

Needs assessment inquiry concerning physical activities of young pupils

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Abstract

Background. Childhood and adolescence age is the time of life with maximal development, when lifestyle, personality and, also, adequate habits necessary for social integration are shaping. At this life stage, there are necessary efforts from family and teachers to avoid an unbalanced physical development due to an intense intellectual activity, typical for this age.

Objective. Our purpose was to study the influence of physical activity on lifestyle development of young pupils from a rural community, assessing their perceived needs for physical activity during learning process and leisure.

Methods. We performed a descriptive, observational study, based on a genuine and anonymous questionnaire, containing 33 items – multiple choices and open questions –, applied to 159 pupils (age between 8 and 14 years), attending II–IV year of study in a rural school. The inquiry, performed during 2005-2006 academic year, assessed the subjects' opinion about the way in which the hygienic regulations concerning the educational process are followed.

Results. 90% of subjects answered that they are doing all the homework for the next day, but most of them need the support of their family in order to perform this task; 75% do not perform any sports on a regular basis, but those who are playing football, do this activity for 1 or 2 hours daily. More than a half of them are tired and stressed – at the end of a school day, at the end of the week or the semester – due to the educational process.

Conclusions. Pupils use to relax at the end of the week through sedentary activities: playing computer games, learning or watching TV. Our study confirms the pupils need of organized physical activities and that the educational process hygienic norms and regulations to be followed.

Key words: study, perceived needs, young pupils, sports.