

**CRC BRAZILIAN ALTERNATIVE REPORT  
HRE AND YOUTH**

Joint submission sent as a civil society report to the  
98<sup>th</sup> Pre-Sessional Working Group (May 27<sup>th</sup> - May 31<sup>th</sup>, 2024)  
of the Committee on the Rights of the Child



**IDDDH**

*Instituto de  
Desenvolvimento  
e Direitos Humanos*

**Co-sponsors:**



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## INTRODUCTION

1. The Institute for Development and Human Rights (IDDH) is a Brazilian civil society organization that, for 19 years, has sought to strengthen civic space in Brazil and Latin America through human rights education and articulation with civil society organizations to influence international human rights systems. It operates with: a) Training and Research (courses, workshops and materials), and, b) Articulation and Advocacy (Platforms for articulation and information on advocacy, such as the International Advocacy Network (RAI) and its Youth division (RAIJ). Find out more about IDDH through its digital platforms: [iddh.org.br](http://iddh.org.br), [Educar DH](http://EducarDH.org.br), [IndexDH.org.br](http://IndexDH.org.br).
2. Seeking to follow our mission, implement the 4th phase of the United Nations World Program for Human Rights Education (WPHRE - A/RES/66/137, 2011) and achieve SDGs 4 (Quality Education), 5 (Gender Equality) and 16 (Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions), IDDH established a **Youth Program** focused on strengthening the civic participation of young human rights defenders in international human rights forums.
3. The **Youth Program at IDDH** began in 2020, in which young volunteers instruct and articulate human rights education to other young people, aiming at greater participation of this group in the human rights scenario.
4. With the aim of making the opinion of Brazilian children at the CRC relevant, the Youth Program at IDDH developed this report to encompass the evaluations and recommendations of adolescents<sup>1</sup> [about Human Rights Education in Brazil](#), focusing on Article 29 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (Article that most encompasses HRE) and [General Comment](#) n.1 of the Children's Rights Committee.

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<sup>1</sup> According to Brazilian legislation, **children** are people under 12 years of age and **adolescents** those between 12 and 18 years of age (Art. 2 of the Child and Adolescent Statute (Law No. 8,069, of July 13, 1990). In turn, **young people are** people between 15 and 29 years old (Art. 1, § 1 of the Youth Statute, Law No. 12,852, of August 5, 2013). At the UN, the Convention on the Rights of the Child considers children people even 18 years old (Convention on the Rights of the Child) and young people between 15 and 24 years old (UN General Secretariat). Considering these classification variations, this report consulted children/adolescents between 15 and 17 years) and was prepared/coordinated by young adults (18 years old) from the Youth Program at IDDH). The intention is to be as inclusive as possible given the different classifications. There will only be no focus on children, since IDDH does not develop courses and methodologies specific to this age group in its leadership training.

