



CATÓLICA
ESCOLA SUPERIOR
DE BIOTECNOLOGIA

PORTO

Service-learning in the promotion of healthy diet among vulnerable children and adolescents

Elisabete Pinto



APRENDIZAGEM SERVIÇO

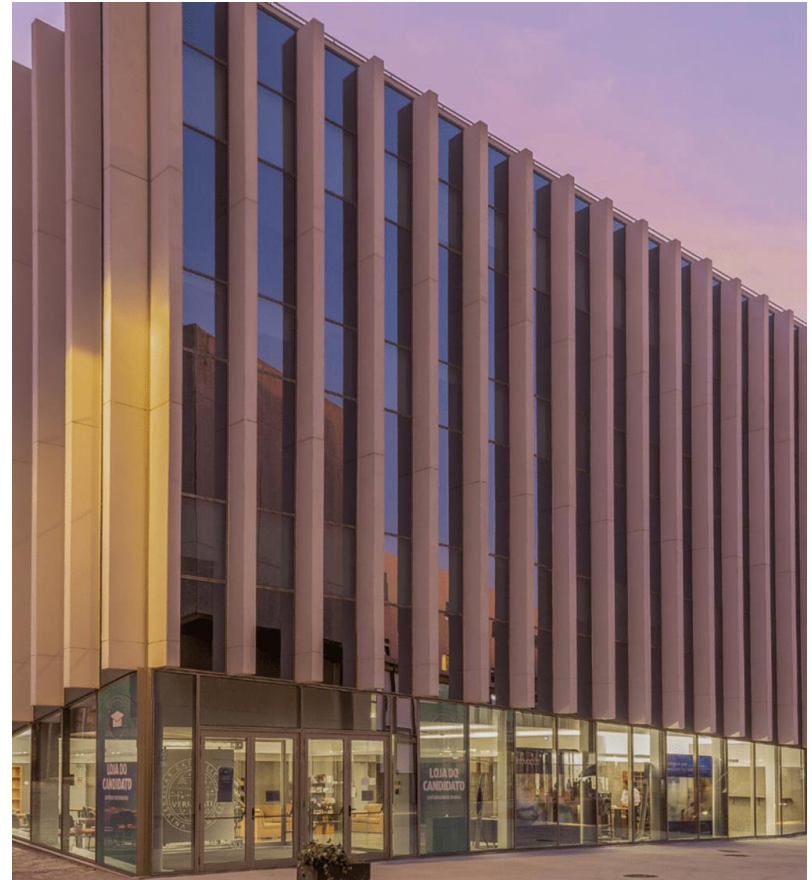
Elisabete Pinto

Nutritional Sciences, BSc

Public Health, PhD

Assistant Professor

[Public Health and Community Nutrition; Epidemiology]

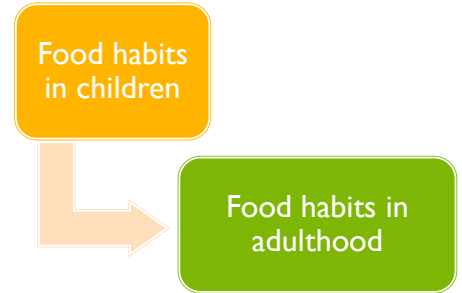
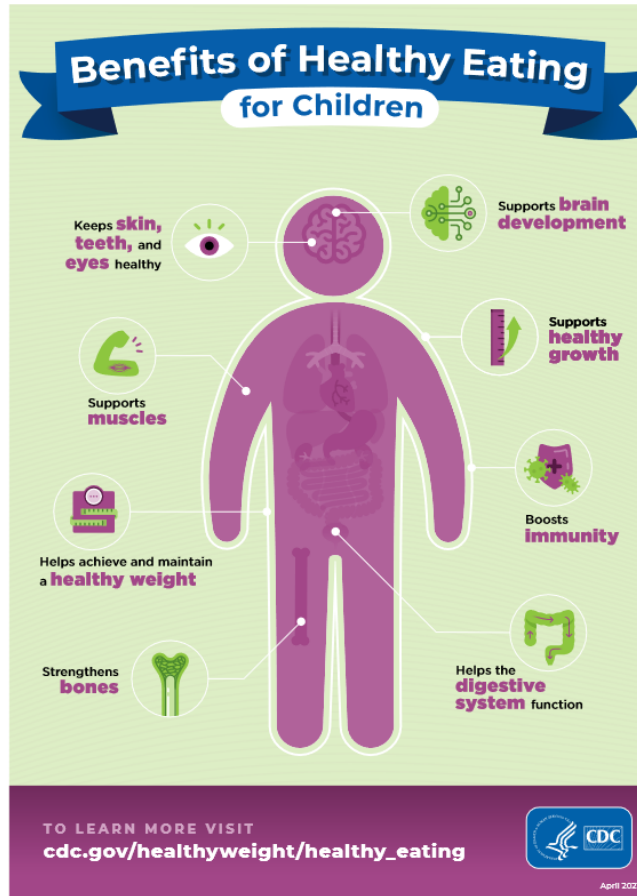


Service-learning is...

