



SPONSORED FURTHER EDUCATION
HEALTH SURVEY 2006-07

**Report for
The Wider Sample**



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Foreword

The Student Health Education Unit (SHEU) is pleased to present this Report, containing detailed information regarding the health beliefs and behaviour of the wider sample of students.

Introduction

There is now a well-established National Healthy School Scheme in England and Wales, and the concept of the Health-Promoting University has been developing for a number of years. Between the ages of 16 and 19, between school and University or employment, many young people attend Colleges of Further Education or 6th Form Colleges. It is only recently that the specialised health education needs of people in this age group been more systematically examined.

As part of this process, a survey of college students' habits and attitudes was thought valuable. The surveys were completed in organisations from the further education sector towards the end of 2006 and at the beginning of the spring term 2007.

Some of the questions refer to 'this term' or 'last term' and so these items will be referring to different periods of time, depending on when the students sat the surveys.

The principal purpose of the survey is to promote debate and change in the colleges receiving reports about the behaviour and beliefs of the students they work with. We hope students will play a full part in this process, based on objective information about their peers.

The Project

The project involved offering a survey at no cost to organisations from the FE sector that are working towards developing healthy settings for students. The sponsorship offered the use of SHEU's online questionnaire and support for running the exercise.

Initial consultations highlighted a number of possible benefits to those participating:

Benefits to Colleges

- Useful to examine how your self-assessment compares to an external one
- Help to move your Healthy College project forward
- The data would help to formulate your action plan and help develop and implement your Every Child Matters (ECM) strategy
- Use the findings of the survey for further evidence for the ECM section of the SAR and to further support your contribution to the Joint Area Review
- Use the data to take into account the students as key stakeholders in the college's ECM framework and action plan
- Cross reference results to your plans and make refinements as required
- Beneficial to be able to benchmark with other organisations and the potential to share good practice

Benefits to SHEU

- Further develop the SHEU commitment to healthy college settings
- Enhance SHEU unique health related behaviour database
- Increase awareness of SHEU services to the education and health sectors

Comments

Specific comments we have received about the survey have been mostly positive, common general comments often include reference to its size. While we are mindful of the length of the survey, all the information we collect is valuable and has been requested for inclusion by local interest groups and experts.

We have discovered that most students can complete the exercise inside an hour and in that time will answer 119 questions about a wide range of topics.

Your comments are invited about the exercise and the reports you receive.

This report

This report should ideally be studied with reference to the original questionnaire and the fully detailed results available via the online tutor access. The first is recommended because we may have paraphrased a question for reasons of space and the precise wording and position may be important for interpretation.

The Full Survey Results Tables available online contain more information than can be summarised here. You may consider this useful if you want to look in more detail at the results of a particular question. This facility also allows you to analyse and redraw graphs and tables in order to highlight significant points. Also online is the opportunity to **compare** results to previous surveys or the **wider data set**.

This report, as all other data, is confidential to your college.

Additional services (graphs and discs) are available; please contact SHEU.

Administration

Staff in colleges will have been responsible for the arrangements for carrying out the survey and for selecting an appropriate representative sample of students.

Anything special about the day of administration, or the students present and absent on that day, may affect the detail of the results.

Additionally, please note that several of the questions ask about yesterday, or last week, or this term. If students have been asked to fill in the questionnaire at different times, this may introduce some extra variation in the results seen.

Report

General Information

The wider sample

Over **5000** students from **34** organisations have contributed to the wider sample.

The type of organisations participating included:

	6 th form as part of School	Combined FE and 6 th form	6 th Form	FE	tot
number organisations	8	3	7	16	34
number students	614	76	1699	3015	5404
% students	11	1	31	56	100

In this report, the data gathered from your college have been compared with a larger sample of similar institutions.

Throughout the test below, overall percentages may be given for your college together with the comparable figure from the wider sample, which will follow in brackets. For example the proportion of your students who were aged 18 or over on the day of the survey 25%

The Sample

57% were female.

75% were 16-17 year olds.

51% were studying A/AS level courses and 23% were on BTEC programmes.

The spread of data for each year of study was as follows:

	<i>Year 1</i>	<i>Year 2</i>	<i>Year 3 or more</i>
Percentage	72%	25%	3%

College life

Views about College life

69% thought that they felt like a real part of their college;

91% considered people at the college to be friendly to them.

70% described their level of 'interest' and 64% described their general level of 'effort' as 'high' or 'very high'.

Active travel

11% of students walked to college on most days.

