



# Contemporary health threats in children and teenagers in Poland and Norway as a basis for school health education

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**Main objective: Popularisation of the project materials "Healthy lifestyles - we think globally, act locally".**

**From theory to practice ....**



Presentation of project results „ **Healthy lifestyle – we think globally, we act locally**”,



the developed materials as examples of good practice - encouraging the implementation of projects, scenarios in kindergartens and schools



**Materials from the project:**

Project "Healthy lifestyle - we think globally - we act locally"

[www.pcen.pl](http://www.pcen.pl) - Projects implemented by PCEN (project materials)

## Let's start with the project ...



The project *Healthy lifestyles - we think globally, we act locally* was addressed to headmasters and teachers of primary and secondary schools implementing the national programme "Health Promoting School" in the Podkarpackie Voivodeship - **National Certificates SzPZ** (Health Promoting Schools).

It was realized within the framework of Norwegian funds by **Podkarpackie Complex of Voivodeship Facilities in Rzeszów**, as Component I of the Education Intensive Training - Professional Staff Development Programme financed by the EEA Financial Mechanism 2014-2021 and national funds between the Minister of Investment and Development acting as the National Contact Point and the Foundation for the Development of the Education System in Warsaw.

**Partner institution : Educational Authority in Rzeszów**

It included the implementation of a five-day training of teachers using modern technologies in the so-called **hybrid approach - 21- 29.01.2021**.

# Motto of the meeting:



*"The participation of students in educational programs that promote natural values (body, health, nature) determines success in life, while the abandonment of educational activities, resulting in the "birth" of student incompetence, causes, in the further course of events, a series of failures, becoming the source of many a failure, and even a failure in life"*

(A.Pawłucki, 2007)

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Direction of reflections ....

## Contemporary health risks in children and adolescents

Norway and Poland - *the same problems or different?*

Health education in Norway and Poland - what we have in common - what is worth using!



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## Contemporary so-called civilisational threats to pupil health



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# "The civilization trap"

The 21st century has become a '**civilisation trap**' for modern man, in which life is more comfortable and easier, but not always healthy.

"Never before has the lifestyle of children and teenagers resembled that of adults. Children and teenagers behave like adults, eat like adults, rest like adults, and this adversely affects their health."

(W. Pańczyk, 2011)



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Studies conducted for years, e.g. within the framework of HBSC and observation of school reality indicate that **health risks for children and teenagers in Poland and Norway are similar.**

Poland is one of 40 countries in Europe that have been participating in HBSC research for 25 years, coordinated by the Institute of Mother and Child in Warsaw. Norway also participates in this research. The research is a key source of knowledge about the health behaviour of young people, their psychological and sociogeographical conditions.

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## Threats to the health of children and teenagers in Poland and Norway concern all areas of a pupil's health from physical, through mental, social and spiritual.

The most common health disorders of children and adolescents are observed in the area of:

- **nutrition:** overweight, obesity, anorexia, bulimia to orthorexia and bigorexia;
- **physical activity:** physical passivity, passive rest, including preference for so-called sedentary activities (spending leisure time in front of a computer and TV screen);
- **social contacts:** the virtual "me". - computer, Facebook - virtual "friend";
- **contact with oneself** - identity in the body - "I" of modern man - postmodernity and the self-creation of the body, e.g. a weight loss regime. (J. Kilanowska, 2016, A. Pawłucki, 2014; J. Szymańska, 2014, B. Wolny 2016 )

# Obesity and mental disorders

*Health education, health promotion  
and prevention*

According to the HBSC: "**obesity and mental disorders** represent one of the most significant factors affecting the health and well-being of young people, which can be addressed through preventive measures".

(HBSC, 2016)



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## Movement and healthy eating are the basis of health

**The progress of civilisation and technology**, especially the restriction of physical activity associated with everyday activities and easy access to highly processed, energy-rich food, leads to **an imbalance in the energy balance of the body** and, as a consequence, causes **overweight and obesity**.

