

Risk factors to the health of adolescents: results of national survey of Adolescent's Health in Brazil-

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The National Survey of Student's Health (PeNSE) is a research conducted by the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics and the Minister of Health. Its aim is to identify risk factors affecting the health of adolescents and giving subsidy with reliable information for the guidance of health policies by a self-responding interview conducted in a sample of students at private and official schools in Brazil. The research began in 2009 and its second edition was applied in 2012.

In 2008, Brazil had 17.5 million adolescents aged between 10 and 14 years and other 17.0 million between the ages of 15 and 19 years and the vast majority attending school (97.9% for the first group and 84.1% for the second). This population is strategic for studies of adolescents and a privileged space for implementation of public policies. The survey was conducted using the handheld computer, Personal Digital Assistant-PDA, in which the structured questionnaire was self-administered.

In 2009, the sample of 9th school year students was referred to the capitals and the Federal District. It was estimated in 618,555 in total, of which 293,597 (47.5%) were male and 324,958 (52.5%), female and 89.1% were between the ages of 13 and 15 years. Nearly 80% of students (489,865) studied in public schools, while 20.8% (128,690) attended private schools. Of students surveyed, 24.2% had tried smoking and 6.3% consumed cigarettes in the 30 days preceding the survey. Alcohol consumption was more widespread than smoke: 71.4% had experienced alcohol, with 27.3% said having consumed it in the month preceding the survey. 8.7% of the students have used some illegal drug. The results showed that 30.5% of the students have had sexual intercourse and 24.1% did not use a condom at last intercourse. The PeNSE showed that 30.8% of students said they have suffered bullying and 12.9%, became involved in a fight in the 30 days preceding the survey. It was also found that the prevalence of overweight in the students was 16% and obesity amounted to 7.2%. The research still showed data on social and family context, the parents or guardian's knowledge about the free time of the students, eating habits, physical activity, body image, oral health and sexual behavior. The methodology of self-response was considered appropriate to collect sensible data in this specific population. These results permitted to suggest some priorities to the Minister of Health for the implementation of public policies for adolescents.

Key words

Health survey

Sample survey

Adolescent health risk factors

National Data