8% of males and 1% of females cycled.

Use of College Services

The use and awareness of college-based services was recorded:

	Had only heard of it at best	Know enough to use it	Have used service
Careers service/Connexions	18%	69%	37%
Counselling service	41%	40%	9%
College nurse/Health care service	44%	36%	6%
Student Union/Association	49%	31%	4%
Student Union/Association officers	55%	25%	2%
Student services e.g. Registry	26%	60%	33%
Head of Student Support	46%	35%	7%
Personal tutors	17%	72%	42%
Special needs tutor	48%	35%	5%
Learning/Study support	45%	38%	8%

The following facilities were judged at least good by different proportions of students:

Males			Females		
1	Lecturers	77	1	Lecturers	79
2	Personal tutor	75	2	Personal tutor	76
3	Computers and networks (IT)	71	3	Computers and networks (IT)	73
4	Teaching rooms	68	4	Teaching rooms	69
5	Social space	52	5	Social space	51
6	Sports	51	6	Sports	46
7	Medical support	46	7	Medical support	44
8	Exercise facilities	45	8	Exercise facilities	41
9	Financial advice	42	9	Financial advice	40

81% of students felt that there was at least one lecturer or adult in the college that they could talk to if they had a problem.

Study support at college was described in the following terms:

13%	Have used this service - it helped a lot
14%	Have used this service - it was OK
3%	Have used this service - it was not OK
31%	Know what it is and how to get access but haven't used it
6%	Know what it is but don't know where/how to get access
16%	Heard of it but know little or nothing about it
17%	Never heard of this service

The most popular measures for the college to adopt in improving student health were:

Males			Females		
1	Flyers and leaflets	42	1	Flyers and leaflets	48
2	Tutorials	32	2	Posters and notices	38
3	College web site	31	3	College web site	34
4	Talks and videos	28	4	Posters and stickers in toilets	33
5	Posters and notices	28	5	Tutorials	32
6	e-mail	26	6	Talks and videos	30
7	Discussions and workshops	24	7	Discussions and workshops	28
8	Posters and stickers in toilets	21	8	e-mail	27
9	Events in lunchtime	17	9	College nurse	22
10	College nurse	16	10	Trained students (peer education)	16

Health

Views about Healthy living

When asked about the top three things that they think make them healthy, the five most common responses from students were:

Males			Females		
1	Fitness/Exercise	70	1	Fitness/Exercise	55
2	Not Smoking	35	2	Diet	45
3	Diet	32	3	Friends/Relationships	34
4	Sex	23	4	Not Smoking	24
5	Friends/Relationships	22	5	Social life	24

And for making them unhealthy:

Males			Females		
1	Stress/Worry	37	1	Stress/Worry	55
2	Lack of sleep	36	2	Lack of sleep	41
3	Poor Diet	28	3	Poor Diet	33
4	Alcohol	27	4	Smoking	23
5	Smoking	23	5	Lack of exercise	22

11% say they have a long-standing illness or disability.

Sleep

14% had less than six hours sleep on the night before the survey; 77% said the amount they had last night was usual for a college day. 20% of males and 27% of females think they do not get enough sleep to stay alert and concentrate on their studies.

21% of males and 28% of females think they do not get enough sleep for their health.

Weight

Students expressed their views about their current weight as:

	Males	Females
'I would like to put on weight'	23%	4%
'I am happy with my weight as it is'	48%	31%
'I would like to lose weight'	29%	65%

54% of males and 26% of females say they never worry about what they eat, while 2% of males and 8% of females say they are always on a diet;

39% say they watch what they eat without ever dieting while 18% try and lose weight a couple of times a year.

Emotional well being

16% and 23% of males and females respectively have experienced emotional or psychological problems this term, where as 31% males and 39% females have experienced such problems in the past.

Of these:

- 13% have thought that life is not worth living at some point this term; 47% in the past;
- 5% have harmed themselves this term;
- 6% have thought about taking their own life.
- 2% say they have attempted suicide this term; 11% have done so in the past;
- 5% have received counselling or other help for depression or other emotional problems this term; 5% (21% in the past, and of these 41% said this help was effective.

Self esteem

There are presented a number of questions designed to tap into their self-esteem; 84% agreed with the statement "I am glad I am who I am" while 28% agreed with the statement "I never seem to achieve anything worthwhile".

Self-esteem is often thought by health educators to be a key component of mental health, as well as a valuable factor in making people resist motivations to behave in health-risky ways.

