

PRESS RELEASE
EMBARGO until 12:01am Friday 8th June 2018

The *Young People into 2018* report

FOR FURTHER DETAILS PLEASE CONTACT:

Dr David Regis, Research Manager, SHEU Tel.(01392) 667272 Email. david.regis@sheu.org.uk

Dr Regis is available for interview and comment in advance of the midnight embargo on the night of **Thursday 7th June**.

We have just published *Young People into 2018*, which presents figures from **over one hundred thousand** young people (100,976) completing surveys in 2017. This report is the 32nd in a series begun in 1987. 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 results from one question (sometimes two) and may also show links between questions and trends in responses going back over decades.

What's new and different in these reports?

We have reported here about vapour products (**e-cigarettes**) for the first time, and have some extra detail about: young people who might need **support** if they are bullied or abused by their partner; young people's **religious** beliefs; sending sexual pictures (sometimes referred to as '**sexting**' in news media) and several **links** between dissatisfaction and risky health behaviours.

Some of the latest figures are different from those we last published in 2017, 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.

Continuing to increase:

- ↑ Use of computer games by 12-13yo males
- ↑ Fresh fruit on most days
- ↑ Females drinking at least a litre of water yesterday

Continuing to decrease:

- ↓ Enjoyment by 14-15yo females of physical activity
- ↓ Proportion of 14-15yo females scoring in the highest bracket of self-esteem
- ↓ Experimentation with tobacco cigarettes
- ↓ Drinking alcohol in the week before the survey
- ↓ Intending to stay in full-time education
- ↓ Use of computer games by females

Newly reported in this volume:

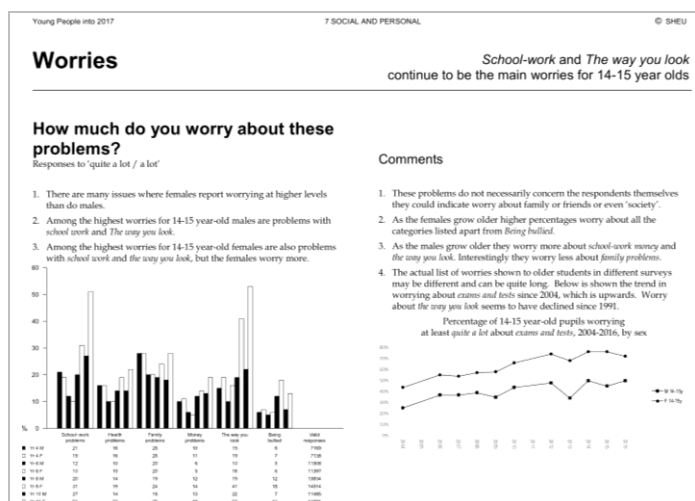
- ↑ Increase in reports of bullying (since 2011)
- ↑ Increase in the fear of bullying (since 2011)

Previously increasing but now steady:

- Skipping lunch
- Eating 5-a-day (portions of fruit/veg)
- Experimentation with cannabis
- 14-15yo females wanting to lose weight
- Use of computer games by males
- Enjoyment of school lessons
- Worrying about exams/tests

Previously decreasing but now steady:

- Eating crisps on most days



Dr David Regis, Research Manager of the Schools Health Education Unit, says,

“This report 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.

“ We’ve pulled together all the trends in this report in this press release (pages 5-6). I guess the good news is: things can change; the bad news is, usually quite slowly!”

“Some of the trends are unwelcome but we can point to several positive trends. 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. We have spotted some increases in **bullying** that are of concern.”

“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. **Alcohol use** always used to be associated with higher **self-esteem** among older pupils, but this pattern has **reversed** in more recent years. **Lesbian, gay and bisexual young people** report being bullied more often than do others – and there is also more smoking in this group.”

Angela Balding, Survey Manager at the Schools Health Education Unit, says,

“ We’ve broken the six-figure barrier! This is not the first year where we have surveyed more than 100,000 young people – that was 2008 – but it is the first where we have more than 100,000 in our target year groups.”

“Although we’ve seen a big increase in awareness of young people’s **emotional health** needs¹, the signals we see in the figures about poorer 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, those who have the heaviest **screen use** 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 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.”

