

A unique contemporary archive of young people, 'Young People in 2000' provides the answers to over 100 health-related behaviour questions.

John Balding

John Balding is Director of the Schools Health Education Unit

Young People in 2000

42,073 young people tell us about what they do at home, at school and with their friends.

The 'Young People' series has reported on data from more than 3,800 separate school surveys.

Annually since 1986, the Schools Health Education Unit (SHEU) has published the collected Health Related Behaviour Questionnaire results.

The 'Young People' series has reported on data from more than 3,800 separate school surveys. The important dimension of 'Young People in 2000' is to be able to see at the same time the behaviours from both primary and secondary school. Many surveys have involved individual secondary schools at the same time as their feeder primary schools. These results inform action in communities.

Striking changes

In 'Young People in 1998' we saw some striking changes looking back over the last 17 years of data. We didn't see a lot of additional change between 1998 and 1999, but some important findings have been repeated - like the changes in worrying about school, and the reports of illegal drug use.

This latest report provides the answers to over 100 health-related behaviour questions. 42,073 young people, between the ages of 10 and 15, tell us about what they do at home, at school, and with their friends.

Good news

The data tables show clearly the changes of behaviour as children move to secondary school and begin to mature. The tables should dispel the illusion that all is innocence in the primary school, but also give some heart to those that work with older children - there is a lot of good news here.

The 'Young People' series

'Young People in 1986' (YP86) began the series and was based on a sample of 18,002 pupils between the ages of 11 and 16 in 88 schools in England, Scotland Wales and Northern Ireland. They had completed version 10 of the Health Related Behaviour Questionnaire (HRBQ). Reported in 'Education and Health' (vol. 5 no.4), the YP86 article was based on a selection from almost 200 tables contained in the report.

We believed then that YP86 was the most up-to-date and comprehensive of its kind ever published - a claim which would still be upheld today with YP2000.

Reading from the 1986 article a number of interesting comparisons can be made with current data as presented in this article. For example in 1986:

- * 20% of 14 -15 year old females had nothing at all for breakfast
- * Approximately half the sample had visited their doctor within the last three months
- * Approximately 6% of the 14 - 15 year olds worked for more than 10 hours a week

'Young People in 1998' also provided a unique portrait of the health-related behaviour of young people. HRBQ results from 200,000 pupils since 1983 were analysed. 'Education and Health' (vol.17 no.1) summarised the report.

Among the headlines were:

- * "more girls than ever want to lose weight"
- * "involvement with physical activities decreases with age"
- * "the trend for smokers has been upwards"

As usual we offer some key findings from the report together with examples from the data tables.

Key findings

- 🔑 The older they get, more young people think that drugs are 'always unsafe'. Cannabis is the only drug which is considered to be safer by the older groups, and is by far the most common drug used with almost 23% of 14-15-year-old males and females reporting having tried it.
- 🔑 'The way you look' is the principal worry for young people, but school, money and career worries are also high on the list of the older teenagers. Females are more likely to worry about all the topics than males, with 53% of 14-15-year-old females worrying 'quite a lot' or 'a lot' about 'the way you look', and 36% about 'school work problems'.
- 🔑 21% of the 14-15 year old females had 'nothing at all' for breakfast 'this' morning.
- 🔑 40% of 10-11 year old males do not know an illness called AIDS. One in five 14-15 year olds are unaware that 'having sex without a condom' is high risk.
- 🔑 42% of the 10-11 year old girls have had fears about going to school because of bullying.

