



Young People in 2000

*The Health Related Behaviour Questionnaire
results for 42,073 young people between the ages of 10 and 15*

4 Family and Home

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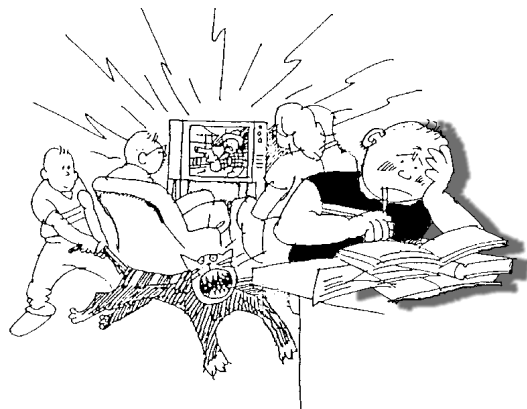
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2001

4 Family and Home

Young people spend the majority of their time in and around the home. Relevant questions are scattered through the Health Related Behaviour Questionnaire, but the ones included here relate particularly to the kind of home they live in and the things they do when at home. There is also an attempt to derive a 'newspaper readership index' from information about national daily newspapers read by the family.



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Adults at home

64 - 67 %
live with both parents

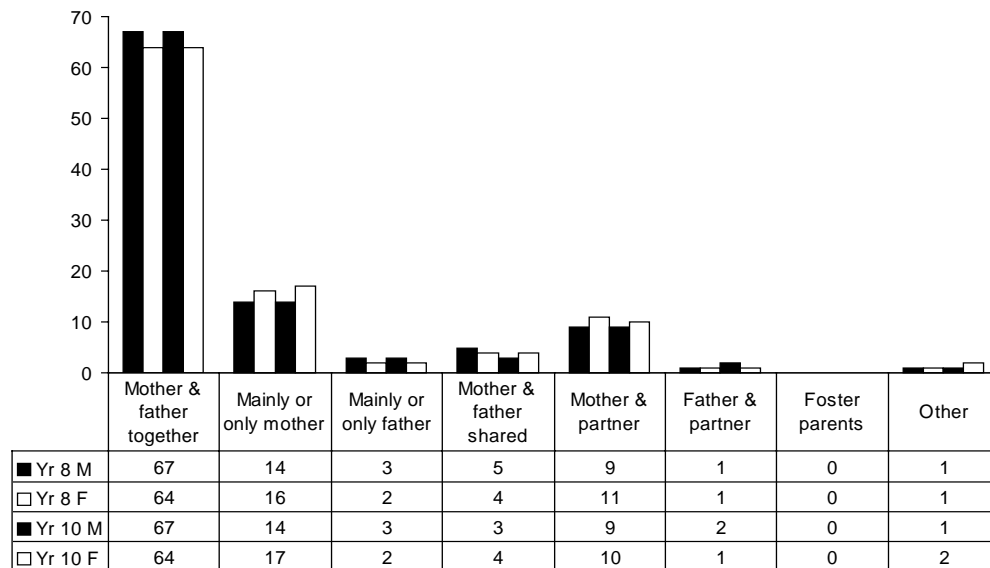
Which adults do you live with? (P2)

1. Around 65% of the respondents live with *mother & father*.
2. If they live with just one parent their mother is more likely than their father to be present.

Comments

1. In the case of the *mainly or only mother* category, some of these young people may have been brought up by a single parent from the beginning, while others may be with a parent who has separated.
2. The *other* category could include grandparents or other relations, as well as children in care homes.
3. It is often observed that the children of single or divorced parents fare worse, for example being more prone to depression, perhaps because of the trauma of the previous relationship, the likely poorer economic circumstances and other related factors. On the other hand, they may be in a better situation than if their parents had stayed together.

It is quite easy to demonstrate differences in the levels of health-risky behaviour between children with different family backgrounds, but we sometimes wonder if this helps anybody. If it was likely to improve provision or sympathy for disadvantaged groups we would be more encouraged.



Valid responses	
Yr 8 M (12-13 yrs)	7094
Yr 8 F	7487
Yr 10 M (14-15 yrs)	6977
Yr 10 F	7375

Home population

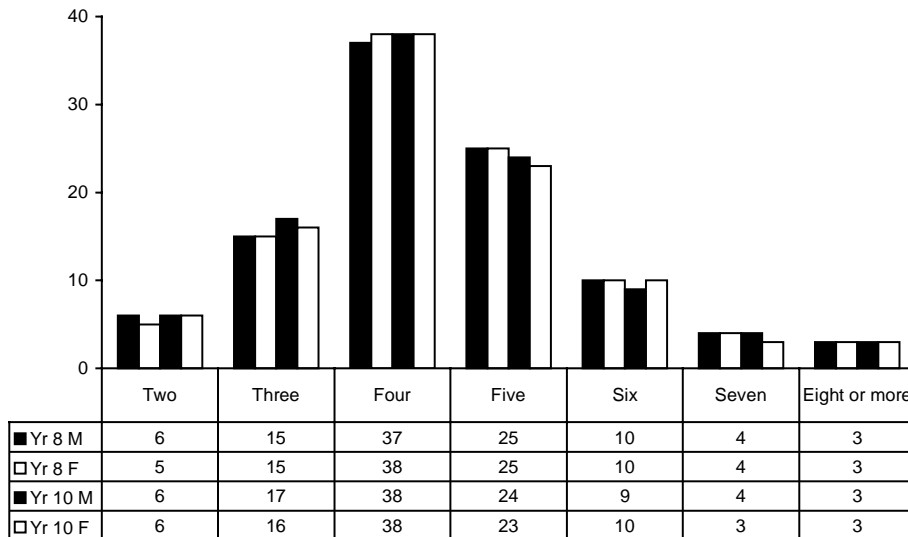
Around 38% live with *three* other people

