

# Allergies, mental health problems and accident injuries: New data on child health

September 19 2018

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The Robert Koch Institute has published new data from the German Health Interview and Examination Survey for Children and Adolescents (KiGGS) on allergies, mental health problems and accident injuries.

KiGGS is the only comprehensive study on the health of children and adolescents in Germany and an important database for evidence-based policy decisions. The 'data for action' of the current KiGGS wave were collected between 2014 and 2017 by physical examinations and interviews. The data can also be used for trend analyses by comparing them with data from the KiGGS baseline study, which was conducted between 2003 and 2006. The latest results are published in issue 3/2018 of the Journal of Health Monitoring.

Allergic diseases such as hay fever (allergic rhinitis), bronchial asthma and atopic dermatitis (atopic eczema) are among the most common diseases affecting the health of children and adolescents. These diseases often severely impact the daily lives of those affected. More than one in six children (16.1 percent) currently suffers from at least one of these three diseases. This prevalence has not changed since the KiGGS baseline study and in absolute figures affects 2.1 million children and adolescents in Germany. Moreover, more than one third of children and adolescents in Germany are sensitised to a mix of certain inhalant allergens and have, in other words, an increased risk of allergies. However, the number of young people affected by allergic sensitisations has not changed since the baseline study.

In addition to allergic diseases, the current issue of the Journal also focuses on a second major topic: [mental health problems](#). Whereas the KiGGS baseline study found that 20.0 percent of children and adolescents had mental health problems, KiGGS Wave 2 found this to be the case with 16.9 percent of young people. One of the reasons for the decline in mental health problems could be the implementation of health policy measures in the fields of health promotion and health care. Attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) is one of the most common psychological disorders. As part of KiGGS Wave 2, parents of 3- to 17-year-old participants were asked if a physician or psychologist had diagnosed their children as having ADHD. Overall, the study found

that 4.4 percent of adolescents had been diagnosed with ADHD, one percentage point less than in the KiGGS baseline study. Importantly, mental health problems are more common among children with a low socioeconomic status. In order to enable all [children](#) and adolescents to grow up in good health, measures for health promotion and prevention should start early in a child's life and be tailored to the needs of the target group.

Accidents also belong to the common health risks that occur in childhood and adolescence. Every fifth boy received medical treatment for an accident injury within one year (19.4 percent), while girls were affected less frequently (15.2 percent). The situation has changed little since the beginning of the 2000s.

In the Journal section Concepts & Methods, the KiGGS results for underweight, overweight and obesity are classified according to international reference systems. A second Concepts & Methods article describes the standardised procedure for telephone-based ad hoc studies that was introduced at the Robert Koch Institute in 2017. This procedure enables answers to be provided to questions on specific topics in a fast and flexible way.

**More information:** Allergic diseases in children and adolescents in Germany. Results of the cross-sectional KiGGS Wave 2 study and trends. *Journal of Health Monitoring* 3(3): 3-16. [DOI: 10.17886/RKI-GBE-2018-08](https://doi.org/10.17886/RKI-GBE-2018-08)

Social inequalities in health of children and adolescents in Germany. Results of the cross-sectional KiGGS Wave 2 study. *Journal of Health Monitoring* 3(3): 17-33. [DOI: 10.17886/RKI-GBE-2018-08](https://doi.org/10.17886/RKI-GBE-2018-08)

Mental health problems in children and adolescents in Germany. Results of the cross-sectional KiGGS Wave 2 study and trends. *Journal of*

*Health Monitoring* 3(3): 34-41. [DOI: 10.17886/RKI-BE-2018-084](https://doi.org/10.17886/RKI-BE-2018-084)

ADHD in children and adolescents in Germany. Results of the cross-sectional KiGGS Wave 2 study and trends. *Journal of Health Monitoring* 3(3): 42-49. [DOI: 10.17886/RKI-GBE-2018-08](https://doi.org/10.17886/RKI-GBE-2018-08)

Accident injuries of children and adolescents in Germany. Results of the cross-sectional KiGGS Wave 2 study and trends. *Journal of Health Monitoring* 3(3): 50-55. [DOI: 10.17886/RKI-GBE-2018-086](https://doi.org/10.17886/RKI-GBE-2018-086)

Prevalence of underweight, overweight and obesity among children and adolescents in Germany. KiGGS Wave 2 results according to international reference systems. *Journal of Health Monitoring* 3(3): 6-69. [DOI: 10.17886/RKI-GBE-2018-08](https://doi.org/10.17886/RKI-GBE-2018-08)

Ad hoc surveys at the Robert Koch Institute. *Journal of Health Monitoring* 3(3): 70-80. [DOI: 10.17886/RKI-GBE-2018-088](https://doi.org/10.17886/RKI-GBE-2018-088)

Provided by Robert Koch Institute

Citation: Allergies, mental health problems and accident injuries: New data on child health (2018, September 19) retrieved 26 April 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2018-09-allergies-mental-health-problems-accident.html>

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