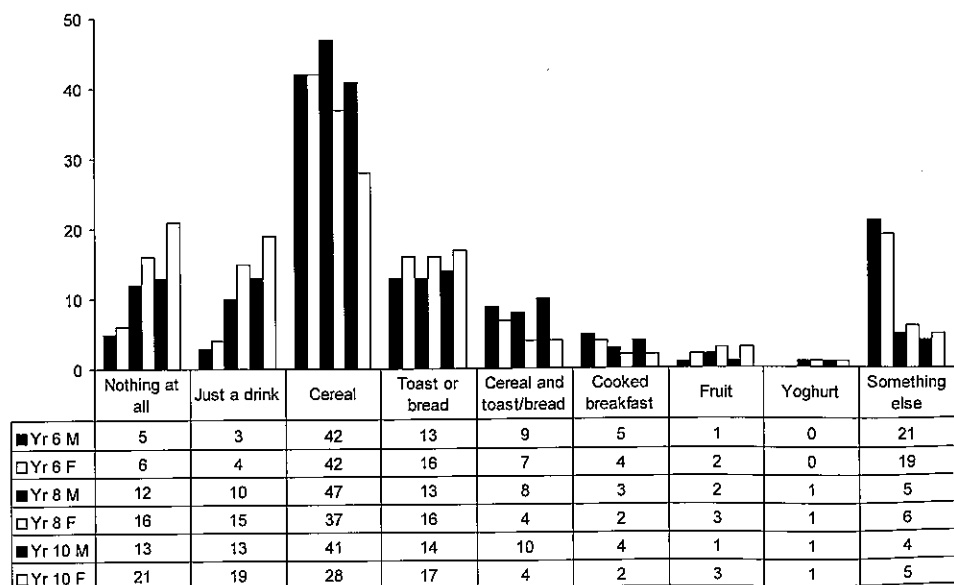
'Young People in 2000' is divided into nine sections and the following pages present some examples to provide more detail to the key findings.

1 Food choices and weight control



The figures that have always attracted most attention here have been those related to the very high proportion of young women who want to lose weight - 60% this year. We have

Table 1 What did you have for breakfast this morning?



been able to relate this desire to low self-esteem and general anxiety about their appearance. In their behaviour, we find these female pupils who want to lose weight are more likely to skip breakfast or lunch, and to eat a calorie-conscious diet - but it's certain that most of these young women do not need to lose weight. We would like to add our voice to those who wish to see a much greater variety of body shapes presented positively in print and other media.

- 🍞 Breakfast (Table 1)
21% of the 14-15 year old females had 'nothing at all' for breakfast 'this' morning.
- 🍞 Lunch
15% of the 14-15 year old females ate no lunch on their previous day at school.
- 🍞 Breakfast & Lunch
23% of the 14-15 year old females who had nothing to eat at breakfast 'this' morning had nothing to eat at lunch the previous day at school.
- 🍞 Healthy eating
Females are more likely than males to take health into account when choosing what to eat. 26% of the 14-15 year old males never do.
- 🍞 Weight
60% of the 14-15 year old females and 26% of the 14-15 year old males would like to lose weight, but 15% of males and females are 'clinically' overweight.

- 🍞 Food choices
Up to 69% of older pupils have dairy products. For females, there is an age-related drop in frequency of consumption of chips and sugary cereals. Females, from 10 - 15 years, show a greater preference for fresh fruit and vegetables.

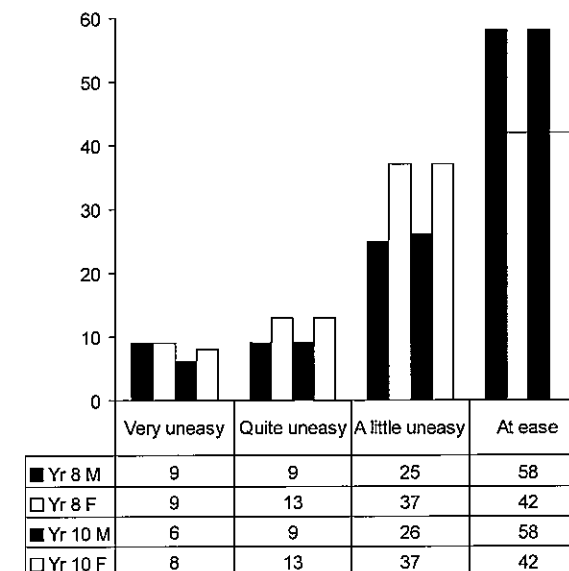
	Valid responses
Yr 6 M (10-11 yrs)	6387
Yr 6 F	6245
Yr 8 M (12-13 yrs)	6010
Yr 8 F	6543
Yr 10 M (14-15 yrs)	5842
Yr 10 F	6307

2 Doctor and Dentist



We know amongst adults that there are wide variations how much we get out of the health service - and some of that has to do with our own attitudes. We can see differences emerging in young people in how confident they are with a doctor. Some of our earlier work showed that females are more confident if they see a female GP, while boys are more confident if their GP is female. Is this still true?

Table 2 On this last visit, did you feel at ease with the doctor?



