Young Persons’ Behaviour & Attitudes Survey

Attitudes Towards Domestic Violence

Almost all pupils in Years 11 and 12 (95%) think that both females and males can be a victim of domestic violence/abuse. The same number (95%) think that both females and males can commit acts of domestic violence/abuse.

Pupils were asked which items, from a list of options, they considered to be examples of domestic violence, as shown below:

- Physical violence against a partner (79%)
- Virtual/online abuse of a partner (35%)
- A young person/child abusing their parent (53%)
- A parent abusing their children (72%)
- Abuse of older people in a nursing home (59%)
- Isolating a partner from friends & family (42%)

If they wanted to discuss concerns regarding domestic violence/abuse, pupils would be most likely to contact a family member (55%), a friend (40%), a teacher/school support staff (33%) or the police (30%).

Sexual Health

One in two pupils (49%) have ever had a boyfriend or girlfriend. Over half of pupils (56%) have had no sexual experience and a small number (4%) have had sexual intercourse.

Of those pupils in Years 11 and 12 who have had sexual intercourse, over half (58%) were aged 14-15 when they first had intercourse, and 81% used some form of contraception. The most commonly used form of contraception was condom (60%). Pupils would be most likely to get contraception in the following places:

- Parents/other family members (31%)
- Friends (21%)
- Parents/family planning clinic/dentist (7%)
- Other public place e.g. bar, public toilet (12%)
- Shops/chemists (56%)
- Internet/website (21%)
- An advice helpline (8%)

If they needed help or advice about sexual health issues, Year 11 and 12 pupils would be most likely to go to their doctor (58%).

Confidentiality (64%) and not being judged (57%) would be the most important factors when pupils are seeking sexual health advice.

Table 9: If you ever needed help or advice about sexual health issues what services would you be likely to use?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>% of respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Doctor/GP</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friends</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual health clinic</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internet/website</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An advice helpline</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A survey of the behaviour and attitudes of young people on areas and issues affecting their lives

This bulletin presents key findings from the sixth round of the Young Persons’ Behaviour and Attitudes Survey, carried out between October and December 2016. These results are based on data which has been weighted by year group, gender and religion in order to reflect the composition of the Northern Ireland post-primary population.

Central Survey Unit was commissioned by a consortium of government departments to design and conduct a survey, covering a range of topics relevant to the lives of young people today. Interest amongst policy makers on the views and behaviours of young people was such that, in order to meet the demand for questions on the survey, the topics were split across two versions of the questionnaire, A and B.

Demographics

The majority of pupils’ households are comprised of a mother (96%), a father (78%) and over half include brother(s) (60%) and sister(s) (58%).

Fifteen percent of pupils reported that their household included persons from more than one community background.

The majority (87%) of pupils were born in Northern Ireland, 3% were born in England, 3% in the Republic of Ireland, 1% in Scotland and 6% were born somewhere else. Of those who were born somewhere else, 68% stated it was somewhere else in the EU.

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For the purpose of this bulletin, all percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole number.

Figure 1: Who of the following, if any, do you live with?
Long Term Conditions

The majority (83%) of pupils say their health is very good or good (Figure 2).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Health Status</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very good</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fair</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bad or very bad</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 2: In general, how would you say you health is?

Almost half of respondents (48%) think that schools should be taught as part of the curriculum.

Almost all pupils (92%) say that their family encourages them to do well at school and just over half (54%) say their teachers encourage them to do well.

Organ Donation

The majority of pupils (84%) have heard of organ donation but less than half (47%) have ever heard of the NHS Organ Donor Register.

Eleven per cent of respondents think you can join the Organ Donor Register at age 16, while 29% think you can join at 18.

Forty per cent of respondents don’t know.

Almost half of respondents (48%) think that schools should provide young people with information on organ donation, to be taught as part of the curriculum.

School

Four fifths (80%) of pupils like school at present. The majority are in agreement that it is important to have Maths and English qualifications by the time they leave school (94%), that staying on at school is important if they want to get a good job (83%) and that they could do well at school (85%).

Eighty four percent of pupils feel a certain amount of stress due to the school work they have to do. The majority of these are worried about exams/tests (84%) while almost half are worried about homework (48%) and falling behind in class (46%) (see Figure 4).

Almost all pupils (92%) say that their family encourages them to do well at school and just over half (54%) say their teachers encourage them to do well.