(J. Kilanowska, 2016)

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## Increasing trend of overweight and obesity



The World Health Organisation notes an increasing trend of overweight and obesity among children and teenagers.

The problem starts in **early childhood** and gains momentum in the later years of life, especially during the **period of puberty**.

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# Increase in overweight and obesity.



**Source: J. Kilanowska Presentation1. Selected diseases of civilisation.**

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# Consequences of overweight and obesity

Overweight and obesity in children and teenagers is a disorder of their health which has a number of consequences:

**both the direct, mainly psychosocial and emotional effects, and the distant somatic effects.**

Among obese teenagers, there is a high likelihood of maintaining obesity into adulthood and developing complications such as:

- *premature development of atherosclerosis,*
- *metabolic syndrome,*
- *second type diabetes*
- *a broad spectrum of cardiovascular diseases.*



(J. Kilanowska, 2016)

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## HBSC report 2020(research 2018) Overweight and obesity



### Poland

The results of the Health Behaviour Survey of teenagers aged 11-15 years indicate that **excessive body weight is present** in **29.7% of boys and 14.3% of girls** (according to WHO criteria, 2007).

**These percentages are several percent higher compared to the 2014 results.**

**Between 2014 and 2018, the percentage of teenagers with excessive body weight increased from 19.9% to 21.7% with a stronger deterioration observed in boys compared to girls and, considering age, in 13-year-olds of both sexes.**

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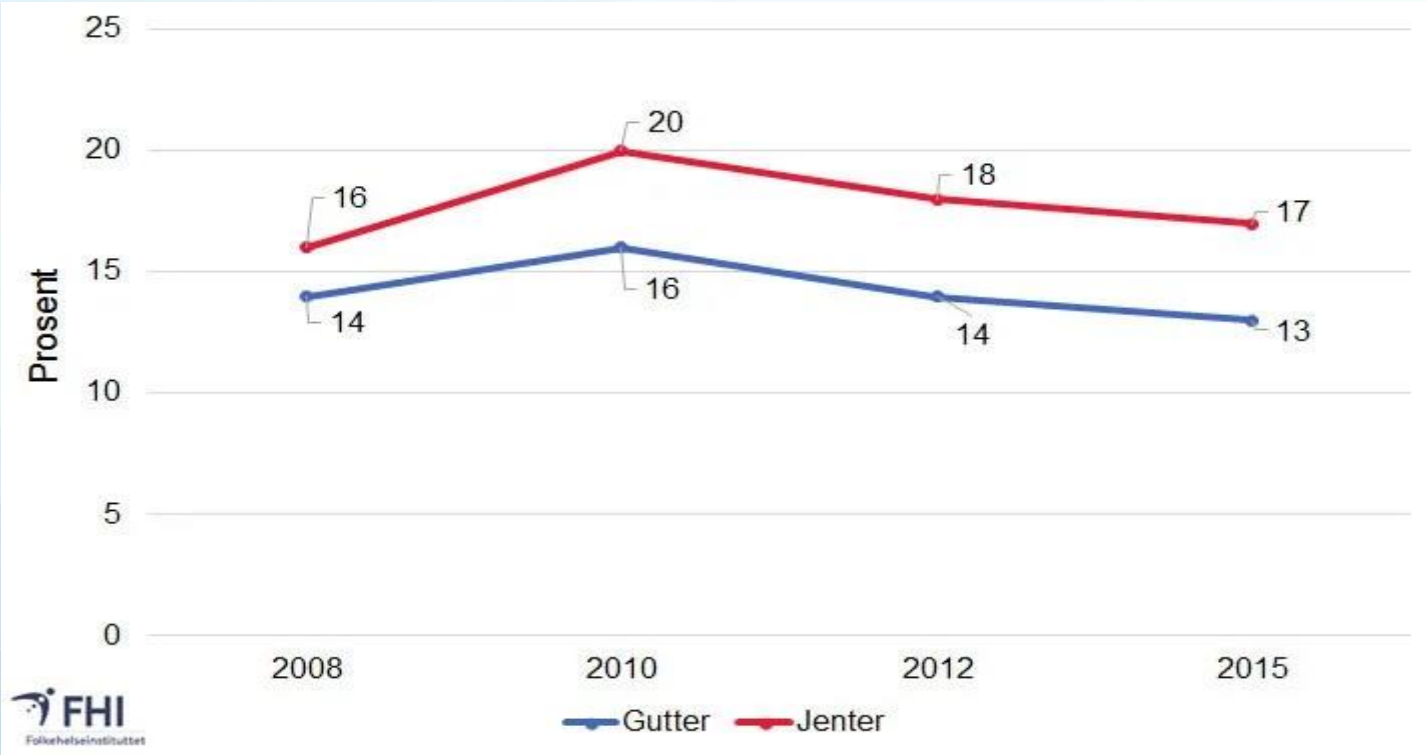


