

MENTAL HEALTH

SUICIDES ATTEMPTS AND SELF-HARM AMONG 15-YEAR OLD STUDENTS IN CROATIA (189)

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Suicide is one of the most common causes of death among young people, although the rates vary between countries. Due to the growing risk for suicide with the increasing age, prevention of suicides is important in adolescence, as well as recognition of the possible risk factors.

OBJECTIVES: To evaluate factors which might influence suicide attempts and self-harm among adolescents.

METHOD: 2884 adolescents aged 15-16 years filled in the anonymous questionnaire, within the frame of the ESPAD2003 project. Suicide attempts, self-harming, free time activities, school performance and truancy, personal and friends' substance abuse, parental monitoring, family structure, relationship and self-satisfaction, depression symptoms and delinquency behaviour were analysed. Logistic regression analyses were used to determine the characteristics of the adolescents more prone to suicides or self-harm.

RESULTS: That they thought of harming themselves at least once reported 19.4% of the boys and 37.1% of the girls respectively and 4.7% of the boys and 8.9% of the girls thought of that more than 5 times. 6.2% of the boys and 11.5% of the girls reported attempting suicide at least once. Suicide attempts in the boys were associated with the lifetime marijuana use, dissatisfaction with the family financial situation, delinquent behaviour and less cigarette smoking, and in the girls with lifetime ecstasy use, dissatisfaction with themselves, divorced or single parent family, symptoms of depression and delinquent behaviour, for both genders with suicide attempts. Self-harm was associated in the boys with daily smoking, poorer school performance, dissatisfaction with themselves and symptoms of depression, for the girls with lifetime marijuana use, symptoms of depression, dissatisfaction with themselves and with the relationship with mother and father, for both genders with self-harm. The gender differences and substance-abuse association were analysed.

CONCLUSION: The main target of the effective prevention of youth suicide is to reduce suicide risk factors. Therefore the effective measures regarding preventable influencing factors are discussed.

Key words: suicide attempts, self-harm, youth

LIFE SATISFACTION: DEVELOPMENTAL AND GENDER ISSUES IN ADOLESCENCE (111)

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INTRODUCTION: This research examined risk and protective factors for demographic, personal, family and school variables related to adolescents' perception of well being and life satisfaction.

SUBJECTS: Data was collected from the Portuguese sample of the "Health Behaviour in School-Aged Children -2002- (HBSC)" and included 6131 pupils both genders and attending 6th, 8th and 10th grade.

METHODS: Descriptive statistics analyses were conducted to examine behaviours related to risk and protection according to gender and grade. Multiple regression analyses were conducted considering the "life satisfaction and well being" as dependent variable and a set of demographic, personal, family and school variables used as independent variables.

An analysis of descriptive variables previously published identified 3 types of pathways through adolescence: for the majority, risk increased and protection decreased with age; for a few there is an increase at the age of 13 followed by a decrease by 15. A minority of risk behaviours /situations decreased with age. This previous analysis provided also evidence of gender and social class differences. Multiple regression models identify several associations among demographic, psychosocial and contextual variables with well being and life satisfaction. Gender and socio-economic status were not significant predictors in the younger adolescents (6th grade) but become significant in 8th and 10th grades.

DISCUSSION: Thus, being a male, younger, wealthier, satisfied with school, getting help from teachers, considering that teachers think they are "good" at school, being accepted by peers at school and not reporting psychological symptoms are significantly associated with life satisfaction and well being.

CONCLUSIONS: These findings have important implications to promote life satisfaction and well being in adolescents. It is likely that school has to be involved in order to create opportunities for a healthful development before and during adolescence, with special focus in reducing gender and socio-economic inequalities.

Processes and practises of adolescents active participation will be presented and discussed

Key words: adolescents, health, life satisfaction, school ambience, psychological symptoms

QUALITATIVE EVIDENCE BASED MEDICINE, CIRCULAR EPISTEMOLOGY AND PSYCHOANALYTIC PSYCHOTHERAPY WITH UNIVERSITY STUDENTS (5)

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The motto of Plutarchos (Moralia): the human mind is not a vase to be filled but a light to be lit.