Risk taking

51% males say they don't worry much about risks;

29% of females are more inclined to risky things when they have had a drink or two; 10% seek out risky things when they are bored.

Legal and Illegal Drugs

Smoking

27% of females and 19% of males currently smoke cigarettes and of these 89% of those smoke at least 5 per day.

Of the students who smoke:

15% have begun smoking since they started at college;

66% started smoking before they were 15.

- 70% would like to give up
- 76% have tried to give up at some point, and
- 38% would like some help giving up

Alcohol

35% say they drink alcohol regularly (at least once a week). On two or more days in the week up to the day of the survey 40% drank alcohol.

Students reported *drinking* alcohol in the following places in the last week (Wider data in brackets):

Males			Females		
1	At home	54	1	At a pub or bar	48
2	At a pub or bar	51	2	At home	46
3	At a friend's home	46	3	At a friend's home	39
4	At a disco, club or party	39	4	At a disco, club or party	38
5	At a relation's home	21	5	At a relation's home	15

Students reported *buying* alcohol from the following places in the last week:

Males			Females		
1	Pub or bar	46	1	Pub or bar	45
2	Disco or club	30	2	Disco or club	30
3	Off-licence	29	3	Off-licence	20
4	Supermarket	19	4	Supermarket	15

The most common types of drinks consumed were in order of popularity:

Males			Females		
1	Beer or lager	55	1	Spirits (gin, whisky, vodka, rum)	38
2	Spirits (gin, whisky, vodka, rum)	30	2	Pre-mixed spirits, e.g. Bacardi Breezer	36
3	Pre-mixed spirits, e.g. Bacardi Breezer	26	3	Wine	28
4	Cider	16	4	Beer or lager	20

Attitudes to alcohol were explored. When asked why they thought people of their age drank, students agreed in various proportions with the following:

Males			Females		
1	'To get drunk'	86	1	'To get drunk'	86
2	'To feel relaxed'.	74	2	'To feel relaxed'.	76
3	'To feel good'	72	3	'To feel confident'	75
4	'Because friends do'	68	4	'Because friends do'	71

Of the students that drink alcohol 19% have at some time thought that they should cut down on their drinking and 14% have been annoyed by criticism of their drinking.

12% thought the amount they drink is harmful to their health and 6% thought it harmed their studies.

Drugs

There are many illegal drugs available to young people. The following table summarises the most common drugs used by students of different ages:

Year 1

	Never used	Ever used	Use less than weekly	Use weekly or more weekly
Acid, LSD	96	4	0	0
Amphetamines	93	7	1	1
Cannabis	63	37	5	5
Cocaine	90	10	2	1
Ecstasy	91	9	1	1
Magic mushrooms	95	5	0	1
Poppers	82	18	1	1
Solvents	95	5	0	1

Year 2

	Never used	Ever used	Use less than weekly	Use weekly or more weekly
Acid, LSD	97	3	0	0
Amphetamines	93	7	0	1
Cannabis	61	39	4	4
Cocaine	89	11	2	1
Ecstasy	91	9	1	0
Magic mushrooms	96	4	0	0
Poppers	80	20	2	0
Solvents	94	6	0	1

Year 3

	Never used	Ever used	Use less than weekly	Use weekly or more weekly
Acid, LSD	93	7	1	3
Amphetamines	87	13	2	3
Cannabis	60	40	5	7
Cocaine	81	19	5	4
Ecstasy	87	13	3	3

Magic mushrooms	89	11	2	3
Poppers	78	22	1	3
Solvents	96	4	1	2

\$TT.CANNB4.1.X9 had tried cannabis before starting College.

9% thought their drug use affected their studies and 23% their health, with 81% wanting to take less.

Of the 2% who had ever injected 44% had shared a needle.

Other drugs: 2% have tried crack, 1% heroin, 3% anti-depressants, 2% sedatives/tranquillizers and , 2% body-building steroids.

Exercise, Sport and Leisure

Exercise

32% of females in comparison to 57% of males think that they take enough exercise for someone of their age to keep healthy. 78% of females and 64% of males said 'yes' they 'would like to take more exercise'.