## METHODOLOGY

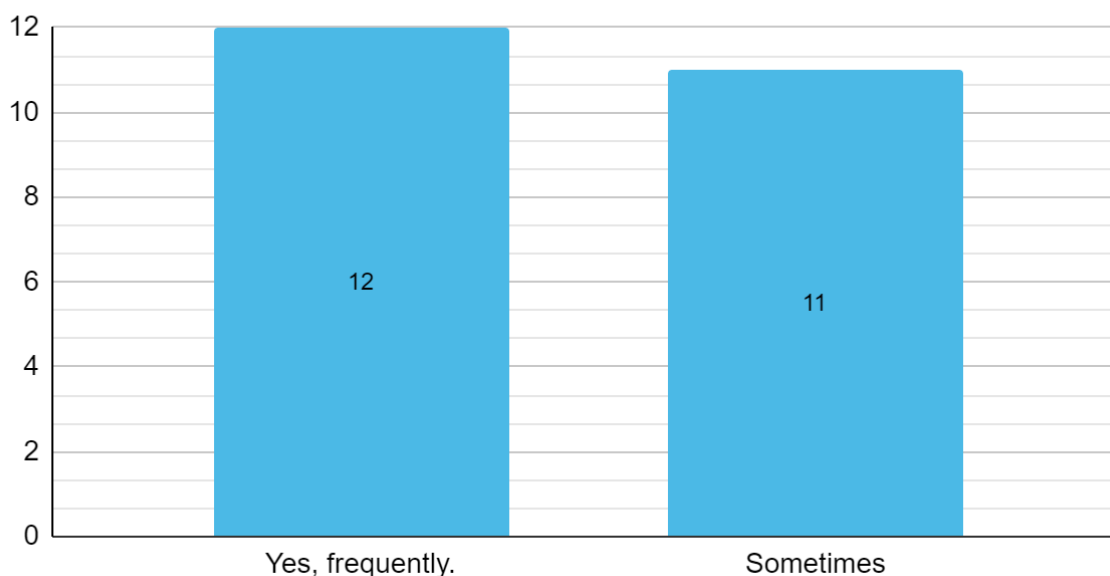
5. The Youth Program works with Human Rights Education because it believes that it is an essential component of the Right to Education and a driver of the values of human rights and the society we aspire to be.
6. Interns from the Youth Program at IDDH studied in depth the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the general comment n.1 from the Committee on the Rights of the Child. Seeking to directly understand the experiences of adolescents with EDH, they developed a questionnaire focusing on article 29 of the Convention, divided into subsections of the article. The form was launched on December 11, 2023 and was published until February 18, 2024, with the partnership of [ANCED Brasil - National Association of Child and Adolescent Defense Centers](#), [Brazilian Campaign for the Right to Education](#) and [Alana Institute](#) for publicity. Of these organizations, both ANCED and the Brazilian Campaign for the Right to Education co-sponsor this report. The form reached respondents in all 5 regions of Brazil, promoting an understanding of the national scenario regarding the proposed topic, despite having a limited number of people as participants. In total, there were 23 research participants from 8 of the 27 states in Brazil. It is important to highlight that IDDH, as a network to encourage EDH, also used the form not only for data collection but also for pedagogical purposes, concisely instructing respondents on subjects such as the UN, the 17 Sustainable Development Goals and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.
7. It is worth noting that for scale graphs from 0 to 10, the value 0 represents the least ideal situation, while the value 10 represents the most ideal scenario for the context of the question.

## RESEARCH AND OBSERVATIONS - EDUCATION, LEISURE AND CULTURAL ACTIVITIES (ART. 29: AIMS OF EDUCATION)

### I. The development of the child's personality, talents and mental and physical abilities to their fullest potential:

8. In this section, questions about freedom of expression and personality were asked to children concerning their education, in addition to asking for their recommendations on the topic. In general, when asked if the school allowed them to express their personalities, all of them understands that yes, frequently (12 children) or sometimes (11 children) are able to express their cultures and personalities:

Does your school allow you to express your culture/personality?

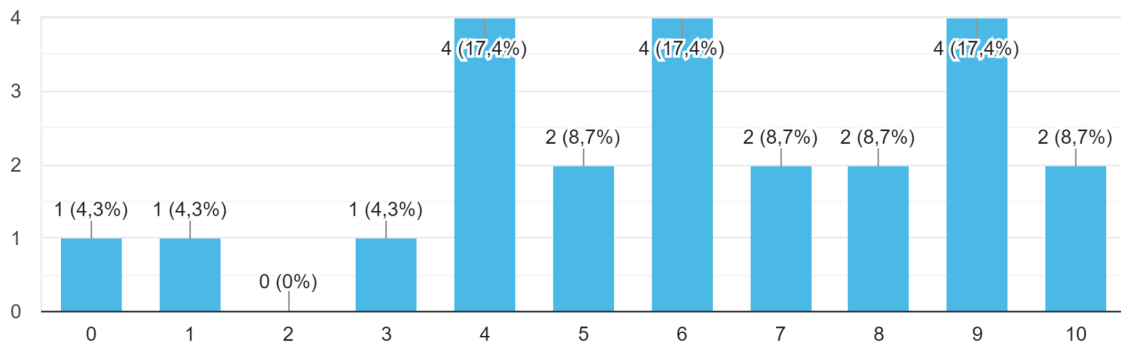


**Graph 1:** Children's perception of how much they can express their personal and cultural identity in school

In relation to how much the school allows them to express their personality and culture, the responses were no longer as homogeneous as seen in the graph below, where 0 would be the most restricted scenario and 10 the most in favor of development:

On a scale of 0 to 10, how much do you think your school lets you develop your own abilities, aptitudes and skills?

