



Young Persons' Behaviour and Attitudes Survey 2019

- Substance Use -

(Smoking, Alcohol & Drugs)



Department of
Health

An Roinn Sláinte

Mánnystrie O Poustie

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(Smoking, Alcohol & Drugs)

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<https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/articles/young-persons-behaviour-attitudes-survey>

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Explanatory Notes

The Young Persons' Behaviour and Attitudes Survey (YPBAS) is a school based survey carried out among 11-16 year olds (school years 8 to 12). It is commissioned jointly by a number of government departments and includes questions on a wide range of topics. Seven rounds of the survey have now taken place: 2000, 2003, 2007, 2010, 2013, 2016 and 2019. This report presents an overview of the smoking, alcohol and drugs modules from the most recent survey undertaken in 2019 and includes comparisons with previous surveys where appropriate.

The fieldwork for the survey ran between September 2019 and February 2020. A total of 8,118 children completed the survey. Due to the high level of interest amongst policy makers on the views and behaviours of young people, topics were split across two questionnaires to accommodate additional questions. Version A was completed by 3,892 children and version B by 4,226 children. This bulletin is comprised of responses to questions asked in version B.

Findings in this report have been weighted by year group, sex and religion in order to reflect the composition of the Northern Ireland post-primary population.

Please note that only differences that are statistically significant at the 95% confidence level are reported.

The Central Survey Unit of Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA) are responsible for carrying out this survey. A technical report and information on other topics included in the survey are available online at:

<https://www.nisra.gov.uk/young-persons-behaviour-attitudes-survey>

Findings in this Department of Health report may differ from findings published by other government departments due to differences in methodology.

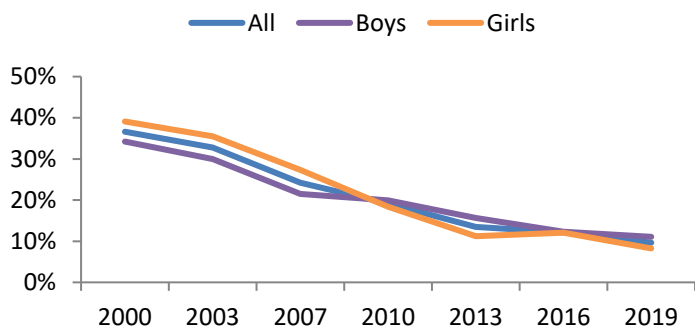
Please note that some of the questions on drugs and solvents changed in 2016 and thus may not be directly comparable with those asked in previous years.

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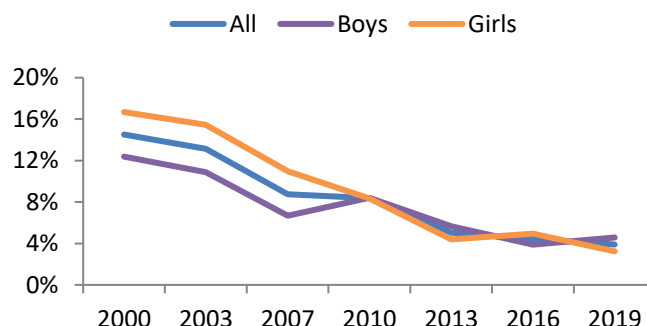
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Key Trends

Proportion of young people that reported ever having smoked

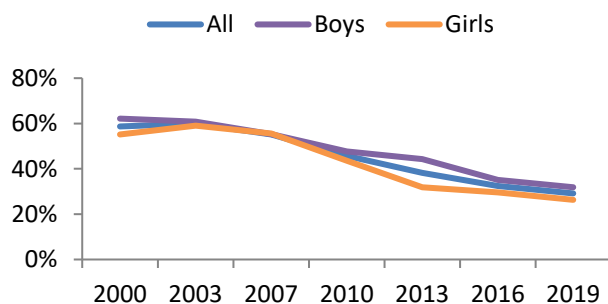


Proportion of young people that are current smokers

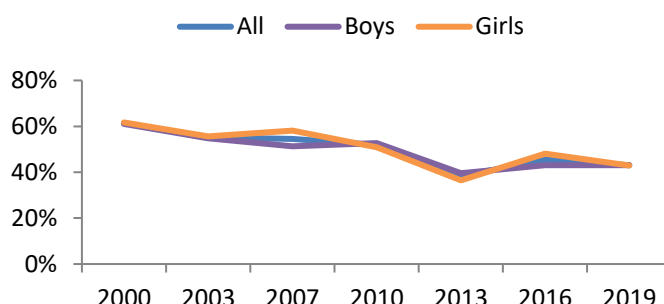


In 2019, one-in-ten young people reported ever having smoked (10%) with 4% indicating that they currently smoked. This represents a decrease since 2000, when two-fifths (37%) reported ever having smoked and 15% were current smokers.

