they can later take responsibility for it; familiarize them with the world, provoking them to cherish it to the point that they want to bet on its continuity.

<sup>(8)</sup> The birth condition is the central category of Arendtian political thought because action is the political activity *par excellence*. It is about birth to the common world. That is to say, although born in an old world, through action, it is possible for people to start something new and, therefore, to renew the world. Through action we update the singularity that was given to us by birth and, therefore, we reiterate human plurality.



From the human condition of birth comes the potential freedom of the human being, this ability to start something unexpected<sup>7,11</sup>. However, accepting that freedom approaches education through birth does not imply bringing political action into the classroom, where the teacher's authority as a representative of the common world bequeathed by humanity must prevail<sup>(b)</sup>. We can state with Arendt<sup>7</sup> that education is a time of preparation for political action and that, although it has no power in itself to change the world, it can awaken in the new ones the gift of freedom, so that they transform the world they inherited for the better.

The human condition is the field in which people decide their destiny, and the category of birth can be understood as the critical instance capable of asking them about their choices. The affirmation of birth in education corresponds to the Arendtian bet on the human capacity of political action responsible for the world, on communication and on the hope of the (re)foundation of the common world, which can be operated by the inaugural powers that people carry with them<sup>15</sup>.

The exercise of freedom in education, as the responsibility to decide on the political elements that should guide it, is equivalent to our ability to bring education to "the web of human relations", making education a link between us and other people. According to Arendt<sup>11</sup>, in the field of common affairs, our interests are located in a space that occurs between us and other people, and around which we come to want to relate and keep together with these people in order to accomplish something common. It is the "space-between", which is "physical and mundane", bearer of the issues of the world of things in which we move, and which is also intangible – although real – "made up of acts and words, whose origin is it owes only when acting and speaking about men directly with each other"<sup>11</sup> (p. 226). This space-between, where we perform our actions and utter our words, is the very web of human relationships. In them we reveal ourselves to each other, and constitute the objective reality of the world. Nevertheless, the web of relationships where we can place education between people as a link of responsibility *vis-à-vis* birth, and the space between the political action that is the exercise of freedom takes place, are the interfaces between action and education .

Certainly, the responsibility for education as an attribute of responsibility for the shared world is something that brings together the ideas of Freire<sup>9</sup> and those of Arendt<sup>8</sup>. In terms of the relationship between the teacher and the student, and between both and knowledge, the defended thesis says that education actually occurs when it is an expression of the appropriation of knowledge accumulated by humanity – which is systematized and taught in schools – in the relationship of building knowledge with oneself, with others and with the world<sup>(i)</sup>. And, it is also worth mentioning that, in this sense, the political dimension that Freire<sup>9,10</sup> attributed to education is manifested both in the educational end and in its form, which is dialogical and mediated by the concreteness of the world. For him, it is from reading his own reality that students can understand themselves in the world. The more complex the educational process in this direction, the greater the cognitive conditions for students to appropriate the knowledge taught in schools. The greater will be their conditions to offer their transforming contribution to the world. According to Freire, it is through the understanding of his own history in the world and how it is constituted along with the human legacy that the student develops his transforming potential<sup>9</sup>.

<sup>(b)</sup>For Arendt, authority is not based on argument or coercion, but on the mutual recognition of the hierarchy; through it, the teacher assumes responsibility as a representative of all adults, introducing the common world to the new ones.

<sup>(i)</sup>The progress already observed in the sense of overcoming a biologist paradigm, whose foundation was in the discipline of the body itself to fight pathologies and epidemics, is undeniable. The 20th century worked to standardize hygiene and body care habits to ensure minimum health conditions and disease prevention. The challenge of the 21st century is to bring students closer to their own reality, establishing a dialectical reading of health and community life<sup>16</sup>.





As for Freire educating is a political act of love for people and the world, in terms of the principles and values that govern pedagogical ideas, this assumes admit that education is not neutral under any circumstances. Although a teacher may deny this understanding and refuse to take a clear position for himself and for students in relation to what he teaches and the way he teaches, his pedagogical repertoire can never be free from the political elements under which he was constituted. That is, every proposal for education, in its pedagogical expression as well as in its didactic strategies, brings specificities about worldview, society, conception of humanity, role of teaching, belief about how learning takes place, the teaching-learning relation and its implications for the organization of pedagogical work. For the author, the teacher cannot undermine his own position in relation to the world from his practice, under penalty of endorsing ideologies that he might wish not to reproduce if they became aware of their effects<sup>(j)</sup>.

