

The risk of missing children and adolescents with disabilities: A Brazilian experience

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There are 9.000 missing kids per year in São Paulo, the largest state in Brazil. Since 2004, the families that registries an official report of missing person, less than 18 years old, are invited to participate in a program called “Caminho de Volta (CV)” from the São Paulo University, Medical Faculty that includes a detailed interview by psychologists and collecting of blood sample to establish the DNA profile. It was observed that in the CV databank of almost 700 families 10% of them were cases of children and adolescent with physical and/or intellectual disabilities. The objective of the present investigation was to evaluate the frequency of missing cases in 9 different institutions that serve children with disabilities. A total of 559 individuals, 306 men (55%) and 253 women (45%), were inserted in a preventive databank that included not only DNA from these children but also frontal image capture. The preliminary results of 251 (47%) cases of intellectual disabilities (54% Down Syndrome), 127 (23%) of blindness, 92 (16%) deafness, and 89 (16%) of other physical disabilities revealed that: from 56 (10%) of missing occurrences reported by their parents (80% intellectual disability, 14% deafness and 6% visual), 20 (36%) of them were missing more than two times, but official report was made only for four of them. The results indicate the importance of preventive strategies that includes not only the DNA profile and update photo files, but also the discussion of risks with the families and professionals. Supported by FAPESP/ LIM-40-HC-FMUSP.

Biography

Gattás GJF is the Associated Professor in the Department of Forensic Medicine, Faculty of Medicine, University of Sao Paulo. She is geneticist with post-doc in cytogenetic and molecular biology, Harvard Medical School, Boston, MA, USA, and coordinator of a Missing Kids Program with DNA database at the University, in Sao Paulo, Brazil.

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