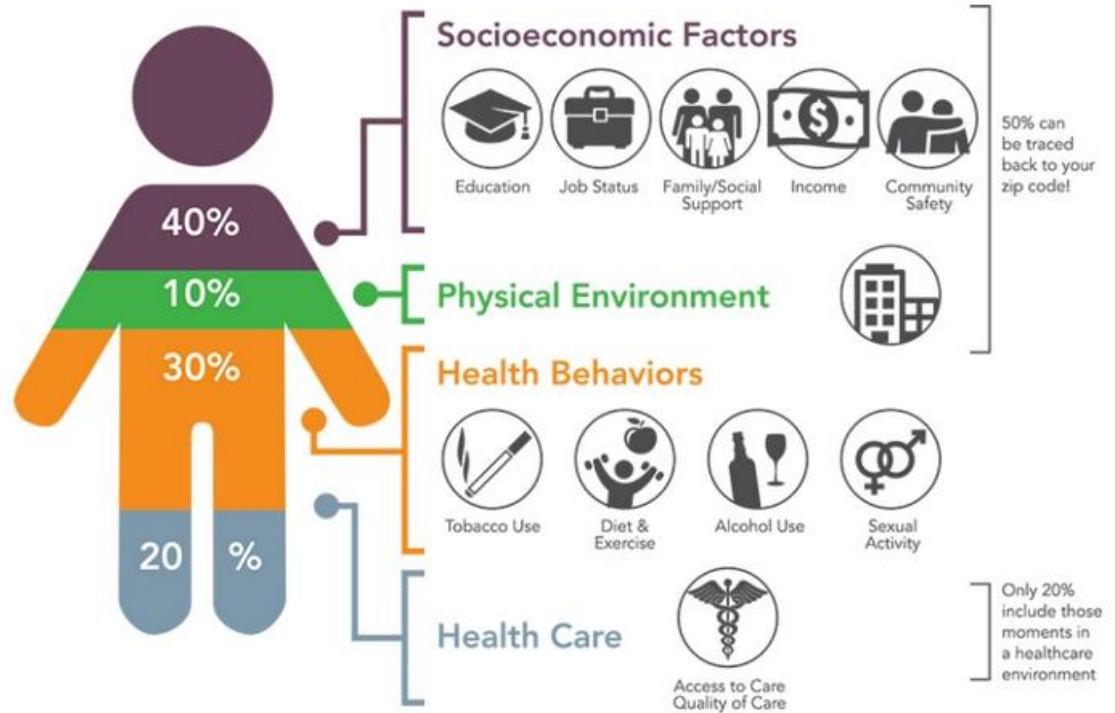
“An **experiential educational** method in which students participate in activities that address human, social and environmental needs from a **social justice perspective**, **integrating community service** into the curriculum in order to enrich learning at any university degree, teach civic responsibility, and strengthen communities through **action** and **critical reflection**.”



Why children and adolescents?



Why children and adolescents of vulnerable groups?



Source: Institute for Clinical Systems Improvement, Going Beyond Clinical Walls: Solving Complex Problems (October 2014)



Our activity

- Students of the bachelor in Nutritional Sciences
- 3rd academic year
- Unit: Nutrition community
- Years: 2020/2021; 2021/2022; 2022/2023
- 25-30 students each year, working in groups (4-5 elements)
- 2 institutions:
 - Center for occupation of free time [O meu lugar no Mundo] – 6-16 years | n~30
 - Residential home [Centro António Cândido] – 6-23 years | n~30

Our activity

- Initial assessment with institutional directors and children/ adolescents
- Establishment of nutritional and dietetic objectives for the intervention
- Design of the intervention
- Development of the intervention in the field
- Final assessment of the intervention



Service

It enables institutions to:

- Benefit from nutritional advice for its users, who are unable to hire, even though they recognize that dietary errors and lack of information are frequent in the population they serve;
- Interventions designed and conducted by university students, therefore with an age closer to the target populations, facilitating communication.

Learnings

It enables the student to acquire many knowledge and skills, namely:

- Develop an intervention in the field of Community Nutrition aimed at a real public, putting into practice the theoretical knowledge acquired in the curricular unit;
- Implement the planned intervention, circumventing potential obstacles that may arise;
- Develop personal organization skills and ability to work in groups;
- Acquire the necessary skills to speak/pass technical messages to population groups, as well as transversal skills.

Conclusions

- The success of this innovative teaching method corroborates its benefits for students and beneficiaries.
- This is an example of how university students can put their knowledge at the service of the community, while solidifying their theoretical knowledge and acquiring transversal skills.

Thanks a lot for your attention.

Elisabete Pinto

ecbpinto@ucp.pt