Education as a practice of freedom should be committed to expanding access to historically accumulated knowledge, instigating students to curiosity and investigation of social problems and, also, to engagement in the world. Awareness, then, is a prerequisite of the educational act, because, through education, the student appropriates the necessary conditions to become aware of himself, of his history in the world, and to position himself critically. Education, more than anything else, is a way to get to know the world and uncover sometimes hidden questions<sup>9</sup>.

For Freire<sup>9,10</sup>, the formation of critical awareness in school education depends on the legacy of humanity's knowledge<sup>(k)</sup> being transmitted. Because we take ownership of that knowledge, we acquire the ways to read the world, to read reality. The more libertarian education will be, the more it will be able to assure students the wide appropriation of this legacy. Transmitting humanity's legacy of knowledge is the responsibility of education towards the world; and that symbolic legacy is also the world. And it is still in Arendt<sup>8</sup>.

### **Epistemic distinctions and reciprocities regarding the idea of freedom in education in the works of Hannah Arendt and Paulo Freire**

For Arendt<sup>8</sup>, birth to the shared world is linked to the unique appropriation of the inheritance that is transmitted to us by education, and this will depend on our ability to act in favor of the renewal and preservation of the world. Therefore, the teacher has the responsibility:

‘[...] to watch over the durability of the world of symbolic inheritances in which he initiates and welcomes his students’ and to make sure that they ‘can learn, integrate, enjoy and, above all, to renew this public heritage that belongs to them by right, but whose access is only possible through education’<sup>17</sup>. (p. 21)

Note that Arendt argued that the teacher's job corresponds to “serving as a mediator between the old and the new, in such a way that his own profession demands an extraordinary respect for the past”<sup>8</sup> (p. 244). However, this is certainly compromised in the face of the crisis of authority in education, in which the modern era reflects our disinterest in the past, that is, the loss of tradition.

<sup>(j)</sup> Such as the understanding of the health-disease process in a biologist perspective, so that the individual becomes solely responsible for his health, and his illnesses are understood as a result of his ignorance and lack of knowledge<sup>16</sup>.

<sup>(k)</sup> This legacy is formed by scientific knowledge and those typical of traditions.



The break with tradition implied the loss of contents that materialize different cultural traditions and we abstained from the dimension of depth<sup>(1)</sup>. Interestingly, Arendt's way out of the education crisis is love<sup>17</sup>. It would be love capable of provoking us to such an extent that, through education, we take responsibility for the world and "save it from the ruin that would be inevitable were it not for the renewal and the coming of the new and the young"<sup>18</sup> (p. 247)?

According to Freire, the transmission of knowledge is an exercise of releasing whenever taken in the sense that the teacher assumes the responsibility of passing on the symbolic heritage of the human community, creating conditions for the students to appropriate it and transform it by adding their contributions. It is not the teacher who is the liberator, but the one responsible for pedagogically organizing dialogicity at the heart of the educational process so that those people who are involved in it, through the appropriation of knowledge, free themselves from naivety in relation to themselves, to the world, to their position in the world. Politically oriented education as a practice of freedom is positioned in relation to the world and the way in which knowledge is conceived<sup>9</sup>.

Dialogicity assumes two dimensions: one at the level of interpersonal relationships established between the teacher and students throughout the educational process, and the other between knowledge – its appropriation / production – and the world itself. Dialogicity, as a guiding principle of Freire's education, can contribute to establish pedagogical mediations between states of knowledge – in the relationship with oneself and in relationships with others and with the world – and how much certain knowledge is valuable in view of preservation and renewal of the world. It is not a matter of listing knowledge that should or should not be transmitted, but of assuming to know critically the legacy of humanity.

Lovingness, enunciated by Freire<sup>9,10</sup> as a founding value of the encounter with the other in education, assumes concreteness in pedagogical practice insofar as it is based on the establishment of dialogical relations within the scope of teaching and learning, aiming to align the critical appropriation of knowledge to the preservation of student culture, the critical insertion in the world of cognitive development. Teaching activity can be considered a political act of creating the world. And this is lovingness<sup>9</sup>.