How many people live in your home (including yourself)? (P3)

1. The modal [most frequent] value is 4, which is most likely to correspond to two adults and two children.

Comments

1. The community within the home may include friends and paying lodgers as well as family members.
2. Whilst larger family groups provide richer opportunities for interaction between young people and other individuals, the opportunity for seeking privacy is also important to youngsters. The bedroom question on page 4? can be used in conjunction with this question as an indicator of the amount of privacy available.



Valid responses	
Yr 8 M (12-13 yrs)	5979
Yr 8 F	6443
Yr 10 M (14-15 yrs)	5844
Yr 10 F	6285

Younger and older siblings

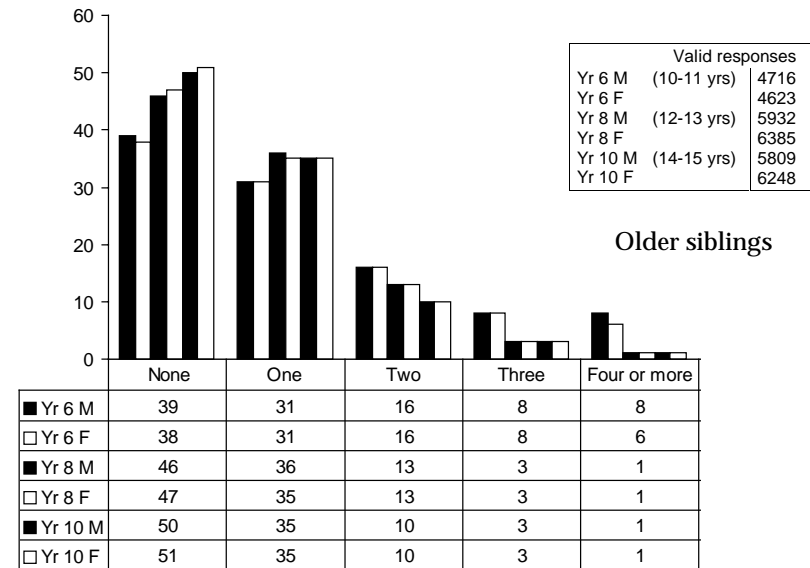
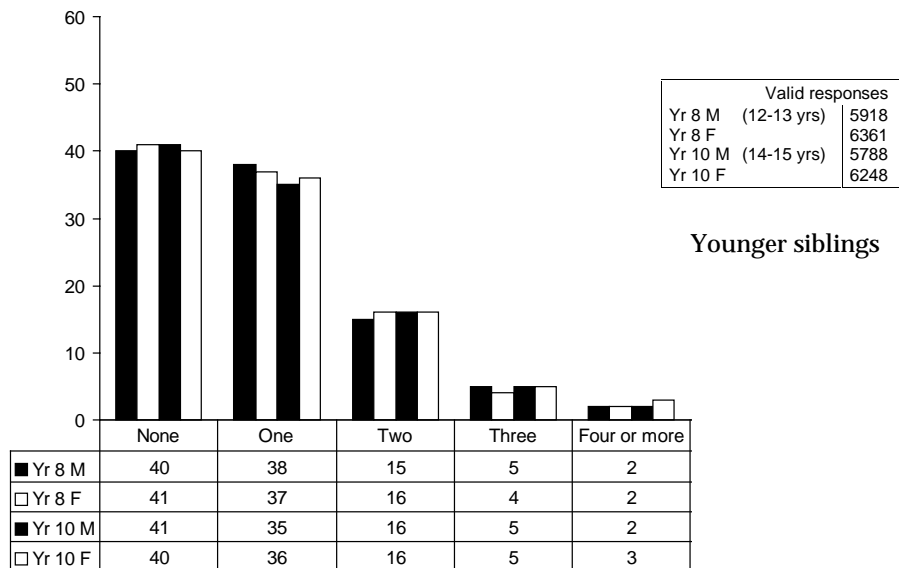
About 60% have at least one younger sibling

How many brothers and sisters are younger/older than you? (P4 & P5) (Pri.1 & 2)

1. Just over 40% are the youngest, and around 50% are the oldest. The ones who are neither youngest nor oldest (about 10%), must therefore be in a family of at least three, with at least one sibling older and one sibling younger than themselves.
2. Some individuals, who are 'only children', will appear in the 'none' columns on both charts.

Comments

1. The question specifies only those siblings living at home, and prompts for step-brothers and step-sisters if they are living at home. However, if the parents have separated and the children share time between them, the concept of 'home' may embrace more than one household.
2. We have been able to show that the frequency of tooth brushing declines with later children, as does the fear going to school because of bullying *Toothbrushing in Adolescence* (MacGregor et al., 1994) and *Bully Off* (Balding, 1996).

