

SCHOOL SETTINGS AND RISK BEHAVIORS OF SCHOOL-CHILDREN IN BULGARIA. RESULTS FROM MULTILEVEL ANALYSIS

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Abstract: *The article examines the impact of the school settings on the risk of smoking, drinking, cannabis use, bullying others and the early start of sex life among the teenagers in Bulgaria. Data from the Bulgarian sample of the international study "Health Behavior of School-aged Children – HBSC" (2018) is used. A multilevel analysis (random coefficient mode) is applied to study the variance in students' risk behaviors, which is due to the school environment in which they study. The results from the analysis confirm that the unfavorable school environment (lack of tolerance, mutual assistance and support among students, lack of attention from teachers, higher stress from lessons and homework) are associated with more frequent manifestations of risk behaviors. In schools where there is greater tolerance for drinking, smoking, cannabis use and bullying individual differences (gender, age, etc.) among children are weakening. The children perceive risky patterns of behaviors as normal and start reproducing them in the process of communication with their classmates.*

Keywords: smoking; drinking; bullying perpetration; early start of sexual life; school setting.

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