Proportion of young people reporting to have ever taken an alcohol drink

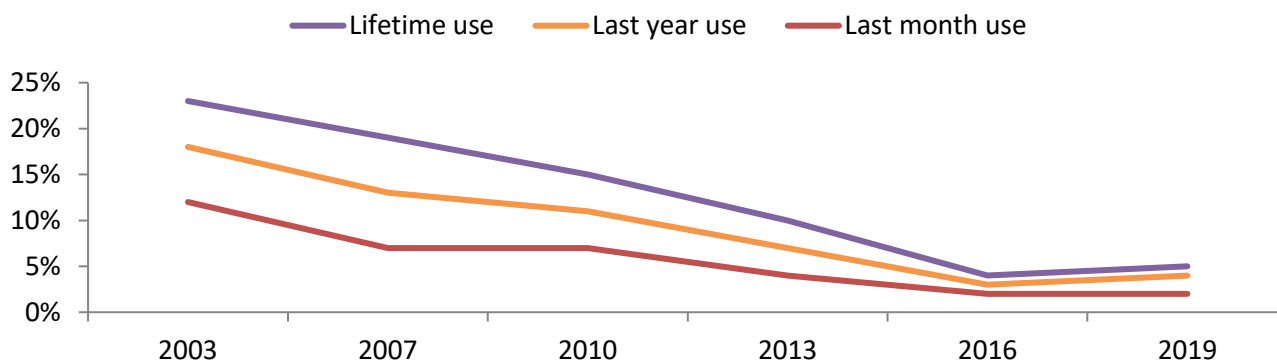


Proportion of those that drink that report having been drunk



Half as many young people reported ever having a drink in 2019 (29%) than in 2000 (59%), with a higher proportion of boys reporting having had a drink (32%) than girls (26%). The proportion of those that drink who also said they had been drunk was the same for both boys and girls (43%) down since 2000 (61% for all young people).

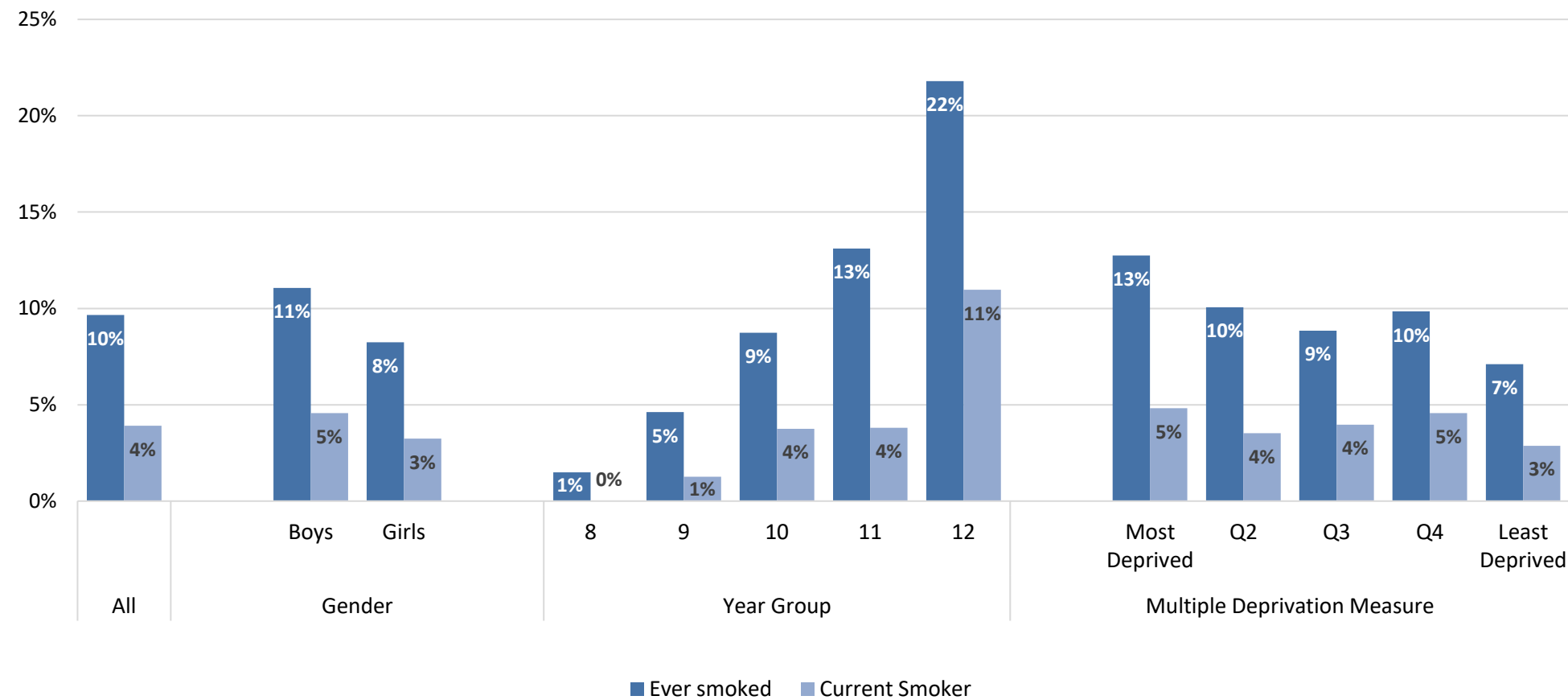
Proportion of young people reporting having taken drugs