For Freire's thought, education is an act of love for people and the world and, therefore, in the exercise of teaching, the teacher must witness the principles of loving-kindness and dialogicity in his pedagogical practice. Thus, erecting concrete experiences of affection with students and the school community that they integrate, their practice, through the mediation of dialogue with others and with the world, will reflect the commitment to the consistent transmission of humanity's legacy of knowledge<sup>9,10</sup>.

Lovingness and dialogue correspond to the "loving encounter between men who, mediated by the world, pronounce it; that is, transform it, and, transforming it, humanize it for the humanization of all"<sup>18</sup> (p. 43). Nevertheless, the exercise of respect for the other, humility, hope and faith in freedom and the power of creation are referred to in pedagogical practice<sup>10,18</sup>.

<sup>(1)</sup> In Arendtian thought, the dimension of depth corresponds to memory whose reach occurs only through the activity of remembering, that is, the appropriation of this symbolic heritage.



## Freedom, political action and plurality in the school community

For Arendt<sup>7</sup>, freedom must be conceived as a demonstrable fact, that is, experienced in the political sphere and tangibly manifested in the phenomenal world, through words and actions that address human problems in general. This freedom can only happen when we decide to go out into the world considering that, more than the satisfaction of our particular needs, it is the world that is at stake. It is through this encounter with the human community, with the plurality, that we establish and ensure politically the concrete space where freedom can appear. In this way, the exercise of freedom occurs through political action. And, through action, always plural, political bodies are founded as the agents reveal their uniqueness, causing new beginnings and contributing to the preservation and renewal of the world. Through action, a new beginning is called to existence, something that, before acting, was not yet. But for action to correspond to freedom, first it must have the capacity to transcend its purpose. That is, the motives and intentions that, perhaps, from a particular act – arising from the singularity – established it. In other words, to be free, the action cannot take place subject to circumscribed motives and intentions in a predictable outcome.

Is it possible for the school community to follow the path of exercising freedom in promoting health? It can be inferred that, in the context of the debate on health policies aimed at children and young people in the public basic education network, popular participation intended – from the second half of the 1980s – to qualify the school community as a responsible body for the decisions and actions of health promotion at school, evoking an affective tonic that corresponded to the challenge of the imperative mode attributed to the hygienist logic<sup>1,4</sup>.

On the school floor, this implied both operating a certain mediation between the needs detected by health professionals and the needs that other members of the community identify as important, as it implied the understanding that it is possible and necessary to mobilize scientific knowledge appropriate to health promotion at school correlating them to the daily knowledge manifested in the school space. This, of course, does not mean overlapping everyday knowledge with scientific knowledge, nor the other way around. But, rather, understanding how scientific knowledge and everyday knowledge can help broaden understanding and communication of health care at school. Furthermore, a characteristic issue in this context is how health and education professionals, parents or guardians of students and members of different institutions and organizations who are interested in school health will, together with their knowledge, experiences and purposes, promote health at school<sup>19-21</sup>.

Certainly, anyone who is interested in taking responsibility for health promotion at school will have to reflect insistently on how to educate from the perspective of the human condition of birth; he will have to conceive school as a public space, avoiding the pitfalls of circumscribing popular participation to the instrumentalization of private and anti-democratic interests; it will have to permanently reflect on how health conceptions enter the school environment, and how, not infrequently, they are captured by a homogeneous political agenda that disregards the reality of the school and tries to subject education to the logic of particular interests.





Interested in school health, we could dwell on the reflection of what world health promotion at school teaches. To what extent does what we teach in the context of health promotion at school allow children and young people to read critically and enter the common world? And, regarding participation, would it be possible to take health promotion at school from the perspective of the plurality of people who can form a school community? Undoubtedly, how do we need to reflect? For what? For whom?

## Final remarks

Among the contributions of Hannah Arendt and Paulo Freire to think about education and freedom in the context of health promotion at school, we highlight, first, the possibility of understanding it as part of the material and symbolic legacy that school transmits through the educational process. This is because school corresponds to the period in which we take on the task of assisting new people for political insertion in the common world, helping them understand it, taking responsibility for it and preparing them to enjoy the freedom of political action; because through school education the new can enter the shared world and confirm the human condition of birth and; because through the proper means of education, we reiterate our responsibility to welcome the new by transmitting to them the material and symbolic legacy of humanity that will help them enter the common world. With Paulo Freire, we could also say that the appropriation of knowledge regarding the promotion of school health, as part of the human legacy, is fundamental for students to carry out a critical reading of the world and create the appropriate conditions to act on the reality of this world.