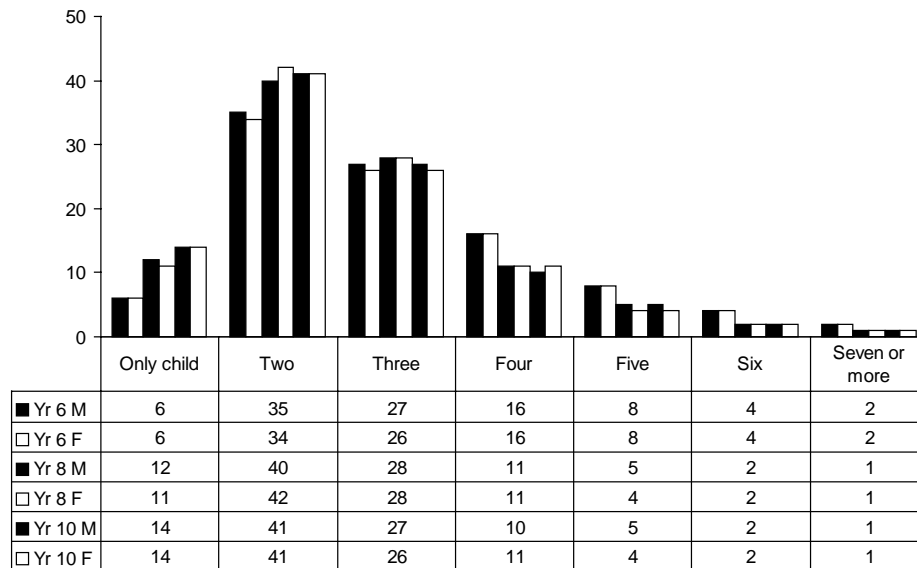


Family size

Around 10% of all pupils are the *only child* at home

Total number of children in the family living at home (P4 & P5) (Pri.1)

1. The modal [most frequent] value is 2.
2. All age/gender groups record similar statistics, as would be expected.



Comments

1. There is a slight inconsistency between this question in the primary and secondary questionnaires. The primary data include siblings that are not necessarily at home, hence the higher percentages recording large family numbers.
2. The secondary data refer explicitly to siblings living at home. This may be smaller than the total number of children, if some have moved away, but there could also be step-brothers and step-sisters from earlier marriages.
3. The mean family size, calculated from the secondary data, is 2.7 children. The widely-accepted figure of 2.4 may be consistent with this, as childless families are necessarily excluded.

Valid responses		
Yr 6 M	(10-11 yrs)	4751
Yr 6 F		4660
Yr 8 M	(12-13 yrs)	6016
Yr 8 F		6454
Yr 10 M	(14-15 yrs)	5856
Yr 10 F		6297

Bedrooms

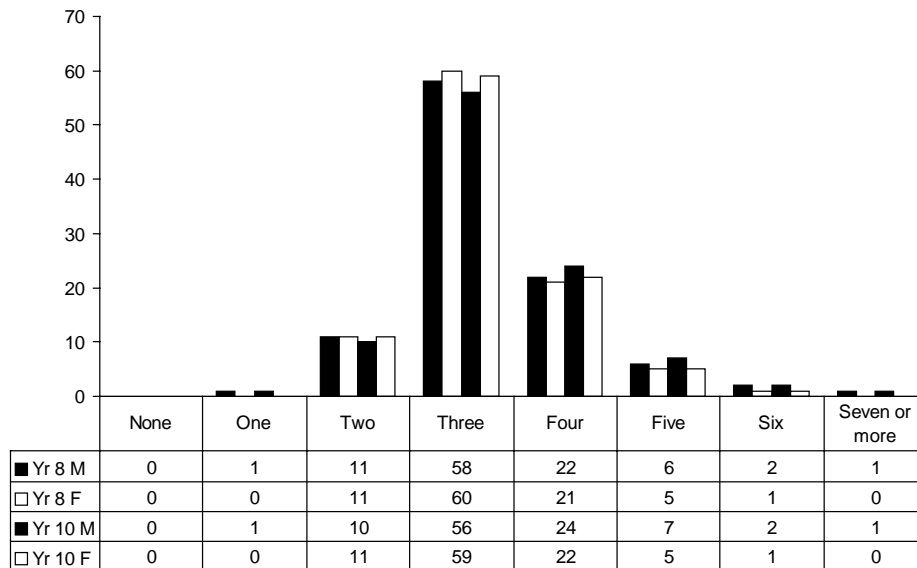
At least 56% of all pupils live in a home with *three* bedrooms

How many bedrooms are there in your home? (P6)

1. Almost 60% of these young people live in a three-bedroom home.

Comments

1. These data, in conjunction with those describing the home population on page 39, can be used as an indicator of the amount of privacy available. The table below shows the difference between the number of people and bedrooms in the home, obtained from the whole sample combined.



