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Young People towards 2018

We have just published *Young People into 2017*, which presents figures from 92,193 young people completing surveys in 2016.

This report is the 31st in a series begun in 1987 and it provides a snapshot of our young people as they were approaching 2018 and also offers some trends where we are able to look back over the last 30 years and more of our research. The full report may be obtained in PDF format by application to SHEU.

Where are the figures from?

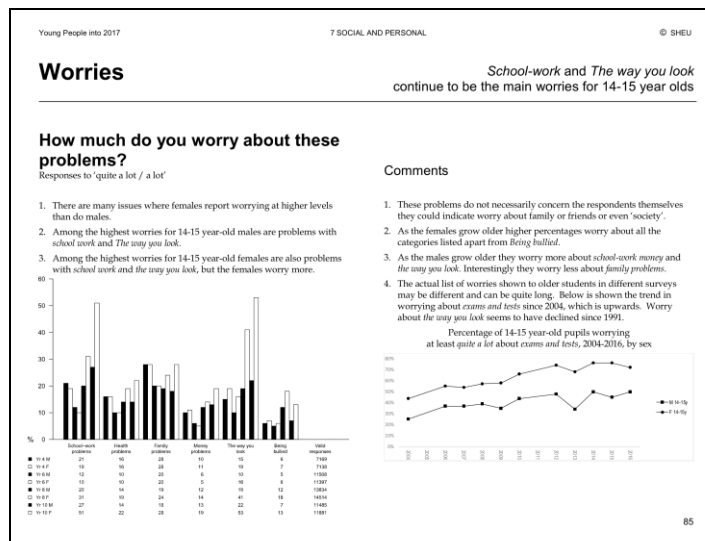
Every year, SHEU carry out healthy lifestyle surveys with young people for local authorities and each year these surveys involve tens of thousands of young people. At the end of each calendar year, we put all the results from all the surveys together, and publish a report. These reports contain findings from over 100 health-related behaviour questions using answers from pupils in primary and secondary schools. They tell us about what they do at home, at school, and with their friends.

What's in the report?

The report has 7 chapters:

- CHAPTER 1 - Food choices & weight control
- CHAPTER 2 - Doctor & Dentist
- CHAPTER 3 - Health & Safety
- CHAPTER 4 - Family & Home
- CHAPTER 5 - Legal & Illegal Drugs
- CHAPTER 6 - Exercise & Sport
- CHAPTER 7 - Social & Personal

The pages in each chapter show headline results from one question (sometimes two) and may also show links between questions and trends in responses going back over decades.



The sample

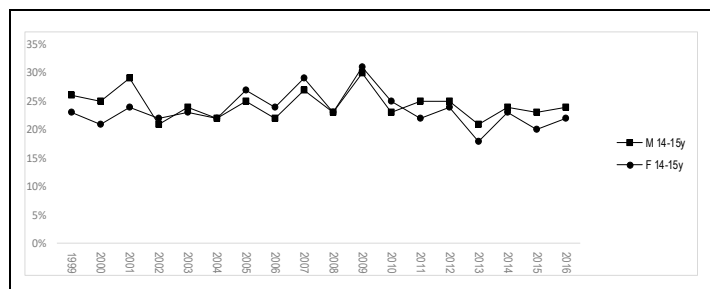
The sample size was 92,193, but not all respondents answered all questions.

Ages and year groups reported were:

Phase	Year group	Ages
Primary	Year 4	8-9 years old
	Year 6	10-11 years old
Secondary	Year 8	12-13 years old
	Year 10	14-15 years old

The accumulated databank from the hundreds of school surveys we support each year, involving tens of thousands of young people, is a valuable resource of information and provides many opportunities for insight and research. But we caution against simple reporting and interpretation of our figures as being from 'a national survey'. Many authorities use us every other year, and so will appear and disappear from the data sets, and there are some trends in which we can see evidence of a strong regional effect in the figures we obtain – as in the case of figures for eating wholemeal bread on most days in the middle 2000s, which shows a

'rollercoaster', as authorities drop in and out of the sample on a regular cycle:



The range of topics we have been asked to look at with schools continues to expand, but that hasn't made the production of our annual reports any easier! We have seen some items dropped from the reports, as too few clients chose those questions for their surveys, while a few items have been added to the reports.

As regards the aggregate data sets from which we publish this series of reports, they have become more complex and diverse. Are the figures still representative? We show in the report some evidence to show that the characteristics of the schools in the SHEU data sets are reasonably well-matched to the national population of schools, and that the results we see are comparable to those seen in national surveys using careful sampling methods.

What's new and different in these reports?

For the first time, we have published responses from Year 4 pupils (aged 8-9 years) alongside those from older pupils. Their responses usually line up in a way we might expect but there are some interesting exceptions – for example, Year 4 pupils are much more likely than older pupils to say that they enjoy *all* of their lessons at school.

