

0839 **PERCEPTIONS OF LOCAL AREA AS PREDICTORS OF INJURY AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AMONG SCHOOLCHILDREN IN IRELAND**

M Molcho\*, C Kelly, S N Gabhainn *Correspondence: National University of Ireland, 12 Distillery Road, Galway, Ireland*

10.1136/ip.2010.029215.839

**Background** Unintentional injury and physical inactivity together are the leading causes for disability and chronic illness in young people. Although the benefits of physical activity are well documented, there is evidence highlighting the risk for injury imposed by physical activity, potentially acting as a barrier for active lifestyle. This study aims to investigate characteristics in the local area that could both provide safe environment associated with decreased risk for injury and increased level of participation in physical activity.

**Methods** Nationally representative data from 10 146 students aged 10–17 years were collected as part of the Irish Health

Behaviour in School-aged Children (WHO-HBSC) study. All participating children completed a questionnaire during class time. The questionnaire included questions on injury, participation in physical activity, and their perceptions of the area where they live. Associations between local area perceptions and physical activity and injury are expressed in odds ratios from logistic regression models.

**Results and Conclusions** 43% of Irish children reported a medically attended injury in the previous 12 months and 28% reported that they are physically active for 60 min or more every day. While most local area perceptions were not significantly associated with physical activity or injury, perceptions of safeness of the local area were associated with lower level of injury and higher level of participation in physical activity. These findings highlight the need for safe environment for children to play and live, environment that promotes physical activity, and at the same time, are associated with fewer injuries.