

ADOLESCENCE IN CONTEMPORARY SOCIETY: AN INTEGRATIVE LITERATURE REVIEW

*A ADOLESCÊNCIA NA SOCIEDADE CONTEMPORÂNEA:
UMA REVISÃO INTEGRATIVA DA LITERATURA*

*LA ADOLESCENCIA EN LA SOCIEDAD CONTEMPORÂNEA:
UNA REVISIÓN INTEGRATIVA DE LA LITERATURA*

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RESUMO

Este estudo de revisão integrativa da literatura científica teve como objetivo analisar as publicações recentes sobre família e adolescência no contexto da teoria do desenvolvimento emocional de Winnicott. As buscas foram realizadas nas bases de dados LILACS, MEDLINE, PePsic, PsycINFO e SciELO, das quais, após a aplicação de critérios de inclusão e exclusão, foram selecionados 11 artigos para análise. O perfil predominante foi o de estudos teóricos e estudos de caso, que discutem o cuidado clínico de adolescentes na teoria do amadurecimento emocional winnicottiano. Na adolescência, o aparelho psíquico encontra-se em transformação, o que requer que o ambiente sobreviva às agressões dos jovens, destacando, assim, o papel da família e da escola durante essa etapa do desenvolvimento. Ressalta-se que os estudos que compuseram o corpus dessa revisão ampliam a teoria winnicottiana para abranger novas realidades; porém, não levam em conta as mudanças sociais mais amplas que impactam o universo doméstico. *Palavras-chave:* adolescência; família; desenvolvimento emocional.

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Não se declararam fontes de financiamento.

ABSTRACT

This integrative review study of scientific literature aimed to analyze recent publications on family and adolescence in the context of Winnicott's theory of emotional development. Searches were performed in LILACS, MEDLINE, PePsic, PsycINFO and SciELO databases, from which, after applying inclusion and exclusion criteria, 11 articles were selected to be analyzed. The predominant profile was that of theoretical studies and case studies, which discuss the clinical care of adolescents in the Winnicottian theory of emotional maturation. In adolescence, the psychic apparatus is undergoing transformation, which requires the environment to endure the youth's aggressions, thus highlighting the role of the family and the school during this stage of development. It is noteworthy that the studies that made up the corpus of this review extend the Winnicottian theory to encompass new realities; however, they do not take into account the broader social changes that impact the domestic universe.

Keywords: adolescence; family; emotional development.

RESUMEN

Este estudio de revisión integrativa de la literatura científica tuvo como objetivo analizar publicaciones recientes sobre la familia y la adolescencia en el contexto de la teoría del desarrollo emocional de Winnicott. Las búsquedas se realizaron en las bases de datos LILACS, MEDLINE, PePsic, PsycINFO y SciELO, de las cuales, luego de aplicar criterios de inclusión y exclusión, se seleccionaron 11 artículos para el análisis. El perfil predominante fue el de estudios teóricos y estudios de casos, que discuten la atención clínica de los adolescentes en la teoría winnicottiana de la maduración emocional. En la adolescencia, el aparato psíquico se está transformando, lo que hace necesario que el entorno sobreviva a las agresiones de los jóvenes, destacando así el papel de la familia y la escuela durante esta etapa del desarrollo. Es digno de mención que los estudios que conformaron el corpus de esta revisión amplían la teoría winnicottiana para abarcar nuevas realidades; sin embargo, no toman en cuenta los cambios sociales más amplios que impactan en el universo doméstico.

Palabras clave: adolescencia; familia; desarrollo emocional.

Introduction

The concept of adolescence emerged in the 18th century (Ariès, 1986), from a change in the way of understanding childhood (Calligaris, 2009). However, the establishment of adolescence as a stage of individual development was culturally consolidated at the beginning of the 20th century (Barbosa-Silva et al., 2021; Bock, 2009).

In medieval families, it was common to leave small children to strange families so that they could serve these families and learn good manners. They returned to their families after they were adults; therefore, the family was a social and moral reality more than sentimental, with parents hardly following the emotional development of their children. The childhood institution was effectively stabilized in the 19th century, when a distinction was made between the roles of parents and children, creating leisure spaces for the healthy growth of children, such as gardens and parks and educational spaces (Barbosa-Silva et al., 2021). According to Ariès (1986), this transformation occurred due to the need to isolate the child from the adult world, keeping the child innocent, and due to the parents' desire to be closer to their children, thus endorsing an approximation of the family and the child.

As for adolescence, Coutinho (2015) points out that it was only in 1850 that this term was introduced in the dictionary with a meaning like what we know today. Therefore, adolescence is a concept developed in modernity, having acquired several meanings to date. In this context, Barbosa-Silva et al. (2021) points out that adolescence is a cultural phenomenon, produced by society at a given moment, manifesting itself in different ways in different places and there are places where it – as a stage of human development with own characteristics – does not even exist. Thus, it is emphasized that the idea of adolescence will vary according to society and culture.