Alcohol

Just under a third of pupils (31%) have taken an alcoholic drink (16% of Key stage 3 pupils and 52% of Key stage 4). Of those pupils who have ever had an alcoholic drink:

- 47% were aged 13 or under when they had their first drink.
- A quarter (25%) drink alcohol at least a few times a month.
- Over a quarter (26%) do not drink any more.
- 16% have deliberately tried to get drunk in the last month.

Over two thirds (70%) of pupils have received education on the use of alcohol in school, while 13% say they have not had any education on the subject.

Solvents & Drugs

A small number (4%) of pupils have been offered solvents and 1% of pupils have inhaled solvents.

The majority of pupils (88%) feel that the education they have received about the use of drugs has made them less inclined to take drugs.

Personal Safety

Almost two thirds of pupils (63%) feel very safe in the area in which they live and 31% feel quite safe.

A small number of pupils (4%) feel slightly unsafe in the area in which they live and 1% feel very unsafe.

*Table 8: As a result of drinking alcohol have you ever, at least once...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>% of respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Had an argument</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Had a fight</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ended up in a situation</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>where you felt threatened/unsafe</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Been sick (vomited)</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Been in trouble with parent(s)/other family member</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Posted something on social media you wished you hadn’t</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Done something you later regretted</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Cannabis is the most common drug for pupils to have tried (3%). One percent of pupils have tried the following drugs:

- Speed
- LSD
- Ecstasy
- Mephedrone
- Synthetic cannabis
- Other drugs (not given by a GP, nurse or chemist)

Pupils most commonly took drugs with a friend (42%) and the most commonly reported location for taking drugs was somewhere outside (e.g. park, street, entrance or under a bridge) (37%).

The majority of pupils (88%) feel that the education they have received about the use of drugs has made them less inclined to take drugs.
Health & Wellbeing

One third (33%) of pupils from all year groups reported having concerns or worries about their mental health. Of those pupils, over a third (36%) have sought help: 73% from a family member, 41% from a friend, 24% from a GP and 22% from a teacher. The most commonly reported reason for not seeking help was that pupils felt they could handle things on their own (55%).

Table 7: Selected results from the Stirling Children’s Wellbeing Scale.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>% of respondents who think this quite a lot or all of the time</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I think good things will happen in my life</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can find lots of fun things to do</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I think lots of people care about me</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I think there are many things I can be proud of</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I’ve been getting on well with people</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Almost two thirds (67%) of pupils in Years 11 and 12 chose their subjects with a career area in mind. Almost two thirds are confident they will get the type of job they want when they finish school or college or training and 75% have goals and plans for the future regarding work. Over half (54%) have a bank account. Almost half (49%) of those pupils do not understand what it is. Two thirds (60%) go to sleep at around 10 or 11pm on a school night.

Almost three quarters (72%) of Year 11 & 12 pupils have heard of the Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA), however almost half (49%) of those pupils do not understand what it is. Over a third (35%) of pupils said that they would only stay on at school or Further Education if they received an EMA. 

Two thirds (67%) of pupils in Years 11 and 12 chose their subjects with a career area in mind. Almost two thirds are confident they will get the type of job they want when they finish school or college or training and 75% have goals and plans for the future regarding work. Over half (54%) have a bank account. Almost half (49%) of those pupils do not understand what it is. Two thirds (60%) go to sleep at around 10 or 11pm on a school night.

Subject Choices & Next Steps

Almost three quarters (72%) of Year 11 & 12 pupils have heard of the Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA), however almost half (49%) of those pupils do not understand what it is. Over a third (35%) of pupils said that they would only stay on at school or Further Education if they received an EMA.

Employment and Money

Fifty four percent of Year 11 & 12 respondents have had a part-time job, such as a paper round, babysitting, cutting grass or working in a café. Of those remaining, most (85%) are likely to look for a job while still at school or college.

Almost all (97%) Year 11 & 12 pupils think it is important to get a job when they finish school/college or training and 75% have goals and plans for the future regarding work. Over half (52%) are confident they will get the type of job they want when they leave school/university or training.

Medicines

Over half of pupils (52%) have had a medicine prescribed for them by a doctor or nurse in the past year, most commonly for acute illnesses (59%).

Over a third (35%) of pupils have used medicines in the last 12 months that weren’t prescribed by a doctor or nurse.

Almost half (45%) pf pupils would like more information about how to use medicines safely and appropriately.

Antibiotics:

Almost half (48%) have had an antibiotic in the past year. The same number (47%) think that antibiotics work on colds and flu’s and 37% of pupils think it’s OK to stop taking an antibiotic when you feel better.

