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Every Child Matters - Health Related Behaviour survey in North Yorkshire: a case study

The North Yorkshire Children and Young People's Service has commissioned the Schools Health Education Unit (SHEU) to collect reliable information about young people's lifestyles. The findings are an important source of intelligence for strategy development and service planning. The Every Child Matters - Health Related Behaviour Questionnaire (ECM-HRBQ) was used to collect data from a sample of primary, secondary and special schools in North Yorkshire during summer 2010. The number, age range and geographical coverage of the ECM-HRBQ respondents made its findings more robust than those reported by the now discontinued series of Tellus surveys. The ECM-HRBQ survey was co-ordinated by an ECM-HRBQ Planning Team in the Children and Young People's Service (CYPS).

Teachers were briefed on how to collect the most reliable data and then over 15,000 pupils anonymously completed the questionnaire either on paper or online. Following data analysis, reports of the results were compiled for individual schools together with county and other detailed reports for the CYPS.

The results from individual schools remain confidential within the CYPS. No individual schools are identified within county or other specific reports. Schools are free to share their own data with colleagues, governors, pupils, parents/carers and the wider community including other local organisations who can offer support.

North Yorkshire is familiar with working

with data about young people following previous ECM-HRBQ surveys in 2006 and 2008. This article describes some of the processes involved before and after publication of the 2010 ECM-HRBQ survey results.

Context

The ECM-HRBQ survey was undertaken in order to:

- audit the learning and health related behaviours of children and young people in North Yorkshire in 2010
- make the survey accessible to those children and young people with special educational needs, especially those most vulnerable pupils in special schools
- increase participation in a 2010 ECM-HRBQ, especially by primary and special schools
- identify emerging priorities for CYPS to inform re-alignment of service plans related to ECM outcomes for children and young people
- provide benchmarking data for CYPS Plans 2008-2011
- secure best use of ECM-HRBQ survey data for CYPS and Children's Trust partners

Ongoing development

In order to achieve some of the above points, there were some key developments in the 2010 ECM-HRBQ, which improved the accessibility of the questionnaire, increased participation and broadened the data set. These included:

- Primary Key Stage 2 and secondary questionnaires as before
- Bespoke SEN questionnaires - including use of symbols and an on-line speaking version.
- Key Stage 1 questionnaire (for Year 2 pupils)
- On-line option for KS2 and secondary questionnaires
- More in-depth equalities monitoring, enabling comparative data and significant differences to be identified for the following groups of pupils:-
Ethnic minority / Children in care / Single-parent family / Not in own home / Special educational needs (SEN) / Disability or long-term illness / Free school meals / Armed forces family / Sexual identity (lesbian, gay or bisexual [LGB]) - Year 10 pupils

Increasing participation

All schools in North Yorkshire were invited to participate in the 2010 ECM-HRBQ survey and two countywide training seminars were held to support preparation. Tables 1 and 2 below show that, in 2010, an increased number of schools and pupils since 2006 and 2008 participated in the survey.

Table 1. Schools

Number of schools participating in the ECM-HRBQ Survey			
	Primary	Secondary	Special/PRS
2006	131	28	0
2008	116	35	1
2010	246	42	15

Table 2. Pupils

Number of pupils participating in the ECM-HRBQ Survey			
	Primary	Secondary	Special
2006	3543	4732	0
2008	5016	6527	0
2010 (all)	10427	8514	234
2010 (Y2/6/8/10 only)	7159	8391	180

Changes to the Reports

The school reports in 2010 were revised to include:-

- A specific section clearly identifying the school's own benchmarked data, cross referenced to the relevant sections of the OFSTED School Self -Evaluation Form.
- Pupil behaviour/perception changes since 2008
- Examples of good practice in effective use of the ECM-HRBQ data
- County equalities monitoring data

The 2010 county reports:-

- Equalities monitoring has enabled significant differences to be identified between pupils within a range of social identity groups and all North Yorkshire pupils
- Consultation on the key emerging priorities and recommended actions to be identified has been broadened to include consultation with young people. This has been carried out with the North Yorkshire Youth Council and representative secondary schools, special schools and Pupil Referral Services in the county
- The format and placing of the key issues and recommendations have been revised to ensure they clearly focus on the key issues arising at the beginning of the report

Additional reports

- 6 local area reports - including significant trends within the area since 2008 and significant differences between the area findings and county wide data
- Children with Special Educational Needs Report (secondary age pupils in the Special Schools/PRS)
- Armed Service Families Report - includes primary and secondary pupils and a significance report against all North Yorkshire pupils
- Targeted Mental Health in Schools

(TAMHS) Report to support the North Yorkshire TAMHS project evaluation

Involving pupils in the identification of key priorities and actions for the 2010 ECM-HRBQ county report

Following the reporting of the survey data in October, there were a number of ECM-HRBQ Pupil Consultation activities held in secondary schools/pupil referral services, and with the North Yorkshire Youth Council to inform the key priorities and actions. Among the resources for the activity were:-

- The draft County report - useful to show pupils, especially the sections where the key priorities and key actions would be inserted, and to answer any questions that arose about the broader data
- 2010 Pupil questionnaire - this was helpful to remind pupils of the questionnaire that they had completed in the previous May.
- Pie charts with key data

Introductory Activity: 15 mins

Using the current ECM-HRBQ statements, pupils were asked to match the percentages. The correct answers were shown to the pupils to support discussion and allow the facilitator to give the background to the questionnaire in terms of content, size of county, number of pupils/schools taking part and the importance of their input.

Main Activity:

Stage 1 - 15 mins

- Pie charts were displayed around the room. Pupils were asked to place a Post-It sticker on the ones they feel are the most important to them or pupils in their school
- Pupils were asked to identify the most commonly marked (max 5 pie charts) and asked to discuss these briefly on their tables: were they what they expected

and why they think they have received the most Post-Its.