## Norway

**Obesity** is a problem for children and teenagers in Norway, with positive changes to be seen and a decrease in overweight and obesity since 2012, which should be linked to systematic education and prevention activities in Norwegian schools.

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# Child obesity in Norway



**Source:** Barnevekststudien 2008, 2010, 2012 og 2015, Folkehelseinstituttet, za: J. Kilanowska, Presentation 1. Selected diseases of civilisation.

**NOTE !** Overweight and obesity is a problem for children and teenagers in Norway

HBSC research continues to show a **group of children and teenagers with overweight and obesity problems.** .

In Norway, **15 - 20% of children** and **about 25% of teenagers** are overweight or obese.

In relation to gender, **17% of girls** and **13% of boys** are overweight or obese, and among junior high school students this problem affects 25% of boys and 20% of girls.

Overweight also persists among high school students, here **27% of boys** and **25% of girls** are overweight or obese

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## Comparison ....

The presented data from Norway show convergence with the 2018 HBSC data in relation **to Polish children** who continue to **gain weight** and there is clearly **an upward trend**.

Overweight and obesity are civilisation problems that equally affect Norwegian and Polish schoolchildren.

### Health consequences

Among the particularly dangerous health risks for overweight and obese children and teenagers and later adults is **diabetes**.

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The World Health Organisation reports that **422 million** people worldwide **suffer from diabetes**.

In Norway, there are numerous educational activities in schools aimed at preventing and counteracting the effects of overweight and obesity, including preventing the somatic consequences of obesity in children and teenagers, including **diabetes**, as one of the most common diseases of civilisation.

**In Poland, special activities are undertaken by Health Promoting Kindergartens and Schools - the promotion of a healthy lifestyle carried out in kindergartens and schools is the teachers' own programmes and projects addressed to the whole community**

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# Mental health and mental health disorders

**This was just the beginning ....**



Already in the 1980s, doctors, psychologists and educators drew attention to **the increase in psychosocial health disorders in school children and teenagers.**

(K. Ostrowska, 1998)

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In the 1990s a **new morbidity** began to be reported which included:

*behavioural disorders,*

*neuroses,*

*personality disorders,*

*psychoses*

*various forms of social maladjustment, including substance abuse  
and suicide.*



(B. Woynarowska, Oblacińska A., Jodkowska M, 1996)

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# Mental health - how to understand it and how to strengthen it ?

"Mental health is more than the absence of mental disorders, it is an integral part of health; indeed, there is no health without mental health."

Mental health depends on a number of socio-economic, biological

Mental health promotion activities in pre-schools and schools (e.g. various programmes - Health Promoting Kindergartens and Health Promoting Schools).

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## What is the mental health status of children and teenagers in Norway?