Buying medicines using the internet:

Over half (56%) think that it is fairly or very easy to get medicines using the Internet, however almost all (94%) have never used the Internet to buy medicines. Two thirds (67%) know at least some information about the risks of using medicines bought on the Internet.

Table 2: Which, if any, of the following reasons stop you from accessing play and leisure facilities in your local area?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>% of respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not enough time</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There aren’t enough facilities close to where I live</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I don’t have any friends to go to them with</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difficulty getting there/lack of transport</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cost of activities</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Play and Leisure

Almost two thirds (64%) of pupils think that the play and leisure facilities in their area are good. The majority (82%) think that there are safe and welcoming places where they can meet up with friends in the area in which they live. The main factors that stop pupils accessing play and leisure facilities in their local area are reported in Table 2.
University

Almost three out of four pupils in Years 11 & 12 (72%) want to go to university and 60% of pupils expect that they will. Almost two thirds (63%) of pupils think it is important to have a university degree.

Shared Education

Over a third of pupils (37%) have been involved in projects or classes with pupils from another school in the last year. The types of activity are reported in Table 3.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Activity</th>
<th>% of respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Project(s) with pupils from other schools</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Had classes with pupils from other schools</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Used or shared sports facilities or equipment</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Nutrition

Over three quarters of pupils (77%) think you should eat 5 or more portions of fruit/vegetables each day to be healthy, however only 16% of pupils usually eat 5 or more portions of fruit or vegetables per day.

The majority (79%) of the pupils who have participated in shared education enjoyed the experience. Pupils reported that they enjoyed it because they made new friends (55%), did interesting/fun projects (60%), did classes they don’t normally get to do at their school (36%) and got to use the other school’s sports/computer facilities (15%).

Over three quarters of pupils (76%) don’t have any concerns about participating in classes or projects with pupils from other schools.

Just under half (48%) of pupils eat fruit and 36% eat vegetables and salads at least once a day. Almost a quarter (23%) eat meat products every day and over half (53%) only eat fish less than once a week or never.

Half of pupils (50%) think that their body size is about right.

Sixteen percent of pupils who are entitled to a free school meal do not usually take it, with almost a quarter (24%) saying they prefer to bring a packed lunch and almost a fifth (19%) saying they don’t like the quality/choice of food available.

Almost two thirds (63%) of pupils have run across the road without checking for traffic.

Almost a quarter (26%) of pupils have live 3km or more from their school, while 36% live within 1.6km of their school.

Twelve percent of pupils feel no-one encourages them to go to university and 60% of pupils expect that they will.

The majority (79%) of pupils expect that they will go to university and 60% of pupils expect that they will.

Over half (50%) think that their body size is about right.

24% of boys think they are too fat.

32% of girls think they are too fat.

Two out of five (39%) of pupils quality for free school transport and 76% of those pupils use their free transport every day.

Living closer to school (58%), better weather (37%) and not having things to carry (35%) would encourage pupils to walk to/from school more often.

The methods that pupils most commonly use to plan their journeys are timetables on the Translink website (63%) and paper timetables (33%). Some of the factors that would encourage pupils to use the bus or train more often are reported in Table 6.

Public Transport

Apart from travelling to school, over a quarter (29%) of pupils never travel by bus or train.

Almost two thirds (65%) of pupils have walked out onto the road to cross between cars.

47% of pupils have used a mobile phone/iPod/mp3 player when crossing the road.

Over a quarter (26%) of pupils have run across the road without checking for traffic.

Table 3: Have you done any of the following (with pupils from another school)?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>% of respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Project(s) with pupils from other schools</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Had classes with pupils from other schools</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Used or shared sports facilities or equipment</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6: What would encourage you to use the bus or train more often?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>% of respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wi-fi on buses</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower costs</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Living closer to a bus/train stop</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More frequent weekend services</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More reliable or punctual services</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Better information on services</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Learning to Drive

Almost all pupils (97%) in Years 11 & 12 want to learn to drive, with 65% of those pupils hoping to begin learning when they’re 17 years old.

The most commonly reported ways in which pupils plan to prepare for their theory test are taking a practice theory test (66%) and discussing it with their driving instructor (49%).

The most commonly reported ways in which pupils plan to prepare for their practical driving test are lessons with a driving instructor (82%) and learning with parents (66%).