Today, children and adolescents occupy an important emotional place in the family group, which is considered the main source of their protection and care (Alves & Hueb, 2020; Lauz & Borges, 2013). Thus, it is not possible to talk about adolescence without considering family and care. The family is considered the fundamental cell of society (Chapadeiro et al., 2017), a phenomenon that occurs almost all over the world and in different historical periods, but that suffers intense influence of the culture, with multiple format possibilities (Durham, 1983).

It is known that in adolescence, young people go through moments of instability, feeling distressed, insecure, and confused, which can trigger prob-

lems of conviviality and relationships with the people around (Amaral et al., 2020; Faria et al., 2020). Thus, during adolescence it is important that the family is widely available to offer parameters and references necessary for the growth of children. However, the current youth, living in a context of blurring generational differences, have less and less stability in the references they need to mature, which makes it difficult for them to assume the responsibilities of adult life (Bittar & Soares, 2020; Serralha, 2017). The adults themselves, also affected by social changes, began to experience an identity crisis in which adolescence is identified as a “social ideal, whose way of life beckons as a kind of happiness attainable by itself”¹ (Serralha, 2017). In this scenario, Serralha (2017) emphasizes that there will be a confrontation of the adult with the adolescent’s challenge and that the possibility of positive results will be related to the degree of maturity that the adult has managed to achieve, that is, their ability to deal with jealousy and the envy of the adolescent child, avoiding retaliation and revenge.

In this sense, Winnicott (1988/1990) emphasized the need for every child and adolescent to have a welcoming, safe family environment, which provides care capable of favoring their development and allowing the constitution of Being. Thus, psychoanalysis has contemporarily been instigated to reflect on the different family configurations, aiming to understand their impact on the individual’s identity constitution (Alves & Hueb, 2020, 2022; Barbieri, 2017; Ribeiro & Granato, 2021).

Winnicott (1948/1993) developed his theory of emotional development based on the assumption that everyone is born with an innate tendency to integration; but this propensity will only flourish when there is a facilitating environment capable of providing fundamental care to the child. When the environment fails in this task, it can hinder the constitution and development of the individual’s self. Thus, this is a particularly fruitful perspective to address the way in which the parent-child relationship permeates the construction of the child’s or adolescent’s self (Barbieri, 2017; Chaves et al., 2021; Menezes & Martínez, 2021), a bond that is imbued by the historical, social, and cultural characteristics in which its protagonists live.

Regarding adolescence, Winnicott (1984/2002) pointed out that it is a period of personal discovery and search for a specific identity, and when there is sufficient care, that is, a safe and reliable environment, the young person’s ability to deal with the frustrations and anxieties of this phase is greater, making them less confrontational. In adolescence, the psychic apparatus is in transformation, requiring an adjustment in the mental mechanisms

to accommodate the new instinctual demands that intensify in this period (Aberastury & Knobel, 1981; Amaral et al., 2020; Bittar & Soares, 2020), with the demands of the outside world being regulated. Basic questions of the constitution of identity are taken up in adolescence, with a revival of the primitive stages of development.

Dias (2003) highlighted that adolescence is a difficult period that carries with it the threat of disintegration: if there were many failures in the initial care of the individual's life, reliving the primitive phases will face the young person with gaps that may favor the appearance of psychological disorders, due to the precariousness of the integration previously obtained (Chaves et al., 2021; Oliveira, 2009). In an individual who has had a good start in life, if the family environment is reliable and survives the turbulence of adolescence, the passage of time takes care of transforming the adolescent into an adult (Chaves et al., 2021; Dias, 2003).

It is mainly in adolescence that the consequences of failures to care for the childhood environment arise. However, Winnicott (1986/1999) pointed out that no matter how good the provision was at the beginning of life, there will always be problems inherent in adolescence. This happens due to the complexity of the maturing process, which requires a constant adaptation of the environment to the individual's innate tendencies, which is not easy to do.

Given these theoretical considerations about adolescence and the repercussions of socio-cultural changes in family relationships that constitute a determining force on how this evolutionary period will be lived, the present study aims to explore, through an integrative literature review, what has been published in the last 10 years on families and adolescence in the context of Winnicott's theory of emotional development. The aim is to inquire how the impacts of family bonds fostered by the characteristics of contemporary society impact on the emotional development of young people from this psychoanalytic perspective. As the quality of the environment has been understood in the scientific literature as having an essential role for the self to constitute itself. In this way, a general appreciation of possible affective-emotional transformations in this developmental range will be possible, and about how sensitive and flexible Winnicott's theory would be to the actions of time and space (given the international character of the review), to absorb the historical and socio-cultural changes in the development of the self from the family context.