The most common forms of exercise taken part in during the 7 days before the survey were:

Males			Females		
1	Walks of 2 miles or more	51	1	Walks of 2 miles or more	53
2	Exercises (weight training, press ups, sit ups etc.)	50	2	Exercises (weight training, press ups, sit ups etc.)	31
3	Jogging/running	43	3	Jogging/running	24
4	Team sport (e.g. football, rugby, hockey, netball)	40	4	Heavy housework, DIY or gardening	17
5	Manual work	26	5	Aerobics/keep fit	14
6	Cycling	22	6	Manual work	13
7	Heavy housework, DIY or gardening	18	7	Other sports or other exercise activity	12
8	Swimming	12	8	Swimming	11
9	Other sports or other exercise activity	11	9	Cycling	7
10	Tennis, squash or badminton	9	10	Team sport (e.g. football, rugby, hockey, netball)	7

89% did any sort of activity in the last 7 days and 50% exercised three times or more.

85% did any sort of activity in the last 7 days *for at least 30 minutes* and 43% did so three times or more.

78% got "out of breath or sweaty" while exercising in the last 7 days and 34% did so three times or more.

The aspects that are most likely to deter students from exercising as much as they would like are:

Males			Females		
1	I don't have enough time	61	1	I don't have enough time	78
2	It is too expensive to take part in things I like	30	2	I am self-conscious in front of others	47
3	It is too far away	26	3	It is too expensive to take part in things I like	42
4	I am self-conscious in front of others	23	4	It is too far away	27
5	The facilities don't offer what I want	22	5	I feel awkward trying new things	26
6	I feel awkward trying new things	18	6	I don't know what to do	21
7	I don't like the people who go there	16	7	The facilities don't offer what I want	19
8	I don't know what to do	15	8	I don't like the people who go there	16
9	I don't like the facilities	12	9	I don't like the facilities	11
10	Other	10	10	Other	7

Leisure

The leisure activities taken part in at least weekly were:

Males			Females		
1	Spend time with friends	88	1	Spend time with friends	87
2	Play sport	54	2	Visit family or friends	61
3	Visit family or friends	51	3	Work at a paid job	57
4	Work at a paid job	44	4	Go to a bar or pub	38
5	Go to a bar or pub	35	5	Go out to eat	31
6	Go out to eat	35	6	Go out to clubs	28
7	Go out to clubs	26	7	College society	22
8	College society	23	8	Play sport	21
9	Visit cinema, theatre, shows	16	9	Visit cinema, theatre, shows	17
10	Go to see live music	9	10	Go to see live music	6

Diet and Food

Main meal

The most common types of 'usual main meal' for the students were:

Meal prepared at home	55%
Varied too much to say	23%
Take away or supermarket	9%
Canteen food	5%
Packed meal	23%
No main meal	3%

Foods eaten

Different foods were eaten with different frequencies:

	At least 3-4 days a week	At least once a month	Less often
Bread or rolls	79%	93%	7%
Fried foods including chips	43%	88%	12%
Dairy produce	87%	96%	4%
Meat or fish	74%	93%	7%
Sausages, pies, burgers, kebabs	31%	81%	19%
Vegetables or salads	70%	91%	9%
Fresh fruit	68%	91%	9%
Sweets & chocolates	70%	94%	6%
Crisps	61%	87%	13%
Potatoes (apart from chips), rice or pasta	74%	95%	5%

Diet and health

Students considered the 'health' aspect of their diet as follows:

44% of females and 34% of males thought that their diet was unhealthy;

78% of females and 57% of males want to eat more healthily.

When choosing or buying food:

71% said they were	"knowledgeable enough about what I am eating"
39% said they were	"concerned about how it is produced"
47% said they were	"concerned about what it has got in it and how it can affect your health"
30% said they were	"concerned that you don't know enough about it"
30% said they were	"concerned that the information on the packet is not enough or misleading"
69% said they were	"concerned about taste"
59% said they were	"concerned about price"

Water

11% drank no water yesterday.

56% and 61% considered their to be 'no' opportunity to get water from 'water bottles/coolers in rooms' or from a 'water fountain' respectively.

Sexual Health

Sexual health knowledge

3% think they don't know enough about sex, with a further 20% thinking that they know enough but would still like to know more.

91% know where to go for further information or support.

Sexual preference and experience

Declared sexual preferences were as follows:

Males			Females		
1	Women	92	1	Men	91
2	Men and women	4	2	Men and women	5
3	Men	3	3	Women	2
4	No one	2	4	No one	2

Sexual experiences largely matched this pattern:

Males			Females		
1	Only or mainly Women	62	1	Only or mainly Men	71
2	No one	34	2	No one	26
3	Only or mainly Men	2	3	Men and women	2
4	Men and women	2	4	Only or mainly Women	1

18% reported they had more than 5 sexual partners in their lifetime.