In 2019, 5% of respondents indicated they had ever used drugs, this is a similar level to the finding in the previous survey in 2016 (4%). Last year use (4%) and last month use (2%) also remain at similar levels.

Smoking

Smoking status 2019



17

The median number of cigarettes smoked per week by regular smokers (those who smoke at least once a week)

One-fifth

of young people (22%) in year 12 had tried smoking

The proportion of young people who had ever smoked was almost twice as high for the most deprived (13%) as the least deprived (7%)

Top 3 reasons given for trying smoking

- 41%** my friends smoke
- 26%** I tried e-cigarettes and wanted to try normal cigarettes
- 18%** I had easy access to cigarettes

Most common place those who smoke usually get cigarettes

- 41%** friends give them to me
- 33%** I buy them from a shop
- 25%** I buy them from friends or relatives

Smoking at home



32% of young people indicate that adults in their household smoke



30% of these say that the adults smoke inside the house



14% of young people indicate that visitors are allowed to smoke within their house



18% indicate that adults who smoke do so in the family car with a further **16%** reporting that adults smoking in the family car only do so whenever no children are present

Current smokers were asked, which of the following best describes you . . .

18%	I REALLY want to stop smoking and intend to do so in the next month
4%	I REALLY want to stop smoking and intend to do so in the next 3 months
20%	I want to stop smoking and hope to do so soon
8%	I REALLY want to stop smoking but I don't know when I will
12%	I want to stop smoking but haven't thought about when
28%	I know I should stop smoking but I don't really want to
10%	I don't want to stop smoking



6 in 10 Young people who are current smokers have tried quitting (62%)

Smoking and e-cigarette use

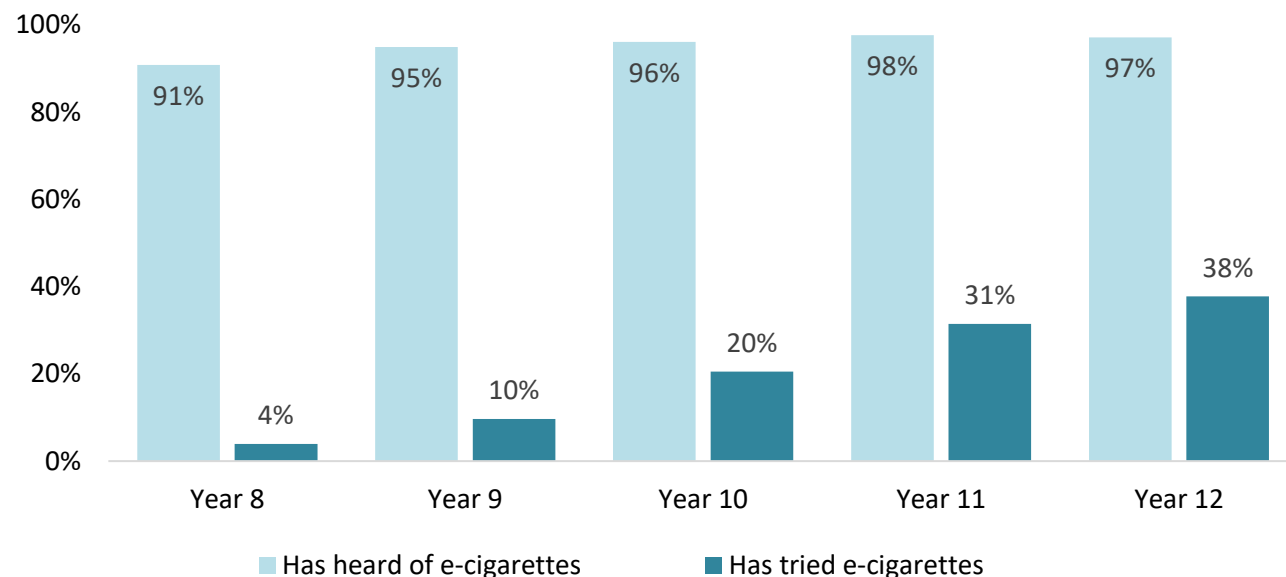
	Is a current smoker	Has tried smoking but is not a current smoker	Has never smoked
Is a current e-cig user	2%	1%	2%
Has tried but is not current user of e-cigs	2%	3%	10%
Has never used e-cigs	<1%	1%	79%