The linear causality principle is the epistemological vantage point for the prevailing evidence based medicine (or EBM). In this consideration only knowledge obtained through senses is a reliable knowledge. The background philosophy is the logical empiricism and the basic scientific conception is physical. The research method is according to natural sciences quantitative, using quantitative statistical methods (the qualification preconceives a great amount of objects researched). The influence of the researcher is tried to be eliminated with all kind of possible methods in order to get reliable results with this kind of approach. Prospective randomised controlled double blind studies are carried out.

The result from these premises within narrow bounds is that only studies following the deductive research method of natural sciences can be qualified as reliable studies having the best category of confidence. Other studies are either of a smaller reliability or they are not qualified reliable. A world wide database is gathered for evidence based psychiatric care without calling into question the qualification of this approach to psychiatry/psychotherapy.

The empiric-experimental research method is qualified in psychiatry for the research made in biological psychiatry in which causality principle is linear: e.g. in medicine studies. In psychotherapy research it is not applicable.

In this work, by means of the psychotherapy study with university students, my aim is to show how psychotherapy belongs to a totally different epistemology than studies in basic natural sciences. The epistemology of psychotherapy belongs to the circular epistemology, having interactive, recursive and reflective nature: the basic scientific conception is hermeneutic-emancipative having the interest of knowledge and the research interest in human interpersonal communication and in intrapsychic experiential world. In order to discuss the qualitative case study method of psychoanalytic psychotherapy applied in this study I describe more closely the evaluation, diagnostics and treatment approach of borderline personality disorder (BPD).

Key words: university students, psychotherapy, evidence based medicine

DETECTION OF EARLY EMOTIONAL DISTURBANCES AMONG STUDENTS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF NOVI SAD (26)

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The main purpose of this paper is early detection of emotional disturbances(ED) among the students of the first and third academic year.

The sample was made of 3500 students of both sex, at the first and third year of studies of the 6 faculties at Novi Sad University, during the 2004-2005 school year (43% male students and 57 % female students). Methodology: The Questionnaire for early detecting of emotional disturbances (ROEP, Jankulov, Marinkovic, Gavrilovic 2004) was used (anxiety, fobic disorders, agressivity, obsessive manifestations, depressive symptoms, social anxiety, psychosomatic symptoms, general self-confidence and sexual orientation). This questionnaire was designed according to the Questionnaire for early detection of emotional disturbances (Eric1974). Results: The research will be concluded in July 2005 year, and preliminary results show that 16% of students have risk for the development of some emotional disturbance. In comparison with the research on the same sample of the students at the same University (Jankulov 1979, the result was 13%students with neurotic disturbances), gives us the possibility to compare students' mental health, 25 years after.

Key words: emotional disturbance, students

DEPENDENCY AND INDIVIDUATION IN ADOLESCENCE (97)

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In the beginning of adolescence the young person has to begin loosening the ties to the family of origin in order to be able to go through the so-called second individuation process, which in my mind is a central task regarding the mental health of the future adult. In adolescence we live through the problems of our first years once more which gives us a second chance to solve the conflicts of human development and to fill in the gaps that were left there during the early childhood. The loosening of early dependencies leads first to regression, and only gradually to growing independence and the ability to form extrafamilial relationships in both love and hate. Leaving behind the image of early childhood's parents produces empty space in the mind of the adolescent, which makes it difficult to distinguish between depressive moods and real illness in adolescence.

The peer group is sometimes literally a substitute of the adolescent's family, and personal friendships are most important for both boys and girls. These friendships help the adolescent to give up childhood dependencies rather than mean yet any genuine or lasting relationships. Only when the dependencies would just repeat the old childhood patterns would the group lose its positive function.

Learning disorders, long-lasting moodiness and general negativism sometimes point out a crisis or even a failure in the process of individuation. The adolescent may simply try to detach himself and reject the real contemporary parents, but will end up in a state of permanent regression and depression which is one of the big diseases of our time.

