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### **Health Condition of a Specified Rural Area Youth with Regard to Certain Hygienic Habits and Civilization Harmfulness**

Stan zdrowia wybranej młodzieży środowiska wiejskiego z uwzględnieniem pewnych nawyków higienicznych i szkodliwości cywilizacyjnych

In the social and economic planning of the country development, the priority of health problems of the young is not to be questioned. Not only the doctrinal arguments recalled in the Declaration of the Human Rights, but also demographic, biological and socio-economical arguments are to be taken into general account.

Children's health care usually goes far beyond fighting the very illness and decreasing mortality rate and aspires to the task of preparing a child to life, eases the adaptation process to the grown-ups' world, not forgetting about psychobiological aspect of child's personality.

In the consequence of the current educational situation, visible shortage of free places at schools, continuously rising number of school-age children, bad hygienic and sanitary conditions, the prolongation of children's stay at school, the last few years bring inevitable worsening of the school environment health condition (4, 6, 8).

School doctors practice tends to prove that among the seemingly healthy school-going population, a certain percentage of the children deviate from the expected development process (2, 6).

Medical service staff applies the active counselling method to all these children, the method is one of the commonest forms of active preventive treatment way in the open medical care.

American investigations of the problem point to the existence of convergence between bad housing conditions and low income, and the frequency of sickness rate from some chronic diseases (1). Alcoholism also belongs to the phenomena usually described as "social pathology", and is treated as a deviation of specific social illness (5, 7). The problem turns to become a real threat if we turn our attention to the fact that habitual drinking at young age may irreversibly lead to nothing else but alcoholism. Biological effects of toxic alcohol impact are well-known (3, 5). Alcohol psychopathizes young people, hindering the development of higher emotional behaviour, the altruistic character of which seems indispensable in the process of social adaptation.

In our culture two bad habits prevail: alcohol drinking and cigarette smoking. Clinical considerations and the results of epidemiological examination in the last 5 years point out that the cigarette smoke is a pathogenic factor, very often a primary importance factor in the development of many illnesses. That is why organized campaign against smoking at young age should be so much accentuated (5, 6, 7).

In the last years we also faced another problem which is using by the young people different chemicals and medicaments of the narcotics group and bringing their users full dependence. The long-lasting use of these causes mostly irreversible results in psychophysical condition.

The aim of this study was the evaluation of the health condition state of a chosen rural youth population with the consideration of their hygienic habits and the presence of some civilization threats like: cigarette smoking, alcohol drinking, and narcotics dependence.

## MATERIALS

The examination was conducted on the population of 394 advanced primary school pupils. The all originated from the rural region of Siedlce voivodeship. The health condition of the examined group was assessed on the basis of the information taken from pupils health records and by using common active counselling method. To the active counselling method group 106 pupils were qualified, which constitutes 26.9% of all the population. Moreover, the information on the hygienic habits and civilization harmfulness exemplified in smoking cigarettes, alcohol drinking and narcotics addiction was gathered on the basis of an inquiry questionnaire.

## RESULTS

Taking into account social origin, it was shown that 37% of the examined population descended from the workers families, 26% from peasant families, 20% from the worker-peasant families and 17% from intelligentsia families. 90% originated from complete families, 5.8% from incomplete ones (the lack of one parent), 4.1% from the broken up family (divorce, separation).

The health condition examination of the chosen pupils population by the active counselling method is exemplified in the Table 1. The succession of the diseases was as follows: in the first place we placed eye illnesses and defects (shortsightedness, hypermetropia and astigmatism), in the second — somatic defects (weight deficiencies, height deficiency, overweight) and successively: impairment of the movement apparatus, as well as lateral spinal curvature, flat feet, valgus feet.

Analysing hygienic habits and taking into consideration frequency of taking a bath, it was shown that 39.3% of the girls and 50% of the boys take a bath once a week, an everyday bath was pointed out in 6.9% of the girls and 5.6% of the boys. Running water was available to 240 children (60.9%), well water — to 154 children (39.1%), indoor toilet was available to 217 children (55.1%) and outdoor toilet to — 177 children (44.9%). In general 64.7% of the examined children wash their hands after leaving the toilet, 34.3% sometimes do it and 1% — do not. In case of tooth brushing — 42.6% do it two times daily, 37% once daily and 5.8% do not brush their teeth at all.