23 respostas



**Graph 2:** Distribution of the perception of how much children can develop their own abilities, skills and abilities in school

It can be seen that despite very diverse responses, the average ranged around 6, a reasonable value, but with potential for improvement. In view of these data, it is possible to affirm that children see the need for school to be an environment where children can develop their own skills and opinions. It is worth highlighting that the National Human Rights Education Plan (PNEDH) reaffirms the formation of a citizen conscience, in addition to valuing the development of participatory pedagogical and methodological practices and collective construction. It is important to highlight that, along with being regulated as a HRE practice, it is essential that children and adolescents feel comfortable developing their own skills and opinions in the school environment.

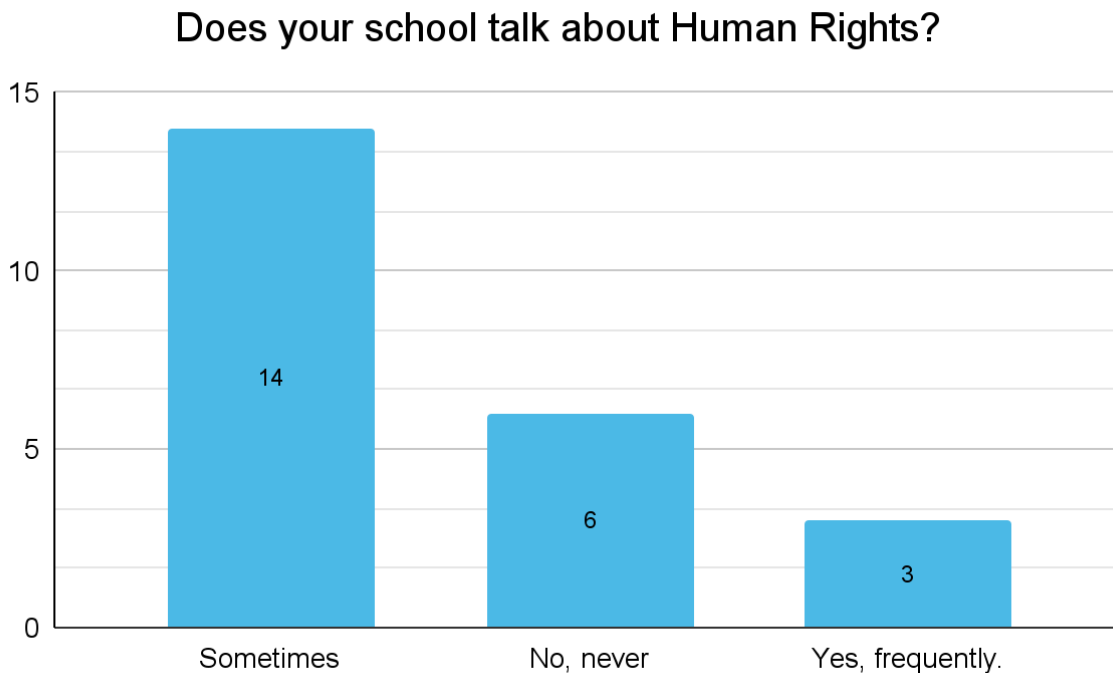
When asked what changes could be made in the school environment to improve this aspect, some of the recommendations were projects to encourage freedom of expression in schools, insertion of **courses on HRs in the school curriculum and the encouragement of extracurricular activities to build an environment not only for learning, but for valuing the individual.**

## II. The development of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, and for the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations:

9. When it comes to what the participants previously knew about human rights, the majority understand that they are fundamental and universal rights that must be respected regardless of the context, and that they must be ensured by rulers/governments. **However, some do not understand what these rights are**

and where they come from, as some of the answers stated that they were a “law created by the UN”.

10. The answers are predictable, as most children reported that human rights are not widely discussed in their school environment, as observed in the graph below, in which 60.9% (14 out of 23) of children reported hear about HRs from time to time in their schools:



**Graph 3:** Children's perception of how much their schools talk about Human Rights

A recent study carried out by UN Women together with the Ipsos Institute<sup>2</sup> highlighted that 8% interviewees know a lot about human rights, 76% of people interviewed know reasonably or little, while 16% don't. The study also identified an increase in favorability among the population aged 25 to 39 and with higher education, and a drop in favorability among the population over 60 years old and in the DE (low income) class. Furthermore, it should be noted that this form was published on social networks of NGOs or initiatives related to HRs. Therefore, it is possible to deduce that research participants already have contact with projects/institutions linked to human rights issues, not necessarily reflecting the reality of the majority of young Brazilians. For this reason, the need to encourage the inclusion of HRE in the Brazilian curriculum is highlighted, since the data above does not represent all Brazilian children.

