



## **HEALTH PROMOTION IN PORTUGUESE SCHOOLS: EVALUATING THE EFFICACY OF A PILOT INTERVENTION PROGRAM**

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### **RESUMEN**

**Objectives:** To describe the different stages concerning the development and evaluation of a pilot health promotion program that was implemented at different schools with the main goal of promoting health behaviours and preventing risk taking behaviour in Portuguese adolescents.

**Method:** The first stage was developed by a multidisciplinary team of psychologists, Health Centre physicians and teachers. The intervention program has 9 sessions with the following topics: nutrition, risk taking behaviour, physical exercise, developmental changes, self-image and social skills (e.g. assertiveness), and two sessions for parents. In the second stage the efficacy of the program was evaluated in a sample of 104 Portuguese adolescents 7<sup>o</sup> and 8<sup>o</sup> grades of both sexes, studying in schools from the northern region of Portugal. The design consisted in pre post evaluation measures. In stage 3 a more rigorous evaluation was done with a randomisation of the sample and a control group (100 in each condition). The measures used were the Portuguese version for adolescents of the European Health and Behaviour Survey, and measures of anxiety, depression, self-concept, and interpersonal behaviour .

**Results:** Results confirmed the efficacy of the program in specific areas such as : an increase in breakfast intake, in the practice of physical exercise outside school, and a decrease at the levels of depression and anxiety.

**Keywords:** Intervention Program, Efficacy, Health promotion, Adolescents

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