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COMPARATIVE ASSESSMENT OF PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT LEVEL OF RURAL STUDENTS

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Recently, many authors have noted the deterioration of physical development, motor fitness and other health criteria in schoolchildren. The health of schoolchildren is influenced by such factors as urbanization, decreased physical activity and massive increase of incoming information. Therefore, of special importance is the assessment of physical development of younger schoolchildren in rural and urban areas of the Republic of Crimea, to determine the overall physical health and find better ways to correct the amount and type of the ongoing health, fitness and sports activities at schools.

Taking that into account, the goal of our study was to investigate the level of physical development and morphological and functional organism characteristics in children of primary school age living in rural and urban areas.

Comparison of the data collected for the analyzed groups revealed that growth indices and body weight in the group of urban schoolchildren were not statistically different from those in the group of their rural peers, being slightly higher only by 1.8% and 0.8 % respectively. In the group of rural schoolchildren, the chest circumference indices at the inhalation and exhalation were 2.8 % higher and vital capacity was higher by 18.7 % ($p \leq 0.05$). There were also higher the carpal dynamometry indices for the right hand by 2.7 % and for the left hand – by 13.1 % ($p \leq 0.05$), for postural dynamometry by 16.0 % ($p \leq 0.05$), while the average score in the Martinet functional tests was 12.1 % lower ($p \leq 0.05$) than among urban students.

The results of our study show that the level of physical development of rural primary school children appears to be higher than in their urban peers. Comparatively higher indices of chest circumference at inhalation and of lung vital capacity in rural students can be seen as a sign of their better developed chest and muscles involved in breathing, or the

overall higher degree of respiratory system fitness in general. Higher dynamometry indices are the result of better developed muscles and of higher level of physical development. Lower Martinet test indices in the groups of rural schoolchildren show better adaptation of their cardiovascular system to physical load.

Keywords: physical development, primary school age, physical health, physical education.

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