Contraception and prophylaxis

On the last occasion of sexual intercourse, 74% used any sort of contraception or protection.

Of those that used a condom on the last occasion, 61% did so mainly to reduce the risk of pregnancy while 51% did so mainly to reduce the risk of infection.

With respect to avoiding infection with a new partner on the last occasion, the most common approaches were:

Males			Females		
1	Used a condom	73	1	Used a condom	61
2	Found out about their past sexual history	38	2	Found out about their past sexual history	50
3	Had sex without penetration (into vagina, anus or mouth)	30	3	Worry about infection	27
4	Took no precautions	28	4	Had sex without penetration (into vagina, anus or mouth)	26
5	Worry about infection	27	5	Took no precautions	25
6	Only oral sex	24	6	Only oral sex	17

The most common intentions about avoiding infection with a new partner on the next occasion were:

Males			Females		
1	Use a condom	87	1	Use a condom	88
2	Find out about their past sexual history	51	2	Find out about their past sexual history	67
3	Worry about infection	50	3	Worry about infection	62
4	Have sex without penetration (into vagina or anus)	32	4	Have sex without penetration (into vagina or anus)	27
5	Take no precautions	28	5	Take no precautions	27
6	Only oral sex	22	6	Only oral sex	18

81% know where they are able to get condoms free of charge, when asked specifically if their college provided free condoms 25% said 'yes'.

87% thought that they would use a condom with a new or future partner.

Sexual health problems

3% of the sexually active students reported that they or their partner had ever had a sexually transmitted infection.

6% students reported that they or their partner had ever had a termination of pregnancy (abortion).

37% of the students reported that they or their partner had ever taken emergency contraception (50% of those more than once).

The most common sources for obtaining emergency contraception (the 'morning after pill') were:

38%	Pharmacist
36%	Family planning service
16%	Own GP
12%	Other source
7%	GUM clinic (Genito-Urinary Medicine)
2%	College Student Health Service

33% thought that emergency contraception was effective only up to 24 hours, while 18% thought that it was effective after 72 hours.

Use of health services

67% visited the doctor within the last six months and 87% did so within the last year. 66% had made more than one visit to the doctor in the last 12 months.

With respect to their last visit, 14% said they did not talk to their doctor about something they wanted to (see tables for list).

73% visited the dentist within the last six months and 90% did so within the last year.

Home background

Parents

87% live their mother at home and/or 62% their father, while lived with a 14% a step parent/parents partner.

60% of females and 49% of males thought that they could talk openly with their mother (indicating 4 or 5 on a five-point scale), while 28% of females and 39% of males thought that they could talk openly with their father.

76% felt confident that their mother would help if they had a problem and 66% would be comfortable if they had to ask their mother for money.

Problems and worries

Family problems

28% say that family problems affected their work this academic year.

Of that percentage, the most common family problems affecting work at least some of the time were:

Males			Females		
1	Family members not getting on with you	63	1	Family members not getting on with each other	69
2	Family members not getting on with each other	61	2	Family members not getting on with you	68
3	Family members not supporting you in other ways	45	3	Family members not supporting you in other ways	55
4	Family members not supporting you financially	36	4	Death of a family member	40
5	Death of a family member	36	5	Other changes at home	40
6	Other changes at home	32	6	Family members not supporting you financially	36

Experiences of problems at College

Difficult experiences met by students included:

Males			Females		
1	Changing friends	15	1	Changing friends	23
2	Settling in to this college	12	2	Settling in to this college	18
3	Changes of tutors	10	3	Changes at home	18
4	Changes at home	10	4	Changes of tutors	13
5	Switching the course(s) you chose	8	5	Health problems	12
6	Changes in the way the courses are run	7	6	Changes in the way the courses are run	10

21% said that such experiences had affected their work *quite a lot* or more.

Worries

Students were offered a long list of worries to report upon. The worries felt on most days by students were, in order:

Males			Females		
1	Study/work problems	30	1	Study/work problems	50
2	Money problems	26	2	Money problems	40
3	Boyfriend/girlfriend problems	18	3	The way you look	37
4	What people think of you	17	4	The amount you are eating	35
5	Physical health	16	5	What people think of you	34
6	The way you look	16	6	Boyfriend/girlfriend problems	27
7	Emotional health	14	7	Emotional health	26
8	The amount you are eating	13	8	Physical health	23
9	Problems with friends	12	9	Family problems	22
10	Family problems	10	10	Problems with friends	18
11	Problems with lecturers and teachers	9	11	Problems with lecturers and teachers	9
12	Sex	9	12	Sex	9
13	Smoking	7	13	Smoking	9
14	Drinking alcohol	7	14	Drinking alcohol	7
15	Gambling	5	15	STIs	5
16	STIs	4	16	Gambling	2
17	Drugs	4	17	Drugs	2
18	Other problem (please write)	2	18	Other problem (please write)	2

19% of students said that they had worried so much about a problem that it had affected their studies.