	Valid responses
Yr 8 M (12-13 yrs)	6614
Yr 8 F	7096
Yr 10 M (14-15 yrs)	6742
Yr 10 F	7148

- 🏠 Going to the doctor
About 25% of the males and 30% of the females reported visiting their GP within the previous month, and about 50% of all the young people had done so within the previous three months.
- 🏠 Confidence with the doctor (Table 2)
58% of the males, compared with 42% of the females, reported being 'at ease' on their last visit.
- 🏠 Toothbrushing
More than 70% of the older males and at least 80% of the older females brush their teeth at least twice a day. 25% of older males brush only once.
- 🏠 Going to the dentist
About 85% reported visiting the dentist in the previous six months, and 65% reported having a checkup.

Young People in 2000

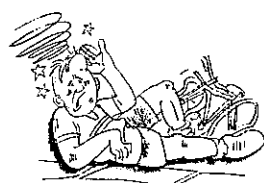
The Health Related Behaviour Questionnaire results for 42,073 young people between the ages of 10 and 15

John Balding Director
Schools Health Education Unit 2001

Schools Health Education Unit

Young People in 2000 - £40
cheques, or official order forms, payable to **Schools Health Education Unit**
price includes postage and packing

3 Health and Safety



We continue to see high attention to personal hygiene among most young people. The willingness of some of them to self-medicate must be a reassurance to the pharmaceutical industry.

42% of the 10-11 year old girls have had fears about going to school because of bullying. Any fear must have a disabling effect and undermine performance.

Cycling

54% of the Year 6 males 'hardly ever' or 'never' wear a safety helmet when cycling.

Toilet hygiene

Few pupils 'never' or 'almost never' wash their hands after using the lavatory.

Baths & showers

20% of the Year 10 females had eight or more baths or showers during the week before the survey.

Asthma

Up to 18% of all males report having asthma. Fewer of the primary children do, but more of them are uncertain if they have asthma or not.

'Wheezers'

Over 50% report 'wheezing' and have trouble breathing (not just out of breath) when they run.

Eczema

Almost twice as many females as males report having eczema with up to 16% of females saying 'yes'.

Dyslexia

4% of males in Years 8 and 10 said they had dyslexia

Disturbed nights

About a third of the males and almost half the females experience disturbed sleep though coughing.

Medication

Nearly half the 14 - 15 year old females had taken painkillers on at least one day during the previous week, and two-thirds of the older females and nearly half the older males had taken a remedy for something. During the same period nearly a quarter of the males and a third of the females had taken medication for colds, throat infections, or flu.

Safety outside after dark and during the day

Up to 26% of the sample felt that safety after dark was 'poor' or 'very poor' in their neighbourhood, with females and the younger age group feeling more apprehensive.

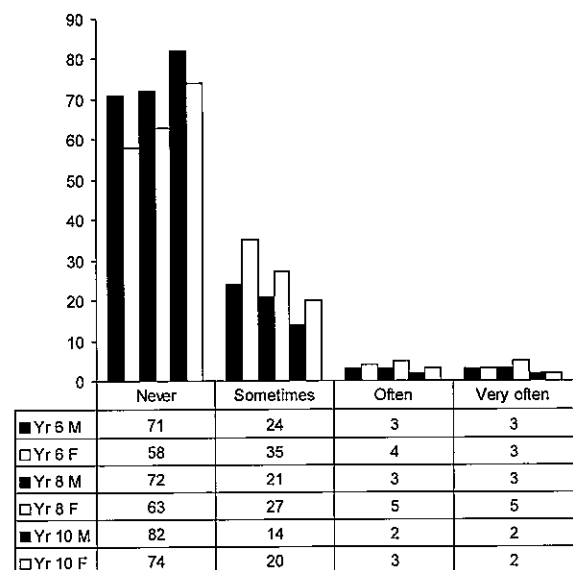
Being bullied (Table 3)

42% of the 10 - 11 year old females are afraid of going to school because of a fear of bullying. Females are more fearful than males. Many items in the survey can be linked with fear of bullying, most notably low self-esteem and poor perceived control, and also, asthma, eczema and birth order.

Accidents

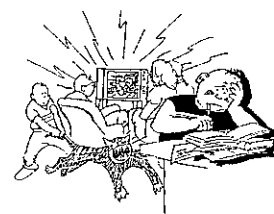
During the previous year, up to 40% of the males needed treatment from a doctor or at a hospital. 34% of the older males broke a bone. Most accidents occur while 'playing sport', for males, and 'at home' for older females.