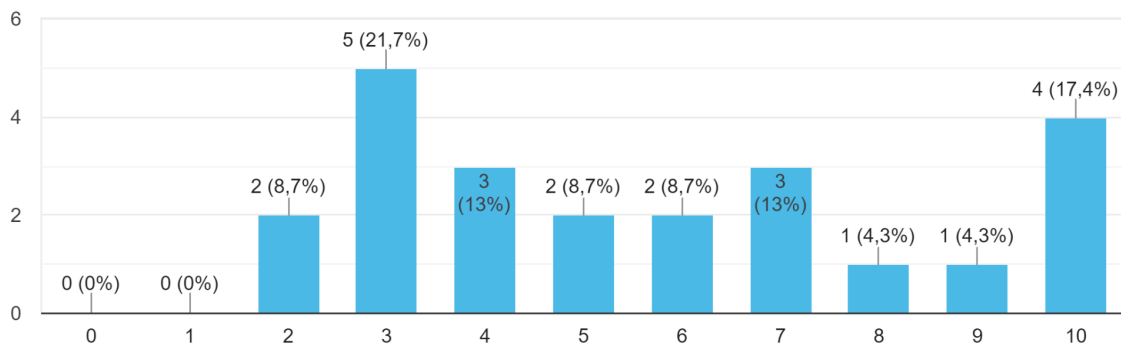
<sup>2</sup> UN WOMEN; IPSOS INSTITUTE. **Social Perception of Human Rights and Women Human Rights Defenders**. Available at: [https://www.onumulheres.org.br/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/ONU-Mulheres\\_Relato%CC%81rio-Executivo-Ipsos-2023\\_FINAL.pdf](https://www.onumulheres.org.br/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/ONU-Mulheres_Relato%CC%81rio-Executivo-Ipsos-2023_FINAL.pdf)

**III. The development of respect for the child's parents, his or her own cultural identity, language and values, for the national values of the country in which the child is living, the country from which he or she may originate, and for civilizations different from his or her own:**

11. The third part of the form comprised questions to understand how respect, human rights and the principles present in the United Nations Charter are being presented to children, especially when it comes to respect. The responses clearly portray that the majority understands broadly what respect and tolerance is. Furthermore, they commented that they learn about these concepts more frequently at home, through research on the internet, at school or through organizations and social movements that develop projects on these topics.
12. When dealing with different societies, more than 65% of respondents commented that they had infrequent contact with communities different from their own. Moreover, the same percentage indicated that their schools almost never promote contact with individuals from different communities. **As the following graph demonstrates, there is a great divergence when it comes to respect for the values and practices of different communities by their own communities:**

On a scale of 0 to 10, how much do you think your community respects the values and practices of different cultures?

23 respostas



**Graph 4:** Distribution of children's perception of how much their community respects values and practices of different communities

When asked about their recommendations to emphasize respect and tolerance, they mentioned the need to raise awareness among mothers/fathers and guardians on these issues, promoting understanding of diverse cultural values and practices - through campaigns, lectures and contact with different people - and also **be careful with the dissemination of fake news that may encourage acts of discrimination and prejudiced**



**ideas.** Some also highlighted the importance of religious texts and guidance from psychologists to improve relationships between people from different communities.

13. Thus, through the responses, it is clear that there is an incentive to practice individual and collective respect for children in different educational spaces in Brazil. However, this incentive is concentrated in the spaces of the community where they are inserted, ignoring values and practices of other cultures. Despite the responses received on the form, this is not necessarily the Brazilian school reality. The study prepared by the Brazilian Campaign for the Right to Education<sup>3</sup>, identified that schools and universities report several cases of racism and gender and/or religious discrimination, and, in some cases, the victim is discredited. To combat such speech or activities, many schools choose to expel the student as a repression of discrimination. We understand that it is necessary to carry out activities to raise awareness and knowledge of the topic, inclusion in school curricula and cultural insertion in the school environment, from the ground up, to educate students to prevent children from continuing to be victims of discrimination due to different cultural practices. With this in mind, the inclusion of HRE in school curricula is essential and consistent with children's concerns, as highlighted in the questionnaire responses.

