

## DISPLAY OF BULLYING AMONG ATHLETES, NON-ATHLETES AND RISK GROUP ADOLESCENTS

At school every child has to feel important and safe. But the reality is absolutely different. Lithuanian and foreign scientists state that at schools the scale of aggressiveness and bullying is growing, and as it is proved by empirical research (Zaborskis, Vareikienė, 2008; Carlson, Cornell, 2008) that there are children who constantly experience bullying by peers at school.

It is established that the frequency of experiencing bullying and bullying others at Lithuanian schools is higher than in other European countries. According to International Schoolboys/girls Health and Living Research (1994-2002), in Lithuania every third adolescent is bullied by other adolescents 2–3 times per month or more frequently. Almost the same amount of adolescents bully peers themselves (Zaborskis, Cirtautienė, Žemaitienė, 2005).

By the year of 2008 research also proved that no rare than 2–3 times per month bullying was experienced by more than half (52,3 percent) Lithuanian adolescents who participated in the research, they were bullying victims of other adolescents (18,3 percent), or themselves bullied their adolescents (17,9 percent), or experienced both (16,1 percent) (Zaborskis, Vareikienė, 2008).

Thus in recent years considerable attention is paid to researching adolescent aggressive behavior. Bullying intensity, forms, differences of gender, consequences of personal psychosocial health (McGuckin & Lewis, 2006; San Antonio & Salzfass, 2007; Zaborskis, Vareikienė, 2008; Fleming, Jacobsen, 2009) are being analyzed; and effective ways and means of solving this problem are being searched.

**The aim of the research** is to disclose the influence of gender, after-school activity factors (going in for sports and attending children's day centre) on the frequency of experiencing bullying and performing bullying of peers by 5-10-grade adolescents.

**The research tasks:** 1) to determine the influence of gender, age, after-school activity factors (going in for sports and attendance of children day centre) on the display of experiencing bullying by 5-10-grade adolescents; 2) to evaluate the influence of gender, age and after-school activity factors on the frequency of bullying peers; 3) to disclose dependence of the frequency of person's experiencing bullying and performing bullying of peers.

For the research there was provided a questionnaire, based on the *Bullyings questionnaire for schoolboys/girls* (York, United Kingdom), which consists of 32 closed questions.

**The research methods** are analysis of scientific literature and questionnairing. For processing the gathered data SPSS program was used. There were selected comparative groups samples according to W. C. VanVoorhis and L. B. Morgan (2001) statistical research rules. To state the relation between variables we used the

non-parametrical statistical associational analysis  $\chi^2$  method. The scale values of those who experienced bullying were unified with investigated implemented bullying scale values, by codifying experience of bullying meaning to *very often* and *often*. The value of these scales connection is evaluated by Gamma coefficient. Differences of bullying were statistically reliable, being no higher than 5 percent of error ( $p < 0,05$ ).

During the year of 2008 in the research there participated 411 5-10-grade adolescents (aged 12–15) from various Lithuanian schools. The testees were divided into three groups: the first group – non-athletes, the second one — athlete adolescent and the third — risk groups adolescents.

There is a considerable amount of research on the display of bullying in literature. The *frequency of bullying* is being analyzed: American scientists (O'Hanlon, 2006; Wilson, 2006) indicate that bullying is experienced by one of three schoolboys/girls from 6 till 10th grades; in Germany constant bullying is experienced by about 8 percent of children and 22 percent – initiate them themselves (Targamadžė, Valeckienė, 2007). In Lithuania, as mentioned above, bullying is experienced by 50 to 70 percent of children (Zaborskis, Vareikienė, 2008).

Scientists profoundly analyze the display of bullying forms. Lithuanian authors define such forms of bullying as direct (a child is attacked openly, offended by his coevals) and indirect bullying (a person is hurt through not direct aggression). Besides, according to what kind of aggression is directed at the child, bullying is divided into verbal, physical, and mixed ones (Povilaitis, Valiukevičiūtė, 2006). Foreign researchers (Wilson, 2006; San Antonio & Salzfass, 2007) divide bullying into physical (beating, kicking), verbal (nicknaming, irritating) and psychological ones (social separation, compulsion, gossip dissemination).