E-Cigarettes & Vaping

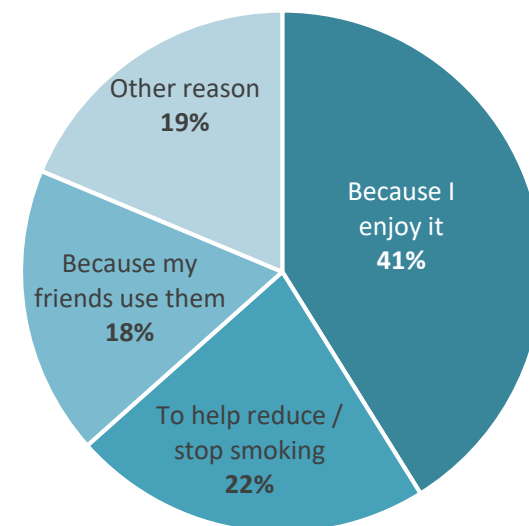
95% of young people had heard of e-cigarettes

20% had tried an e-cigarette at least once

Young people exposure to e-cigarettes by year group



Main reason for using e-cigarettes



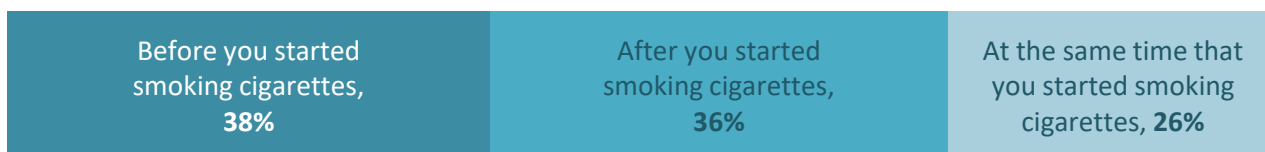
3 in 4

Young people who have used e-cigarettes said they got them from a friend (74%)

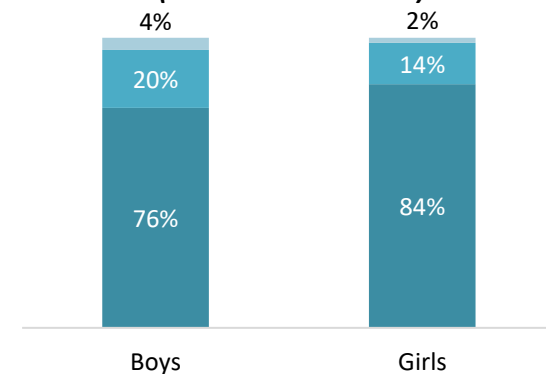
One-fifth of young people live in a household with adults who use e-cigarettes (19%)



Those who had ever smoked and ever used e-cigarettes were asked:
did you start using e-cigarettes...