Method

Type of survey

An integrative review of the scientific literature is characterized by contributing to the deepening of a researched topic, using a rigorous method that presents the synthesis of several published works, which allows conclusions within an area of study (Scorsolini-Comin, 2014). In this integrative review the following protocol was adopted: (a) identification of the theme – in this case, “families and adolescence in the context of Winnicott’s theory” – and the research question; (b) establishment of inclusion and exclusion criteria for studies; (c) categorization of investigations; (d) evaluation of the manuscripts; (e) interpretation of results; (f) presentation of the knowledge synthesis (Mendes et al., 2008).

The guiding question of this article was constructed from the PICO strategy – acronym for “Patient”, “Intervention”, “Comparison” and “Outcome” – which is used in studies of integrative literature review. Based on the guiding question, it is possible to define what evidence is relevant to answer the research question (Santos et al., 2007), thus enabling the objective of the review to be achieved. The following guiding question for the present study was outlined: emotional development of adolescents (P), seen from Winnicott’s (I), findings in the literature (O). It should be noted that, since the objective of this study did not to involve comparison between scenarios or techniques, the present review implemented the PICO strategy without the “C” (comparison) criterion. It is noteworthy that there are articles from different areas other than health, such as psychology studies, which were based on the PICO strategy for the construction of research questions, making changes – such as not implementing the “C” criterion – due to the aims of the study (Alves, Hueb & Scorsolini-Comin, 2017).

The option to include studies from just the last 10 years was made because there have been several changes in contemporary society since the 2000s, such as the increased consumption of the internet, the advent of social networks, among others. In this way, we sought to regard the most recent production, in line with the current context in which we live. We chose Winnicott’s perspective because the theme of this study is related to family and adolescent children, and this theory maintains that there are some environmental requirements necessary to favor the emotional development of the child/adolescent; but the characteristics of these concepts can change according to geography (Winnicott, 1969/1996) and, we add, history. Thus, we seek to understand from Winnicott’s theory how its concepts would manifest themselves in today’s families.

Inclusion and exclusion criteria

This review included: (a) articles published between January 2010 and January 2020; (b) published in indexed journals and available online in full; (c) written in Portuguese, English or Spanish; (d) with a theme concerning the objectives (families and adolescence in the context of Winnicott's theory of emotional development) and that answered the guiding question of this review. Studies not published in the form of articles were excluded, as well as literature review articles and articles prior to the year 2010. The abstracts consistent with these criteria were selected, thus starting from this previous survey for the recovery of complete studies.

Indexing bases and keywords used

The LILACS, MEDLINE, PePSIC, PsycINFO and SciELO were used because these databases cover a large part of the national and international scientific production. In the searches carried out, the keywords “adolescence”, “adolescents”, “family”, “Winnicott”, “Winnicott, D. W.”, “Winnicott theory”, “Winnicott, Donald Woods, 1896-1971” and “emotional development” were used in Portuguese, English and Spanish. Such keywords were previously consulted in the VHL-Psi (Psi-Alphabetical Terminology), based on the guiding question. The combinations of the phrases were performed in trios, using the Boolean operator “and”, and in all crossings the keyword “family” was used, combined with “adolescence” or “adolescent” and combined with the “Winnicott” or “Winnicott, D. W.” or “Winnicott, Donald Woods, 1896-1971” or “Winnicott theory” or “emotional development”. The combinations were done first in Portuguese, then in English, and finally in Spanish.

Procedure

The combinations of keywords were used in the five selected databases in January 2020. The records were then retrieved, and the inclusion and exclusion criteria were applied by two independent judges (psychologists with knowledge of Winnicott psychoanalysis).

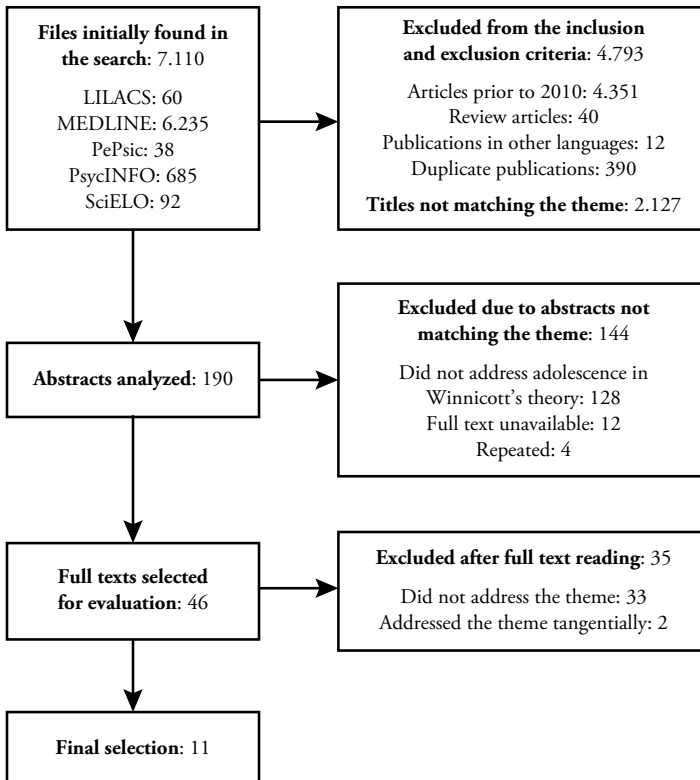
After applying the inclusion and exclusion criteria, the articles retrieved in full were cataloged in terms of title, authors, year of publication, journal, type of study, country, sample, objective, and main results. From this process, the *corpus* was read, analyzed, and categorized into axes: (a) Recent publications and