Key words: adolescence, dependency, individuation, depressive moods, depression

THE ASSESSMENT OF RISK FACTORS IN ORDER TO ACT PREVENTIVELY IN THE FIELD OF PSYCHICAL HEALTH (219)

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This paper describes the result's analysis of structured questionnaire used to identify high school students with high risk potential for development of risky behaviour.

GOAL: The application of the instrument used to identify students with high risk potential for development of risky behaviour and problems in the field of psychical health.

Test subjects and methods: The Questionnaire was applied on High School first year students from four different High Schools in Sisacko-moslavcka County, as a part of regular medical examination. The students attend both three and four year High school programmes. The tested population comprised 453 students (39% girls and 61% boys), average years was 15.9.

RESULTS: The answers to the questionnaire questions, each carrying defined value measured in points, have been divided into four areas: school, family, friends and personal characteristics. In the area of behaviour assessment related to school, it was possible to score maximum of 7 negative points; 52 students (11.5%) scored 5 and more negative points.

The questions focused on family can score maximum of 15 negative points. The high score was 7 points; 67 students (14.8%) scored 3 and more negative points.

Relationships with friends bring the maximum of 9 negative points; 53 students (11.7%) scored 4 and more negative points

Personal characteristics comprised questions regarding consumption of various psychoactive substances, their perception of danger of such consumption, and depression and self-esteem scales.

CONCLUSION: Each of the four questionnaire areas indicates certain issues with the tested adolescents and enables experts to take appropriate preventive actions.

Key words: adolescents, psychical health, psychological symptoms, preventive actions

DIFFICULTIES IN THE TREATMENT OF EATING DISORDERS (247)

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What makes young, talented people, especially girls, treat themselves so badly and put their health at risk – as they do in anorectic and bulimic behaviour?

Anorectic or bulimic behaviour be triggered by very innocent remarks made by peers or relatives about the patient's appearance. These adolescents try to please everyone, including their parents, teachers, relatives and peers. They are often among the most intelligent pupils in their class, but they do not always manage so well as students. If they do not succeed, they easily feel deep humiliation and shame. They feel that their physiological and psychological needs are not legitimated, and that they have to set new "rules" for themselves. It often becomes more important to them to keep their own idea of their mind and body under control than to keep themselves alive and healthy.

These adolescents readily punish themselves. They have very strict superegos. They are not satisfied with ordinary behaviours: they have their own ways to do things, and their own targets for success – especially with regard to their weight and eating behaviour. They often know all about food, calories, nutrition and diets, but they uses this knowledge to keep themselves in a constantly undernourished state. Anorectics in particular set targets of their own invention for their weight. These weight levels may be so low that the patients' physiological and mental functions are impaired.

Such adolescents have not gained full possession of their own minds, and instead they try to gain this control by exercising extreme control over their own bodies. You have to use a lot of time to build up a working alliance: to get the young person to trust to you, while at the same time keeping the therapy strictly under control to keep them alive.

Treating such young people is very difficult, and requires extreme care. You need to work together with a partner such as a doctor or a nurse, who can take care of their physical health, which is beyond your scope a therapist.

Key words: eating disorder, treatment

ENCOPRESIS GUIDELINE FOR CHILDREN (30)

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Encopresis is defined as the involuntary loss of stools into underwear without any physical abnormality (>4 years of age), whereas the term faecal incontinence is used when there is an organic cause.

The number of children with encopresis is increasing globally.

In the majority of cases, encopresis is the result of constipation. Requests for help with the problem are often delayed. If these children do not receive counselling or treatment in good time, there is a risk of persistent constipation and associated psychological harm. A guideline is therefore needed to identify earlier, to counsel and to treat these children. This prevents secondary psychological damage.

Guideline - We set out a phased plan that is appropriate for use in the youth health care system, in general practice and by paediatricians. The procedure identifies encopresis from stool loss that needs referral in due time.