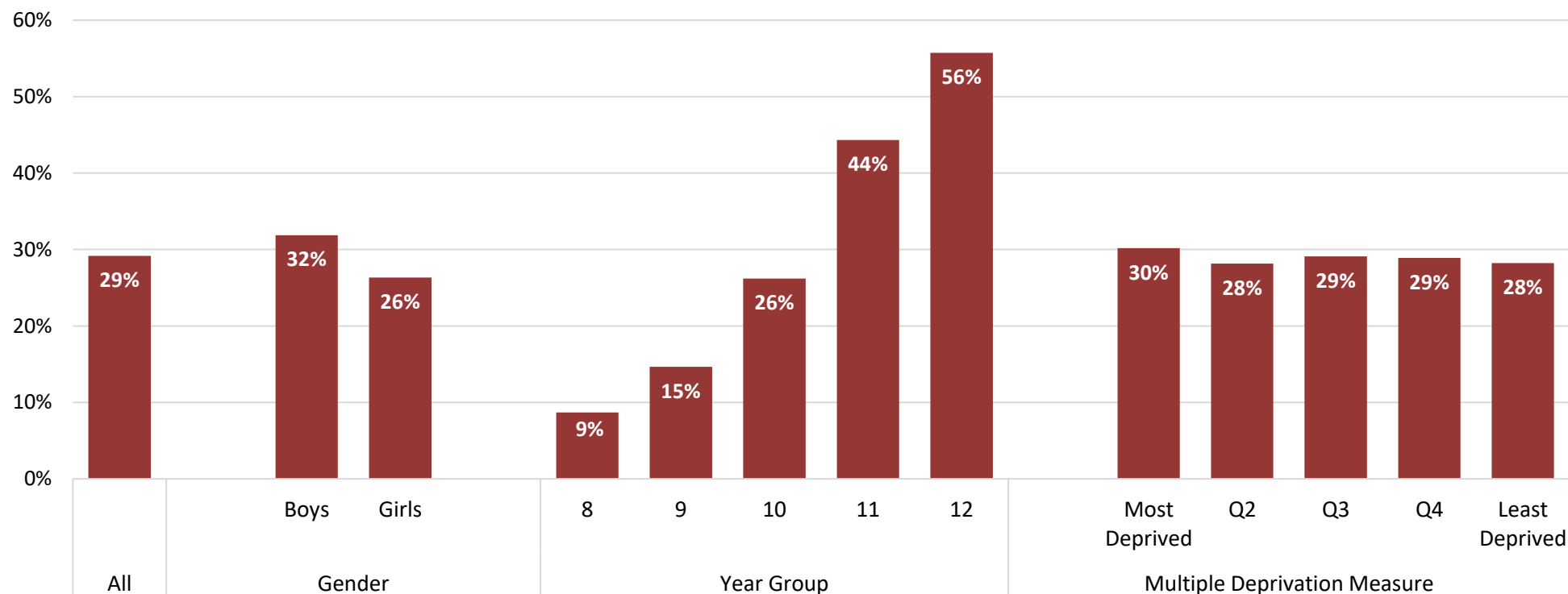
Regular e-cigarette users
(at least once a week)



regular e-cigarette user
 has used e-cigarettes but not a regular user
 has never used or never heard of e-cigarettes

Alcohol

Proportion of young people reporting to have ever taken an alcohol drink



13 The median age reported for having first tried an alcoholic drink

More than HALF of young people in year 12 had tried an alcohol drink (56%)

