

## SUBJECTIVE HEALTH STATUS, HEALTH BEHAVIOURS AND HIGH-RISK BEHAVIOURS AS RISK FACTORS FOR ADOLESCENT PSYCHOPATHOLOGY

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**Objectives.** To examine the role of subjective health status, health behaviours and high-risk behaviours as risk factors of mental health difficulties in a representative sample of 11-, 13- and 15-year-old adolescents in Latvia.

**Materials and Methods.** The study was conducted using data from the international Health Behaviour in School-aged Children (HBSC) study year 2017/2018 Latvian database. Statistical modelling was performed to explore the link between mental health risks (as measured by the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ)), socio-demographic risk factors (gender, age, socioeconomic status), health complaints (subjective health, body image, psychosomatic symptoms), health behaviours (sleep and physical activity) and high-risk behaviours (smoking, drinking, problematic social-media use).

**Results.** The sample consisted of 4412 11-, 13- and 15-year-old students. Overall, 155 (8.0%) boys and 209 (10.3%) girls were identified by the SDQ screening as having “abnormal” levels of psychopathology. Adolescents from families with low affluence had 1.4x higher odds of screening positive for mental health difficulties. In a binomial regression model, the gender and socioeconomic status-adjusted odds ratios of scoring positive for significant mental health difficulties on the SDQ were 3.7x (CI 2.98–4.68) higher for adolescents having poor subjective health, 2.0x (CI 1.62–2.52) higher for having inadequate body image, 2.6x (CI 2.06–3.29) higher for having multiple health complaints, 2.1x (CI 1.66–2.68) higher for getting less than 7 hours of sleep on weekdays, 1.6x (CI 1.23–1.97) higher for having low level of physical activity, 1.6x (CI 1.19–2.22) higher for smoking cigarettes, 1.50x (CI 1.07–2.12) higher for using e-cigarettes, 1.9x (CI 1.54–2.46) higher for drinking alcohol, and 3.7x (CI 2.78–4.97) higher for having a problematic level of social-media use.

**Conclusions.** Adolescent girls in Latvia are at a higher risk of having mental health difficulties. Subjective health status, poor health behaviours and high-risk behaviours are significant risk factors for adolescent psychopathology and should be considered important targets for public health interventions.