Dr Regis adds,

“We have repeated new pages on **bullying in secondary pupils**, and where possible we have included throughout results from Year 4 pupils (8-9 year-olds). 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.”

“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.”

Notes

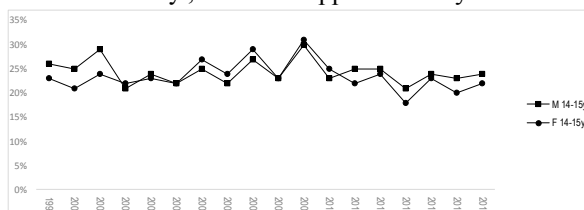
1. SHEU is an independent research, survey and publishing company. The Unit provides reliable baseline data for local needs assessment to inform plans in health, education and care.

2. The sample size was 100,976, 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

4. 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'; it didn't happen that way.

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 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’:



¹ <https://www.tes.com/news/teachers-and-pupils-let-down-mental-health-crisis-grips-schools-poll-shows>
www.sheu.org.uk Embargo 12:01am Fri 8th June 2018

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 – 57% 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 also more likely to have skipped lunch on the day before the survey, and to want to lose weight.

CHAPTER 2 - Doctor & Dentist

- Headlines*
- Nearly half of pupils have visited a doctor in the last three months.
 - 30% of 14-15-year-old females felt *quite* or *very uneasy* on their last visit.
 - 70-80% of all groups had been to the dentist in the last 6 months.
 - Up to 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 and the fear of being bullied have increased since 2011.
- 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 older pupils walked at least part of the way to school on the day of the survey.
 - About 2/3 of the sample live with mother and father, less as they get older.
 - Nearly 80% of the 14-15-year-olds identify as White (British or other).
- 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 15% 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 5-6% of pupils live in homes where someone smokes at home in rooms that they use.
 - 30% of 14-15yo have tried e-cigarettes, slightly more than the 27% who have ever tried tobacco cigarettes.
 - Over 10% of pupils aged 14-15 years had ever tried drugs – nearly always cannabis, if nothing else.
- Trends*
- Smoking cigarettes and drinking alcohol are in long-term decline in our figures; cannabis experimentation has been fairly stable for the last decade.
 - 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).
 - Alcohol use always used to be associated with higher self-esteem among older pupils, but this pattern has reversed in recent years.

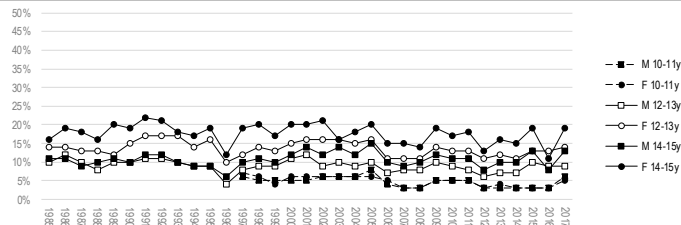
CHAPTER 6 - Exercise & Sport

- Headlines*
- Around 90% of all groups say they did some sort of exercise last week but less than 10% said they exercised every day. Recommendations are for daily exercise, including some vigorous exercise and strength-building activities.
 - 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 girls).
- 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.

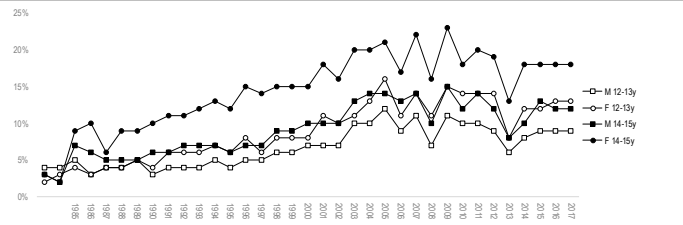
CHAPTER 7 - Social & Personal

- 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 14-15yo 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.
 - Worry about *exams and tests* seems to be increasing among 14-15 year-olds.
- Links*
- Lesbian, gay and bisexual young people are more likely than their peers to report being bullied and also to have tried smoking or drugs.