Table 3 Do you ever feel afraid of going to school because of bullying?



	Valid responses
Yr 6 M (10-11 yrs)	6443
Yr 6 F	6343
Yr 8 M (12-13 yrs)	6481
Yr 8 F	7089
Yr 10 M (14-15 yrs)	6627
Yr 10 F	7128

4 Family and Home



The home is such an important feature of young people's health careers. We have seen this year some interesting if not surprising differences between the health behaviours of young people from different ethnic groups.

TV and computers are no less popular in this compilation. TV tends to get a bad press when compared with reading, but there's no doubt that the best TV is better than the worst books.

Family structure

Up to 67% of the young people live with both parents, and up to 17% live in single-parent families. Around 60% live in a household with four people, and the majority live in a home with two children. About 60% have at least one younger sibling and 14% of the older pupils are the only child at home.

School journey (Table 4)

At least 55% walk to school, around 16% go by school bus, and about a quarter (the majority female) go at least part of the way to school by car. Over 40% of the sample have two or more cars in their family.

Television

At least 15% watched more than 3 hours of TV the evening prior to the survey. More males watched more than 3 hours, and, up to 17% of the sample did not watch TV at all.

Homework

More females than males did homework on the evening before the survey, and they tended to spend longer at it. 33% of the 14-15 year old males did no homework.

Computer games

Up to 74% of the males, compared with up to 35% of the females, spent some time playing computer games on the previous evening.

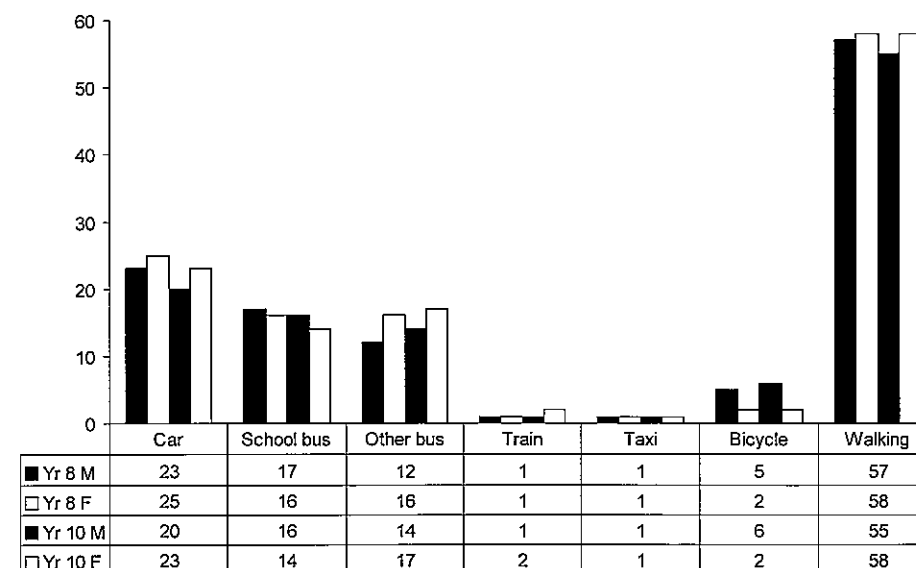
Internet

Up to 71% of 14-15 year olds accessed the Internet 'in the last month'. However, 44% of the Year 8 females did not access the Internet. At least one third had access at home. 54% of 14-15 year old males browse without adult supervision.

Evening activities

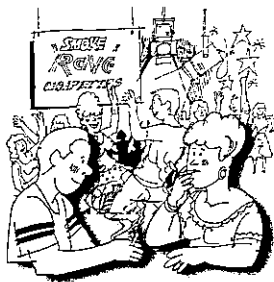
The most common of all is television watching (about 85%). Also popular: (with males) playing computer games, meeting with friends and playing sport; (with females) caring for pets and doing homework.

Table 4 How did you travel to school today?



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

5 Legal and Illegal drugs



Most young people don't smoke, or use drugs, and those that drink usually do so in moderation. It's very easy to focus only on the behaviour of those few young people who use illegal drugs or who drink to excess.

Drug experimentation reported this year is slightly higher than last year but remains lower than the peaks recorded in 1995/1996.