Coping strategies

If worried by a problem, the most common responses (adopted *usually* or *always*) were:

Males			Females		
1	Listen to music	55	1	Listen to music	54
2	Think carefully about the problem on your own	54	2	Talk to someone about the problem	51
3	Keep busy socialising e.g. go out with friends	46	3	Think carefully about the problem on your own	51
4	Talk to someone about the problem	36	4	Keep busy socialising e.g. go out with friends	49
5	Keep yourself busy (exercise, socialising, work)	28	5	Eat or drink more (for example, sweets, chocolates)	33
6	Rest or sleep more	24	6	Rest or sleep more	26
7	Watch more TV	24	7	Keep yourself busy (exercise, socialising, work)	26
8	Eat or drink more (for example, sweets, chocolates)	19	8	Watch more TV	22
9	Do nothing	15	9	Smoke cigarettes	19
10	Smoke cigarettes	11	10	Do nothing	11

Interpersonal relationships

Experiences of bullying or assault were recorded in the last 12 months:

Males			Females		
1	Verbal assault	26	1	Verbal assault	17
2	Physical assault	9	2	Other harassment	4
3	Other harassment	4	3	Bullying at home	4
4	Bullying at college	4	4	Physical assault	3
5	Bullying at home	3	5	Bullying at college	3

Two questions were included about personal efficacy.

- when asked "when somebody wants me to do something I don't want to do ..."

45% say "I am usually or always able to refuse"

37% say "I am sometimes able to refuse"

15% say "I am rarely able to refuse"

3% say "I am never able to refuse"

- when asked "When I want something from somebody ..."

40% say "I usually or always know what to say"

48% say "I sometimes know what to say"

10% say "I rarely know what to say"

3% say "I never know what to say"

Money and employment

Employment

53% have done regular work and 24% irregular or casual work.

Of these 50% did more than 40 hours work last month.

8% think their employment affects their college work *quite a lot* or *very much*; 26% because it takes up time, 47% because it makes them too tired.

The most common forms of employment were:

Males			Females		
1	Retail work	30	1	Retail work	39
2	Bar/restaurant work	28	2	Bar/restaurant work	35
3	Other (please specify)	26	3	Other (please specify)	21
4	Cleaning/manual work	16	4	Cleaning/manual work	9
5	Clerical/office work	5	5	Clerical/office work	4

The most common reasons for working were:

Males			Females		
1	To earn money for luxuries	67	1	To earn money for essentials	67
2	To earn money for essentials	59	2	To earn money for luxuries	66
3	Because I enjoy working	23	3	Because I enjoy working	26
4	Because parents/guardians want me to	22	4	Because parents/guardians want me to	22
5	Other reason	5	5	Other reason	4

Debt and money worries

31% stated that money worries affected their health *'a little'* and 8% thought it did so *'quite a lot'* or more.

25% stated that money worries affected their studies *'a little'* and 8% thought it did so *'quite a lot'* or

more.

Future plans

On leaving college, students had various intentions:

Males			Females		
1	Develop a worthwhile career	80	1	Develop a worthwhile career	83
2	Get training for a skilled job	51	2	Continue in full-time education	55
3	Continue in full-time education	48	3	Get training for a skilled job	45
4	Set up my own home (with or without a partner)	41	4	Stay in the town or place where I live now	41
5	Stay in the town or place where I live now	39	5	Set up my own home (with or without a partner)	39

Ethnicity and culture

91% of the students were White (UK).

45% reported having no religious affiliation; 43% were Christian.

7% reported discrimination because of their religious practices.

7% reported tension between themselves and their parents over cultural differences.

2% are from families who are asylum seekers or refugees.

Headline Summary

The wider sample

Over 5000 students from 34 organisations have contributed to the wider sample.

The Sample

57% were female.

75% were 16-17 year olds.

51% were studying A/AS level courses and 23% were on BTEC programmes.

Views about College life

69% thought that they felt like a real part of their college;

91% considered people at the college to be friendly to them.