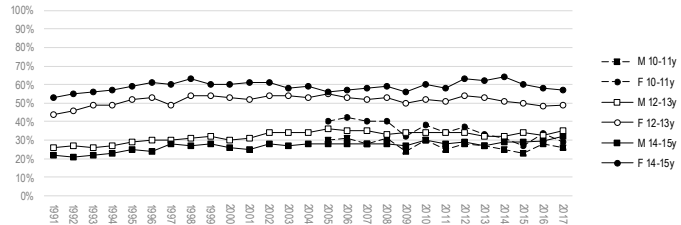
Selected trends



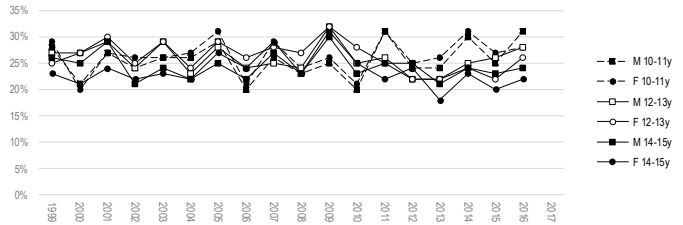
Percentage having nothing for breakfast, 1985-2017, by age and sex



Percentage having nothing for lunch, 1985-2016, by age and sex



Percentage wanting to lose weight, 1991-2017, by age and sex



Percentage having wholemeal bread on most days, 1999-2016, by age and sex

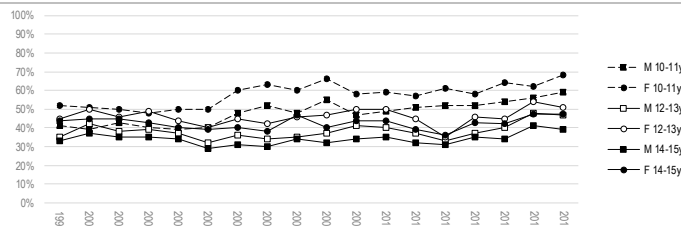
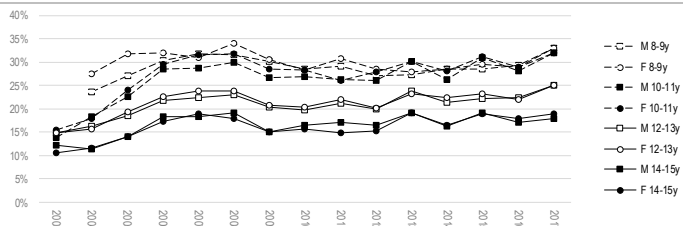
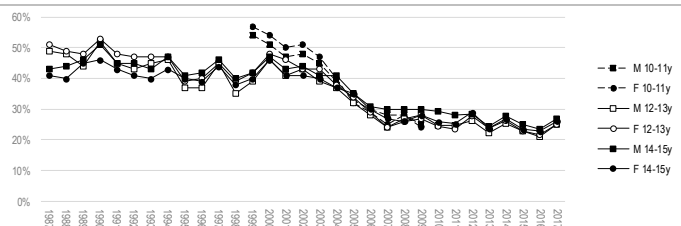


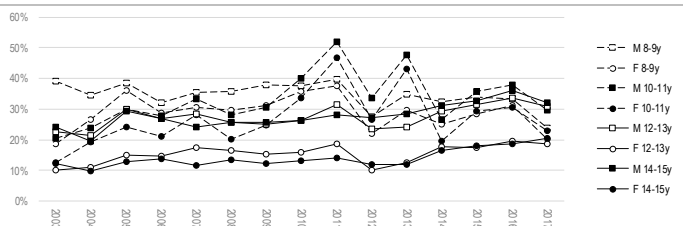
Chart: 10-15 year-olds who report eating fresh fruit on most days 1999-2017



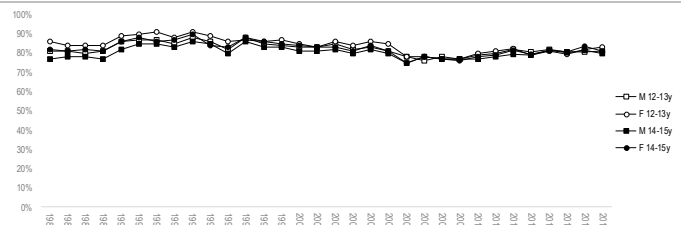
Percentage having 5 portions fruit/veg on the day before the survey, 2003-2017, by age and sex