emotional development; (b) Adolescence and the family in contemporary society; (c) Winnicott psychoanalysis in understanding adolescence. Such thematic axes will be discussed, seeking to answer the guiding question outlined in this study.

Results and discussion

A total of 7.110 publications were found, which were refined according to the defined inclusion and exclusion criteria (Figure 1). Of these, 2.192 articles were excluded, because they stood far from the theme. Some articles that focused on the theme of adolescence were not included because they did not mention Winnicott’s perspective. After applying the inclusion and exclusion criteria, suppressing repeated articles, and eliminating other types of publication and reading the studies in full, 11 articles were retrieved, that made up the *corpus* of this review of the scientific literature.

Figure 1 — Flowchart of the studies found and retrieved



Recent publications and emotional development

Regarding the methodological profile of the publications presented in Table 1, among the 11 articles selected, most are case studies ($n=4$, one being a multiple case study), followed by theoretical investigations ($n=2$) documentary research ($n=1$), experience report ($n=1$) and qualitative research ($n=1$). This distribution suggests that most of the studies carried out in the last ten years on adolescence and emotional development are one-off research, with no large samples involved. The distribution of these articles in terms of the method employed reveals a strong preference for the clinical case study: 7 out of 11 (63.6%) directly used this strategy or consisted of theoretical discussions derived from a case. This characteristic shows the applied emphasis of recent investigations on adolescence and emotional development under the Winnicottian prism: they are mainly a set of bibliographic productions derived from the reflection on the real experience of their authors, testifying to a practice driven by theory and producer of the latter.

Clinical cases are part of psychoanalytic literature, and particularly Winnicott's work, which contains several cases and clinical vignettes that enrich his texts (Winnicott, 1960/1987, 1971/1984, 1977/1987). Winnicott (1948/1993) proposed non-physical health problems as deviations or stagnation in the process of emotional maturation, thus requiring work to resume maturation. As Januário and Tafuri (2008) highlight, "the emphasis is on clinical management and the establishment of the environment, characterized by a complex holding organization that allows, without necessarily requiring interpretation, regression to dependence" (p. 221). In this context, Winnicott used the illustration of clinical cases to familiarize the reader with his ideas, concepts, and theoretical procedures (Loparic, 2009), that is, the cases reported in his works, which deal with the author's therapeutic activity in various fields, are a cornerstone to understand its theory and can be used as a reference in teaching and research and as examples of problem solutions.

Table 1 — Identification of Retrieved Studies (N=11)

Reference	Type of survey	Aim	Main results
Amiralian (2011)	Theoretical-clinical	Better understand the difficulties of young people with visual impairment from the description of the care of these young people and raise the necessary care to help them face and resolve their doubts and conflicts.	Adolescents with visual impairment may experience difficulties in romantic and sexual relationships, and the family may inhibit these relationships due to excessive worry, thus needing people they can trust and to relate to their peers.
Zappe & Dias (2012)	Multiple case study	Investigate the relationship between the practice of infralegal acts and the family relationships of young people in conflict with the law.	The presence of different forms of violence suffered in the adolescents' life trajectories was identified, as well as weaknesses in family relationships since early stages of development.
Oliveira (2013)	Experience report	Present some of Winnicott's contributions on adolescence, with a view to the work of educators.	A good enough environment is needed for the development of young people. When the family is unable to provide this environment, the adolescent will look for this support at school; that is why they need an organized school, and the willingness of teachers.
Verceze, Sei & Braga (2013)	Qualitative research	To know the complaints reported by adults regarding their adolescent children when faced with a demand for psychotherapy at a service school of psychology, in contrast to what is reported by the adolescent themselves.	The complaints presented by the parents as a reason for the care of the child – more concrete concerns, such as academic performance – are not consistent with the symptoms reported by the adolescents, who suffer depressive conditions. Most parents consider the characteristics of healthy adolescence to be pathological symptoms.
Otuka, Scorsolini-Comin & Santos (2013)	Descriptive case study	Discuss the experience of a divorced couple with biological children who had a late adoption.	In terms of the dynamics of the couple's members, they renewed the good pre-existing bond not only through the exercise of adoptive parenting, but also through the "desire to help" the adolescent through their insertion in a family nucleus. For the couple, the notion of family transcends the idea of a traditional nuclear arrangement. On the other hand, conjugality was valued as a condition for the birth of the first biological child, denoting that, in this case, different meanings were attributed to biological and adoptive parenting.