At the moment in foreign countries and Lithuania a new form of bullying is often mentioned – bullying *through internet* – the use of phone and computers aimed at sending by email sights and messages to torment or frighten others. Bullying by internet can quickly disseminate messages or sights for a large auditorium and existing anonymity frequently makes it difficult to track them (Cyberbullying, 2007). Bullying by internet can continue 24 hours per day and can have long influence on a child – psychological harm, being raised, is the same to being bullied at school. Schoolchildren who experienced bullying by internet are more inclined to miss lessons, study badly and feel depressed (Wolfsberg, 2006). A. Zaborskis and I. Vareikienė (2008) state that open school bullying causes worse state of health; lower satisfaction of life; and frequent head, stomach, back pains; sadness; irritability; nervous stress; somnolence; head dizziness; weakness. Indicated connections depend on gender and bullying nature. Bullying an adolescent leads to smoking, use of alcohol and narcotic staff. Unfortunately in scientific literature there is a lack of research in which there would be analyzed interdependence of sports and bullying; for example how going in for sports influences the display of aggression, keeping from bullying and so on; that's why it is analyzed as depending on risk group factor influencing bullying process.

Analysis of the extent of bullying among testees shows that every tenth adolescent often or very often experiences bullying; half of the testees state that they sometimes experience it; the rest state that they do not experience bullying (Fig. 1).

Analysis of the extent of bullying in different adolescent groups, depending on their after-school activity, demonstrates statistically significant difference of bullying frequency ( $\chi^2 = 42,0(6)$ ;  $p = 0,000$ ).

In this research the weightiest factor influencing bullying frequency is a sports one. The frequency of experiencing bullying in athletes group is less (50 percent; 44 percent; 5,0 percent; 1 percent) and differs from non-athletes and risk group adolescents (25 percent; 57 percent; 9 percent and 8 percent) bullying frequency ( $\chi^2 = 33,8(1)$ ;  $p = 0,000$ ). It is indicated that spreading of bullying among non-athletes and risk group adolescents does not differ significantly (Fig. 2). Thus the sports factor lowers bullying. This can be explained by the fact that athlete adolescents' attitude to themselves is better, and they are more confident in themselves than non-athletes or those belonging to risk groups.

Another factor significantly influencing the frequency of experiencing bullying is the age of testees. The older the testees, the lower the frequency of bullying is ( $\chi^2 = 23,7(3)$ ;  $p = 0,000$ ) (Fig. 3).

The lowest frequency of experiencing bullying was noticed in the athletes group. The older the athletes, the lower bullying spreading is ( $\chi^2 = 8,551(1)$ ;  $p = 0,021$ ). One third of athlete adolescents of the 5-7-grades indicate that they do not bully; and regardless the gender, twice more (60 percent) of the 8-10-grade athletes state that they experience no bullying. This dependency of non-athletes and risk group adolescent interval was not noticed (Fig. 4).

When researching the frequency of bullying due to gender, it can be stated that girls and boys experience analogical frequency of bullying. Every tenth girl and every tenth boy often and very often experiences bullying, half of girls and half of boys state that they sometimes experience it. That is characteristic of all three researched groups. The gender factor does not influence the frequency of experiencing bullying (Fig. 5).

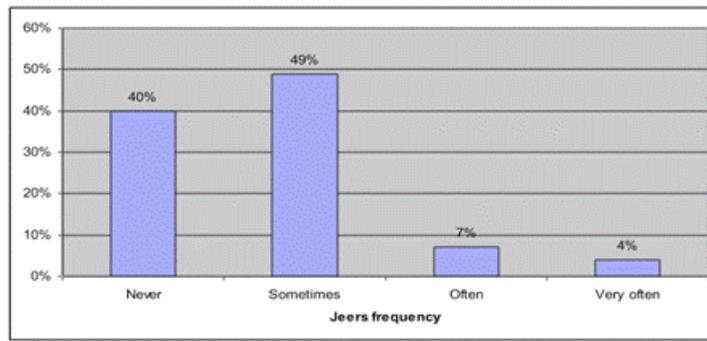


Fig. 1. Dispersion of bullying frequency among 5-10-grade adolescents

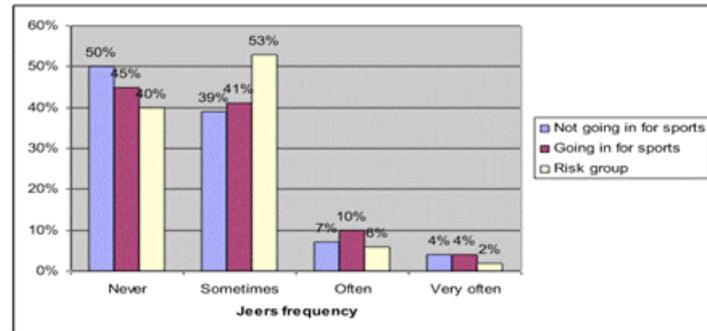


Fig. 2. Dispersion of bullying frequency among athletes, non-athletes and risk group adolescents