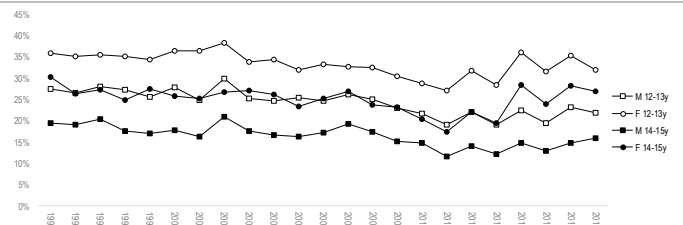
Percentage eating crisps 'on most days', 2003-2017, by age and sex



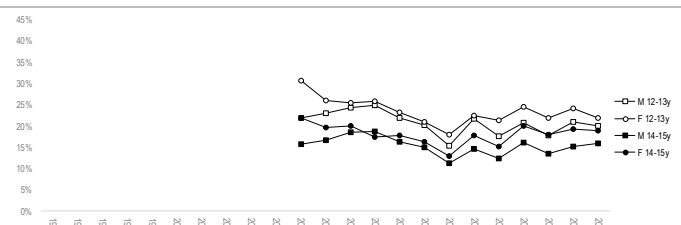
Percentage drinking at least a litre of water yesterday, 2003-2016, by age and sex



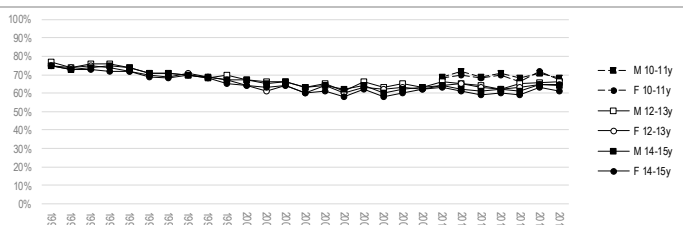
Percentage of pupils visiting the dentist in the last 6 months, 1986-2017



