Breastfeeding is the best way of feeding infants and one of the most effective ways to ensure child health. To achieve the recommended goals for breastfeeding duration and exclusivity, programs should be directed towards breastfeeding promotion and support in the community and a society as a whole. For that purpose, every community should ensure the optimal conditions for mother and child. The goal was to describe the activities of the program Breastfeeding friendly City of Zagreb and to evaluate the use of the services providing breastfeeding support and promotion among parents in the City of Zagreb.

In 2015, the Breastfeeding friendly City of Zagreb, a comprehensive breastfeeding promotion program in the community of Zagreb, the capital of Croatia, had been designed and set in motion, with activities aimed to promote and increase breastfeeding rates. We described the program activities that were implemented in the 5-year period, from 2015 to 2019.

Data on the number of participants attending Courses for pregnant women and their partners, Counselling centers for breastfeeding and Lactation ambulance were presented.

In the period 2015 – 2019 the Program included the following activities that were provided on the primary health care level: antenatal courses for pregnant women and their partners, Breastfeeding Support Groups, Counseling Centers for Breastfeeding and Baby Handling, Counseling Centers for Family Planning. Breastfeeding friendly pediatric offices, and support activities from different NGO’s. In addition, „The Breastfeeding Textbook” was published, the work of the Lactation ambulance in a Clinical hospital and the establishment of the first Human milk bank in Zagreb were supported. All activities were free of charge and were available to everyone. The number of participants attending antenatal courses was 4576 in 2016, 2524 in 2017, 3756 in 2018 and 3839 in 2019. The number of participants in Counseling centers for breastfeeding increased in all three Health Care Centers in the city (e.g. in one Center from 1760 were recorded in 2 years period). The number of women examined in the Lactation ambulance during 2016 – 2018 was 116.

The babies need the best care and support, and local community needs to provide the highest level of health care and all other available services (social, public health, pro-natality population police etc.).

The evaluation of Program showed an overall increase in the use of the services providing breastfeeding support and promotion in the City of Zagreb during the 5-year period. The Program should be further continued and promoted.

Cardiovascular diseases are the leading cause of death in Croatia. One of the risk factors for cardiovascular disease development is abdominal obesity. More recently, the waist-to-height ratio (WHtR) has been used as a more reliable method for determining this type of obesity. According to the research so far, the problem of obesity begins from the age of five. Studies that also included this age group used WHtR values ≥0.5 as elevated for all age groups and both genders. However, recent research is limited to children aged 6 to 18 years and defines a limit of WHtR index ≥0.459 for girls and ≥0.473 for boys.

This study aimed to determine the extent to which risk factors are present in children, whether their parents recognize them, and whether they are aware of the need to develop healthier lifestyle habits to prevent cardiovascular disease in adulthood.

The study was provided through an anonymous questionnaire with 26 questions about sociodemographic characteristics, family and medical history and lifestyle.

The data was statistically analysed (SPSS Statistic Version 23, descriptive statistics, χ2 test, arithmetic mean, t-test, and ANOVA).

The other part of the study consisted of anthropometric measurements of the weight, height, waists and thighs circumference of every child.

Our study included 1418 children, 730 boys and 688 girls, aged 5 to 15 years, from three paediatric offices of the Zagreb West Health Centre.

According to the WHtR criterion ≥0.5, 7.3% of boys and 8.8% of girls were at an increased health risk for cardiovascular disease. However, according to the latest WHtR criteria, 25.1% of girls and 21.4% of boys were at increased risk. Furthermore, as many as 79.6% of parents did not recognize the risk factors for cardiovascular disease in their children.

The results of our study are similar to the results of other studies and show that most parents are not aware of the problem of obesity and therefore do not see the need for change in their children’s life habits.

Accordingly, we conclude that it would be necessary to take additional educational measures both in primary paediatric care and in educational institutions with the aim of timely and effective intervention that would, as expected, contribute to the reduction of morbidity and mortality in adulthood.