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Reference	Type of survey	Aim	Main results
Klein (2014)	Theoretical study	Exploration of Winnicott's ideas regarding adolescence and education.	The importance of a good enough environment for the adolescent's development, as well as the father's surviving the son's attacks, which will be possible when the father faces the confrontations with the adolescent in a mature way.
Basaglia & Souza (2015)	Case study	Investigate the psychic functioning of the mother of an adolescent addicted to drugs to establish which characteristics of this functioning could hinder the relationship with the child and limit their healthy development.	The results showed an immature psychic functioning of the mother, characterized by difficulties in interpersonal relationships and anxieties that make it impossible to grasp her conflicts and provide a good enough environment for the child's development.
Coufinho (2015)	Theoretical study	To consider the issues related to the education of adolescents in the contemporary social context, in the light of the contributions to psychoanalysis by Freud, Winnicott and Lacan.	The tension between the experiences of dependency and challenge, described by Winnicott, or between alienation and separation, theorized by Lacan, is central in adolescence, raising many challenges for parents and educators.
Silva & Milani (2015)	Documentary research	To consider antisocial behavior in adolescents and young people by analyzing the content of the lyrics of Brazilian rap: Killer toy / I Miss You / A Sip of Poison / Prayer to the Father / If the World Ends. ²	In the selected rap lyrics, antisocial behaviors proved to be an emotional outlet found by adolescents with a history of deprivation, making them adopt a socially challenging conduct as a way of seeking external restraint to repair the previously experienced failure by some reference figure.
Zanetti & Cianca (2017)	Single case study	To present the results of a case study about a borderline teenage girl, based on Winnicott's theory and clinical method.	The adopted framework made it possible to understand the case as borderline. Clinical improvement was possible through the therapeutic setting supported by the promotion of a "sufficiently good" environment in psychotherapy.
Sei & Zuanazzi (2016)	Theoretical-clinical	To discuss intervention strategies employed in the field of adolescence, stemming from experiences of individual psychotherapy of the adolescent and family psychotherapy, in which the teen may be inserted.	Family involvement in psychotherapy, directly or indirectly, is fundamental for the good development of an analytical process that can favor the autonomy and health of young people.

Two theoretical-clinical studies (Amiralian, 2011; Sei & Zuanazzi, 2016) illustrate the use of Winnicott psychoanalysis in psychotherapy. Regarding case studies (single or multiple), one of them consisted of a psychotherapeutic service performed in an office (Zanetti & Cianca, 2017), one addressed the adoption of an adolescent by a divorced couple (Otuka et al., 2013), and two were studies carried out in social institutions (Basaglia & Souza, 2015; Zappe & Dias, 2012). There is also a case report that links Winnicott's contributions to the education of adolescents (Oliveira, 2013). Finally, one qualitative research was carried out in a school clinic with two families (Verceze et al., 2013). In this last publication, although the authors defined their method simply as qualitative, which was respected in our classification; the strategy used was, in fact, the study of multiple cases, which further emphasizes the preference for this scientific procedure. Case studies are relevant in the health field when analyzing and describing complex situations, understanding, discussing, and interpreting such a condition in an exhaustive way (Casarin & Porto, 2021), helping to gain a deep understanding of the topic. In general, the studies that make up this review seek to analyze Winnicott's theory of emotional maturation, relating it to psychotherapeutic care for adolescents and the relevance of the family and the school environment.

The two purely theoretical studies (Coutinho, 2015; Klein, 2014) also sought to transpose Winnicott's understanding of emotional development, particularly of adolescence, to the school context. The documentary research found, on the other hand, relates the assumptions of this theory about adolescence with lyrics of rap music (Silva & Milani, 2015).

Thus, we observed that the case studies contribute more directly to clinical practice by discussing how the theory of emotional development can be linked to working with adolescents. However, it is important to emphasize that this methodological strategy has the limitation of being restricted to a particular situation: they are one-off research, which, *a priori*, can lead to the idea that they do not allow great generalizations of the results or comparison with other cases or data. In this respect, it is necessary to consider that the totality of studies that make up this review is of a qualitative nature, because this is the character of most psychoanalytic research that are carried out, especially (although not exclusively), in the context of clinical care, and whose objective is to achieve a deeper and more detailed understanding of each case (Alves et al., 2017).

Therefore, although such methods involve limitations, the studies recovered in this review are in accordance with psychoanalytic investigations, allowing critical readings of the cases. Regarding the integrative review, it is possible to

affirm that the recovered studies can trigger important reflections in case management in clinical and school care, thus showing themselves relevant to the work in psychology and to other professionals who deal with adolescent audiences.

