

**POSITIVE TRENDS IN GROWTH OF TURKISH SCHOOL CHILDREN DURING TEN YEARS PERIOD****F. Simsek, B. Ulukol, S. Gulnar***Ankara University, Medical School, Department of Social Pediatrics, Ankara, Turkey  
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Secular changes in growth can be considered to be indicators of the changes in the nutritional, hygienic and health status of a population. Secular changes are best documented for body height and weight. The purpose of the present paper is to analyze positive trends in height and weight of children ages 7 - 15 years from a same primary school over the period 1993-2003. Anthropometric measurements of 1214 children and adolescents obtained in 2003 were compared with data from a previous study carried out in 1993 in the same primary school, including anthropometric measurements of 867 children and adolescent. Comparisons between the two samples reveal significant increments in both height and weight measurements for all age and sex groups. Both of weight increments of around 2.7 - 6.3 kg/decade and height increments of around 1.7 - 5.5 cm/decade were demonstrated in boys, while weight increments of around 2.8 - 6.5 kg/decade and height increments of around 1.8 - 5.7 cm/decade were indicated in girls. There was found a statistically significant difference in all ages except 9 years-old girls, and 7, 13 and 15 years-old boys. The present study reveals a significant positive trend in growth of this middle class children and adolescent population. These positive trends can be explained as the result of improvements in socio-economic and socio-hygienic conditions, and public health status of Turkish population. Investigations into the phenomenon of secular changes in growth continue to be necessary to establish new reference data.

