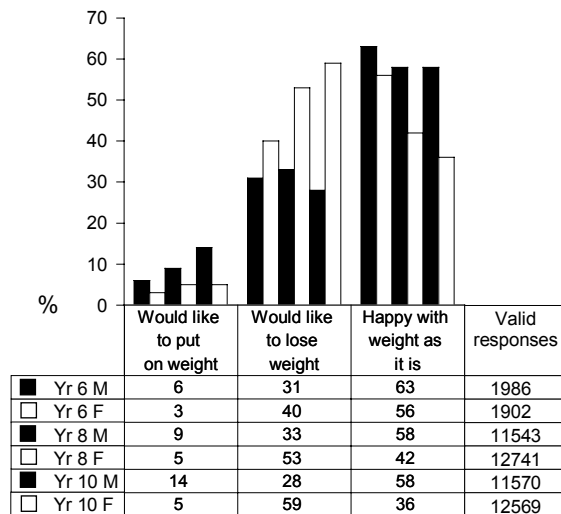


Attitude to personal weight

59% of Year 10 females and 53% of Year 8 females would like to lose weight

Your weight — which statement describes you best?

1. Many more females than males want to lose weight.
2. 59% of the Year 10 females and 53% of the Year 8 females would like to lose weight.
3. 14% of Year 10 males would like to put weight on.
4. Between 36% - 42% of the older females said they were happy with their weight as it is.



Comments

1. It is easy to understand why more females than males want to lose weight, but the age differences are interesting: The slight preponderance of younger males could mean that they feel more self-conscious, or that weight seems more of a disadvantage — it could also be because more are overweight. Conversely, the preponderance of older females suggests the opposite.
2. An analysis of the characteristics of the Year 10 females shows that most of those wanting to lose weight are within the limits of 'healthy' weight, and some are already underweight (see page 6).
3. Data since 1991 reveal an increasing trend of desire for weight loss for all.
4. We have a problem of sending appropriate messages to a population of young people, many of whom are overweight, and yet more seem overanxious about their weight.



Year 10 females were a little more likely to miss breakfast and lunch if they desired to lose weight:
Proportion who had nothing to eat or drink for breakfast today: 14%
Proportion who missed lunch yesterday: 16%
Proportion who want to lose weight who had nothing for breakfast: 16%
Proportion who want to lose weight who missed lunch: 18%
 In earlier books in this series we also showed that a desire to lose weight could be linked to food choices.