Winnicott psychoanalysis in understanding adolescence

In line with Winnicott's theory, all the studies included in this review emphasize the relevance given to the family, as shown in Table 1, which summarizes the objective of each study and its main results. As can be seen in Table 1, all articles stressed how essential first care is for the adolescent's emotional development. Four studies (Amiralian, 2011; Klein, 2014; Oliveira, 2013; Zanetti & Cianca, 2017) highlight that, according to Winnicott (1969/1996), puberty is a condition proper to nature, and adolescence is a phase that has its own challenges, and it is only with the passage of time and the provision of a sufficiently good environment that the transition from adolescence to adulthood will be achieved.

The idea of adolescence as a phase of human development is relatively recent. This stage of life was legitimized in the 20th century, considered as the phase before children passed from childhood to adulthood (Amiralian, 2011; Ariès, 1986; Coutinho, 2015). There is consensus that adolescence is a crucial moment in human development and a phase of major physical and psychological changes (Amiralian, 2011; Coutinho, 2015; Sei & Zuanazzi, 2016; Verceze et al., 2013; Zanetti & Cianca, 2017). The articles reviewed in this study describe, in accordance with Winnicott's theory, that in adolescence the childhood failures and successes are relived. Thus, the care provided at the beginning of life is essential; from their experience with this they can develop confidence in the environment and follow their innate tendency to maturity (Amiralian, 2011; Basaglia & Souza, 2015; Klein, 2014; Oliveira, 2013; Otuka et al., 2013; Silva & Milani, 2015; Zanetti & Cianca, 2017; Zappe & Dias, 2012). When the environment is not satisfactory, the lifeline is broken and the maturation stops (Oliveira, 2013; Zanetti & Cianca, 2017; Zappe & Dias, 2012).

The establishment of this trust in the environment is based on the care provided to the child at the beginning of life, which Winnicott (1960/1990) calls holding and handling (physical management with the baby), the presentation of objects (the delivery of the real object to the baby, leading them to believe that the world can contain what they want) and the mirror function performed by the child's primary caregiver, who is usually the mother (Zanetti

& Cianca, 2017). Many studies that make up this review highlight, in this scenario, the importance of the concept of holding (Amiralian, 2011; Sei & Zuanazzi, 2016; Verceze et al., 2013; Zanetti & Cianca, 2017; Zappe & Dias, 2012), which goes beyond the child's bodily support early in life, but also includes the emotional support that the mother offers to the baby, which is fundamental to the constitution of the self. When the mother adapts to the child's needs, she provides the child with the illusion of omnipotence and they feel safe to "continue being". The good development in this stage leads to the acquisition of an integrated body scheme by the baby. Subsequently, the mother gradually begins to disappoint the child, to the extent and proportion to which they are prepared, thus gradually presenting reality, helping the child to walk from their "absolute dependence" to the "relative dependence" (Oliveira, 2013; Zanetti & Cianca, 2017; Zappe & Dias, 2012), that is, to the "ability to evoke objects perceived as outside themselves and usable" (Zanetti & Cianca, 2017, p. 297). It is from this care that the child reaches the capacities of integration, personalization, and fulfillment.

In this sense, Oliveira (2013) and Verceze et al. (2013) emphasize that in adolescence the dynamics of the previous phases are resumed but with the difference that they are now augmented by the physical power to attack and procreate (Winnicott, 1971a). In this sense, the adolescent is an immature being who needs an environment that welcomes them and that is present if they need protection, considering that it is a moment of uncertainty (Amiralian, 2011; Oliveira, 2013; Verceze et al., 2013).

In some of the articles (Amiralian, 2011; Coutinho, 2015; Oliveira, 2013; Sei & Zuanazzi, 2016; Silva & Milani, 2015; Verceze et al., 2013) the emphasis of Winnicott's theory on immaturity is the main characteristic of an adolescent, in addition to the fact that they want to be someone. In this context, there is an oscillation of the adolescent between being and not being dependent (Amiralian, 2011; Oliveira, 2013; Sei & Zuanazzi, 2016; Verceze et al., 2013). In some moments, adolescents will look like children in the first years of life, while in others they may be aggressive and critical towards their parents, but there is also a feeling of gratitude for the care received (Oliveira, 2013; Klein, 2014; Sei & Zuanazzi, 2016).

The need for confrontation and rebellion is related to the young individual's search for independence and to assume their own identity. Despite the adolescent's growing autonomy, parents have a fundamental role in their emotional development, but many have difficulties to deal with this phase of their children and create rivalries with them, or overload them with expectations, preventing

them from testing the environment and building their independent identity. In this context, the importance of family support is discussed in the cases of two adolescents undergoing psychotherapy, one of whom is highly demanded by the family and the other whose family was not so present, demonstrating that these two extremes can have consequences (Sei & Zuanazzi, 2016).