The qualities that most pupils think make a good driver are:
- Has good concentration (75%)
- Is responsible (73%)
- Is confident (67%)
- Drives within the speed limit (66%)
- Is patient (65%)
- Obeys the Highway Code/rules of the road (63%)

Creative Industries

Over three quarters (79%) of Year 11 & 12 pupils are aware that they can have a career in the creative industries.

Almost half (49%) of Year 11 & 12 pupils would be interested in studying specific areas to help them work towards a career in the creative industries. The creative subjects that most pupils have had the opportunity to study at school are:
- Design: 48%
- Crafts: 27%
- Music: 57%
- Arts: 41%
- Tech: 54%

Libraries & Arts

Over two fifths (43%) of pupils have not visited the public library in the past 12 months. For those who did visit, the most popular reasons for visiting were to borrow, bring back or renew books (59%) and to do homework or study (34%). Pupils reported a better selection of books (31%) and having more free time (35%) would encourage them to use the public library more.

The majority (82%) of pupils have been to some form of arts event in the past year. The most common types of event were: film at a cinema (73%), pantomime/musical (27%), museum (25%) and play/drama at a theatre or other venue (18%).

The most commonly reported types of arts activities that pupils had taken part in were reading for pleasure (30%), playing an instrument (30%), dancing (23%) and painting, drawing, sculpting or printmaking (29%). Pupils felt the following benefits from participating in or attending arts activities:
- I learned new skills/developed existing skills (20%)
- It improved my knowledge (26%)
- I made new friends (13%)

Tattooing & Piercing

Around one in six (16%) respondents in Years 11 & 12 have a tattoo or piercing (other than earlobes).

Almost a third (29%) of pupils have had problems, such as infection or pain, after getting their tattoo(s) or piercing(s). Of those pupils, 23% sought medical advice from a pharmacist, GP or A&E.

Sign Language

Just under one in ten pupils (8%) can communicate using some form of sign language (see Figure 16). Half of pupils (51%) would be interested in learning sign language in school.

Of those who can use sign language:
- 64% can sign single words or simple phrases.
- 12% can sign simple sentences.
- 87% can communicate in sign language.
Museums & Science Centres

The museums and science centres that pupils are most likely to have visited in the last 12 months are W5 (39%) and the Ulster Museum (32%) (see Figure 9).

Over two thirds (70%) of pupils who visited museums and science centres did so with family and friends. Less than half (41%) of visits were with a school trip and 10% were with a club or group. Almost four out of five (79%) pupils enjoyed their last visit.

A small number of pupils (8%) reported that a museum had visited their class in the past year.

Breastfeeding

A third of pupils (32%) think that the healthiest way to feed a 3 month old baby is breast and bottle feeding, however 24% don’t know what the healthiest way to feed a 3 month old baby is (see Figure 10).

When they see a woman breastfeeding her baby, almost half (48%) of pupils think that is just a normal part of life. Sixteen percent of pupils have never seen anyone breastfeeding and 16% feel uncomfortable when they see a woman breastfeeding her baby.

Sport and Physical Activity

The majority (94%) of pupils generally enjoy doing sport or physical activity. Most pupils (83%) think that they should spend 60 minutes or more per day doing physical activity or sport, however only 12% of pupils had exercised for at least 60 minutes per day over the previous week.

Over two thirds (70%) of pupils who visited museums and science centres did so with family and friends. Less than half (41%) of visits were with a school trip and 10% were with a club or group. Almost four out of five (79%) pupils enjoyed their last visit.

The most common benefits that pupils feel they get from sport and physical activity are: having fun (80%), keeping fit (71%) and learning new skills or developing existing skills (63%).

Pupils reported that having someone to go with (54%), facilities nearer to home/school (41%) and cheaper admission prices (30%), would encourage them to participate in sport more in the future.

Pupils were asked how long they had spent participating in a particular activity during the past week. The percentage of pupils who spent between 10 and 20 hours on each activity is shown below:

Care in the Sun and Sunbeds

Most pupils (89%) have never used a sunbed. Almost two thirds (63%) of pupils would associate sunbeds with a higher risk of skin cancer, 29% would associate them with eye damage and 25% would associate them with premature ageing.

Over half (58%) of pupils think they look better with a tan and 37% think that having a tan makes people look healthier. Two fifths (41%) of pupils disagree with the statement “people who tan are damaging their skin”.

77% of pupils use sunscreen, at least sometimes, if spending 30 minutes outside on a sunny day.

15% often or always take no protective measures if outside if a sunny day.

39% of pupils have had sunburn at least twice in the past year.

73% of pupils seek shade, at least sometimes, if outside for more than 30 minutes on a sunny day.