People/bedroom density

Crowding?	Percentage
Three extra bedrooms or more	1%
Two extra bedrooms	1%
One extra bedroom	5%
Equal number of people and bedrooms	23%
One more person than number of bedrooms	38%
Two more extra	21%
Three or more extra	11%

2. Some of these bedrooms may not be used for sleeping in: they may be guest rooms, studies or serve some other purpose.

Valid responses	
Yr 8 M (12-13 yrs)	5957
Yr 8 F	6431
Yr 10 M (14-15 yrs)	5831
Yr 10 F	6277

Ethnic Group

A predominately white population is represented here

Ethnic group — which of the following most nearly describes you? (P7) (Pri.3)

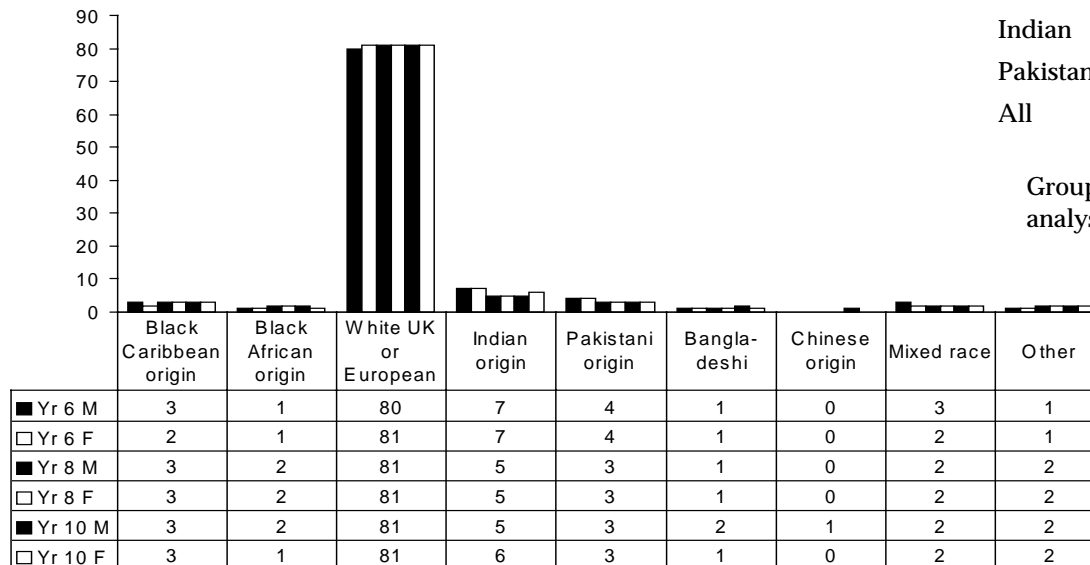
Comments

1. Around 80% of this sample were White, that is, *UK or European*.

1. Some aspects of young people’s lifestyles, such as diet and the use of legal and illegal drugs, are strongly influenced by cultural factors. For example, among Year 10 males, we see the following differences:

Ethnicity	Smoked in last week	Drank alcohol in the last week	Ever taken any illegal drugs
Black (either)	18%	34%	29%
UK or European	18%	48%	25%
Indian	16%	32%	20%
Pakistani	17%	6%	14%
All	18%	44%	24%

Groups with sample sizes less than 30 have been excluded from this analysis.



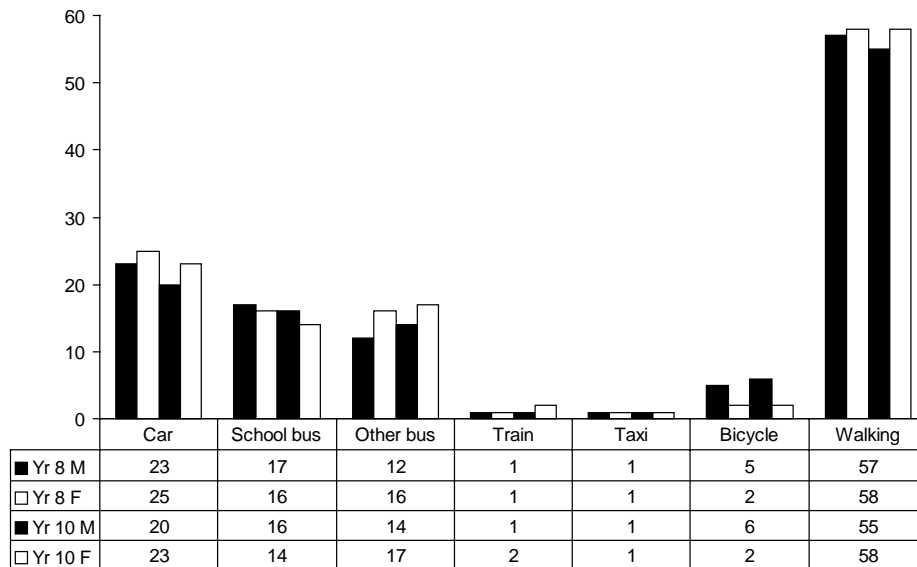
Valid responses		
Yr 6 M (10-11 yrs)		6417
Yr 6 F		6308
Yr 8 M (12-13 yrs)		7011
Yr 8 F		7420
Yr 10 M (14-15 yrs)		6944
Yr 10 F		7341

Journey to school

At least 55% walk to school

How did you travel to school today? (P10)

- Over 20%, with more females than males, go at least part of the way to school by *car*.
- About 15% go by *school bus*.
- At least 55% of males and females *walk* to school.



