

ABSTRACT

The theoretical part of the bachelor's thesis addresses the issue of eating disorders with a focus on children and adolescents and it also explores the influence of sports, particularly at the high-performance level, on the nutritional needs of children and adolescents, as well as the risk of developing an eating disorder. The practical part compares selected parameters of children in the 4th year of elementary school (comparing sports and regular classes) and in the 6th year of elementary school (comparing sports and regular classes). It involves monitoring anthropometric data, the correlation between subjective perception of one's own weight and its objective assessment, food choices with regard to their effects on health, weight and performance, adherence to dietary measures, the presence of targeted weight loss in the last 6 months, the intensity of regular physical activity, and selected factors of the external environment that are considered risky in terms of the development of eating disorders.

There was no statistically significant difference in the BMI of children from the sports class and the regular class in the first stage, but the BMI of children from the sports class was statistically significantly lower ($p < 0.001$) in the second grade. In other parameters, there was no significant difference between children from sports and regular classes – there was no difference in the proportion of children who purposefully lost weight, followed dietary measures, or had a distorted perception of their own weight. The number of risk factors of the children's external environment in both groups did not differ significantly.

The fact that already in the 4th grade of primary school, 41% of children in the sports class and 24% of children in the regular class lost weight intentionally can be considered alarming, even though their weight was, in most cases, within the norm. 15% of the children surveyed had 5 risk responses that may affect the development of eating disorders. In the 6th grade, 15% of the children from the sports class and 25% of the children from the regular class lost weight, again with most of them having a normal BMI. 25% of the children surveyed gave 5 or more out of 10 risk responses.

Although it has not been proven that performance sports significantly affect the risk of developing eating disorders, it is necessary to pay great attention to the prevention of the development of eating disorders in primary school children, regardless of their study focus.

Keywords: eating disorders, performance sport, self-concept, children's diet, anorexia nervosa, bulimia nervosa