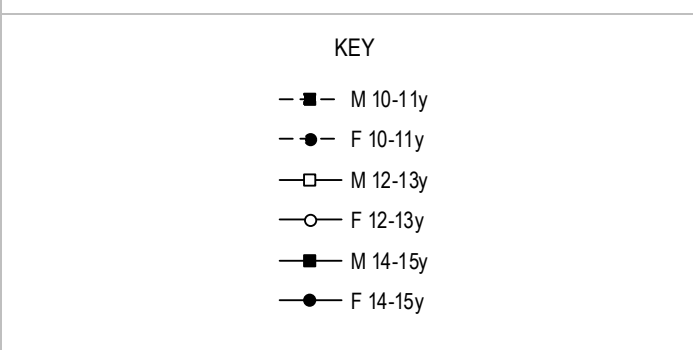
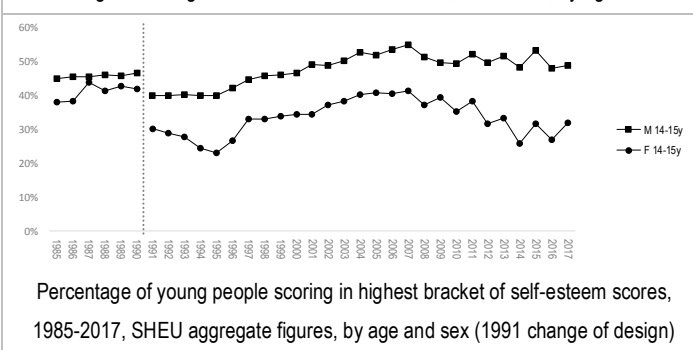
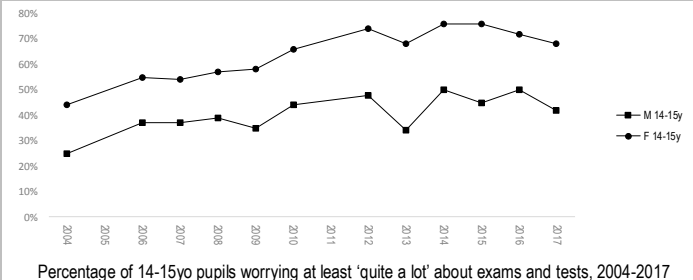
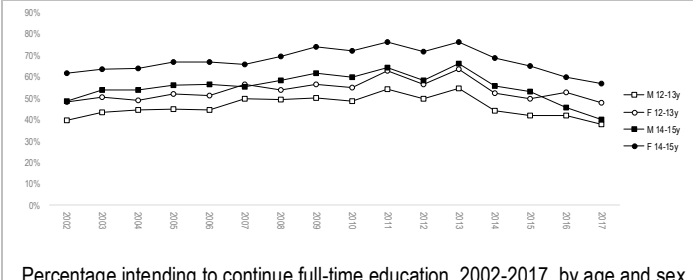
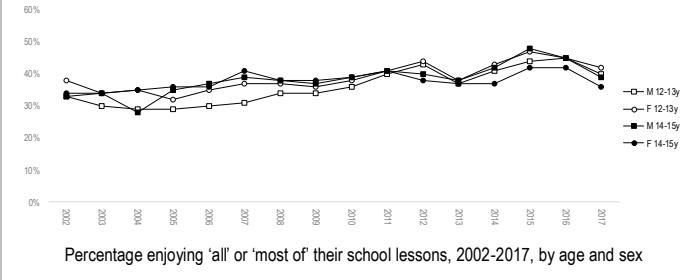
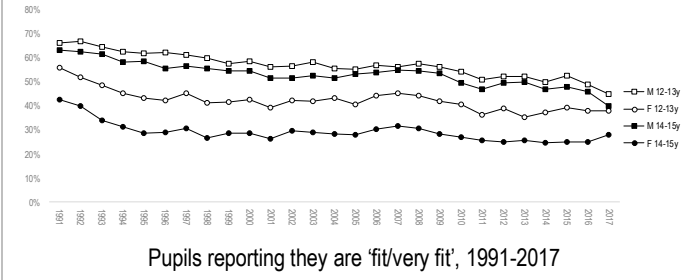
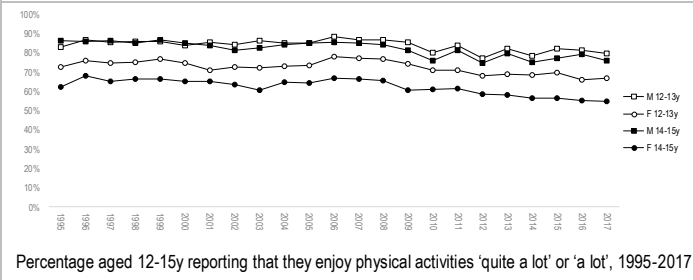
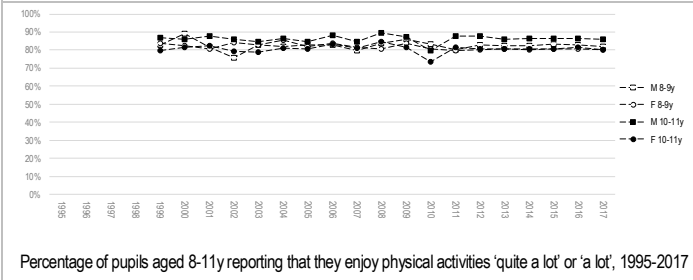
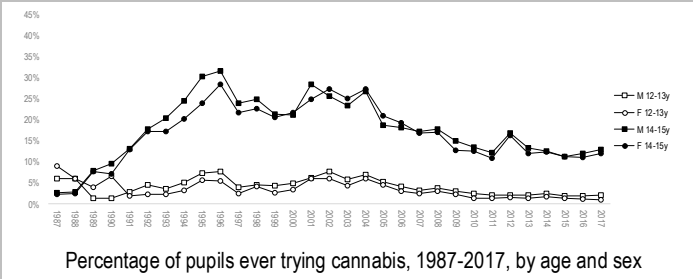
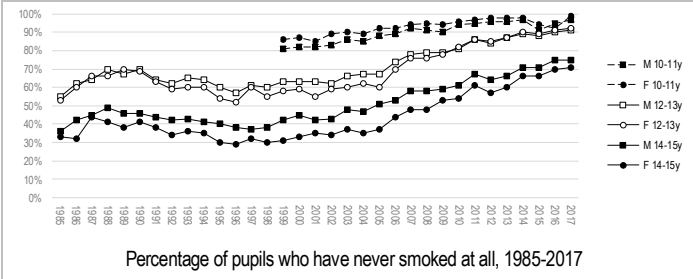
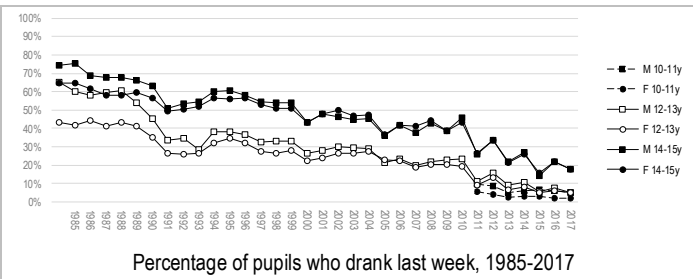
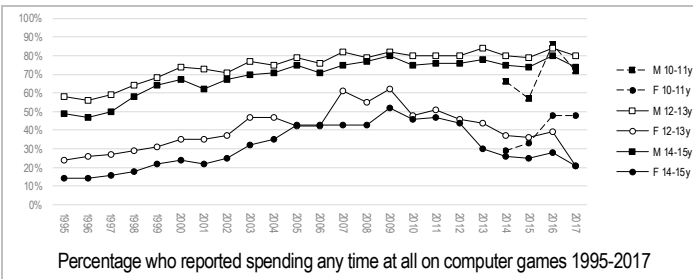
Percentage fearing going to school because of bullying at least *sometimes*, 1995-2017



