

# Patterns of internet use by Russian schoolchildren

Tinatini Gogberashvili<sup>1</sup>, George Karkashadze<sup>1</sup>, Tatiana Konstantinidi<sup>1</sup>, Daria Bushueva<sup>1</sup>, Elena Kaytukova<sup>1, 2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Research Institute of Pediatrics and Children's Health in "Central Clinical Hospital of the Russian Academy of Sciences", Moscow, Russian Federation

<sup>2</sup> Pirogov Russian National Research Medical University, Moscow, Russian Federation

**Objective.** Study the amount of internet use by Russian schoolchildren and its connection to the other factors of social functioning.

**Methods.** Schoolchildren from 9th grade from 5 major cities in Russia participated in the research. The questionnaire concerning out-of-school life and well-being was used. The questionnaire was filled in by the parents.

A total of 598 children were examined, with an average age of 14,83 years, 48,7% of them being girls.

**Results.** It was found that during the schooldays 26% of the children do not use the internet at all, 16% — spend less than an hour a day; 20% — spend around 1–2 hours a day on the internet; 15% — 2–3 hours a day; 23% — 3–4 hours a day. A direct connection was revealed between internet use and interest in computer games ( $r = 0,95$ ).

Clear gender distinction was found among the children using the internet more than 3 hours a day — 64,1% were boys. Among the children not using the internet at all or spending less than an hour a day on the internet — 71,8% were girls.

Children who use the internet a lot (more than 3 hours a day) are more likely to sleep less than the others: less than 8 hours (50,8% against 42,6%). However, there is no significant distinction between those who do not use the internet at all or use the internet 1, 2, or 3 hours a day.

Further, children who use the internet for more than 4 hours a day participate less in sports-related activities and clubs (25,8% against 37,9%). However, there is no significant distinction in terms of the involvement in sports between those who do not use the internet at all or use the internet for 1, 2, or 3 hours a day.

**Conclusion.** There is a direct connection between internet usage and interest in computer games. Boys spend significantly more time on the internet than girls. This could be explained by the faster development of higher mental functions for girls and less interest in computer games. There are no significant distinctions between the children who use the internet moderately and the children who do not use the internet at all. However, the children who use the internet a lot, sleep reduced hours, and are less interested in sports.