When analyzing experiencing bullying due to gender, the sports factor remains. In the girls' group the frequency of experiencing bullying, depending on their after-school activity, differs ( $\chi^2 = 20,0(6); p = 0,003$ ). In the girls' group of athletes it is less than in the group of non-athlete girls ( $\chi^2 = 10,4(3); p = 0,016$ ) and in the risk group of girls ( $\chi^2 = 17,6(3); p = 0,001$ ). Spreading of bullying among non-athletes and risk group girls does not differ (Fig. 6).

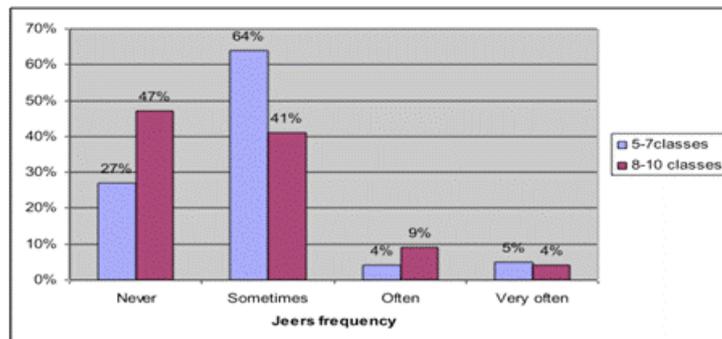


Fig. 3. Dispersion of bullying frequency among 5-7 and 8-10-grade adolescents

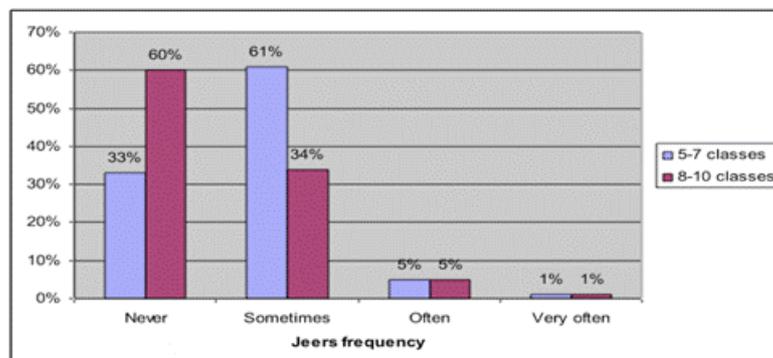


Fig. 4. Dispersion of bullying frequency among athletes 5-7 and 8-10-grade adolescents