#### **IV. The preparation of the child for responsible life in a free society, in the spirit of understanding, peace, tolerance, equality of sexes, and friendship among all peoples, ethnic, national and religious groups and persons of indigenous origin:**

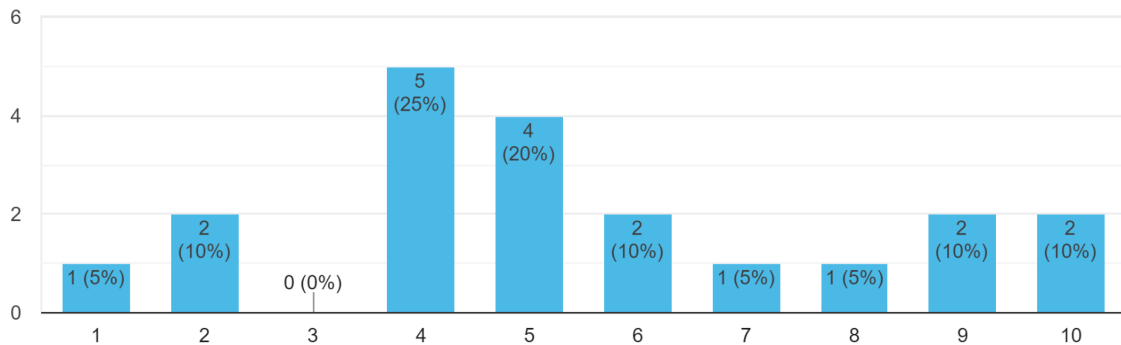
14. With the aim of understanding the dimension of the notion of responsibility and the community incentive for a life of equality, the children were asked about discrimination and prejudice. **When asked about the definition of discrimination and prejudice, they described it as historical-cultural patterns of thought and disrespect for the inherent qualities of an individual. However, many were not able to differentiate the concepts, linking their meanings and implications.** Furthermore, more than 85% of those questioned reported having already suffered or witnessed some type of discrimination caused by prejudice in their lives, with a moderate frequency.

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<sup>3</sup> Brazilian Campaign for the Right to Education. **Mapping Education under Attack in Brazil** (2023). Available at: <<https://educacaosobataque.org/>>

If the previous answer was "Yes", how often does this happen?

20 respostas



**Graph 5:** Distribution of perception of how often children suffer prejudice and discrimination

Furthermore, almost all children responded that it is extremely necessary to encourage respect and tolerance in youth, implying that there is a great sense of responsibility by them. Finally, many declared that they did not see pertinent and efficient attitudes on the part of their schools, emphasizing that discriminatory attitudes are, in many situations, hidden and little penalized. This may explain, for example, the increase in reports of violence in schools by around 50% in 2023, as reported by the Ministry of Human Rights and Citizenship.<sup>4</sup> The study "Mapping: Education under Attack in Brazil" prepared by the Brazilian Campaign for the Right to Education<sup>5</sup> identified more than 20 actions and complaints from adolescents and young people who were victims of racism, gender-based violence, sexual orientation and religious discrimination. The Report prepared by the Federal Government Transition Team<sup>6</sup>, mapped 80 threats and attacks against schools in Brazil since 2002, of which 46 were carried out and 34 attacks avoided. Although some responses state that awareness campaigns and lectures can function as means of promoting equality, many are skeptical about these attitudes.

15. When it comes to gender equality, a topic chosen by IDDDH to deepen the research, another section of the form was prepared for response. In general, the majority of respondents stated that they had never felt in danger because of their gender. However, it is important to highlight that individuals who responded that they have already felt at risk prefer not to inform their gender or identify as cis women.

<sup>4</sup> Brazil Agency. **Violence in schools has increase of 50% in 2023, says Ministry of Human Rights.** Available in: <https://exame.com/brasil/violencia-nas-escolas-tem-aumento-de-50-em-2023-diz-ministerio-dos-direitos-humanos/>

