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Young People's Health in Great Britain and Ireland

Findings from the Health Behaviour in School-Aged Children Survey 2006

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Young People's Health in Great Britain and Ireland

Findings from the Health Behaviour in School-Aged Children (HBSC) Survey, 2006

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KEY POINTS

Outlined below are key points from the analyses presented in each chapter. More detailed summaries are provided at the end of each section.

Health and well-being: More girls than boys reported poorer health and life satisfaction and the percentage of girls who reported poorer health is higher in the older age groups. Girls were also more likely than boys to report that they experienced regular health complaints such as headaches or stomach aches. Gender differences in health and life satisfaction were least marked in Ireland and most marked in Wales and England. Overall young people in Ireland reported the highest life satisfaction.

Diet and healthy weight: The percentage of young people in Wales who reported that they were overweight was higher than elsewhere. In addition, fewer young people in England reported overweight compared with those in Scotland. In terms of healthy eating the percentages of young people who reported daily fruit consumption were highest in England (43.6%), followed by Scotland (38.7%), Ireland (36.5%) and Wales (34.6%). Across all countries fruit and vegetable eating was more common among girls than boys and among young people with high family affluence.

Leisure and activity: Broadly speaking, young people with high family affluence were more likely than those with medium or low family affluence to engage in regular vigorous activity. Similar levels of physical activity were reported across Great Britain and Ireland (over 50%). Young people with low family affluence were most likely to play computer games for two or more hours a day.

Sexual health: More 15-year old girls than boys reported that they had ever had sex, and over 70% of young people across all three countries of Great Britain (Ireland not included) who had sex had used condoms at last intercourse. Those with high family affluence were more likely to report condom use at last intercourse. Between-country differences in sexual initiation were larger for girls than for boys, and girls in Wales were most likely to report that they had ever had sex. On the other hand, sexually active young people in Wales were least likely to report very early sex (at, or before the age of 14). Girls in Wales were also more likely to have used the contraceptive pill rather than a condom than sexually active girls in either England or Scotland.

Health risk behaviours: In terms of substance use, girls were more likely than boys to smoke and drink Alcopops, while boys were more likely than girls to drink beer, cider and spirits and to have taken cannabis. Daily smoking was least likely in England (5.1%) followed by Ireland (6.5%), Wales (6.7%) and Scotland (7.1%). The

highest percentage of young people who had been drunk at least four times was found in Wales (14.1%) and Scotland (14.0%) followed by England (12.0%) and Ireland (8.6%). Young people in Ireland consistently reported lower levels of all alcoholic beverages.

Family life: The percentages of young people living with both parents are lower in the older age groups and across all age groups more girls lived in step-families than boys. Young people from Ireland and England were more likely to report that they lived with both parents than young people in Wales. The ability of young people to talk to their parents about things that really bother them was more difficult for older teenagers. Although both genders reported that communication with their mother was easy, girls were less likely to report that they can easily talk to their fathers.

Peers and friendship: Across the four countries over 90% of young people reported that they had three or more close friends. However girls with low family affluence were less likely to have three or more close female friends than those with medium or high family affluence. The percentage of young people who spend time after school with friends at least four days a week was lower among those with high family affluence and was also lower in England than in other countries. The ability to talk easily to a best friend about the things that really bothered them was more common among those with high family affluence, 15-year olds and girls.

School: Young people in England and those with higher family affluence across all countries were most likely to report that they enjoyed school a lot and that their classmates were kind and helpful. Across all countries the majority of young people felt that their classmates were kind and helpful and accepted them as they are. The majority had not recently been bullied. In relation to school work and academic achievement girls reported more positive perceptions of their school performance and over 25% of young people in England felt pressured by schoolwork compared to 12.5% in Scotland.

INTRODUCTION

This report presents data from the 2006 Health Behaviour in School-aged Children (HBSC) survey; a World Health Organization (WHO) collaborative cross-national study and focuses on data collected from young people in England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales. It expands on the findings from the international report *Inequalities in Young People's Health* (Currie et al, 2008), with additional variables and prevalence rates that allows more comprehensive and focussed comparisons to be made between the four countries.

Research into children's health and health behaviour and the factors that influence them is essential for the development of effective health education and health promotion policy, programmes and practice targeted at young people. The HBSC study has great potential to inform and influence health promotion and health education policy and practice at national and international levels. Several mechanisms are already in place which enable HBSC findings to be fed into policy making and implementation processes. HBSC is committed to integrating research evidence into policy and practice. In so doing, we can explore opportunities to exchange lessons learned from current policy initiatives, which can be used to improve the HBSC study and importantly to improve the life chances of young people in our countries.

The findings from the HBSC study should be seen in the context of a number of strategy documents already in existence in each of the countries. The documents listed are examples and do not represent the full spectrum of policies that exist in each of the countries. In addition, it must be noted that given the descriptive nature of this report it is not possible to make any detailed comparisons across countries in relation to their respective policies.

