
Substance abuse prevention system still missing in schools

Systém školní prevence užívání návykových látek stále chybí

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A conference was held on November 7 and 8 co-organized by the Centre for Addictology of the Psychiatric Clinic of the 1st Faculty of Medicine and the Charles University General Teaching Hospital, the capital Prague, and the SCAN Association, with the aim to answer the question as to whether we will finally be able to produce an interdisciplinary and inter-ministerial model of prevention in Czech schools. On the first day, all seats in the main hall in the Prague municipal authority building were occupied, proving that education and non-profit sector workers were really concerned with the issue of addictions.



At the start of the conference the chief hygiene officer and deputy health minister Michael Vít gave a speech pointing, amongst other issues, at the alarming rise in the number of teenage smokers, mainly among girls. He noted that child obesity is another major problem that will need to be tackled in the future not only by schools. "We should stop and think about that and increase our children's physical activity. It is sad that my desk is full of complaints about children being noisy and misbehaving, about their feeling joy from exercise, which part of the Czech population does not like to see," Vít said. According to him this sort of restriction of exercise puts children off physical activity.



The director of the General Teaching Hospital in Prague Mgr. Dana Jurásková, PhD., MBA said: "As a healthcare professional I feel that prevention has got out of control. If you look at the behaviour of the Czech population, there is only so much they are willing to do. Healthcare workers and the state have almost given up on prevention. However, we still rank among the best as far as addiction treatment is concerned, but we are failing in putting the Czech population off addictions."



Doc. PhDr. Michal Miovský, PhD., head of the Centre for Addictology, called on the participants to discuss the viability of the proposed Minimum Prevention Programme for primary schools. The programme was introduced at the conference from two perspectives: the exact definition of a primary prevention professional and the future structure of the prevention programme.

The conference agenda was divided into specialized lectures and creative workshops which the participants were able to choose from according to their own interest. On Tuesday November 8, the conference continued at the Prague City Hall headquarters on Mariánské náměstí.