When we first saw a drop we were hesitant about its interpretation, but some other surveys seem to be telling the same story now (see Education and Health, 18(2) p.41-42, Steve Flood 'Drug misuse among the young may have peaked').

⊗ Drug safety (Table 5)

The older they get pupils think that drugs are 'always unsafe' except cannabis which is considered to be 'always unsafe' by a smaller percentage of the older groups.

⊗ Smoking levels

27% of the 14-15 year old females and 18% of the 14-15 year old males smoked at least one cigarette during the previous week.

⊗ Sources of cigarettes

16% of the 14-15 year old females were able to buy cigarettes from a shop and 8% of the same group were supplied by friends.

⊗ Attitude to smoking

Between Year 8 (12-13 years) and Year10 (14-15 years) the number of regular smokers more than triples. About 65% will have smoked by Year 10. The majority of current smokers say they would like to stop. 57% of the Year 10 females have a close friend who smokes. The contrast in smoking between females with or without friends who smoke is dramatic, but the highest proportion of all is among females with a 'smoking' sister.

⊗ Experience of alcohol

Over 13% of the 10-11 year olds, more than 24% of the 12-13 year olds, and at least 43% of the 14-15 year olds had consumed at least one of the listed alcoholic drinks during the previous week.

⊗ Beer or lager

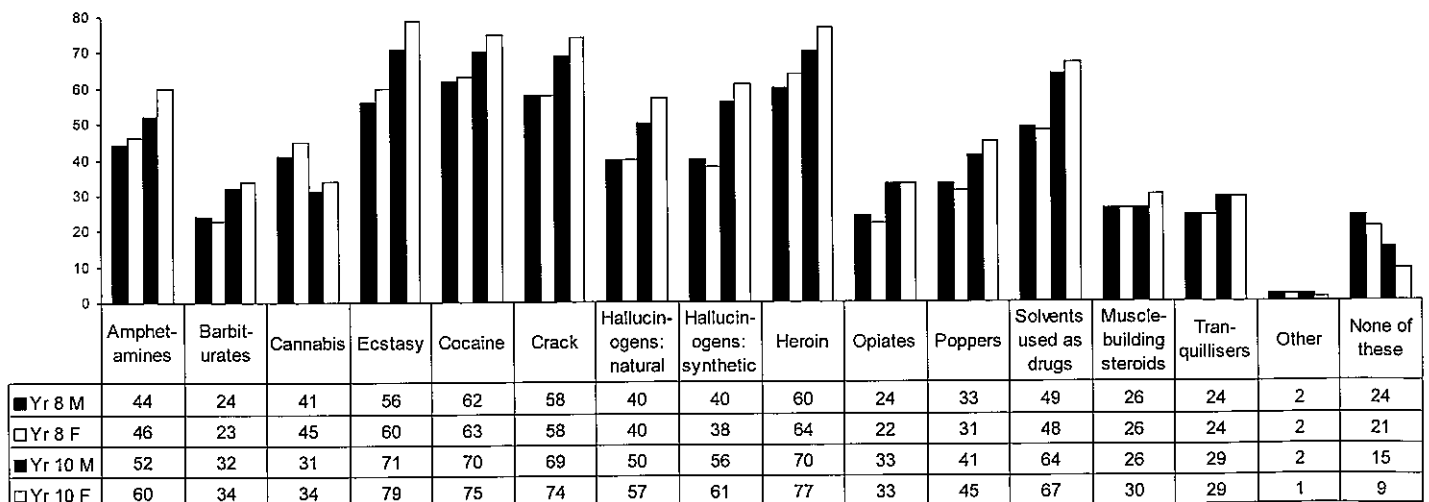
30% of the males and 15% of the females, aged 14-15, drank at least one pint of beer or lager during the previous week.

⊗ Wines and Spirits

19% of the 14-15 year old females had drunk at least one glass of wine during the previous week. Since 1996, the data shows that older females 'overtook' the males as spirit-drinkers with at least 17%, 14-15 year old females, drinking one or more spirit measures in the past week.