More **boys** (32%) than **girls** (26%) had tried an alcoholic drink

Alcohol at home

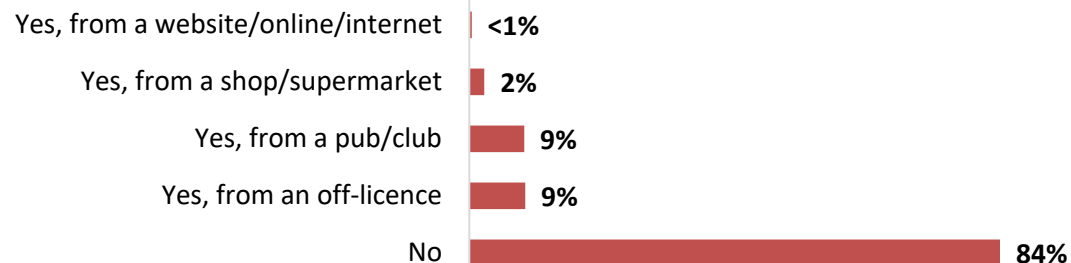


76% of young people indicated that the adults in their household drink alcohol

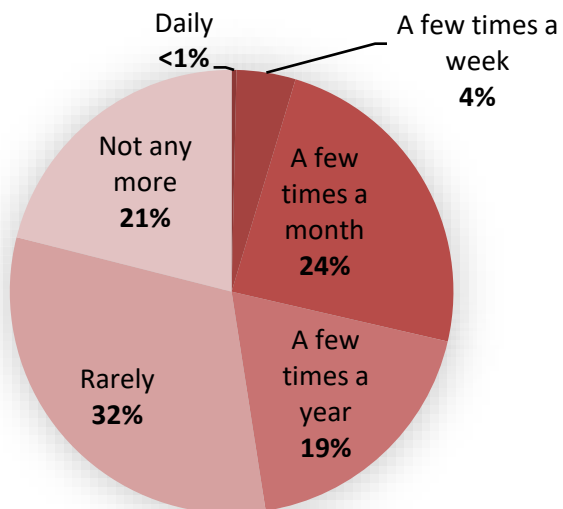


81% of those with adults in their household who drank alcohol said they drank inside the home

Those who had tried alcohol were asked- have you ever bought alcohol?



Those who reporting ever drinking were asked: At present, how often do you drink anything alcoholic...



Being Drunk



15% of those who had ever tried alcohol, had deliberately tried to get drunk in the last month

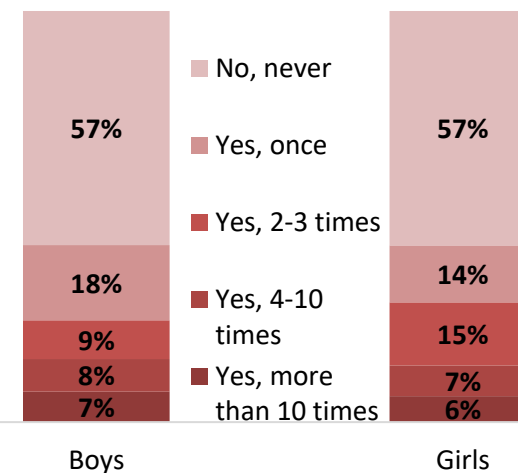


43% of those who had ever had a drink had been drunk

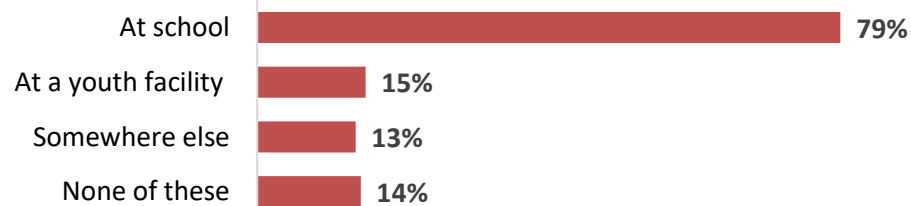


51% of those who'd be drunk had been drunk at least once in the last month

Those who had tried alcohol were asked- ever had so much alcohol that you've been drunk?



Have you had any type of education on the use of alcohol?