Phase 1 (3 weeks)

Diagnosis of encopresis on the basis of completion of medical history checklists and physical examination

Explanation and education

Introduction of bowel diary

Phase 2 (4 weeks)

Simple recommendations

Toilet trainingsitting on toilet at set times

More exercise every day

Recommendations about eating patterns

Use bowel diary and keep records about training

Child's drawing book/Activity book

Normal eating patterns

Phase 3 (1 year)

Laxatives: Cleaning phase/Maintenance phase/Run-down phase

Use bowel diary, keep records about training and use drawing book

Child goes to toilet itself

Prevention

Functional constipation starts in 50% of children as early as the first six months of life. Early treatment of the disorder improves the long-term prognosis. This means that the identification and treatment of constipation and encopresis in time by the youth health care system is important. During every consultation questions should be asked about toilet habits. If a child suffers from constipation, recommendations should be given about diet and exercise.

Children with encopresis are traced using a medical history checklist and physical examination. If the guideline is used, it will quickly become clear which children need extensive and ongoing treatment.

Research is required to determine whether the guideline helps to trace and treat children with encopresis earlier and to determine whether it prevents secondary psychological damage.

Key words: encopresis

GROUP PSYCHOTHERAPY FOR PARENTS OF CHILDREN WITH COCHLEAR IMPLANTS (36)

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During preoperative diagnostic evaluation, surgical procedure of cochlear implantation and following rehabilitation, the parents of the deaf children need to deal with lots of emotional difficulties. Our goal was to demonstrate and quantificate the difference between their quality of life in comparison to control group of parents of healthy children, and than to show how group psychotherapy can improve it.

We tested 60 subjects divided in two groups: 30 parents of cochlear implant users and 30 parents of healthy children. The groups were equalized in terms of sex, age, material status and employment. Semi structured interview method was used to exclude previous psychopathological symptoms.

Quality of life evaluation scale was used, consisting of 21 units, the subjects giving self evaluation of the satisfaction with their lives.

Results of descriptive statistics and analysis of variance showed significant differences in the test scores (quality of life evaluation scale) between the groups. Arithmetic midpoint of the test score in the group of parents of cochlear implant users was 2,95 (SD 0,13) and in the group of parents of healthy children it was 3,71 (SD 0,25).

In the following year supportive educational psychotherapy in the form of workshops in a middle sized group was organized for the parents of cochlear implant users. After 16 sessions the retesting of quality of life was done for that group and it showed the improvement of the score that became close to results of the group of parents of healthy children: after the treatment arithmetic midpoint of the test score was 3,4 (SD 0,4).

It is obvious that the parents of cochlear implant users feel less satisfied with the quality of their lives. There is a need for organized supportive educational work, that is probably most effective in a form of group therapy that can significantly improve their satisfaction with a quality of life.

Key words: psychotherapy, parents, cochlear implant users

PUBLIC PERFORMANCE ANXIETY AMONG FINNISH UNIVERSITY STUDENTS (86)

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INTRODUCTION: Of Finnish high school students, 28% often feel anxiety in public performance situations. Yet, they can cope with even the most demanding situations if they have a positive attitude toward the communication situation and to themselves as communicators. Some young people, however, experience excessive performance anxiety and avoid speaking in public. Problems vary from generalized fear of social situations which significantly limits one's life to a mild feeling of uneasiness in official public speaking situations. For this study, we analyzed the frequency of negative experiences reported in surveys among first-year university students and examined the stability of those experiences.

SUBJECTS AND METHODS: The material included five surveys performed among first-year university students in Finland in 1976/77 (n=10,126), 1979/80 (n=8,124), 1993/94 (n=1,301), 2000 (n=523) and 2004 (n=530) (n=number of respondents). The 1993/94 survey was carried out in Turku, while the other surveys were done on a national level. A sample of 567 students in Turku was followed up in 1993-98. The students were asked to evaluate how they experience performing in public (e.g. reading a paper). The 5-point scale ranged from -2 (truly problematic) to +2 (truly satisfying) and there was an additional option of '?' (hard to say). Students who experienced public performance as negative were examined for this study.