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

Table 5 What do you know about these drugs? Responses to 'always unsafe'



- ☒ Alcohol units
Almost twice as many males (9%) than females (5%) in Year 10 (14-15 year olds) drunk 15 or more units of alcohol in the previous week.
- ☒ Obtaining alcohol
The off-licence is the most important source of purchased alcohol, especially for the 14-15 year olds, followed by the pub or bar.
- ☒ Drinking at home
At least half the 'drinkers' drank at home and substantial numbers of 14-15 year olds used other venues including friends, disco, club, party, pubs and outside in a public place. Of those who do drink at home, about half do so with their parents always knowing about it.
- ☒ Drug users
Up to 55% of the 14-15 year olds are 'fairly sure' or 'certain' that they know a drug user.
- ☒ Drug experience
About 1 in 5 pupils in Year 10 - four times as many as in Year 8 - have tried at least one drug. Cannabis is by far the most likely drug to have been tried, with almost 23% of 14-15 year olds reporting having taken it.

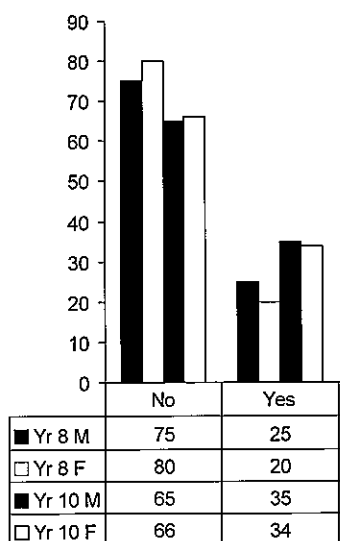
6 Money



Work and money open up all sorts of opportunities, including the opportunity to explore health-risky behaviour.

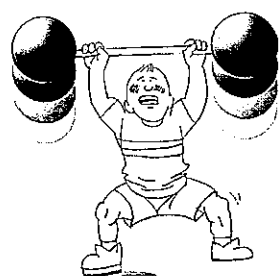
- £ Paid work during term time
The percentage of young people with a regular job rises from about 23% (12-13 years) to 35% (14-15 years).
- £ Hours worked
9% of the 14-15 year old workers worked for more than 10 hours a week before the survey. The average hours worked per. week was between 4.4 and 6.2.
- £ Money earned
Over 18% of 14-15 year olds earned more than £20 a week. The average for the same group was over £18 for males and over £17 for females.
- £ Pocket money
About 70% of 10 -11 year olds receive up to £5, while 12% of the 14-15 year olds receive more than £10 per week.
- £ Total income
20% of the 14-15 female pupils receive more than £20 per week from pocket money and job.
- £ Saving money
More males than females are savers and up to 41% saved something.
- £ Spending money
Over 36% of older pupils spent more than £10 during the week before the survey.
- £ Items bought last week
Sweets remain the favourite item for all age groups. In Year 10, spending on alcohol, cigarettes and fares becomes important.

Table 6 Have you have a regular paid job during term time?



Valid responses	
Yr 8 M (12-13 yrs)	6049
Yr 8 F	6631
Yr 10 M (14-15 yrs)	6316
Yr 10 F	6901

7 Exercise and Sport



The poor levels of physical activity among many young people is of concern - particularly the older girls. We must put more effort into making sport and other physical activities attractive and accessible to them.

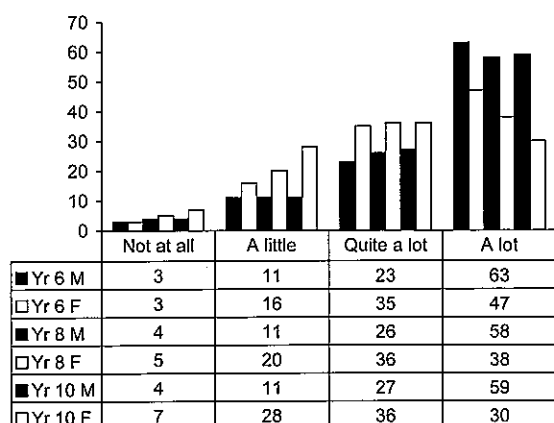
Enjoyment of sport (Table 7)
47% of the 10-11 year old females enjoy physical activity 'a lot'. However, far fewer females than males in each year group report liking sport 'a lot'. Half as many 14-15 year old females as males say they enjoy physical activity 'a lot'. Nevertheless, over 80% of primary school pupils and over 60% of the secondary pupils enjoy physical activity 'quite a lot' or 'a lot'.

Active sports
Nearly all of the 36 activities listed show a decline in involvement with increasing age except for basketball, 5-a-side football, soccer, badminton and weight training for males. Volleyball remains generally constant for the older age groups and between genders.

