

Disordered eating impacts one in five youth worldwide

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More than one in five youth worldwide report disordered eating,

according to a systematic review and meta-analysis published online Feb. 20 in *JAMA Pediatrics*.

José Francisco López-Gil, Ph.D., from Universidad de Castilla-La Mancha in Cuenca, Spain, and colleagues conducted a systematic literature review and meta-analysis to determine the proportion of disordered eating among [children](#) and adolescents worldwide. Study criteria included community samples of children and adolescents aged 6 to 18 years and disordered eating as assessed by the the 5-item Sick, Control, One, Fat, Food (SCOFF) questionnaire from January 1999 to November 2022.

Based on 32 included studies (63,181 participants from 16 countries), the researchers found that the overall proportion of children and adolescents with disordered eating was 22.36 percent, with girls significantly more likely to report disordered eating (30.03 percent) than boys (16.98 percent). With increasing age and body mass index, disordered eating became more common.

"These high figures are concerning from a [public health perspective](#) and highlight the need to implement strategies for preventing eating [disorders](#)," the authors write. "Identifying the magnitude of disordered eating and its distribution in at-risk populations is crucial for planning and executing actions aimed at preventing, detecting, and dealing with them."

More information: José Francisco López-Gil et al, Global Proportion of Disordered Eating in Children and Adolescents, *JAMA Pediatrics* (2023). [DOI: 10.1001/jamapediatrics.2022.5848](https://doi.org/10.1001/jamapediatrics.2022.5848)

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