	Enjoy physical activities <i>a lot</i>	Enjoy all school lessons
Year 4	52%	32%
Year 6	55%	9%
Year 8	38%	12%
Year 10	32%	12%

Some of the latest figures are different from those we last published in 2015, but not all the differences are new – it's better to describe them as continuations of trends that we have seen going on for some time.

We also have updated our newly published findings about e-safety; second-hand smoke; perceptions of drugs; barriers to exercise; responses to problems, sexual orientation, and religion and belief.

A list of the most striking findings from each chapter is appended, but we summarise in prose here:

- We have seen a further decline in young people's reported involvement with **tobacco** and **alcohol**. We saw a peak for many types of substance use in the mid-1990s, and since then there has been a general decline.
- The fall in experimentation with **cannabis** by secondary pupils was quite marked after 2004 – ironically, a period when cannabis was briefly placed in Class C of the Misuse of Drugs schedule, which attracts less severe penalties – but the picture for the last 5-10 years is more level.
- We see a long-term decline in pupils' regular use of **crisps** – in favour of which other snacks or none, we don't know. There has been a continued increase in the use of **computer games** by secondary school males, which is perhaps no surprise, but also in all pupils' reported **enjoyment of school lessons**, which was harder to predict.
- The individual questions and their trends are fascinating, but just as interesting are the connections we can show between questions from different chapters – so, we can see links between **smoking** and wellbeing, poverty, ethnicity and religion. **Lesbian, gay and bisexual young people** report being bullied more often than do others – and there is also more smoking in this group.
- Although we've seen a big increase in awareness of young people's **emotional health** needs, the signals we see in the figures about poor and even declining self-confidence among **young women** are still there.
- Looking for links between the figures, we see again that, among 14-15yo females, the heaviest users of **social media** have poorer emotional wellbeing and possibly a less healthy lifestyle in general. But while we do know there is a toxic element of online interaction, including cyber-bullying, we can't say that being online is overall bad for these young people – they may be getting a lot of support there too, without which their wellbeing

might be worse.

- A long-term increase in **skipping lunch** during the 80s and 90s has stabilised, although the figures for 2016 are still high – 18% of 14-15yo females. And we appear no better at engaging young women with exercise – their reported

enjoyment of **physical activities** continues to decline.

- After climbing for many years, the proportion of young people **intending to stay in full-time education** has been falling since 2014.

Headlines and trends from the 2016 data set (*Young People into 2017*):

N.B. We discourage surveys being conducted on Mondays, so ‘the day before the survey’ will have been a normal school day, and similarly ‘the week before the survey’ will not have been a holiday week.

CHAPTER 1 - Food choices & weight control

- Headlines*
- Around 10% of all pupils said they ate no portions of fruit or vegetables yesterday, while just 17% of 14-15-year-old pupils said they ate at least the recommended 5 portions on the day before the survey
 - Up to 10% of pupils say they had no water to drink on the day before the survey
 - There is a marked increase once we get to the secondary age group among females wanting to lose weight – 58% of 14-15-year-old females said they would like to lose weight.
- Trends*
- The trend for more pupils to skip lunch steadied about 10 years ago.
 - Daily consumption of crisps has declined steadily since about 2000.
- Links*
- Year 10 females who skipped breakfast on the morning of the survey were more likely to have skipped lunch on the day before the survey.

CHAPTER 2 - Doctor & Dentist

- Headlines*
- Nearly half of pupils have visited a doctor in the last three months.
 - 25% of 14-15-year-old females felt *quite* or *very uneasy* on their last visit.
 - 60-70% of all groups had been to the dentist in the last 6 months.
 - 80-90% of all groups brushed their teeth at least twice on the day before the survey.
- Trends*
- The proportion visiting the dentist in the last 6 months has remained fairly constant since 1986, despite several changes in the organisation of NHS dental care.

CHAPTER 3 - Health & Safety

- Headlines*
- Around 14% of primary pupils said they experienced bullying behaviours *often* or *every day* – these behaviours included *teasing* and *name-calling* but also being *pushed/hit*.
 - Of those bullied often, up to 34% report being bullied during school playtimes.
 - The most common reasons reported for being bullied were *size or weight* and *the way you look*.
 - Fear of bullying at school declines with age.
 - Up to a quarter of older pupils report unwelcome behaviours from boyfriends/girlfriends, like jealousy, hurtful language and checking my ‘phone.
 - 80-90% of all groups say they have been told how to stay safe while online.
 - 22% of older females (14-15yo) say they have sent personal information to someone which they later regretted.