The 2007 and 2012 data presented during the project show that:

- around 7% of school-age children have symptoms consistent with mental disorders, **such as conduct disorder, depression and anxiety.**

***The prevalence of anxiety and depression increases in adolescence.***

From **adolescence** onwards, ***depression, anxiety disorders, adjustment disorders and eating disorders*** are more prevalent in **girls** than in boys.

**In boys, these problems show stability with slight fluctuations.**

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## What is the mental health status of children and teenagers in Poland?

### 2020 HBS Report. (Research 2018) HEALTH BEHAVIORS OF POLISH TEENAGERS IN COMPARISON WITH THEIR PEERS IN 45 COUNTRIES

The data reveals that self-assessment of health and life satisfaction in Polish adolescents deteriorates with age.

This is also reflected in **unfavourable lifestyles**.

**Girls rate their health worse than boys**, and gender differences worsen with age to the disadvantage of girls.

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# What is the mental health status of children and teenagers in Poland?

Almost 40% of teenagers experience recurrent complaints of psychological or somatic origin.

Feelings of **nervousness and irritability (bad mood)** are the most frequently recorded, with **headaches** coming in third.

In the study group, 28.3% experienced **more than one psychological ailment** and 18.9% more than **one somatic ailment** in the last 6 months.

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# REPORT 2021 ONLINE 2.0 MENTAL HEALTH OF POLISH TEENAGERS IN REMOTE LEARNING

What effects does the invasion of screens have on development and mental health?

**9 hours a day in front of a screen !!!**

## **EMOTIONAL PROBLEMS AND DEPRESSION**

(Study group N= 806 - 11 to 18 years old)

Research by the Maria Curie Skłodowska University (UMCS) found that:

- **68.4% of adolescents suffer from social isolation and the inability to have direct contact with classmates.**
- **70 % of the pupils surveyed have a **changeable mood (depressive)** - daily **irritability and nervousness****
- **62% have **difficulty sleeping****

(FOUNDATION FOR HEALTH EDUCATION AND PSYCHOTHERAPY PARENTS.CO)

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**BAD MENTAL CONDITION Most teenagers cannot cope with isolation - depressive states will occur**

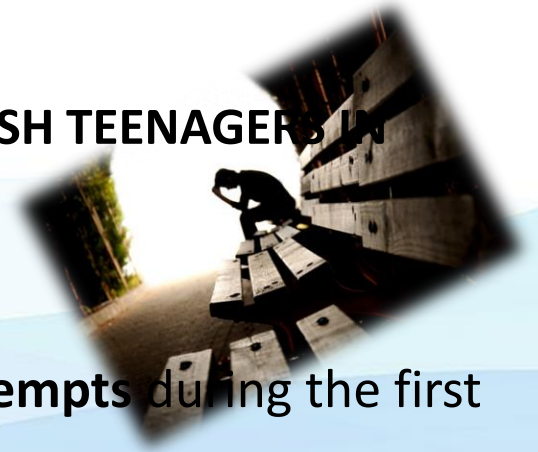
## REPORT 2021 ONLINE 2.0 MENTAL HEALTH OF POLISH TEENAGERS IN REMOTE LEARNING

### THOUGHTS ABOUT DEATH

In the Polish FDDS survey asked about **suicide attempts** during the first period of distance learning (by the end of the school year 2020), **2.9% of respondents aged 15-17** declared that they had **attempted suicide**.

Our study produced results similar to the American study - **4% of the respondents reported serious suicidal thoughts**, another **6.5% expressed a death wish** and **32.1% had thoughts of death**.

(FOUNDATION FOR HEALTH EDUCATION AND PSYCHOTHERAPY  
PARENTS.CO)





The risks presented highlight the need to support the health of children and teenagers

School health education, health promotion and health prevention is not only implemented in the Polish system.



Interesting solutions are proposed in this respect by Norway.

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## Health education in Norway and Poland



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Health education in Norway is an important area of school activity,  
but - it is understood differently than in Poland.

