BUDAPEST STUDENT HEALTH BEHAVIOR SURVEY - BUDAPEST, HUNGARY, 1999. FINDINGS ON UNINTENTIONAL AND INTENTIONAL INJURIES, ALCOHOL USE, AND SEXUAL ACTIVITY

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SUMMARY

Objective: In Hungary, a large proportion of adult morbidity and mortality can be attributed to health risk behaviors that begin in early adolescence. To date, studies examining health risk behaviors among youth have rarely been undertaken in Hungary. In order to expand current research in this area, the Hungarian Metropolitan Institute of State Public Health and Public Health Officer Service and the Office on Smoking and Health at the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention developed and implemented the Budapest Student Health Behavior Survey. The objective of this study was to examine health behavior risk factors among secondary school students in Budapest in 1999.

Methods: The 1999 Budapest Student Health Behavior Survey is cross-sectional school-based survey. A 2-stage cluster sampling design was used to produce a representative sample of secondary students in grades 9-12 in Budapest. Information was collected on unintentional and intentional injuries, alcohol use, and sexual activity.

Findings: During the 30 days preceding the survey, 28.7% of students had rarely or never worn a seatbelt and 68.1% drunk alcohol. During the 12 months preceding the survey, 14.5% had been threatened or injured with a weapon, 12.9% experienced dating violence, and 13.5% seriously considered suicide. Of the 44.7% of students who had had sexual intercourse, 29.5% had ≥ 4 sex partners. Of sexually active students, 50.4% had not used a condom at last sexual intercourse.

Conclusion: Many secondary school students in Budapest practice behaviors that place them at risk for serious health problems both in the short and long term. Programs and policies that adequately address such behaviors among secondary school students are needed to reduce subsequent morbidity and mortality.

Key words: Budapest, Hungary, youth, schools, health-risk behaviors

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