RESULTS: In the first survey, 29.3% of the students experienced public performance as negative; in the other surveys the proportions were 30.5%, 30.6%, 24.5% and 33.3%. In most of the surveys, performance anxiety was more common among female students. The follow-up study shows that these negative experiences have rather a permanent effect. Of those students who, in their first year of study, experienced public performance as negative, 65.9% had the same experience in their third year and 54.2% still in the fifth year. For 42.5%, the experience was negative in all of the surveys.

CONCLUSION: A negative reaction to public speaking reflects situational social fear and it appears that such experiences still are a general phenomenon despite changes in society and school. If the problem persists, it may cause individual suffering and difficulties in one's studies. The issue should be considered both within the universities and student health care environment to ensure that students receive the proper help.

Key words: public performance anxiety, university students

HOW DO LIFE PRIORITIES CHANGE AS YOUNG PEOPLE DEVELOP (103)

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Puberty and adolescence are periods of intensive development and maturation in lives of young people. This is an age in which children immerse into young adults.

The current study was conducted in Lucijan Vranjanin High School in Zagreb. Participants were 195 first grade students (112 girls and 83 boys) and 171 fourth grade students (97 girls and 74 boys). They filled out a questionnaire about their socio-mental priorities by ranking each priority on a scale of 1-10 ("1" meaning the highest and "10" meaning the lowest priority). The analyses included priorities ranked as first on the participants' lists.

First grade students (both girls and boys) ranked freedom, fun and games, and personal dignity as their highest priorities. Peer acceptance by peers was ranked higher by female than by male participants. Among the fourth grades freedom and personal dignity were ranked the highest. X2 test found a statistically significant difference between girls and boys regarding their needs for security and safety. Statistical analysis has also found that female students for both grades have significantly higher need to be accepted by their peers than male students do.

The results of the study have shown that young people of both sexes go through an intensive physical and socio-mental development between the ages of 15-19.

The hypothesis that life priorities change as people develop, and that there are differences in a way females and males rank their life priorities were confirmed partially by the study. Around the age of 25 young people reach their full physical, emotional and social development and maturity; they also develop moral consciousness and awareness of responsibility for their own lives. By this age they are ready to separate from parents and create and live their lives independently.

Key words: young people

SIFTING OUT ENDANGERED STUDENTS AND DRUG-PREVENTION AMONG STUDENTS AT SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN HODMEZOVASARHELY (105)

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INTRODUCTION: According to our experiences there are more and more endangered young people- not only in terms of somatic but mental diseases, too.

OUR AIM: We want to find and help the endangered students with the help of a survey, which is based on a questionnaire.

METHOD: We asked in six secondary schools the 15-16 years old students anonymously so that we could judge the possible mental problem (stresses, depression, aggression) or life-style and social endangerment of them.

RESULTS: We worked up 850 people's data. There are a lot of students who are anxious or inclined to depression. 18% of them behave aggressively when solving the problems. In the view of social life-style 35% have increased risk, 24% are in the marginal category.

DISCUSSION: It is important to know the students' problems, their answers given to the conflict case.

In the future we will make the survey with all of the nine-grade students. It gives us help with our drug prevention work.

Key words: drug prevention

THE INCIDENCE OF DEPRESSIVE SYMPTOMS AMONG HIGH-SCHOOL STUDENTS IN OMIŠ (110)

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OBJECTIVE: the frequency of depression signs among high-school students

RESPONDENTS: the survey examined 213 freshmen and high-school leavers

METHODS: The survey was conducted in April 2005. It covered students from the grammar school, vocational and trade schools. The survey was anonymous. It contained ten questions, which evaluated the feelings of depression. The students answered the questions during class.

RESULTS:

31.6 % of the students answered affirmatively when asked about having the depressive feelings.

22.17 % lost interest in the activities which made them happy and they do not enjoy them any more.

40.09 % feel tired and have the sense of energy loss.

15.57 % have troubles with sleeping.

16.51 % have a loss or grow of appetite.

34.43 % have difficulties with concentration and making decisions.

24.53 % of the adolescents have the feeling of self-pity and 21.70 % have low self-esteem.

19.81 % have pessimistic view about the future.

8.96 % think often about death or suicide.