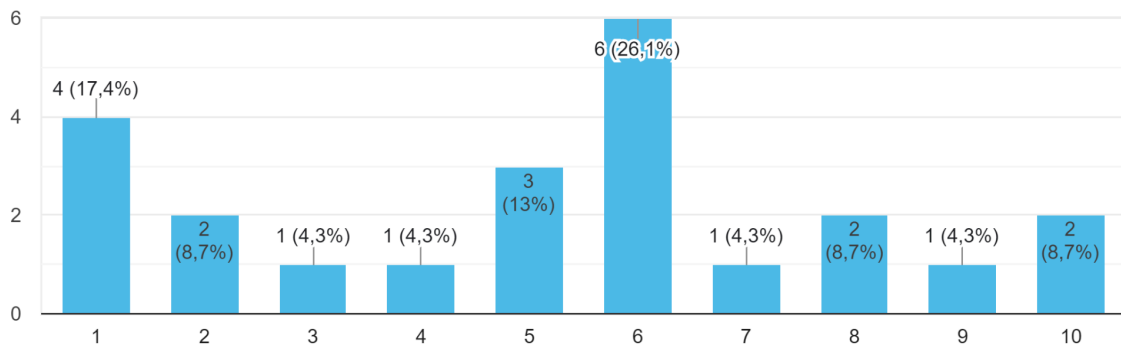
<sup>5</sup> Brazilian Campaign for the Right to Education. **Mapping Education under Attack in Brazil** (2023). Available at: <https://educacaosobataque.org/>

<sup>6</sup> TRANSITIONAL GOVERNMENT. **Right-wing extremism among adolescents and young people in Brazil: attacks on schools and alternatives to government action.** Available at: [https://media.campanha.org.br/acervo/documentos/Relatorio\\_ExtremismoDeDireitaAtaquesEscolas\\_AlternativasParaAcaoGovernamental\\_RelatorioTransicao\\_2022\\_12\\_11.pdf](https://media.campanha.org.br/acervo/documentos/Relatorio_ExtremismoDeDireitaAtaquesEscolas_AlternativasParaAcaoGovernamental_RelatorioTransicao_2022_12_11.pdf).

16. Furthermore, just over half of the children stated that they already feel socially pressured to do certain things because of their gender, regardless of how they identify. Again at the school level, the majority considered that the school comments little on gender equality and that phrases that discriminate against individuals based on gender are common, as shown in the graphs below:

On a scale of 1 to 10, how much does your school talk about gender equality?

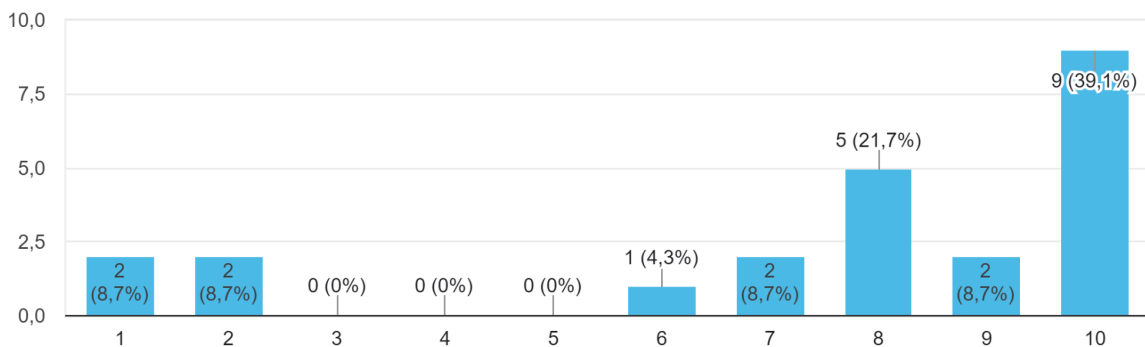
23 respostas



**Graph 6:** Distribution of children's perception of how often their schools comment on gender equality

On a scale of 1 to 10, how often do you hear phrases like "that's a woman's thing"/"men don't cry"?

23 respostas



**Graph 7:** Distribution of children's perception of how often they observe discriminatory and prejudiced verbal behaviors regarding gender

