

Teachers approach toWARDS health promotion in schools of Klaipėda

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Abstract: The World Health Organization's (WHO's) Schools for health (SHE) framework is a holistic, settings-based approach to promoting health and educational attainment in school (SHE report, 2014). 285 schools in Lithuania belong to national SHE network (Health education and disease prevention centre, 2017). 50% of girls and 58% of boys eat breakfast, only 30% of girls and 25% of boys eat fruit daily, 23% of boys and only 12% of girls are physically active, more than half of schoolchildren feel pressured by schoolwork, 12% of fifteen years old girls and 20% of fifteen years old boys are active smokers (HBSC report, 2014). Teachers suppose to cooperate with public health specialists in health promotion and education activities.

The aim was to analyze Klaipėdas Teachers' approach to health promotion in school.

The objectives were: 1. To find out what are the main health-related problems of school children, according to their teachers. 2. To evaluate teachers opinion about integrated health education. 3. To estimate how teachers value public health specialists activity at school.

A questionnaire survey of teachers was conducted in schools of Klaipėda in 2013. 300 teachers of Klaipėda were randomly selected (using the list of all the teachers working in Klaipėda) to participate in a survey, 278 of them filled in and returned questionnaires (response rate – 92.6 percent.). The Likert scale from 0 to 4 (where 4 is the highest score) was used in the questionnaire. Pearson's chi square test and Student's t test were used to analyze data.

The main health-related problems of schoolchildren in general schools (that have grades from 1 to 10), according to the teachers, were malnutrition (3.03 ± 0.160) and smoking or other health threatening habits (3.02 ± 0.802). The main health-related problems of schoolchildren in other schools (gymnasiums, secondary schools) were schoolwork (3.04 ± 0.680) and lack of sports equipment (2.96 ± 0.887). 79.5% of natural sciences teachers, 81.2% of language teachers, 88.6% of exact sciences teachers, 100% of primary teachers integrate health topics in their subjects and 93.2% of other subjects teachers integrate health topics in their subjects. As the most important fields for public health specialist teachers consider to be: cooperation with other health institutions (3.80 ± 1.816 in general schools and 3.91 ± 2.041 in other schools, $p < 0.05$) and first aid (3.73 ± 0.489 in general schools and 3.90 ± 0.297 in other schools, $p < 0.05$). Teachers of both types of schools give high average score to the ability of public health specialist to provide the first aid (3.88 ± 1.423 in general schools and 3.84 ± 1.007 in other schools, $p > 0.05$), but teachers of general schools give lower average score to the cooperation of public health specialist with other health institutions (3.44 ± 1.592 vs. 3.81 ± 2.494 , $p < 0.05$).

Teachers agreed that behavioral health-related problems were common among schoolchildren, but they still thought that the most important task of public health specialist at school was to provide first aid. Although many teachers (89.2%) integrated health topics in their subjects, nevertheless only 29.9% cooperated with public health specialist on this, in order to achieve the effective health promotion.

Keywords: teachers, public health specialists, school, health promotion

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