There are 6.3 % of those who think of suicide and have four affirmatively answered questions.

CONCLUSION: Depression is a disease of today. Although depressive signs are the characteristics of adolescence development, the number of young depressed people who have more distinct symptoms is not irrelevant. Introduction of depression screening at medical examinations during schooling seems necessary.

Key words: depression screening

FAMILY RELATIONS, USE OF THE FREE TIME AND THE SPREAD OF THE TOBACCO, ALCOHOL AND OTHER DRUGS USE AMONG ADOLESCENTS IN HEALTH REGION OF KOPER (IN THE REPUBLIC OF SLOVENIA) (170)

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INTRODUCTION: Family is basic cell of our society, which attributes to a development of adolescent personality. Unsuitable family relations can result in disturbance of sentiment, negative self-image, violence to other persons and to himself (mental disorders, alcohol and other drugs abuse, suicidality). The aim is to show the state of family relations and use of the free time among adolescents the 1st class of secondary schools in health region of Koper as a risk determinates for legal and illegal drugs use, suicidality and violence. The objective of research is to use the results of this study as a starting point for planning of necessary measures.

SUBJECTS AND METHODS: The study included 1.699 adolescents from the 1st class of 13 secondary schools in the health region of Koper who participated in The European School Survey Project on Alcohol and other drugs (ESPAD 03) in the school year 2002/2003. For the purpose of study we chosen and elaborated from the questionnaire ESPAD 03 only those questions which were meaningfully connected with the subject of research. Statistically significance differences between observed events (the tobacco, alcohol, marijuana or hashish use, attempted suicide and violence) and influences on them (family relations, use of the free time and self-image) were evaluate with chi-square test ($p < 0,05$ or $p > 0,05$) in computer programme Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) for windows.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION: We established that adolescents, which do not have emotional support and trust from their parents, smoke cigarettes, marijuana or hashish more frequently and consume alcohol drinks ($p < 0,0005$). We also established that these adolescents tried to suicide more frequently ($p < 0,0005$). Higher share of smokers (cigarettes, marijuana or hashish) was established at adolescents, which are not involved in sport activities and/or other hobbies during their free time ($p < 0,0005$). Those adolescents have frequent night outgoings and do play on slot machines for money ($p < 0,0005$). Adolescents with negative self-image have made suicide attempts ($p < 0,0005$) and were drunk or smoked more frequently ($p < 0,05$).

CONCLUSIONS: Children and their parents have to be included in specific preventive programmes to improve mental health and to achieve positive self-image, which is important factor of preventing suicides.

Key words: family relations, free time, tobacco, alcohol, other drugs use, adolescents

PARENT RATINGS OF ATTENTION-DEFICIT HYPERACTIVITY DISORDER SYMPTOMS IN COMPARISON TO DOCTOR DIAGNOSIS (204)

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INTRODUCTION: The prevalence of ADHD varies across the studies. When only the presence of the behaviour of hyperactivity is required from parent rating scales, prevalence rates are routinely higher. **AIM:** To examine the prevalence of children with a high risk for ADHD. To investigate whether their parents are aware of disorder, in comparison to control group parent reports.

Subjects and methods: 311 first grade elementary school children (aged 6,5-7,5 years), sample from eight elementary schools from Bjelovarska-bilogorska County and their parents were included in the study.

A screening for ADHD was assessed by school doctors. Parents completed questionnaires about 13 individual inattention and hyperactivity symptoms.

RESULTS: A screening identified 29 (9,3%) children at a high risk for ADHD. It was not related to marital status, parents education or number of children in the family. Follow up information from parents were collected on ADHD group and control group. There was statistically significant higher rate of the following 7 symptoms in ADHD group, rated by the parents: "Has difficulty sustaining attention" (p=0,043), "Is often less able than others to wait in line" (p=0,049), "Often answers shortly and quickly" (p=0,0004), "Does not follow through on instructions" (p=0,006), "Changes activities quickly" (p=0,0016), "Often has difficulty playing quietly" (p=0,0009), "Does not seem to listen when spoken to directly" (p=0,004). For other 6 symptoms, rated by the parents, we found no difference between control and ADHD group.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION: Many children were described as inattentive or overactive by a parent, but it does not in and of itself constitute a clinical disorder in a child. This data suggest that the clinical diagnosis of ADHD based on parent report may be questionable, and they point what is common place for children may seem as behaviour problems for parents.