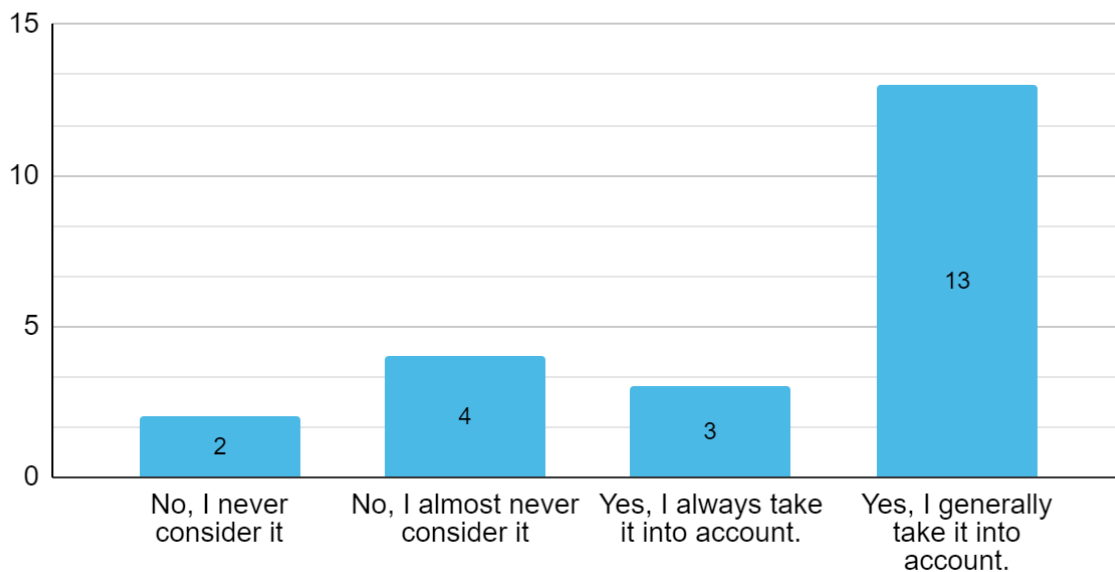
Henceforth, it is possible to consider that many children still suffer social pressures caused by gender roles, forcing them to act in accordance with expectations. Furthermore, it is

possible to see a number of individuals who prefer not to disclose their gender and women who feel uncomfortable and in danger because of their gender, impacting their safety.

**V. The development of respect for the natural environment:**

17. In the last part of the interview, the focus was on understanding children's knowledge about the environment and sustainability. When asked about their understanding of the environment, most children associated it with words such as nature, preservation, fauna, flora and climate change. Regarding the environment of the participants, 39% said that initiatives in favor of the environment are rarely carried out in their communities/school environment. However, when asked about their individual actions, the vast majority stated that they generally take environmental impacts into account:

Do your personal consumption choices take environmental impacts into account?



**Graph 8:** Children's perception of how often they take environmental impacts into account in their consumption choices

Thus, it is possible to infer that despite there being a need to stimulate discussion and initiatives about nature and climate change in the school environment, children have respect and care for the environment. This is seen as a whole by the increase over the years in incentives and awards for school projects on sustainability, such as the *School that*

*Transforms Award*<sup>7</sup>, from Tocantins, and Sustainable Schools Award<sup>8</sup>, from the Organization of Ibero-American States for Education, Science and Culture (OEI). Furthermore, the UN itself highlights the importance of children/young people in sustainable development and environmental protection, also part of the 2030 Agenda, making clear the importance of encouraging and continuing support for education in this aspect.

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<sup>7</sup> Semicolon Writing. **Education and Sustainability: Tocantinense School is Recognized for Environmental Recovery Project.** Available at:  
<https://pontoevirgulanoticias.com/noticia/27227/educacao-e-sustentabilidade-escola-tocantinense-e-reconhecida-por-projeto-de-recuperacao-ambiental>

<sup>8</sup> National Evening Radio EBC. **Sustainable Schools Award values schools committed to sustainability.** Available at:  
<https://radios.ebc.com.br/tarde-nacional/2023/10/premio-escolas-sustentaveis>

## SUGGESTED QUESTIONS TO THE STATE

18. Considering the assessments above, we reinforce the following suggestions for questions to be asked of the Brazilian State, one referring to each subsection of Article 29:

I.

What measures will be taken to ensure children's freedom of expression, combat hate speech and the spread of false information on online platforms and in school communities?

II.

How does the State intend to ensure the implementation of the National Human Rights Education Plan? Is there a plan to establish those responsible, indicators and resources for this purpose?

III.

Considering that the right to education includes the appreciation of diversities and full human development, as stated in Article 206 of the Federal Constitution, how does the State intend to promote the practice of respect and tolerance, along with intercultural contact for children and young people, especially within the school environment?

IV.

What measures have the Brazilian State taken to combat racism, sexism and other forms of discrimination? Has it acted to promote more effective solutions against discrimination and the promotion of spaces free from social pressures, especially regarding gender equality?

IN.

Considering the relevance of discussions on climate change and environmental racism, how will the inclusion of children's participation in State actions for sustainable development be ensured?