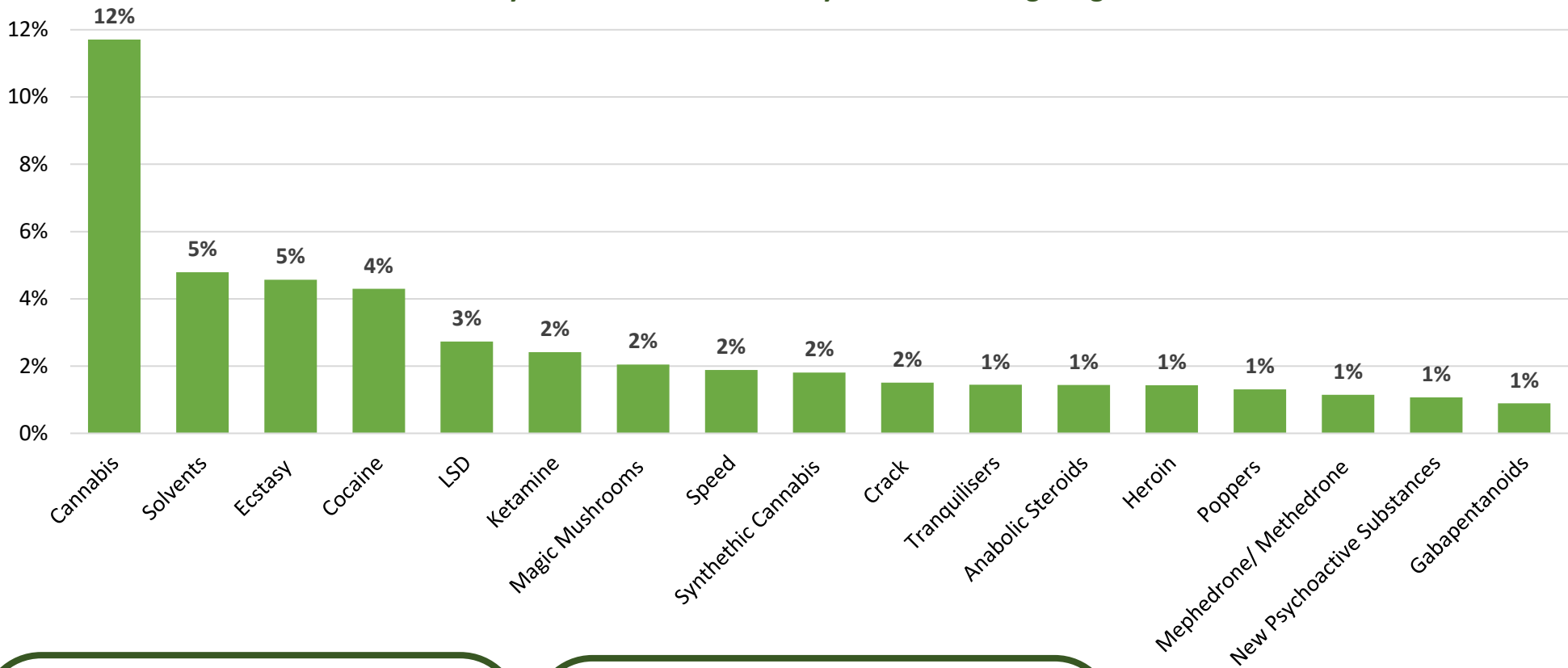
of those who had received education about alcohol indicated it made them less inclined to drink alcohol (71%)

Those who had tried alcohol were asked: As a result of drinking alcohol have you ever...?

25%	been sick (vomited)
23%	been in trouble with parent(s) or other family member
22%	done something you later regretted
17%	had an argument
11%	had a fight
8%	posted/wrote something on a social networking site like Facebook or Twitter that you wished you hadn't
7%	ended up in a situation where you felt threatened/unsafe
7%	been in trouble with the police
6%	been in trouble with local people
4%	been in trouble at school
3%	had to be seen by a doctor

Solvents and Drugs

Have you ever been offered any of the following drugs?



Drugs at home

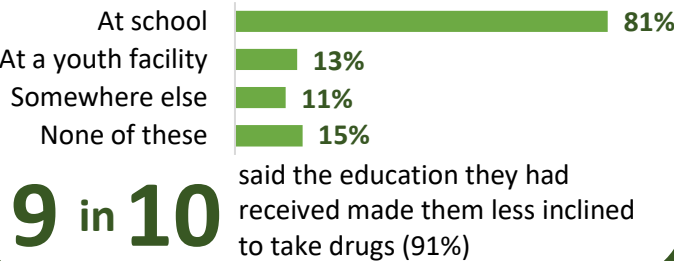


2% of young people indicated that the adults in their household use drugs



45% of those with adults in their household who use drugs said they took them inside the home

Have you had any education on drug use in the last school year?



More than **HALF** of young people who had been offered drugs, had first been offered them aged **13** or younger (51%)

1 in 10 Young people had been offered Cannabis, which was the most offered drug type (12%)

Drug Use



5% of young people indicated using drugs at least once

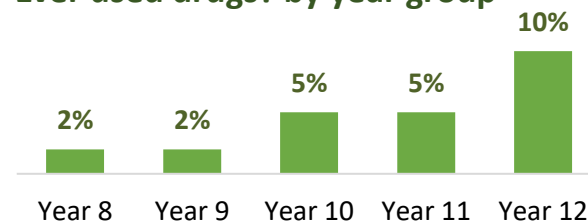


10% of those who had used drugs had taken more than one type the last time they used them



28% of those who had used drugs were drinking alcohol the last time they used them

Ever used drugs? by year group



Ever used drugs? by gender

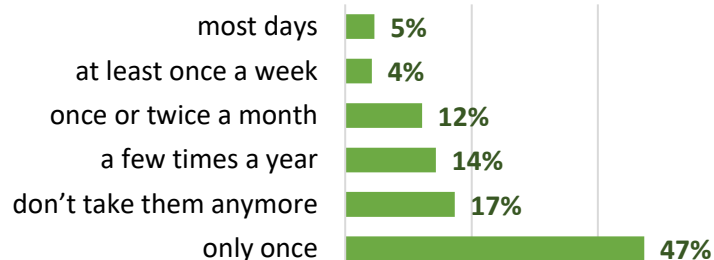


**Please note that the proportion of respondents indicating that they have used drugs is 5% (less than 200 respondents in the sample)*

Those who had taken drugs were asked: As a result of taking drugs have you ever...?