Fitness
Up to 45% of pupils in Year 6 think they are fit. Over 20% of the Year 10 females describe themselves as 'unfit' or 'very unfit'. Perceived fitness declines with age in males and females.

Aerobic exercise
Over 80% of all groups (10-15 year olds) had exercised to the level of 'breathing hard' at least once in the previous week. The gap is seen to widen between males and females among the frequent exercisers as they get older. More than 10% of all groups never exercise.

Table 7 How much do you enjoy physical activity?



Year	Valid responses
Yr 6 M (10-11 yrs)	6384
Yr 6 F	6308
Yr 8 M (12-13 yrs)	5582
Yr 8 F	6272
Yr 10 M (14-15 yrs)	5983
Yr 10 F	6670

Promoting health: skills, perspectives and practice

Who is this Open University course for?
This is a course for all people working in health and social care who have an interest or a role in promoting health in its broadest sense. It will also be valuable to those who are involved in health improvement or health development in statutory or voluntary agencies.

What does the course cover?
Promoting health: skills, perspectives and practice offers a thorough grounding in the knowledge, understanding and key skills needed to develop, implement and evaluate new forms of practice.

Transforming environments: ensuring healthier and safer environments in which people live and work
Strengthening community action: responding to local needs and priorities
Facilitating change: enabling people to lead healthier and safer lives
Building healthy public policy: identifying health enhancing strategies and policies
Providing better services: delivering high quality, local, appropriate services

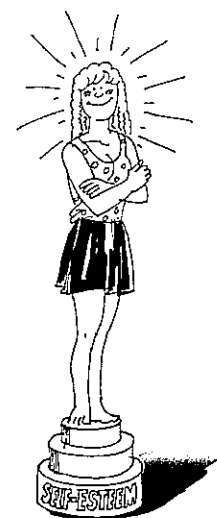
The course has recently been updated to reflect current developments in health and social care policy across the UK. It explores the effects of devolution and the policies and strategies of the current Government.

How does the course work?
Promoting health: skills, perspectives and practice is based around a series of modules, presented in two books. Audio cassettes enhance the main texts with accounts from Healthy Cities Initiatives, practitioners and community activists, and experts and critics talking about the scope of health promotion. Video material focuses on counselling and communications skills. A Learning Guide helps you pull the course together and relate what you are learning to your own experience and practice situation, using a series of carefully constructed activities. You will be invited to attend tutorials, and your tutor will mark and return six assignments and an end-of-course essay. You will also attend two one-day workshops where you will engage in more practical aspects of the course.

CATS points and the Certificate in Health Promotion
In addition to 60 CATS points at Level 3, students who successfully complete the course will also be eligible to claim the Certificate in Health Promotion. The course can be combined with others in a comprehensive programme to lead to a health-focused BA/BSc degree, and opportunities are available for credit transfer. For example, if you have a Project 2000 Diploma in Higher Education, you will usually be eligible for 240 points of transferred credit - already two thirds of your way to a degree.

For more information about this course, or any others available from the School of Health and Social Welfare, please contact our Information Assistant on 01908 653743 and ask for a prospectus, or visit our web site at www.open.ac.uk/shsw