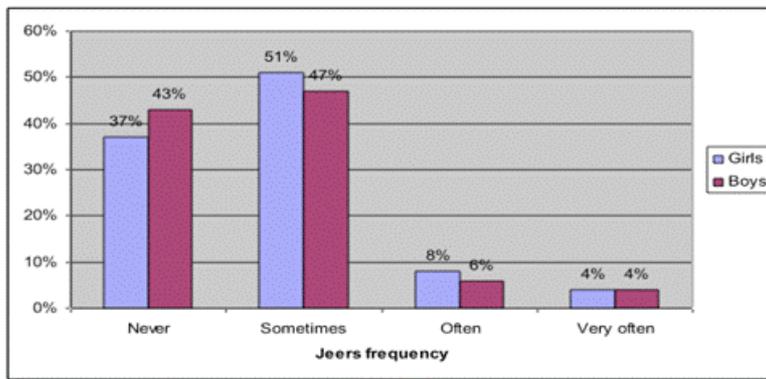


Fig. 5. Dispersion of bullying frequency among boys and girls

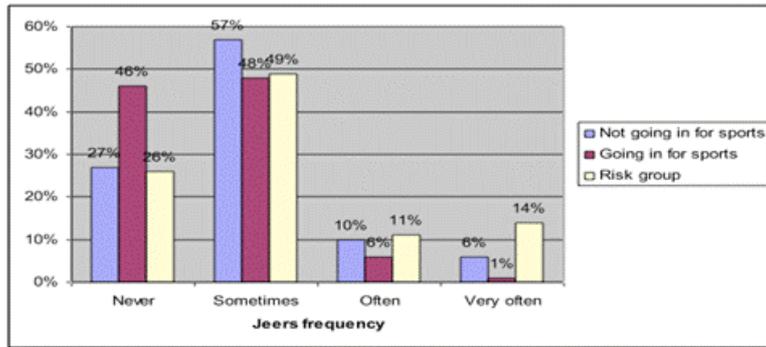


Fig. 6. Dispersion of bullying frequency among girls

In the boys' group bullying spreading also depends on their after-school activity ( $\chi^2 = 25,189(6); p = 0,000$ ). In the boys' athlete group it is less than in the boys' group of non-athletes ( $\chi^2 = 12,0(3); p = 0,008$ ) and the boys' risk group ( $\chi^2 = 16,4(3); p = 0,001$ ). Bullying spreading among non-athletes and risk group boys does not differ (Fig. 7).

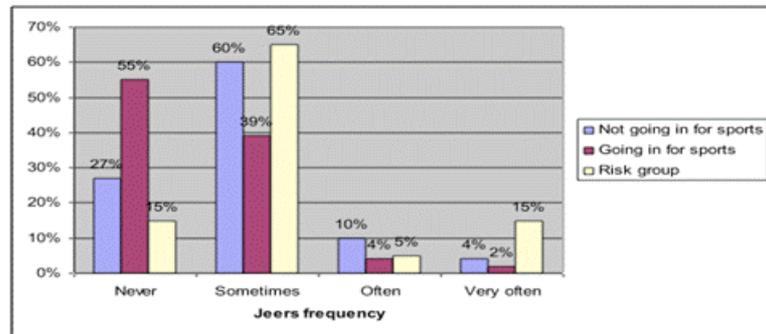


Fig. 7. Dispersion of bullying frequency among boys

When analyzing the frequency of adolescents bullying others it can be noticed that half of the testees state that they do not bully others, one tenth often do it, and the rest — from time to time (Fig. 8).

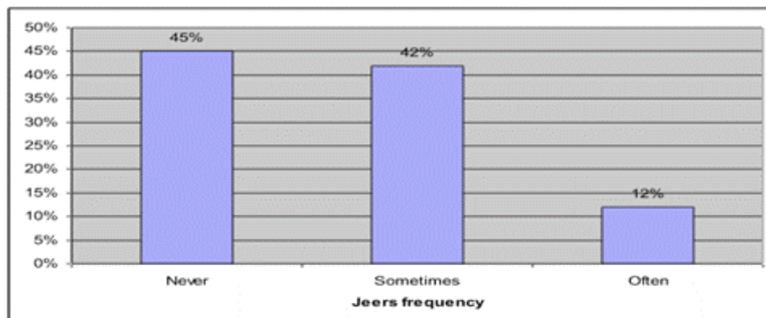


Fig. 8. Dispersion of adolescent bullying at other

The gender and age factors have little influence on bullying other classmates. Girls state that they bully other coevals rarer than boys ( $\chi^2 = 17,(2); p = 0,000$ ) (Fig. 9), and older 8-10-grade adolescents rarely bully younger adolescents of the 5-7 grades ( $\chi^2 = 10,0(2); p = 0,007$ ) (Fig. 10).