22%	Been in trouble with parent(s) or other family member
21%	Been sick (vomited)
17%	Had an argument
15%	Had a fight
15%	Done something you later regretted
12%	Ended up in a situation where you felt threatened/unsafe
11%	Been in trouble at school
11%	Been in trouble with the police
8%	Been in trouble with local people
7%	Posted/wrote something you regret on a social network
7%	Had to be seen by a doctor

How often do you usually take drugs?



Where were you the last time you took drugs?

(Top 3 results)

45% somewhere outside
17% at home
8% someone else's house

Getting help

Of those who'd tried drugs **4%** felt that they needed to get help or treatment because of using drugs.

If you felt you needed to get help because you were using drugs, who would you go to?

73%	Parent
43%	Friend
22%	Drug service
20%	GP (family doctor or practice nurse)
20%	School Teacher/ school support staff
13%	Online, internet
8%	Youth leader
5%	Faith/religious leader
4%	FRANK Helpline
3%	Somewhere else
10%	I wouldn't know where to go

Who were you with last time you took drugs?

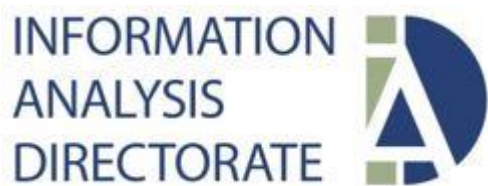
(Top 3 results)

48% with a group of friends
30% with a friend
15% by myself

Attitudes

Do you think it's ok for someone your age to...

	Total	Female	Male	Most Deprived	Least Deprived
Smoke cigarettes once a week	14%	12%	16%	17%	10%
Drink alcohol once a week	27%	25%	29%	25%	28%
Get drunk once a week	11%	9%	12%	12%	10%
Sniff glue once a week	6%	6%	5%	5%	5%
Take cannabis once a week	6%	5%	8%	8%	6%
Take cocaine once a week	2%	1%	2%	2%	1%



Information Analysis Directorate (IAD) sits within the **Department of Health (DoH)** and carries out various statistical work and research on behalf of the department. It comprises four statistical areas: Hospital Information, Community Information, Public Health Information & Research and Project Support Analysis.

IAD is responsible for compiling, processing, analysing, interpreting and disseminating a wide range of statistics covering health and social care.

The statisticians within IAD are out-posted from the Northern Ireland Statistics & Research Agency (NISRA) and our statistics are produced in accordance with the principles and protocols set out in the UK Code of Practice for Official Statistics.

About Public Health Information and Research Branch

The role of Public Health Information and Research Branch (PHIRB) is to support public health policy development through managing the public health survey function while also providing analysis and monitoring data. The head of the branch is the Principal Statistician, Mr. Bill Stewart.

In support of the public health survey function, PHIRB is involved in the commissioning, managing and publishing of results from departmental funded surveys, such as the Health Survey Northern Ireland, All Ireland Drug Prevalence Survey, Young Persons Behaviour & Attitudes Survey, Patient Experience Surveys and the Adult Drinking Patterns Survey.

The branch also houses the NI Health and Social Care Inequalities Monitoring System which covers a range of different health inequality/equality based projects conducted for both the region as well as for more localised area levels. In addition, PHIRB is responsible for the production of official life expectancy estimates for NI, and areas within the region.

PHIRB provides support to a range of key DoH NI strategies including Making Life Better, a 10 year cross-departmental public health strategic framework as well as a range of other departmental strategies such as those dealing with suicide, sexual health, breastfeeding, tobacco control and obesity prevention. It also has a key role in supporting the Departmental Alcohol and Drug Strategy, by maintaining and developing key departmental databases such as, the Substance Misuse Database, Impact Measurement Tool and the Census of Drug & Alcohol Treatment Services, which are all used to monitor drug misuse and treatments across Northern Ireland. In addition to Departmental functions, PHIRB also support the executive level Programme for Government and its strategic outcomes through a series of performance indicators.