"When the core curriculum for school subjects is analysed, it is difficult  
to find any particular distinction between the *concepts of health  
education*.

(J. Kilanowska, 2016)



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## Health education ...What unites us ... What divides us

### Norway

- all stages of pre-school and school education
- *physical education* (kroppsøving)
- **physical activity** (fysisk aktivitet)
- **nutrition and health (mat og helse) – subject**
- a subject combining *biology, chemistry and physics* (naturfag)

### Poland

- all stages of pre-school and school education
- physical education (major subject) - **block health education**
- content in different subjects (the so-called diffuse approach)
- educational and preventive programme



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## *Subject: Physical education - one of the elements of health education*

Unlike the Polish core curriculum for physical education in primary and secondary schools, **health education** is not distinguished here as a separate subject block.

**How to interpret this?**



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"This may be a result of the Norwegians' special relationship with nature deeply rooted in their mentality.

**Taking care of the body, the need to be outdoors,** the ability to recreate in harmony with nature are all embedded in their way of life and perception of the world.

The joy and enjoyment of physical activity, play and outdoor recreation is nurtured in children from an early age and, **perhaps even more importantly,** is not curbed and tamed by adults' fear of children falling during play and activity or getting their clothes dirty.

(J. Kilanowska, 2016)

**Health education - is simply a part of this system as obvious and necessary as language or maths skills.**

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Motto for health action in Norway:

**"There is no bad weather, there is only bad clothing".**

fully reflects the mentality of this nation regarding outdoor activities, contact with nature and traditions and habits formed over the centuries".

(J. Kilanowska, 2016)

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An additional element of health education - linked to the student's daily activities...

***Project: Physical activity***



In Norwegian schools, one of the elements for implementing the recommendation of a minimum of 60 minutes a day of physical activity for pupils is the subject, or rather the school **project physical activity**, which is implemented in practice to the tune of one hour a week in primary school classes 6 and 7

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## Subject of health



### *Subject: Nutrition and health*

**"Food and Health"** as a practical subject is intended to stimulate students to prepare meals, to shape enjoyment and ability, and to help students to be conscious consumers, able to take responsibility for food and meals both at home and leisure, and in their professional and social lives.

**The teaching of the subject is intended to shape an informed and pro-healthy lifestyle.**

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## Health education content in school subjects

***Subject: Naturfag (biology, chemistry, physics)***

The thematic area that includes elements of health education is the one called **Body and Health** (1st to 10th grade) and **Nutrition and Health** (secondary school).



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Motto for health education activities in Norway:

**"There is no bad weather, there is only bad clothing".**

**Worth implementing in our  
pre-schools and schools!**

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Motto of Polish actions: *"We promote health not because it is important, but because without it everything else is unimportant"*.

## Poland

The Health Promoting Kindergarten and Health Promoting School Programme is a proven long-term programme of health promotion extending the educational offer of kindergartens and schools



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## Summary .... conclusions of project evaluation

- The project participants emphasised that participation in the training was a very valuable time for them.
- Working together on the platform under the guidance of trainers from Norway has resulted in numerous programmes, projects and lesson plans in nutrition education and physical activity.
- According to the trainees, the materials will inspire them to further work, break the routine and introduce new solutions to the school.

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## Bibliography :

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- Raport HBSC 2020 – *Jakie są polskiej nastolatki?* Dostępny w Internecie: <https://imid.med.pl/pl/aktualnosci/jakie-sa-polskie-nastolatki-raport-hbsc-2020>

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## Welcome to the project material

[www.pcen.pl](http://www.pcen.pl) – Project implemented by PCEN

"Healthy lifestyles - we think globally - we act locally"

Presentations and materials

Article:

B. Wolny, Implementation of the project "Healthy lifestyle - we think globally, we act locally"- training with the use of modern technologies, Educational Quarterly, PCEN, 2021

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**Thank you for your attention**

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