70% described their level of 'interest' as 'high' or 'very high';

64% described their general level of 'effort' as 'high' or 'very high'.

Active travel

11% of students walked to College; 2% cycled.

Use of College Services

37% have used Careers service/Connexions, 9% Counselling service, 6% College nurse/Health care service, 8% Learning/Study support.

15% had never heard of the College Counselling service, 20% College nurse/Health care service.

Considered good or better:

- teaching rooms 69%
- social space 52%
- 78% of lecturers
- 76% of personal tutors
- ICT 72%
- sports 48%
- exercise facilities 43%

17% had never heard of study support while 13% had used the service and thought it helped a lot.

Students viewed effective forms of improving Health information as:

- Flyers and leaflets 46%
- Posters and notices 34%
- Tutorials 32%
- College web site 33%

Views about Healthy living

The top three things to keep students 'healthy' were:

Males			Females		
1	Fitness/Exercise	70	1	Fitness/Exercise	55
2	Not Smoking	35	2	Diet	45
3	Diet	32	3	Friends/Relationships	34

The top three things to make students 'unhealthy' were:

Males			Females		
1	Stress/Worry	37	1	Stress/Worry	55
2	Lack of sleep	36	2	Lack of sleep	41
3	Poor Diet	28	3	Poor Diet	33

Sleep

14% had less than six hours' sleep on the night before the survey;

77% said the amount they had last night was usual for a college day.

24% think this is not sufficient to stay alert and concentrate on their studies;

25% think they do not get enough sleep for their health.

Weight

- 38% never worry about what they eat;
- 18% diet occasionally;
- 50% would like to lose weight (65% females)
- 39% never really diet;
- 6% are always on a diet

Emotional well being

20% have experienced emotional or psychological problems this term (36% in the past).

Of these:

- 'Life is not worth living' 13% this term, 47% ever;
- 'Harmed yourself' 5% this term, 26% ever;
- 'Thought about taking your own life' 6% this term, 28% ever;
- 'Attempted suicide' 2% this term, 11% ever
- Received help for emotional problems 5% this term, (21% ever) and of these 41% said this help was effective.

Self esteem

84% agreed with the statement "I am glad I am who I am";

28% agreed with the statement "I never seem to achieve anything worthwhile".

Risk taking

45% say they don't worry much about risks (51% of males)

26% were more inclined to risky things when they have had a drink or two (29% females);

10% seek out risky things when they are bored.

Smoking

24% currently smoke (27% of females), of these:

- 15% started at college;
- 70% would like to give up;
- 38% would like some help in giving up;
- 76% have at some point tried to quit.

Alcohol

35% drink alcohol "regularly", 66% had had at least one drink in the last week;

Alcohol was consumed in the following locations:

- 49% at a bar;
- 49% at home;
- 38% at a party or club.
- 42% at a friend's;

19% have thought at some point they should cut down on their drinking;

75% did not think the amount they drink was harmful to their health;

86% think people of their age drink to get drunk, 70% thought because friends do and 71% to feel more confident.

Drugs

Current use:

- 9% Cannabis
- 2% Poppers
- 3% Cocaine
- 2% had ever injected
(44% of these had shared a needle)
- 2% Ecstasy

28% had tried Cannabis but do not use it now, of these 33% had tried it since starting at college.

9% thought their drug use affected their studies, 23% their health, and 81% wanted to take less.

Exercise, Sport and Leisure

43% think they 'take enough exercise to keep healthy';

72% 'would like to take more exercise' (78% of females)

When asked 'What stops you exercising as much as you would like?' responses included:

- 71% time;
- 37% self conscious;
- 37% cost;
- 27% too far away;

The three most popular forms of exercise in past week were 7 days before the survey were:

Males			Females		
1	Walks of 2 miles or more	51	1	Walks of 2 miles or more	53
2	Exercises (weight training, press ups, sit ups etc.)	50	2	Exercises (weight training, press ups, sit ups etc.)	31
3	Jogging/running	43	3	Jogging/running	24

89% did any sort of activity in the last 7 days and 50% exercised three times or more.

85% did any sort of activity in the last 7 days *for at least 30 minutes* and 43% did so three times or more.

78% got "out of breath or sweaty" while exercising in the last 7 days and 34% did so three times or more.

At least once a week during term time 88% spend time with friends, 57% visit friends or family, 51% work for money and 37% go to a bar.