- 45% of 12-13-year-old males reported having an accident in the last year that needed medical attention.
- Trends*
- Reports of being bullied at or near school have been fairly steady for the last 5 years – around 20% for all groups.
- Links*
- Getting plenty of sleep is associated with fewer worries and more contentment with their weight in 14-15-year-old females

CHAPTER 4 - Family & Home

- Headlines*
- Nearly 50% of the sample walked at least part of the way to school on the day of the survey.
 - About 60% of the sample live with mother and father.
 - About 80% of the 14-15-year-olds identify as White British.
- Trends*
- A rise in time spent playing computer games is shown clearly in our figures for males of all ages.
- Links*
- Being a young carer is associated with several unwelcome outcomes – more reports of being bullied, of smoking, of money worries and of accidents.
 - Similarly, having free school meals is also associated with being bullied.

CHAPTER 5 - Legal & Illegal Drugs

- Headlines*
- Over 10% of the 14-15-year-olds had drunk alcohol in the week before the survey. Drinking was done most often at home.
 - About 5% of 14-15-year-olds had smoked a cigarette in the week before the survey.
 - About 8% of pupils live in homes where someone smokes at home in rooms that they use.
 - Over 10% of pupils aged 14-15 years had ever tried drugs – nearly always cannabis, if nothing else.
- Trends*
- Smoking, drinking alcohol and perhaps also the use of cannabis are all in long-term decline in our figures.
 - Figures for reported experience with cannabis are notable for an absence of much effect of legislation during changes 2004-2009.
- Links*
- There is an association between finding drugs education lessons more useful and lower substance use (see Chapter 7).

CHAPTER 6 - Exercise & Sport

- Headlines*
- Around 10% of all groups say they did no exercise at all last week but less than 10% said they exercised every day. Recommendations are for daily exercise, including some vigorous exercise.
 - Weekly sports and activities included *going for walks* (over half of secondary females) *soccer* (over half of secondary males) and *dancing* (over a quarter of secondary females).
 - Among secondary pupils, the most commonly reported barriers to taking exercise were *time, cost, availability* and, especially in females, *shyness* (32% of 14-15yo females).
- Trends*
- Enjoyment of physical activities is lowest among 14-15-year-old females and is declining.
 - Perceived fitness is in decline among both secondary year groups and both sexes.

CHAPTER 7 - Social & Personal

- Headlines*
- Over half of 10-11-year-olds agree that *the school cares whether I am happy or not* but just a third of 14-15-year-olds say the same.
 - The majority of 12-15-year-olds enjoy *all or most* of their lessons.
 - Worries about *school and the way you look* are higher in secondary age groups, particularly among 14-15-year-old females (over 50% of whom are worried at least 'quite a lot' about each issue).
 - The most commonly reported response to having a problem or feeling stressed is *to talk to someone about it*. Some pupils distract themselves with *music* or comfort themselves with *eating more*; over 10% of secondary females say they *cut or hurt myself*.
 - Over 2/3 of secondary pupils judge that they can *usually or always say no* if someone wants them to do something that they don't want to do.
 - Over 50% of 14-15-year-old pupils know where to get condoms free of charge.
- Trends*
- We see a continued decline in the proportion of 14-15-year-old females who score in the top bracket of self-esteem scores.
- Links*
- Worry about *exams and tests* seems to be increasing among 14-15 year-olds.
 - Lesbian, gay and bisexual young people are more likely than their peers to report being bullied and also to have tried smoking or drugs.

Email yp@sheu.org.uk for a copy of the report with the subject line "REQUEST YP".

Education and Health Archive

Each issue of the journal, published since 1983, is available via the archive. There are several simple indices that help to identify articles by keywords; year/issue number; author surname and article title. It can be seen that some contributors have had a number of articles published and there are a range of topics that have been covered over the years. Sometimes a contributor will update their article or develop points raised by another contributor. The pages on the website, that have been provided for the Education and Health journal, usually have the highest number of 'reads' across all pages on this Internet site.

SHEU

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"The (SHEU survey) helped us to prioritise where we needed to be in terms of PSHE education. We delivered assemblies based on the evidence as well as curriculum development, and dealt with whole school issues – particularly in regard to pastoral care. The answers received to the question on the survey Who are you most likely to approach if you needed help worried staff as teacher was not a popular answer. Subsequently the staff asked themselves why this had happened and what needed to be done to address the issue. There was more emphasis on wider aspects of PSHE education delivery, which needed more attention. To summarise, the (SHEU survey) allows the PSHE department to assess the impact of teaching and learning and modify future lessons accordingly. It allows our school to look at whole school issues such as the extent to which the pastoral care system is meeting the needs of our pupils. It helps us to do need analysis of our pupils. It helps to provide important evidence for SEF / the extent to which we are meeting wellbeing indicators / National Healthy School standards." Secondary School Head

For more details please visit <http://sheu.org.uk>