8 Social and Personal

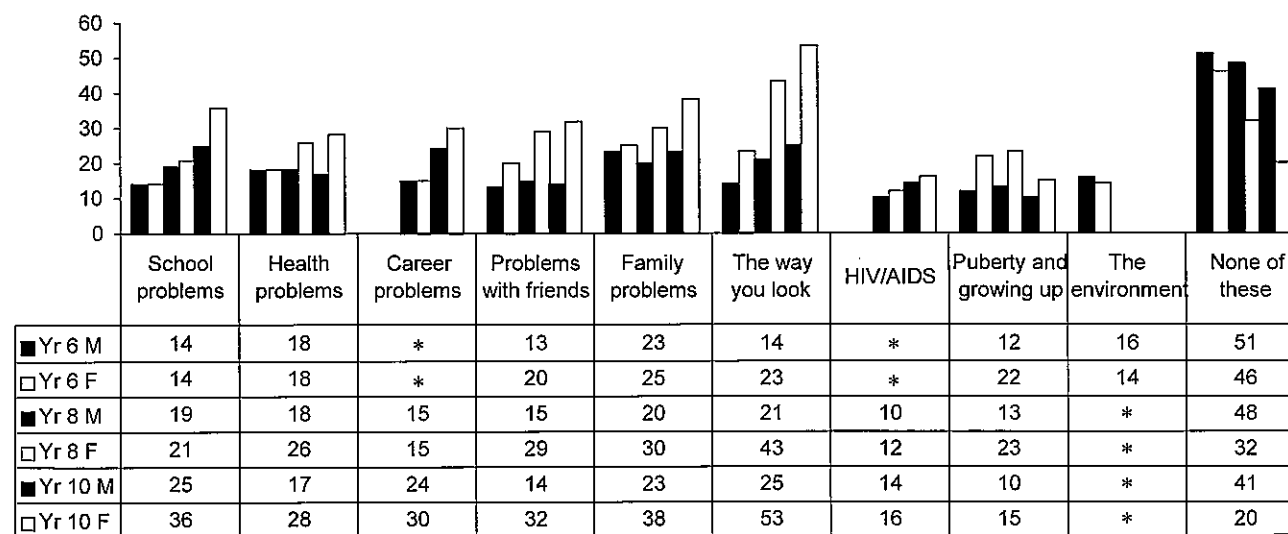


Since 1996 we have noticed a marked increase in the proportion of young people who worry about school, and, as previously reported, the 2000 figures continue at the new higher level. Schools still remain an important source of information about sex and infections like HIV, but there is always room for improvement.

- Boyfriends and girlfriends**
About 25% of all the young people had a 'steady' friend.
- Meeting the opposite sex**
Almost half of the young people feel at ease. 14-20% are 'quite' or 'very uneasy'.
- Information about sex**
Between Years 8 and 10 there is a trend away from parents and school lessons and a trend towards friends. Parents should be the main source of information particularly for females according to these young people.
- Worries (Tables 8)**
14-15 year old females top the list of most problem areas. 'The way you look' is the principal worry for these young people, (including 53% of the Year 10 females), but school, money and career worries are also high on the list of the older teenagers.
- School problems**
There has been a marked rise in worry about school work since 1996. Mother and father are the most common source of support.

Year	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











Table 8 How much do you worry about these problems? Responses to 'quite a lot/a lot'



* Options not available

Since we started collecting these figures in the early 1990's, there has been a decline in the knowledge and concern about AIDS/HIV in Year 10 pupils. Schools may be delaying their coverage of HIV to Year 11, or balancing their programme with more detail about other diseases than AIDS. Nonetheless, the trend is not reassuring.

- Money problems**
Around 45% would talk to their mother and father.
- Health problems**
Almost half the males would turn to mother and father, but mother is the most frequent choice of the females.
- Career problems**
Mother and father are the most likely source of support and up to 18% of older pupils would turn to the teacher. 22% of females would turn to their mother.
- Friend problems**
Gender differences are pronounced. More males say mother and father, or 'would keep it to myself'. More females say mother. A similar proportion, however, would share the problem with another friend.
- Family problems**
Females are twice as likely than males to turn to a friend. Males are more likely to go to mother and father or 'keep it to myself'.

-  **Gambling problems**
Around 25% would keep it to themselves.
-  **Self-esteem**
The level of self-esteem tends to increase with age. The 'high' group included more males than females.
-  **Control over health**
The majority feel they are in control of their health. At least a quarter do not think they can influence their health by their own efforts.
-  **Getting on with adults**
Up to 50% 'get on best' with both parents. Older pupils show a move away from parents towards other individual family members and friend. More than 84% trust at least two adults. 6% of older pupils trust no one.
-  **Life satisfaction**
Males are more satisfied than females. This difference is in line with evidence that females worry about more things than males.
-  **Awareness of AIDS or HIV**
40% of the year 6 males do not know an illness called AIDS
-  **Transmitting HIV**
Sharing needles and unsafe sex are correctly seen as the top risks. Within each year group, the females' knowledge is more accurate than the males'.
-  **Information about HIV**
TV programmes and school lessons are the most widely-mentioned useful sources.
-  **Precautions against HIV**
More males than females say they will not take care of getting infected with the HIV virus. Nearly 20% of the 12-13 year old males say 'no' or 'not sure'.
-  **Birth control services**
42% of the 14-15 year old females knew about the service for young people, and knowledge grew with age. 57% of the older males did not know of a source of free condoms whereas two-thirds of the females said they did know.