- Pupils were asked if there were any topics they would have expected to see and record any suggestions from them Stage 2 -15 mins
- Each table had a flip chart for pupils to write down the top 5 statements and 2 columns to record their thoughts on 'What Should Be Done?' and 'Who Should Do It?' Pupils also had the percentages of how useful pupils report finding the lessons on aspects of Personal Social Health Economic and Citizenship education programmes and they gave their views as to the range of percentages. Pupils discussed the role of themselves, schools, their parents and any other people they thought might be involved in taking action on the priorities identified

Plenary Activity - 10 mins

- Each group fed back to the rest of the group, giving their reasons and justifications on what they had put in the 2 columns. This provoked further discussion between the different groups as they put forward their ideas as well as being able to question others
- The facilitator captured, from the pupil feedback, the key recommendations and summarised them on the flip chart for the group to see the results of their work. It was interesting to note the differences in the suggestions made by KS3 and KS4 pupils
- Pupils were told what would happen to their feedback - that it was collated and taken to next LA meeting to inform key actions and priorities together with feedback from other services

ECM-HRBQ matching exercise - answer sheet (examples)

% young people offered cannabis:

% young people who said that school lessons were main source of sex

education

% young people using Internet chat rooms

% young people with high self esteem scores

Feedback from pupil consultation

The top issues emerging from pupils were:

- Bullying - How schools deal with bullying (example below)
- Drinking - Drugs and Alcohol on the same occasion
- Smoking
- Sex and contraception

Example of actions identified during the pupil consultation

Table 3 (below) shows an example of actions, following the pupil consultation, relating to bullying.

Use of the 2010 ECM-HRBQ

The 2010 data has been used in a variety of ways to inform service planning, provision and evaluation. For example it is:-

- Stranded through the 2011-14 Children and Young People's Plan - measurable outcomes.
- Providing evidence to inform inspection - Local Authority e.g. service family inspection, Children's Centres and school inspections.
- Informing targeting of resources - for example the LA Performance Reward Grant - Risk Taking Sexual Health Services Project - identification of schools and integrated into measurable outcomes on the school project action plans.
- Used widely in training - for example

Table 3. Example of actions identified during the pupil consultation		
Most popular priorities	Reasons for choice	What should be done
Bullying		
% of pupils who think they are picked on or bullied for the way they look and for their size or weight.	It has major impact on pupil confidence and lowers self-esteem and affects attendance. Also reflects badly on the school. Leads to eating disorders. Worries about figures and think they should look like models. Boys get bulked up.	Act quickly as schools should not wait until it gets bad. Sit pupils down and encourage them to talk. Restorative justice but only when pupils are ready. Take personal responsibility for appearance. Promote that everyone is different and it does not matter how you look. Staff to tackle bullies - more sanctions. Have staff available to talk to pupils affected. Encourage people to feel good about themselves by putting more average people in magazines and newspapers. Education about healthy eating, involvement of school nurse.

equalities, anti-bullying, health and wellbeing.

- Informing schools causing concern and locality strategy work.
- Identifying good practice schools - primary and secondary good practice visits and dissemination.
- Providing a significant contribution to the evidence base for children's perception about aspects of provision e.g. bullying where there have been concerns raised about a school, for example parental concerns.
- Informing schools' own self-evaluation

Outcomes of the Equalities monitoring in 2010 ECM-HRBQ

There were significant differences between the perceptions and behaviours of groups of pupils within mainstream schools and in the special schools/PRS, identified against the social identity groups.

Work is ongoing through the Children and Young People's Service to continue to address a range of inequalities as part of the CYPs Children and Young People's plan 2011-14. The 2010 ECM-HRBQ provided key data to support the planning and evaluation of this work. This work includes:

- Development and further guidance for provision mapping in schools, to meet the needs of vulnerable pupils
- Use of the Inclusion Passport to improve information sharing and strategies to improve pupil outcomes for individual vulnerable pupils, particularly on transition
- More in-depth monitoring of variance within social identity groups, for example Gypsy/Roma travellers and new arrivals within the ethnic minority social identity group
- Targeted pupil voice to follow up emerging key issues, for example interviews with Gypsy/Roma travellers, testimonials including young people's accounts of their experiences to further exemplify perceptions. This will inform planning of provision

- Workshops at the Inclusion Conference focussed on SEN and disability key issues e.g. risky behaviours, anti-bullying
- Suite of guidance materials for schools and settings including new guidance on tackling homophobia in schools and supporting Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual (LGB) young people, and a free school meals toolkit
- Bespoke work with individual schools in addressing local/school based equalities issues
- Sharing the service family findings with the local Ministry of Defence Garrison and with the PCT
- Sharing the service family findings at a North Yorkshire children and young peoples multi-agency conference looking at the education and welfare of Armed Forces children, attended by school leaders, Integrated Services, Adult Learning Services, Educational Psychology Service, Army Welfare Service, Army Families Federation and the Soldiers, Sailors & Airmen Families Association (SAFA)
- Publishing a CYPs guidance leaflet aimed at Armed Forces parents outlining how they can help schools support their children at times of exercise, deployment or posting: Helping us to help you and your family
- Continued support from the Quality & Improvement Service for an LA funded project aimed at supporting pupils from Armed Forces families

Next steps

The ECM-HRBQ continues to play an important role in service improvement in North Yorkshire. In November 2011 the Children and Young People's Service agreed to the commissioning of the 2012 ECM-HRBQ to further support its commitment to listen to the perceptions, and survey the behaviours of children and young people to underpin the clear commitment to improving outcomes for children and young people in North Yorkshire schools.