Percentage who report being bullied at or near school in the last 12 months, 2005-2017



Percentage of pupils reporting living with mother and father at home 1990-2017



Young People into 2018

A SHEU report of the responses of young people aged 8-15y to health survey questions in 2017
We show here some headlines from the report.

1,199 schools
100,976 children

FOOD



of primary-aged pupils had 5 or more portions of **fruit & veg** on the day before the survey but less than **20%** of 14-15yo had

57% of 14-15yo females report that they want to **lose weight** **57%**

DOCTOR and DENTIST

30%



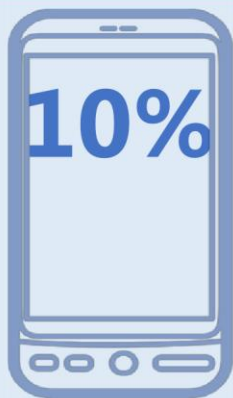
30% of 14-15yo females felt at least 'quite' uneasy when they last visited the **doctor**, while less than 20% of males of the same age said the same

At least 80% of all groups of young people **clean their teeth** at least twice a day **80%**

SAFETY

1 in **5**

children have been **bullied** in the last year



of females aged 14-15y have sent a **sexual image** of themselves by phone, laptop or computer

HOME



2/3 of pupils live with both mother and father.

In one local authority, over 50% of 14-15yo spent more than 3 hours looking at **screens** on the day before the survey, with over 40% of 14-15yo females spending more than 5 hours.



DRUGS

Slightly more children aged 14-15 have tried **e-cigarettes** than normal cigarettes



13% of 14-15yo pupils have tried **cannabis**.

EXERCISE

90%



of all pupils did some sort of **exercise** in the week before the survey, but less than 5% did the amount of **vigorous activity** recommended over the week.



5%



The issue most often reported as stopping young people from exercising as much as they want was **time**, but **shyness** was also a factor for older females.

SOCIAL and PERSONAL

Results show many **links** between:

positive mental wellbeing



positive health behaviours

e.g.

High self-esteem among 14-15yo females = 32%
Among 14-15yo females who **ate 5-a-day** = 36%
Among 14-15yo females who ate **no fruit/veg** = 25%

Links between questions from different chapters are shown throughout the report, but we can't tell what is cause and what is effect.

TRENDS



Smoking, drinking and **cannabis** use all show long-term declines



Older females score less often in highest brackets of **self-esteem** scores



The increase in **skipping lunch** over 1995-2005 seems to have stalled



Fewer young people live with both **mother and father at home**



Older females' **enjoyment** of physical activity has been in decline since 1995



Bullying and the **fear of bullying** has been reported more often since 2011

Icons by Freepik www.freepik.com

The sample is not a stratified national sample, but an aggregate of many local surveys commissioned by local authorities across the country.