Second, we point out the possibility that health promotion at school is assumed as a link of responsibility between the parents of students, professionals in the field of education, professionals in the field of health and the other people who make up the school communities. This shared responsibility is what would make it possible, in Arendtian terms, to exercise freedom in promoting school health, as it corresponds to the moment when we decided to make it our space-between, placing it in our weave of human relations. We can infer that it is in this web of relationships, sheltered under the human condition of plurality, that we have the opportunity to together identify the political elements that, as they correspond to love and care for the world, should be translated into pedagogical objectives within the scope of health school.

Regarding the implications observed in the development of this study, we can highlight repercussions related to practice and research. From the practical point of view, the promotion of school health requires the exercise of shared responsibility, as an ethical horizon for reorganizing the knowledge and actions of health and education professionals and managers. It is crucial to establish communicative processes between sectors, with the alignment of the respective agendas, so that health and education can, in fact, get closer. It is a matter of increasing the intersectoral agenda to promote better levels of health care for school communities, whose mediators are the public health and education systems, which can contribute to the expansion of the respective public policies, the continuation of the evaluation the aggravations in partnerships and the gradual innovation of school health promotion actions, the promotion of multiple and reciprocal community-based mobilizations. The repercussions related to research, on the other hand, derive from the epistemological potency of interdisciplinary theoretical practice, characteristic of the



field of collective health, which makes it possible to operate structuring concepts in an integrating perspective, through training and permanent education processes capable of giving sustainability to the intersectoral articulation. The participation of students and the community in the political pedagogical projects of schools is part of the axiological scope for integrating social issues into health, and that, for this reason, broadens the school territory for health promotion actions as an exercise of freedom.

Finally, we highlight the possibility of understanding the school community in its relationship with the human condition of plurality, considering that, as a circumstance of political life, it expresses the singularity and plurality fundamental to the exercise of freedom in education. In Arendtian thought, the political community – plural, therefore – must be conceived as the very web of relationships formed between the agents committed around a common cause / issue. If we can affirm that collective and plural political action results in something that can be understood as a community, this concerns, precisely, the possibility that agents can weave webs of symbolic relations between them that operate important transformations in the living-in-common regime. To think of the plural community is to think of the plurality of the bonds that unite political agents. For this reason, a plural community is not something given, but it is a collective construction that takes place in the exercise of freedom of political action, takes place in the space-between created by its agents.

### Authors' contributions

All authors actively participated in all stages of preparing the manuscript.

### Conflict of interest

The authors have no conflict of interest to declare.

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#### Editor

Roseli Esquerdo Lopes

#### Associated editor

Flavio Adriano Borges

#### Translator

Ana Silvia Gesteira

#### Submitted on

01/27/20

#### Approved on

09/04/20



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É nosso objetivo discutir a ação política da comunidade escolar como potência para a promoção da saúde nas escolas brasileiras de educação básica. Para tanto, refletimos sobre o significado do exercício da liberdade na promoção da saúde escolar à luz dos referenciais de ação, liberdade e educação, tributários da obra de Hannah Arendt, e do referencial de educação como prática da liberdade, tributário da obra de Paulo Freire. Conclui-se que a promoção da saúde escolar é parte do legado material e simbólico que a escola transmite por meio do processo educativo, e que a escola corresponde ao período em que assumimos a tarefa de preparar os novos para usufruir da liberdade da ação política.

**Palavras-chave:** Promoção da saúde escolar. Educação. Liberdade.

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Nuestro objetivo es discutir la acción política de la comunidad escolar como potencia para la promoción de la salud en las escuelas brasileñas de educación básica. Para ello, reflexionamos sobre el significado del ejercicio de la libertad en la promoción de la salud escolar a la luz de los referenciales de acción, libertad y educación, tributarios de la obra de Hannah Arendt, y del referencial de educación como práctica de libertad, tributario de la obra de Paulo Freire. Se concluyó que la promoción de la salud escolar forma parte del legado material y simbólico que la escuela transmite por medio del proceso educativo y que la escuela corresponde al período en que asumimos la tarea de preparar a los jóvenes para que disfruten de la libertad de la acción política.

**Palabras clave:** Promoción de la salud escolar. Educación. Libertad.