Comments

- Respondents were able to select more than one of these options, for instance if they travel part of the way to school by car and then walk the remaining part of their journey they were able to circle both these answers, hence row totals may add up to more than 100%.
- The percentages of young people travelling to school by car represent a significant number of car journeys contributing to the congestion on our roads, the danger posed by traffic to pedestrians and cyclists and adding to pollution levels. The question schools may need to ask is how many of these car journeys could be replaced by walking, cycling, using school buses or public transport. Some of these car journeys of course may occur where there are no suitable alternatives and indeed car-sharing arrangements may be operating.
- It is comforting to note that at least half of males and females within these age groups still walk to school. These youngsters will benefit from this daily exercise as well as developing their independence and pedestrian skills.
- Collaborative research by SHEU in Devon (P. Gimber: 'Travelwise' survey, Devon County Council, 2000) suggests that more young people would like to cycle to school than do so. (See also *safety helmets* page 20.)

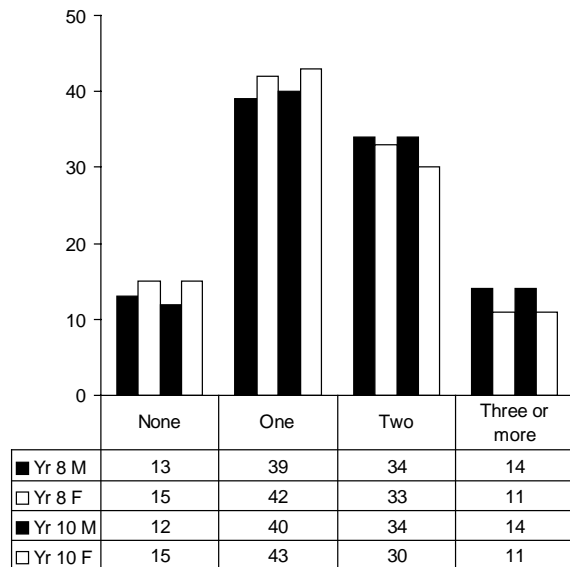
Valid responses	
Yr 8 M (12-13 yrs)	6400
Yr 8 F	6969
Yr 10 M (14-15 yrs)	7797
Yr 10 F	8453

Car ownership

Over 40% have *two or more cars*

How many cars does your family own? (P11)

1. At least 87% of households in this sample own at least one car.



Valid responses	
Yr 8 M (12-13 yrs)	5915
Yr 8 F	6349
Yr 10 M (14-15 yrs)	5758
Yr 10 F	6209

Comments

1. The concept of 'family' may vary depending on young people's circumstances.
2. Ownership of a second car may encourage the 'school run'. These figures reveal that more than 40% of the families within this sample owned two or more cars.
3. Car ownership is another indication of family affluence and social background, although should not be interpreted glibly: some rural areas may be relatively deprived, but have high rates of car ownership, necessitated by the poor public transport available.

Television watching

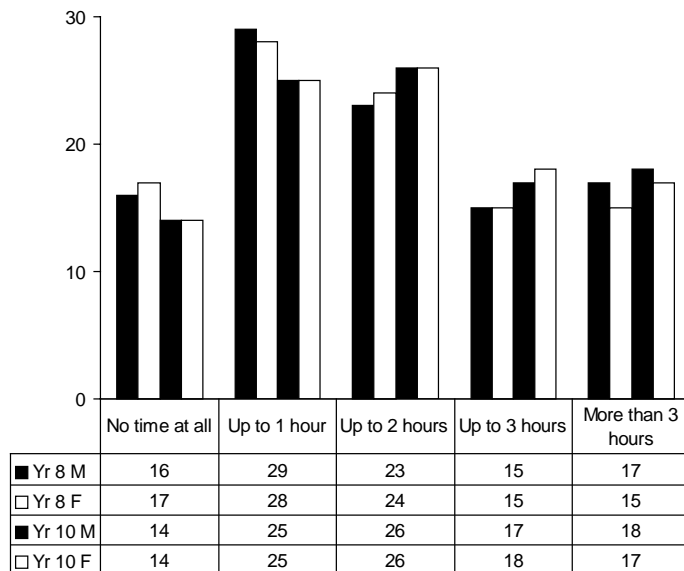
At least 83% watched some TV during the evening prior to the survey

How long did you spend watching live or recorded TV programmes after school yesterday? (L1a)

- At least 15% watched for *more than 3 hours*, whilst 17% or fewer did not watch any at all.
- 'Normal' gender differences are not apparent in this sample, with similar levels of males and females watching different amounts of TV.

Comments

- Many people believe that television-watching is an incompatible activity with doing homework, although some pupils say they can do both at the same time. With computer games and the Internet as added possible distractions, perhaps young people today need to be more disciplined about their homework habits than ever before.
- Time spent watching television, playing computer games and using the Internet will also prevent young people from taking part in any physical activity during these hours, thus encouraging a sedentary lifestyle.