Key words: ADHD, parent report, screening

ATTITUDES OF ADOLESCENTS WITH REGARD TO THEIR PREDOMINANT INTERESTS, NEEDS AND BEHAVIOURS (225)

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Attitudes represent a neuropsychical state of physical and mental activity, and anticipate future behaviour. General attitudes also point to the level of the risk for the society or for particular groups of adolescents posed by the respective psychosocial phenomena.

AIMS: 1) To determine general attitudes of adolescents with regard to their predominant interests, needs and behaviours, and their longitudinal monitoring during high-school period. 2) To upgrade health education activities within the frame of systematic examinations and work at school clinic counselling. The study included 283 high-school first-graders from two high schools in Zagreb, in year 2005. A self-administered questionnaire listing 17 attitudes with which the subjects could agree, disagree, partially agree or partially disagree. Around one third (28.6-38.5%) of study subjects agreed, and more than a half (51.9-56.5%) partially agreed with the following attitudes about dependence related behaviours: it is a transient phase when most young persons use to experiment with some of illegal drugs; alcohol abuse among high-scholars has spread to a worrying extent; and the young tend to practice sex without protection and under the influence of alcohol. More than one third (38.9-41.3%) of study subjects agreed with the following attitudes about school curricula: the curricula are focused on intellectual development while neglecting their age-specific features.

The tolerant and neutral general attitudes point to the possible high level of risk behaviours, the lack of understanding, and inadequate knowledge and awareness of the potential consequences of such behaviours. The majority of the young are dissatisfied with the extent to which these issues are included in school curricula (85.5%), while 24.4% and 38.9% of the subjects did not or only partially did speak about the issues with their parents, respectively. Most of the study subjects considered it useful to talk about these topics, indicating they wanted to learn about them from adults.

Such general attitudes are the consequence of vague, confounding and inadequate messages the adolescents receive from the media, their peers, and even from their parents and some professionals. These attitudes point to the need of continuous health education activities throughout high-school age. Longitudinal monitoring of these general attitudes will show whether or not they are being modified.

Key words: adolescents, attitudes, health education, counselling

INTERNALIZING AND EXTERNALIZING PSYCHOLOGICAL HEALTH PROBLEMS OF YOUNGER SCHOOL AGE CHILDREN AND LINKS WITH FAMILY FACTORS (241)

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INTRODUCTION: Mental and behavioral disorders have substantial effect on family and on child's life, they change child's adaptation, psychological stability, reduce academic achievements. The aim of the study was to assess the behavioral and emotional problems as reported by parents and teachers of 3rd year pupils of Kaunas primary schools.

SUBJECTS AND METHODS: It's a long term epidemiological study. The target group children were in the 3rd school year. The research was performed at 40 schools of the city of Kaunas. 522 of 3rd year pupils were traced and surveyed: 298 boys and 224 girls. Simultaneously the parents of the 434 pupils were surveyed, the teachers completed the questionnaires for 509 3rd year pupil. The behavioral and emotional problems of the children were assessed with the application of the behavior checklists developed by T. M. Achenbach.

RESULTS AND CONCLUSIONS: The scope of problems was determined following the computation of the T-scores and score totals across the subscales. The comparison among the groups of girls and boys revealed the parents tendency to award more scores to boys when assessing their behavioral and emotional characteristics on the subscales of withdrawal/ depression, rule braking, aggressive behavior and attention problems. The mean total BEP score for boys, expressed in the subtotal of all subscale scores, was significantly higher than for the girls. The mean score on the externalizing problems of the boys was also higher as compared with the girls. Among the group of girls somatic complaints, anxiety/depression, social problems were the most prominent while among the group of boys rule braking, attention, aggression problems prevailed. Parental assessment demonstrated the dominance of internalizing problems among children. As reported by teachers boys had significantly more internalizing and externalizing problems than girls did. Girls living in a 1-parent household tended to have more frequent behavioral problems at school, while boys faced more frequent learning problems. The higher education of parents had a positive impact on the child's social adaptation at school. The parental unemployment had statistically significant correlation with the impaired school behavior of girls and lower academic achievements of boys; also it had a negative correlation with child's social adaptation at school.

