

Violence in adolescents aged 11–15 years in relation to alcohol abuse and selected psychosocial determinants

Abstract – The purpose of the study was to show the prevalence of physical fighting among adolescents in Poland and other countries, and to identify determinants of frequent fighting related to alcohol abuse and other psychosocial factors. Data were obtained from cross-sectional self-report surveys conducted within HBSC (Health Behaviour in School-Aged Children: A WHO Collaborative Cross-National Study) in 2001/2002. 162 305 adolescents in 32 countries (11, 13 and 15 year-olds) participated in the survey, including 6 383 from Poland.

In Poland, fighting at least once during last 12 months was reported by 60% of boys and 18% of girls, fighting more than 2 times – 28% and 7% respectively. The prevalence of fighting among boys is higher in Poland than in the most of other countries, while close to international average among adolescent girls.

Frequent fighting was reported by 52% of adolescents who had been drunk more than 10 times in the life time, while by 13% of adolescents who had never been drunk. Alcohol abuse also increased the risk of fighting with a stranger. Multiple logistic regression analysis identified six independent determinants of frequent fighting: male gender, frequent alcohol abuse, lower age, lower school satisfaction, frequent feeling of irritability or bad temper and lower life satisfaction. The strength of relationship between alcohol abuse and frequent fighting differs by gender and countries.

Key words: adolescents, physical aggression, alcohol abuse, life satisfaction, gender, international comparison