

Contest of Asperger teenagers Youtubers, awareness, and bridging for development

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Background: For the autistic people, the awareness around the knowledge provided by scientific research could be a perhaps unique way of understanding and personal development. Some characteristic autistic tendencies in thinking and behavior are valuable keys for better results in a Youtubers contest about science. Both was reasons for planning a Youtubers contest conceived as occasion for public communication of science about particularities of the autistic people brain. This activity is official part of Brain Awareness Week.

Objectives: Allow to Youtubers

- To investigate and express themselves about a topic of their interest.
- To share information about autism, in particular about Asperger's Syndrome.
- To share a space joyfully 'nerd'.
- To apply curiosity to the knowledge of himself, to understand himself better and treat himself with more love.

Methods: This contest was coordinated by a community organization that contacted Dana Foundation, organizer of Brain Awareness Week, and as well as other community organizations with complementary profiles, formed by families of autistic people.

It was honored with the participation as Juries of nationally recognized personalities of Education, Psychology, Biology, and Neuroscience.

The call and bases were shared mainly by social networks.

The prizes were magnifying glasses, watercolor pencils boxes, and science books for young audiences.

In the context of the contest, the short "Amazing things happen" (Dir. Alex Amelines) was made available, with authorization.

Results: Only male participants were registered. Six were pre–enrolled accompanied by a caregiver; only four of them presented works (7, 8, 10 and 12 years old).

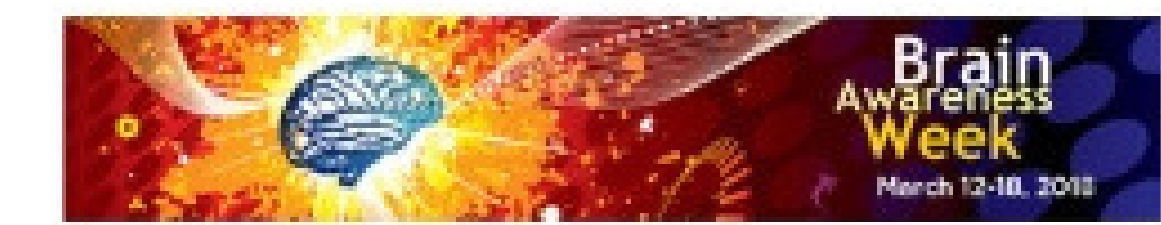
The evaluation of the videos shows a high degree of compliance with the planned objectives. In general, the themes adopted focused on attitudinal aspects and not (yet) on those that had been proposed by the contest. The returns of the Juries had in all cases an high impact on the participants. As planned, their communication favored that participants could deep their awareness about their own work.

Conclusions: Through the contest process was possible to collaborate with autistic people in their own empowerment through the construction of knowledge and shared practices.

Youtube videos resulted for the participants a means of expression and communication perceived as natural.

The evaluation communication had the effect of **bridging** and *created areas of proximal development in relation to the areas highlighted by each participant*. After the contest there was news that each of the contestants progressed very prominently *in the same line* of development – in all cases in collaboration and with the support of his family.

One of the teenagers, whose video had dealt with his difficulties to speak in public, was summoned to share in the first person before legislators and numerous public in favor of the rights of children. Another participant is currently participating in a theater group that gives public performances. In two cases, the status of winners of a Yotutube course earned the participants great popularity and admiration among their schoolmates.



**Mi superpoder
preferido es...**
Concurso de Youtubers

Agradecimientos

Nos da muchísima alegría haber llegado hasta aquí... por ahora: ya estamos pensando en el concurso del año que viene. Se sigue comprobando que la investigación en Psicología y Neurociencias enfatiza en este momento la búsqueda de conocimiento sobre especificidades preciosas del cerebro de las personas de las que se dice que tienen autismo*. Para estas mismas personas, la toma de conciencia sobre este conocimiento es una vía quizás inigualable de comprensión y desarrollo personal. Ello es justamente el por qué de este concurso.

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¡Avanti, Youtubers!
¡A seguir investigando, hasta el año que viene!

* Ello se pudo ver, por ejemplo, en la última reunión anual de INSAR, la asociación internacional de investigadores sobre autismo.

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