Diet and Food

10% follow a special diet (of these 32% vegetarian; 20% low calorie)

The 'usual main meal' for the students was 'meal prepared at home' 55%

Students considered the 'health' aspect of their diet as follows:

- 40% thought that their diet was 'unhealthy' (44% of females);
- 69% want to eat 'more healthily' (78% of females).

When choosing or buying food:

- 71% know enough about food;
- 59% about cost
- 47% concerned about health effects
- 69% were concerned about taste;
- 39% concerned about how it is produced.

11% drank no water yesterday.

56% and 61% considered their to be 'no' opportunity to get water from 'water bottles/coolers in rooms' or from a 'water fountain' respectively.

Sexual Health

77% say they know pretty much all they need;

91% know where to go for further information or support.

92% reported feeling heterosexual attraction and 2% none

30% had not had sex, and among those with sexual experience:

- 25% reported they had had 5 or more sexual partners;
- 74% used contraception or other protection on the last occasion of sexual intercourse
- Of those that used a condom, 61% did so mainly to reduce the risk of pregnancy, 51% for risk of infection
- 3% of the sexually active students reported that they or their partner had ever had a sexually transmitted infection.
- 6% students reported that they or their partner had ever had a termination of pregnancy (abortion).
- 37% of the students reported that they or their partner had ever taken emergency contraception (50% of those more than once).

33% thought that emergency contraception was effective only up to 24 hours, while 18% thought that it was effective after 72 hours.

87% thought that they would use a condom with a new or future partner.

81% know where they can obtain free condoms (25% from college)

Use of health services

90% visited the dentist in the last year.

87% visited the doctor in the last year (14% didn't mention something they wanted to talk about)

Home background

87% live their mother at home and/or 62% their father, while lived with a 14% a step parent/parents' partner.

Problems and worries

28% say that family problems affected their work this academic year.

44% had had no difficulties at College this year;

Difficulties experienced at College this year:

- 20% changing friends;
- 16% settling in;
- 12% changes of tutors;
- 15% changes at home;
- 10% Health.

Of these, 21% said that such experiences had affected their work *quite a lot* or more.

Students noted from a long list of worries that in the last month they had worried often or more:

Males			Females		
1	Study/work problems	30	1	Study/work problems	50
2	Money problems	26	2	Money problems	40
3	Boyfriend/girlfriend problems	18	3	The way you look	37
4	What people think of you	17	4	The amount you are eating	35
5	Physical health	16	5	What people think of you	34

19% worried so much about something it affected their studies.

Strategies to cope with 'worries' were chosen 'usually' or 'always':

- 55% listened to music;
- 45% talk with someone;
- 48% keep busy socialising
- 52% think carefully about the problem on their own
- 27% eat or drink more (e.g sweets, chocolates)

Interpersonal relationships

In the past 12months students had experienced some form of:

- verbal abuse14% ;
- physical assault8% ;
- sexual harassment 4% (6% females);
- other harassment6% ;
- bullying at college2% ;
- bullying at home 2%

Money and Employment

53% have done regular work and 24% irregular or casual work.

50% did more than 40 hours work last month.

26% think it takes up time, 47% makes them too tired and 8% think it affects their college work quite a lot or more

35% retail work, 32% bar/restaurant work.

64% work for essentials, 66% luxuries

8% thought money worries affected their 'health', quite a lot or more; 8% thought money worries affected their 'college work', quite a lot or more.

Future plans

On leaving college:

- 52% intend to continue in full-time education
- 82% want to develop a worthwhile career

Ethnicity and culture

- 91% of the students were White (UK).
- 45% reported having no religious affiliation; (43% were Christian.)
- 7% reported discrimination because of their religious practices.
- 7% reported tension between themselves and their parents over cultural differences.
- 2% are from families who are asylum seekers or refugees.

Origins and acknowledgements

The Further Education Health Survey has been developed as a joint initiative of the Oxfordshire Health Promotion Unit, Oxford College of Further Education, Exeter College, the Health Services Research Unit and the Students Health Education Unit, supported by Oxfordshire Health Authority and Oxfordshire Drug Action Team. We are also grateful for the support of Exeter College and of the Trust for the Study of Adolescence.

We wish to record our thanks to the college staff and particularly the students who have committed themselves to this exercise.

The Students Health Education Unit, in 1995, was pleased to collaborate in a study of University students aged 18 and over. This Further Education initiative, to look at college students, is welcome. It extends the earlier work and is a development of SHEU survey work that began in schools in 1977.

This survey work was supported by the Student Services team in each college and also had the support of each Student Union.

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