

CHAPTER 21

Quality of life of youth with complex and intensive support needs: personal conceptions of professionals in the context of training

MARIA JOÃO CARAPETO, ADELINDA CANDEIAS,
CÁTIA COELHO, NUNO COSTA, LUÍSA GRÁCIO & VITOR FRANCO

Quality of Life (QoL) models are considered important tools, conceptually and methodologically, in promoting the rights of people with complex and intensive support needs (CISN) and the quality of their lives. As such, they have been included in the initial and in-service training programs for professionals and caregivers. Constructivist approaches highlight the importance of considering the personal conceptions of trainees, when designing a training program and implementing it. In this chapter, we review a recent study on the personal conceptions about QoL of professionals that participated in a pilot training program in Évora, Portugal, in the context of the Enablin+ project. First, some notes about QoL; the educative system, especially in a Portuguese context; and the referred training program, “mediators to inclusion”. Closing, some comments and implications.

A brief note about QoL

In Portugal the concept of quality of life became a recurrent one. The idiom “quality of life” is widespread in the everyday discourse, mostly to say “this is quality of life” when a good life is (or is supposed to be) experienced, or otherwise. The expression appears also at the level of national and European Union (EU) policy documents. It occurs, for instance, in recent Portuguese legislation about residential facilities for persons with disabilities (Ministério da Solidariedade, Emprego e Segurança Social, 2015) or the organization of the Activities and Training Centers for Inclusion for adults with intensive support needs (Ministério do Trabalho, Solidariedade e Segurança Social de Portugal, 2021). It is a concern for those institutions aiming at quality certification for the social services they provide in their communities