Most articles identified in this review (Amiralian, 2011; Basaglia & Souza, 2015; Klein, 2014; Oliveira, 2013; Otuka et al., 2013; Silva & Milani, 2015; Zanetti & Cianca, 2017; Zappe & Dias, 2012) considered the role of the mother good enough in the adolescent's emotional development, but some of them also addressed the role of the father (Coutinho, 2015; Sei & Zuanazzi, 2016). Winnicott (1982) pointed the importance of the father, who initially supports the mother so that she can identify with the baby. Later, when the child realizes their instinctual impulsivity, the father can be made important by his presence, being able to intervene to protect the mother from the child's impulses. When this does not happen, there may be a loss of the child's intuition, of their freedom, "with a self-control that sleeps a more spontaneous side" (Sei & Zuanazzi, 2016; p. 91). In adolescence, there is a return to incestuous and parricidal fantasies, and confrontation with the father is necessary to contain them, so it is necessary for him to stand the attacks of the adolescent, preserving the conditions for irresponsibility and immaturity and offering a safe and protective framework (Coutinho, 2015; Klein, 2014; Sei & Zuanazzi, 2016; Verceze et al., 2013).

When the environment fails to provide the necessary conditions for the adolescent to grow and reach maturity, the consequences can be diverse (Klein, 2014; Zanetti & Cianca, 2017). Silva and Milani (2015) highlighted that there is a relationship between the normal difficulties of adolescence and the antisocial tendencies. However, at the source of this trend there is a deprivation that occurred prematurely, and the antisocial child or adolescent seeks a way to repair this failure that they suffered.

Other pathologies linked to environmental failure are addressed in the studies that make up this review. When there is no environment to provide the essential conditions for maturity, depending on the stage in which the failure occurred, one of the consequences may be that individuals do not achieve personality integration, because when there is no suitable holding; the baby is helpless and at the mercy of external threats. Thus, in view of this impossibility to "continue to be", a dissociation may occur, resulting in the development of a pathological false self, aimed to protect the true self from the external world (Klein, 2014; Zanetti & Cianca, 2017).

Adolescence and family in contemporary society

In this review, many studies (Amiralian, 2011; Basaglia & Souza, 2015; Coutinho, 2015; Klein, 2014; Oliveira, 2013; Sei & Zuanazzi, 2016; Silva & Milani, 2015; Zanetti & Cianca, 2017; Zappe & Dias, 2012) highlighted the importance of the family in the emotional development of adolescents, in line with Winnicott's theory, and the importance of society for this purpose (Basaglia & Souza, 2015; Coutinho, 2015; Klein, 2014; Oliveira, 2013; Silva & Milani, 2015; Zappe & Dias, 2012). In this context, when the family does not adapt to the adolescent and cannot be of use, it is necessary that social units are able to fulfill this role (Amiralian, 2011; Klein, 2014; Oliveira, 2013; Silva & Milani, 2015; Zanetti & Cianca, 2017).

In the psychotherapeutic context, Zanetti and Cianca (2017) maintain that we all have a false self that we use to relate to the external world. However, in the pathological false self, there is a split due to deprivation of care early in life. In these cases, Winnicott (1958/2000) affirmed that, whenever there is an environmental failure, it is necessary to regress to the moment when it occurred so that maturity can be resumed.

In a psychotherapeutic process, the therapist provides the holding necessary for the patient to rescue their maturation process. Thus, the role of a psychotherapist of adolescents who suffered environmental failures is discussed in some studies (Amiralian, 2011; Coutinho, 2015; Sei & Zuanazzi, 2016; Verceze et al., 2013; Zanetti & Cianca, 2017). They argue that it is important for professionals to offer space to create a bond of security and favor contact with creative aspects, enabling the emergence of a spontaneous gesture, thus building a bridge between the subjective and objective world (Sei & Zuanazzi, 2016; Zanetti & Cianca, 2017). Thus, it is necessary to offer a holding that makes room for the patient's regression to the condition prior to the environmental failure, being essential, then, that the space offered by the therapist is capable of being molded to the patient's needs, being able to correct an inadequate adaptation and fractures in their personality (Amiralian, 2011; Coutinho, 2015; Zanetti & Cianca, 2017).

Otuka et al. (2013) highlighted the possibility that such a good enough environment could be provided by a substitute family – as occurs in adoption cases that, by providing the necessary care, allow the adolescent to regress and resume their maturity. Still, when these necessary conditions are not found in the family (biological or otherwise) and the maturation stagnates, the school can take up the role of providing the reliable environment, by imposing the lim-

its that young people expect, but also by listening and being available to them (Coutinho, 2015; Klein, 2014; Oliveira, 2013).

In addition to the challenges of childhood being relived in adolescence, adolescents feel isolated from society, which leads them to organize themselves into groups through an identity of preferences. Such groups will serve as protection when these young people feel affected by their need for destruction (Amiralian, 2011; Oliveira, 2013). In this turbulent phase, the adolescent struggles to be someone and to be recognized within a group (Amiralian, 2011; Oliveira, 2013; Verceze et al., 2013), and it is important that they can relate to their peers (Amiralian, 2011).

