

## ADOLESCENT MATURATION GROUPS RESULTS

- In general, we can talk about the **fulfilment of the proposed objectives**, although we must not lose sight of the fact that the general objective which this type of group seeks to attain, is inserted in a natural process: that of personal maturation. This is not something that can be quantified. One can, however, measure the degree of a person's satisfaction concerning the individual goal which he has set, and the majority of boys and girls have verbalised the fact that they are satisfied with their level of attainment. What is more, they show behavioural indications of this accomplishment, not only in their own group but also in the classroom.
- We think that this experience has been **qualitatively different** for the students:
  - Because of the level of responsibility it requires.
  - Because the goal was not the content (what was said was not so important as the group and individual meditation about how they related).
- The thought about how they related in this group has been, in fact, fundamental, since it has allowed for the **establishment of connections about how to act in other group contexts**. In other cases, they have realised how they tend to position themselves in their relational groups and the advantages and disadvantages for them in such positioning.
- The fundamental achievement, in our point of view, is that the experience has given them a "training" in **learning to realise** how they participate in events that happen and **how they are continually choosing**. We believe that this realisation about what they do is something which can improve their personal development, especially at this moment in their life when the choices they make will mark their future.

## CONCLUSIONS

The conclusions from our experience with adolescent maturation groups and in reference to the hypothesis of the research which we were involved in were as follows:

*“ One of the causes which provokes relational conflicts among adolescent students and their teacher, is related to the disparity of values and elements of identity in the students—among both sexes—and in the teachers, respect.*

We believe that to a large part, the success of these maturation groups, is found fundamentally in the fact that it is not the trainer (adult) who imposes the topics “of interest” to be dealt with, but rather the young people who talk about those issues that most worry them: topics which do not usually coincide with those that the teachers had hoped for.

From administrative teams and teacher participants we have been given a common message along these same lines. They stress that there exists a qualitative difference with respect to the real implications in the classrooms that this experience has had, not only in personal areas such as academics (reduction of conflicts, increase of student responsibility, etc.,) and the experience which other “bell” type interventions have had (e.g. prevention of drug addiction). A fundamental difference is that in this activity, the students feel motivated and involved, not because there is external force, but voluntarily, which allows a greater impact on the people who are in contact with the group.

We can definitely say that these activities which directly involve young people function better, not only because of their feeling of belonging but also because of the components which they deal with, rather than topics which are imposed from the outside or that have a more directive look, since these components do not always coincide with the topics that adolescents (of both sexes) value, but that belong, moreover, to the interest of adults who want to have an influence over them.