Key words: primary school, children, psychological health, family

ADOLESCENTS BEHEVIOR IN ZADAR CITY AND COUNTY (245)

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INTRODUCTION: The aim of this study was to test the strength of the relationship between adolescent's free time activities, academic achievements, mental status and substance abuse, and the background of other factors important for this subject.

SUBJECTS: A survey of 849 adolescents (61,6% from Zadar city and 38,39% from Zadar county) between age of 14 and 18 was conducted in May 2005. 38,75% of them in 8th grade of primary and 61,25 % in high school (36,38% in the 1st grade and 24,85% in the final grade of high school).

METHODS: A special questionnaire was designed. It was divided into three sections: the first one with general data and substance abuse, the second concerning mental status (depression scale SDD prepared by prof. A. Prtorić) and the third about free time activities.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION: The percentage of Zadar adolescents consuming alcohol, smoking cigarettes significantly increases with age (9,74 % in the 8th grade comparing to 29,44% in the final grade of high school). There is no significant difference between the city and the county. Generally speaking the places where most of the adolescents spend most time are: cafe bars (57,37% a few times a month and more), parks (51,93% a few times a month and more). Not many of them attending cinemas, discos, public libraries and literally no one goes to the theater and only a low number of them read books. Some forms of adolescents free time activities are directly significant for substance abuse, most of those who regularly smoke cigarettes and drink alcohol spend most of their free time in parks or cafe bars. The gender significantly influences the activities they are occupied with. Girls read books more often (64,52 % of girls comparing to 40,26 % of boys). Boys more often play sports (77,23 % a few times a month and more comparing to 42 % of girls), computer (9,72 % more than 4 hours a day comparing to 0,62 % of girls), gambling games (30,2 % a few times a week and more comparing to 6,12% of girls). Academic achievement is strongly related to nicotine abuse (16,75 % of those who regularly smoke are very good or excellent comparing to 42,85% of them who have lower academic achievement). Adolescents with higher academic achievement are generally less depressed (5,27% depressed among them comparing to 12,6 % of them who have lower academic achievement).

CONCLUSION: Adolescents in Zadar and the county do not have enough adequate and appropriate contents for their free time. Organizing multidisciplinary community youth centers would much improve the use of their free time.

Key words: adolescents behaviour

“THE CLEVER - BUT LONELY CHILD” OR “HOW TO GROW IN GROUPS” (237)

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Groups are uniquely important in modern society. Beginning with the family, the developing personality is affected by experiences within groups.

By its very structure, a group can provide community to those who need to learn how to deal with dysfunctional relationships or dissatisfying ways of living.

An especially challenge working with students in psychodynamic groups is that the long-term psychotherapy norm can be difficult to manage. They are in an age and a situation in life where things change quickly. Most of the Norwegian students are also studying in programs that allow changing university. Many also go abroad for several months or take a break in the studies. So every half year the group have to deal with the uncertainty of which group-members are coming back or not after the holiday. This means that working with the important phases of connecting and terminating demands flexibility without ruining the important frames that secure predictability.

I have found some answers to this challenge in the “conjoint” therapy, which means patients consulting the same therapist for both group and individual therapy.

To avoid the group-experience to be a new “lonely road” for those who need long time to open up for their inner feelings, I have found that conjoint therapy is a way to both take care of every student’s vulnerability and keep the focus in therapeutic goals.

The focus in this workshop will be demonstrating the group therapy setting, the structure, the rules, some techniques, the curative factors and experiences from ten years with students in therapy groups.

Key words: group-experience, psychodynamic groups, “conjoint” therapy