Table 1. Active counselling groups of the examined rural youth

Active counselling group		The number of the qualified in the group	%	
IV	Development defects	Somatic	27	6.9
		Psychic and permanent impairment of the central nervous system	1	0.2
V	Eye defects and illnesses	34	8.6	
VI	Long-lasting pharyngo-nasal cavity illnesses and ear illnesses, hearing and speaking defects	4	1.0	
VII	Long lasting illnesses of a breathing system	1	0.2	
VIII	Circulatory system defects, rheumatism, connective tissue illnesses	1	0.2	
IX	Long lasting illnesses of the urinary system	1	0.2	
X	Permanent impairment of the movement apparatus and defects in a body stasios	22	5.6	
XI	Other illnesses of a long lasting character that require active care	15	3.3	
Total		106	26.9	

In the questionnaire, where the civilization harmfulness present in smoking cigarettes was assessed, 379 pupils said they did not smoke, 15 — did, 10 — smoked occasionally and 2 smoked every day. For their smoking reasons they hold that 7 smoked for socializing, for pleasure — 4, for whiling time away — 3 and one pupil could not give any satisfactory reason. As to the alcohol abuse, in the above questionnaire, 362 of the examined pupils said they did not drink at all, which constitutes 91.9%, 32 were occasional drinkers, which is 8.1%. As to the menace of narcotics taking and possible addiction, 3.8% of the questioned pupils said they contacted narcotics taking people, 2% had a direct contact with narcotics. More than 96% of the questioned claim that they realize the harmful impact of some civilization threats as smoking, drinking and narcotics abuse. The knowledge on the subject was delivered to them successively by: school, home, papers, friends and mass media (radio and TV).

#### DISCUSSION ON RESULTS

Insufficient knowledge on the subject of civilization threats, the air of underestimation towards health education may cause negative health consequences among the young ones. Understanding of the health care matter plays

an important role in organizing health service, in aiming at preventing illnesses and strengthening the body health, in agitating about health care culture, activating people in the direction of health care, forming up the feelings of responsibility for one's and other's health (1, 4, 6).

Our examination pointed out that the most numerous active counselling group among the examined school population were pupils with eye defects, next — with psycho-somatic defects and also the permanent impairment of the movement apparatus, and also with body statics disorders. The phenomenon of such a numerous percentage signifies the range of a problem of taking care of the right and wanted somatic development and the access to the specialists advice: an ophthalmologist and movement apparatus consultant.

The health condition evaluation, the assessment of hygienic habits and the knowledge of the civilization threats should be considered as the basis for some broader prophylactic activity and may constitute a measure for the educational and health activity in the school environment.

### Conclusions

1. The most common health condition irregularities of the examined population should be tied up with eye illness defects, successively psycho-somatic defects follow.

2. The results show a small percentage of smoking and drinking persons as well as narcotics taking ones.

3. The examined youth from the rural environment is in its 96% informed about harmfulness of some civilization threats such as: smoking cigarettes, alcohol drinking and narcotics abuse.

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## STRESZCZENIE

Badania przeprowadzono wśród wybranej młodzieży szkół wiejskich, posługując się metodą ankietową oraz analizą kart zdrowia uczniów według powszechnie obowiązującego systemu dyspanseryjnego. Celem badań była ocena stanu zdrowia z uwzględnieniem nawyków higienicznych oraz poziomu wiedzy o zagrożeniach cywilizacyjnych wynikających z palenia papierosów, nadużywania narkotyków, picia alkoholu.

Najczęstsze nieprawidłowości stanu zdrowia tej populacji dotyczą wad i chorób narządu wzroku. Kolejne miejsca zajmują zaburzenia w rozwoju somatycznym i psychicznym oraz uszkodzenia narządu ruchu i zaburzenia statyki ciała. Aż 96% ankietowanych stwierdza, że znane są im szkodliwości wynikające z zagrożeń cywilizacyjnych, takich jak palenie papierosów, picie alkoholu, używanie narkotyków. Wiedza o tych zagrożeniach cywilizacyjnych według ankietowanych przekazana została w szkole, w domu, przez prasę, kolegów oraz środki masowego przekazu (radio i telewizję).