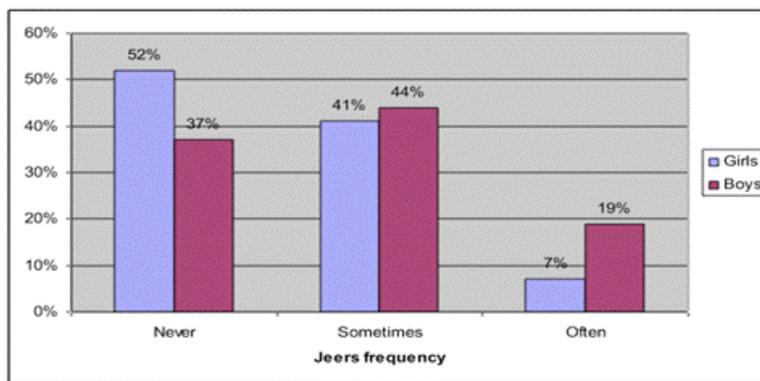


Fig. 10 Dispersion of the frequency of teenagers bullying others due to the age

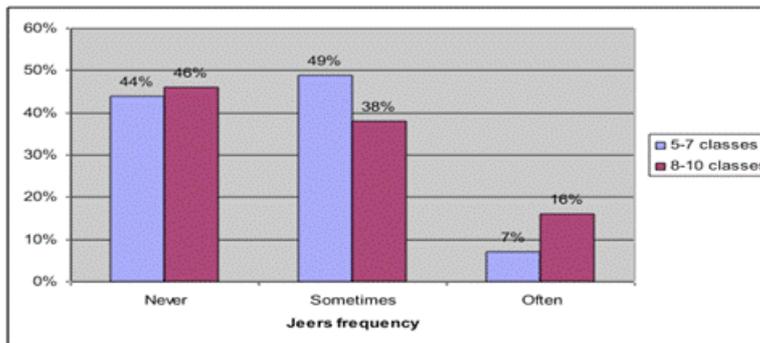


Fig. 9 Dispersion of the frequency of teenagers bullying others due to the gender

Research data allow stating a weak rectilinear dependence of the frequency of experiencing bullying and bullying coevals in a younger 5-7-grade adolescent group ( $\gamma = 0,293$ ;  $p = 0,035$ ). This weak rectilinear dependence was also noticed in the athletes group ( $\gamma = 0,183$ ;  $p = 0,048$ ).

Conclusions. 1. When analyzing the frequency of experiencing bullying among 5-10-grade adolescents, it was established that it depends on gender – girls and boys experience the same frequency of bullying. The frequency of experiencing bullying depends on after-school activity character and the age factors. The sports and age factors lower the frequency of experiencing bullying – athletes experience bullying rarer than non-athletes and risk group adolescent; and older (8–10 grades) adolescents experience bullying rarer than younger (5–7 grades) ones. 2. The gender and age factors have weak influence on bullying other classmates. Girls state that they bully coevals rarer than boys and older 8-10-grade adolescents rarer than younger 5-7-grade ones. 3. When analyzing the frequency of the display of persons experiencing bullying and their bullying coevals, there was established a low rectilinear dependence of this display on age (5-7 grades) and after-school activity (in athletes adolescent groups).

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## SUMMARY

Lithuanian and foreign scientists state that at schools the scale of aggressiveness and bullying is increasing. According to the empirical research conducted there are children who constantly experience bullying by peers at school. Analyzing the frequency of experiencing bullying among the 5-10-grade adolescents, it was established that it depends on the gender: girls and boys experience the same frequency of bullying. Girls state that they rarer bully coevals than boys; and older 8-10-grade adolescents - rarer than younger 5-7-grade ones.

**Keywords:** bullying, athletes, risk group adolescents.

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**ПРОЯВЛЕНИЕ ИЗДЕВАТЕЛЬСТВА СРЕДИ ПОДРОСТКОВ ЗАНИМАЮЩИХСЯ И НЕЗАНИМАЮЩИХСЯ СПОРТОМ И ВКЛЮЧЕННЫХ В ГРУППУ РИСКА**

## РЕЗЮМЕ

Литовские и зарубежные ученые обнаружили, что в школе шкала агрессивности и запугивания возрастает и как доказано эмпирическим исследованием существуют дети, которые постоянно ощущают запугивание сверстников в школе. Анализируя частоту познавших запугивание среди подростков 5-10 классов, было обнаружено, что девочек и мальчиков запугивают в равной степени. Девочки утверждают, что они реже запугивают своих ровесников, чем мальчики, а подростки 8-10 классов еще реже, чем подростки 5-7 классов.

**Ключевые слова:** запугивание, спортсмены, подростки группы риска.

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**ПРОЯВИ ЗНУЩАННЯ СЕРЕД ПІДЛІТКІВ ЯКІ ЗАЙМАЮТЬСЯ І НЕ ЗАЙМАЮТЬСЯ СПОРТОМ ТА ВКЛЮЧЕНИХ ДО ГРУПИ РИЗИКУ**

## РЕЗЮМЕ

Литовські та зарубіжні вчені виявили, що в школі шкала агресивності та знущання збільшується. Емпіричним дослідженням доведено, що існують діти, які постійно відчувають знущання з боку однолітків. Аналізуючи частоту, тих хто пізнав знущання серед підлітків 5-10 класів було виявлено, що дівчаток та хлопчиків залякують в однаковій мірі. Дівчатка стверджують, що вони рідше залякують своїх ровесників, ніж хлопчики, а підлітки 8-10 класів більш рідко, ніж підлітки 5-7 класів.

**Ключові слова:** знущання, залякування, спортсмени, підлітки групи ризику.

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