Valid responses		
Yr 8 M	(12-13 yrs)	6206
Yr 8 F		6792
Yr 10 M	(14-15 yrs)	6423
Yr 10 F		6983

Homework

Females are more conscientious

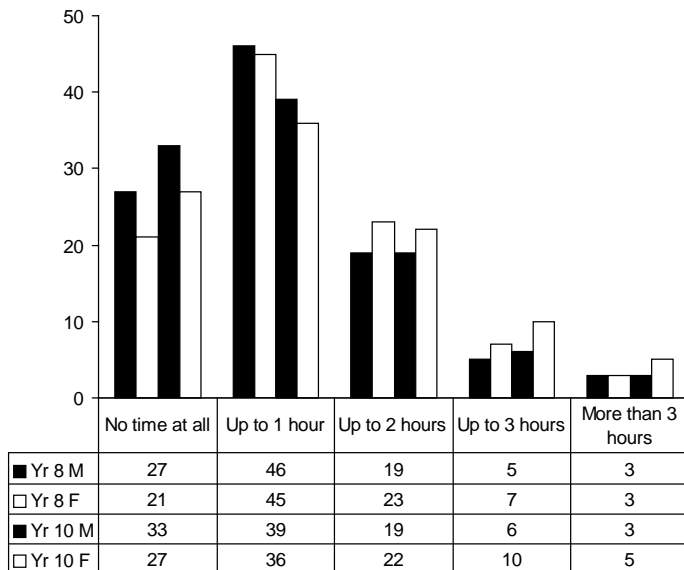
How long did you spend doing homework after school yesterday? (L1b)

1. More females than males did homework, and they tended to spend longer at it.
2. Fewer of the older pupils did any homework at all.

Comments

1. The data refer to the evenings of Monday to Thursday only.
2. The slight increase in the percentages for *no time at all* with the older age group is perhaps the reverse of what may be expected.
3. The data appear to substantiate the view that girls are more studious than boys are. However, it is important to remember that quantity does not necessarily reflect quality. Perhaps boys are making better use of free time in school hours in order to have more free time during the evenings.
4. The average number of hours spent doing homework are calculated as follows:

Year 8 Males	1.1
Year 8 Females	1.3
Year 10 Males	1.1
Year 10 Females	1.3



Valid responses	
Yr 8 M (12-13 yrs)	6196
Yr 8 F	6798
Yr 10 M (14-15 yrs)	6414
Yr 10 F	6971

Computer games

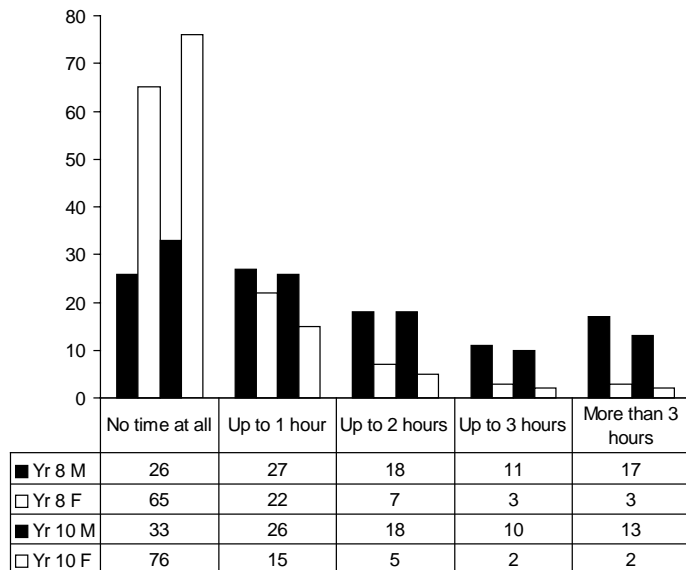
Up to 74% of males play computer games

How long did you spend playing computer games after school yesterday? (L1c)

Comments

1. The much greater involvement of males than females is clear.
2. Despite this male 'dominance', at least 24% of the females reported spending some time playing computer games after school, on the day prior to the survey.

1. The question lists Playstation, Gameboy and P.C. (Personal Computer) as examples.
2. The data reveal that significant percentages of males in this sample spent a considerable amount of time playing computer games during the evening before the survey. While there are benefits to playing some computer games, it is easy to suppose that their time might be better spent.



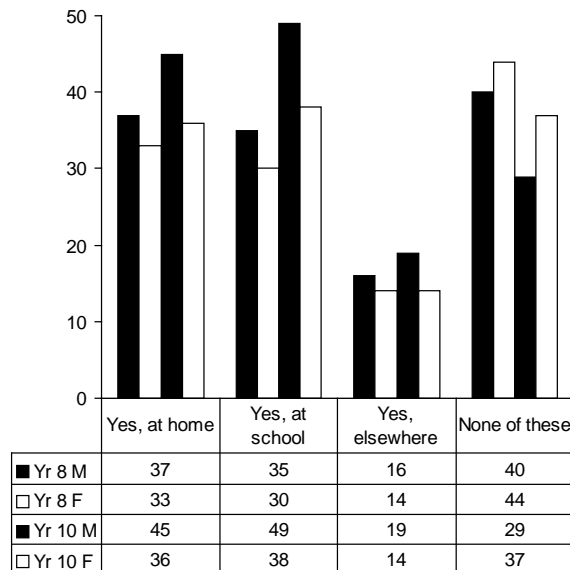
Valid responses		
Yr 8 M (12-13 yrs)		6220
Yr 8 F		6788
Yr 10 M (14-15 yrs)		6423
Yr 10 F		6962

Internet use

Up to 71% of Year 10 pupils access the Internet

Have you used the Internet in the last month? (L3)

1. The *none of these* figures reveal that more than 60% of pupils in this sample do have access to the Internet.
2. More than 50% of the Year 10 pupils have access to the Internet at school.
3. At least one third of the pupils have access to the Internet at home.
4. The percentages of males having access to the Internet are higher than those for females.