The school seems to be one of the main environments for adolescents to get to know and relate to their peers, belong to groups, but more than that, the school and teachers have a fundamental role in their development (Coutinho, 2015; Klein, 2014; Oliveira, 2013; Silva & Milani, 2015; Verceze et al., 2013). The environment often suffers several attacks by the adolescent, and this includes the school, which leads many adults – parents, teachers, coordinators – to consider the adolescents difficult, often resulting in emotional abandonment or daily battles (Verceze et al., 2013). In this sense, Winnicott (1961/2001) questioned whether society is prepared to deal with adolescence, accepting and understanding the attacks, but without the intention to “cure them” (Klein, 2014; Sei & Zuanazzi, 2016; Verceze et al., 2013). Winnicott (1975) stated that adolescents challenge adults by targeting those who have not really lived their own adolescence, but when adults maintain their role of maturity, they support the transition from childhood to adulthood (Verceze et al., 2013).

Thus, the role of the school is to recognize the adolescent’s questioning moves as necessary for their growth towards adulthood. Therefore, it is necessary for the teachers to put themselves in a position of transference and handle this aggressiveness, seeing their relationship with the adolescent in a dimension of transitionality in which knowledge can be shared and reinvented (Klein, 2014; Oliveira, 2013; Verceze et al., 2013).

The school presents itself as an environment that can create conditions for the expression of the creative capacity of adolescents. Adolescents who did not have a good start in life seek in school what the home did not provide, that is, they need the willingness of teachers, to be psychically supported and welcomed, going beyond the task of educating in the classroom (Oliveira, 2013; Verceze et al., 2013).

Finally, despite society often resisting the ideas and behaviors of adolescents, studies (Amiralian, 2011; Coutinho, 2015; Oliveira, 2013; Sei & Zuanazzi,

2016; Verceze et al., 2013) claim that Winnicott (1975) considered adolescence as essential and beneficial to society. It is essential that society be shaken by the creativity of those who are not responsible, because, from the ideas of adolescents, the new becomes known. Adolescence, therefore, is synonymous with idealism, aspirations, and creativity.

Final considerations

Adolescence is a phase of human development characterized by physical, hormonal, and psychic changes. Winnicott (1986/1999) highlighted the importance of this stage for the maturation of an individual, in which there is a great need for environmental support. In this context, the articles that make up this review emphasize the need for the environment to survive the attacks by these young people, stressing particularly the role of the family in this evolutionary moment, without neglecting the other environments frequented by young people, such as school. Hence the possibility of using his theory of emotional development to guide the actions of educators and coordinators who deal with adolescents.

The articles compiled in this review highlighted the challenges inherent in adolescence, and the need for parents to provide a reliable environment for young people, which supports the setbacks of this phase until adulthood is reached. In short, it is essential that there is a welcoming environment, but one that it is also capable of containing and imposing limits on the young person.

It is essential to highlight that the studies that make up the *corpus* of this review have been expanding the reach of Winnicott's theory so that it encompasses new realities, such as the importance that the school has gained in the education of children over the last few years, the emotional development of adolescents in adoptive and single-parent families, among other contexts. However, the reviewed publications barely cover the broader social changes that influence the domestic universe. These changes have been addressed only as they are embodied in the family's microcosm and, whereas they have not been at all ignored by academics, they have not encouraged a critical debate about this social institution and the socio-cultural formulation of its configuration and dynamics.

In this sense, the need to extend Winnicott's theory of emotional development is emphasized beyond the family system, integrating it with broader sociological, anthropological, and historical studies. In this way, it would be possible to understand how historical and socio-cultural changes affect the family and the

constitution of the adolescent's self, in a fruitful integration between these areas of knowledge and psychoanalysis. In this scenario, one of the points that, in our view, would deserve particular attention would be the reverberations in development caused by the advancement of technologies and means of communication, especially social networks.

Evidently, this study has deficiencies, among them the small number of recent publications that cover the theme of adolescence and emotional development, and that most of the articles retrieved are theoretical or case studies, with the limits for the generalization of results that this methodological strategy comprises. All the case studies collected in this review were based on the qualitative perspective of scientific research, illustrating the majority presence of this focus on the theme of family and emotional development of adolescents in Winnicott's perspective.

Regarding its scope, this review of the literature, by organizing the bibliographic production of the last ten years on adolescence, family and Winnicott psychoanalysis, contributes to offering, through a brief report, a support to professional practice. Still, it was possible to detect the need to develop other studies to investigate the emotional development in adolescence in contemporary times, that consider particularly the social, historical, and cultural changes that reverberate in the family, and which employ other methodological frameworks besides the case study.

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Notes

- ¹ Quotes from books published in Portuguese were translated by the authors of this study.
- ² In the original: Brinquedo assassino / Você faz falta / Um gole de veneno / Oração ao Pai / Se o mundo acabar.

Recebido em 15 de dezembro de 2021
Aceito para publicação em 09 de fevereiro de 2024