

Original Papers

DRUG USE AND OTHER PROBLEM BEHAVIORS AMONG JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS. Changes between 14 and 16 year olds

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ABSTRACT – The paper presents prevalence of problem behaviors among high school students. In each residential district 13% of grades were randomly selected, so finally a sample of over 1000 students participated in the survey. First grade students were surveyed in 2002 and followed up two years later, at the end of third grade. The findings show a marked increase in the problem behaviors prevalence: both of any type of problem behavior (the prevalence rate increased from 52 to 67%), as well as of a problem behavior syndrome (including at least two types of behavior, with an increment from 25 to 47%). Most marked increases were noted in the proportion of students who got drunk in the past year (from 20 to 46%), had alcohol-related problems (from 15 to 28%), and took drugs in the past year (from 6 to 20%). Aggravation of problem behaviors among high school students requires adequate, multidimensional prevention efforts.

Key words: adolescents, alcohol and drug use, problem behaviors.