Available sample	
Yr 8 M (12-13 yrs)	7166
Yr 8 F	7544
Yr 10 M (14-15 yrs)	7034
Yr 10 F	7409

Comments

1. The Internet is undoubtedly a valuable tool and resource which can facilitate and enhance young people's learning. However, the potential for its misuse is also there.
2. It is tempting to presume that those young people who have Internet access at home are more likely to belong to more affluent families.
3. The difference between males and females is obvious here, however, it is not as great as the difference for playing computer games. There may be marked differences in how members of each sex spend their time on the Internet.

Internet browsing

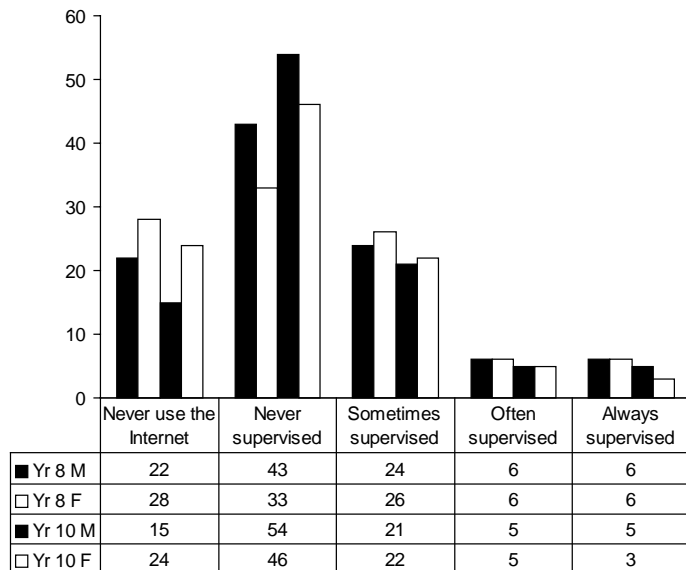
54% of Year 10 males browse without adult supervision

Are you able to 'browse' the Internet without adult supervision? (L4)

Comments

1. Around three-quarters of young people are able to browse the Internet at least sometimes without adult supervision.
2. Higher percentages of males than females are always able to browse the Internet without adult supervision.

1. Are these young Internet surfers able to browse undesirable material? This is a major concern for parents and schools alike.
2. There is guidance for safe surfing for parents and young people, some of which is summarised in Mark Griffiths' article in *Education and Health*, Vol.19 No. 2.



Valid responses	
Yr 8 M (12-13 yrs)	5067
Yr 8 F	5683
Yr 10 M (14-15 yrs)	5254
Yr 10 F	5865

After-school activities

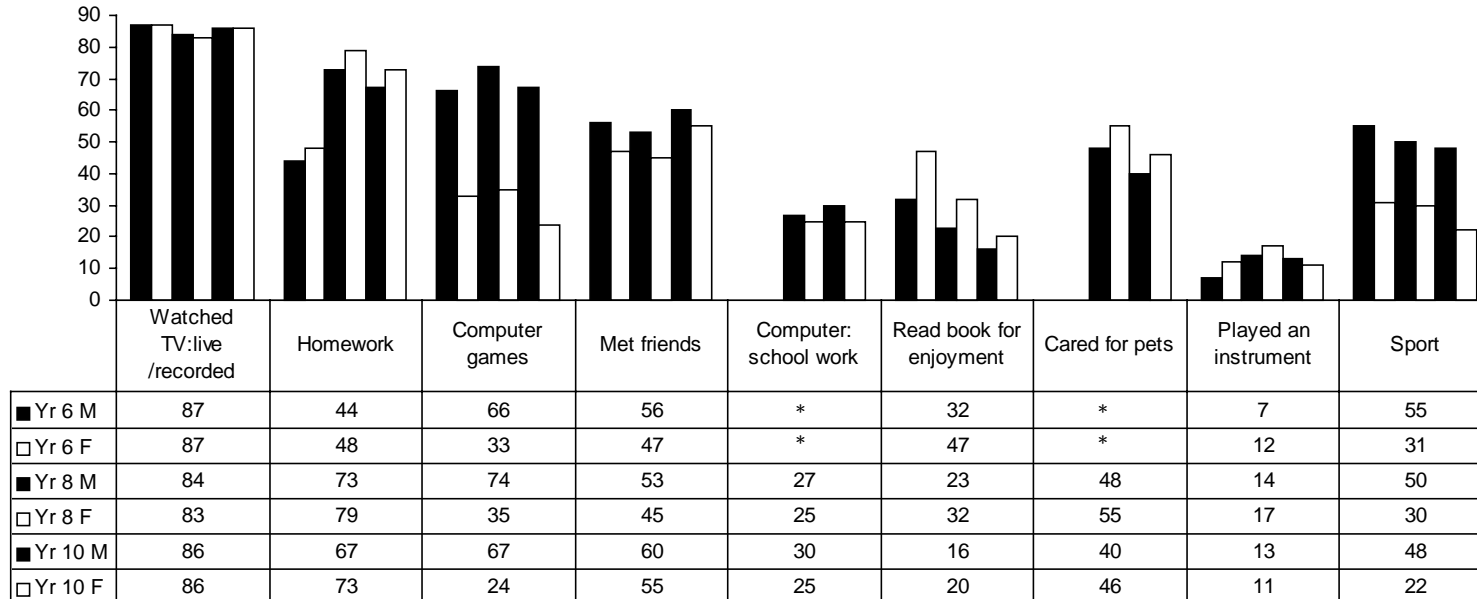
Watching television is the most popular activity

