offered an illegal substance at least once.

Further support for the view that drug misuse among young people has peaked came at the beginning of June with publication in the British Medical Journal (BMJ 2000; 320:1536) of the results of a separate study.

Martin Plant and Patrick Miller from the Alcohol and Health Research Centre in Edinburgh, carried out a survey of 2,502 15-16 year olds attending private and state schools across the UK in 1999. They concluded that most forms of drug use had fallen since 1995. They also found some marked regional variations, with young people in Northern Ireland reporting greater use of glue and solvents and young Scots being more likely to have used cannabis and amphetamines.

"Among girls, there had been a fall from 40 to 33 per cent of those who had used illicit drugs. Boys showed a similar decline—39.5 per cent in 1999, compared to 45 per cent four years earlier."

Plant and Miller described the reductions in drug use since the mid-1990s as "striking", even if they do eventually turn out to have been temporary. A full report of the ONS study, which the Government plans to repeat every two years to monitor the effectiveness of its policies to reduce drug misuse among the young, will be published in the autumn.

Young People and Illegal Drugs into 2000 costs £8.50 from the SHEU, Keswick House, Bombay Road, Exeter EX4 3AY (Tel 01392 667272).

http://www.urban.org/family/teenrisktaking.html

Today's American high school students take fewer health risks overall than a decade ago, with fewer teenagers regularly engaging in two or more harmful activities, such as smoking, fighting, or using drugs. These findings form a new Urban Institute report: Teen Risk-Taking: A Statistical Portrait (http://www.urban.org/family/teenrisktaking.html). The report also reveals a disturbing counter-trend among Hispanic teenagers who do not report the same overall decline. Even so, the portrait shows that all teenagers, including the risk-takers, are involved in desirable family, school or community activities.

Young People and Illegal drugs into 2000

Since 1987 we have been asking young people about their use and views of drugs.

Andi Stother & Azad Abdul are Camden and Islington's Healthy School Scheme project officers

One of the most rewarding aspects of working for the Schools Health Education Unit (SHEU) is being able to get out and about across the country to work with teachers via our 'collecting good data sessions'. As part of this process we often come across examples of wonderful work that teachers and school co-ordinators are involved in locally. As a teaching/teacher I always maintained that the best part of any course I went on was the opportunity it gave teachers to share their own stories and examples of good practice.

The following article is from two Camden & Islington Healthy Schools project officers who have been working with teachers in their local schools. The schools have used the SHEU's Health Related Behaviour Questionnaire to collect baseline data to monitor their work. The day organised by Azad and Andi was designed to raise the profile of Healthy Schools in Islington. It acted as a celebration of work already started in the pilot schools and as an opportunity to welcome new schools into the project. Angela Bridling

The Camden and Islington Healthy School Festival Day was held in order to celebrate the achievements of the 29 schools currently involved.

Andi Stother & Azad Abdul

Festival Day

The Camden and Islington Healthy School Scheme involves Camden Local Education Authority, CAS@Islington and Camden & Islington Health Promotion Service working together to support schools in becoming healthier places to work and learn.

The scheme is funded through a DfEE grant and the Camden and Islington Health Action Zone. 29 schools are currently involved in the scheme.

On July 6th 2000, 140 pupils and their teachers (from 11 schools) attended the Camden and Islington Healthy School Scheme Festival Day held at Cemaz Fields, London.

"My best part of the day was meeting Rhino because he has such big muscles"

Children and adults took part in a selection of health-related workshops, activities, run by a range of professionals, included Turkish Dancing, First Aid, Deaf-Blind Communication and Circus Skills.

"When we were doing the Turkish dancing it made me feel all happy and warm!"

"Sign language was my favorite part of the day because it is interesting to learn new things!"

We hope that pupils and teachers went away from the day with a broad definition of what we mean by 'Health' and the idea that 'Health can be fun for everyone'.