Activities after school on the previous evening (L1 & L2) (Pri.4)

1. More popular with males (5+% difference). All years: *Playing computer games, meeting with friends, playing sport.*
2. More popular with females (5+% difference). Years 8 + 10: *caring for pets, doing homework.*
3. Age differences (5+% difference). Both genders: *homework, reading books, meeting friends.* Girls only: *caring for pets, sport.*

Comments

1. The fall in the percentage of 'readers' between Years 6, 8 and 10 implies a decline in the importance of reading in the lives of children as they grow older.
2. The declining participation of girls in sport seen for this question is mirrored in the later section on sport (7).
3. The use of computers for a purpose other than playing games is not markedly different between males and females.



Available sample	
Yr 6 M (10-11 yrs)	6511
Yr 6 F	6391
Yr 8 M (12-13 yrs)	7180
Yr 8 F	7548
Yr 10 M (14-15 yrs)	7034
Yr 10 F	7409

* Year 6 pupils were not asked about these activities

National newspapers

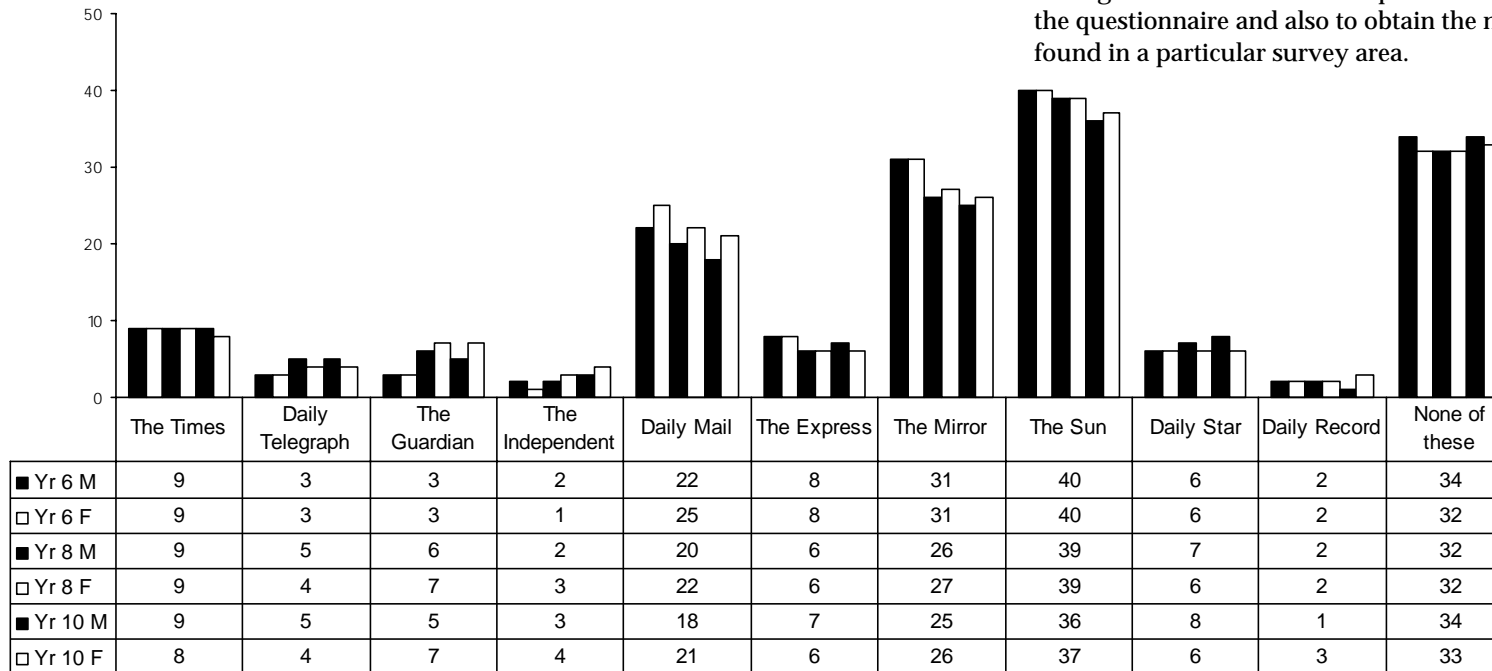
36% - 40 % take *The Sun*

Which of the following newspapers are taken in your home on most days? (A5) (Pri.6)

1. The order of popularity, based on this table, is: *The Sun*, *The Mirror*, *Daily Mail* and *The Times*.
2. About 33% of the homes do not take any national daily newspaper.

Comments

1. For many years now we have classified these newspapers into *broadsheet*, *tabloid*, and *popular tabloid* groups, and used them as a broad socio-economic discriminator with which to match other behaviours, discovering some marked differences between groups, e.g. alcohol preferences.
2. The respondents often confuse local and national daily newspapers. Ambiguities can still occur despite the care we take to guide them through the questionnaire and also to obtain the names of the local newspapers found in a particular survey area.



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