In England 'Every Child Matters' (Department of Health, 2004) and the recently launched 'Children's Plan' (Department of Children, Schools and Families, 2009), represent a long-term commitment to improve the health and wellbeing of children and young people. 'Every Child Matters' aims to create new ways for organisations involved with providing services to children - from hospitals and schools, to police and voluntary groups – to protect children and young people from harm and help them achieve what they want in life. Specifically the Children's Plan presents a long-term vision to improve schools and new ways in which parents and families can be supported to deal with the new challenges faced by young people in the 21st century.

In Ireland the 'National Social Partnership Agreement' (Department of the Taoiseach, 2006) provides an over-arching framework for social and economic development of the country and is built around a life-cycle social policy perspective. Coherent with

policy in the area of childhood, such as the whole child perspective taken in the 'National Children's Strategy' (Department of Health and Children, 2000) and the 'National Action Plans against Poverty and Social Inclusion' (Department of Health and Children, 2007), the agreement presents a shared vision of childhood and commits to specific actions to meet the goals outlined.

In Scotland the 'Curriculum for Excellence' (Scottish Government, 2008) aims to ensure that all the children and young people of Scotland develop the attributes, knowledge and skills they will need if they are to flourish in life, learning and work, now and in the future. These are summed up by four capacities identified as: a successful learner, a confident individual, a responsible citizen and an effective contributor. Support for the development of health promoting environments for young people has also been highly visible in the context of Health Promoting Schools in Scotland. The strong commitment to young people's health is now evident in recent legislation. The Schools (Health Promotion and Nutrition) (Scotland) Act 2007 (Scottish Government, 2007) states that schools have a duty to promote the physical, social, mental and emotional health and well-being of all pupils.

In Wales the Welsh Assembly Government has adopted the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) as the basis for its policies and programmes, translating the UNCRC into seven core aims: early years; education; health; rights and entitlements; access to sport, leisure and culture; safe home and community; and child poverty. The Assembly Government's vision for children and young people is outlined in 'Children and Young People: Rights to Action' and 'Stronger Partnerships for Better Outcomes', setting out the need for joint working among public private and voluntary organisations to deliver effective and integrated services for children and young people (Welsh Assembly Government, 2004; 2006a). Children and Young People's Partnerships are an important element of this work, producing three-year strategic plans at local authority level. A child poverty strategy is also in place, supported by an implementation plan and targets relating to income and work, education, health and housing (Welsh Assembly Government, 2005; 2006b; 2006c). The Welsh Network of Healthy School Schemes has also been in place for a number of years to promote physical, mental and social health and well being.

BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

HBSC is a long-standing study that dates from 1982 when researchers from three countries (England, Finland and Norway) recognised the need for comparable cross-national data on young people's health. Since then HBSC has grown to include 43 countries, 41 of whom contributed comparable data for 2006, and has established itself as a major source of data on young people's health in Europe.

The overall aim of the study has always been to gain new insights and increase understanding of adolescent health behaviours, health and well-being, with an emphasis on the social determinants of adolescent health, particularly the social contexts of young people's lives. The evidence produced from HBSC is able to inform a wide range of policy and practice agendas.

Surveys are conducted every four years according to an internationally agreed Research Protocol. Scotland and Wales joined for the 1985/86 survey and Ireland for the 1997/98 survey. Although English researchers were among the founding members and carried out the first survey in 1983/84, England did not participate in subsequent rounds and re-joined the study for the 1997/98 survey.

The International research network

The HBSC study is the product of an international network of researchers; each participating country is represented by a national research team led by a Principal Investigator. Each country raises national funds to conduct the survey and to contribute to international collaboration. The Assembly of Principal Investigators, the primary decision-making body of the study, agrees membership. The Assembly also elects the International Coordinator of the study and the Data Bank Manager.

The network is multidisciplinary with members from a wide variety of backgrounds, including sociology, psychology, epidemiology, nutrition, clinical medicine, human biology, public health and policy development. The development of the study has therefore involved cross-fertilisation of ideas from a range of perspectives.

WHO partnership

HBSC was adopted by the WHO Regional Office for Europe as a collaborative study in 1984 shortly after its initiation. WHO publishes the international reports from each survey. The data have been widely used and disseminated by WHO, most notably in the development of the *WHO European strategy for child and adolescent health and development*, which was adopted by the WHO Regional Committee in September 2005. In recent years, the partnership has developed to produce a Forum series. The Forum provides a platform for information exchange, discussion and learning about how scientific evidence can impact on practice, programmes and policy to improve young people's health. The first Forum focussed on eating habits and physical activity, the second on mental health. The reports from the Forum process include case studies from selected HBSC countries and a summary of outcomes (WHO, 2006; WHO, 2008).

METHODS

The target ages in HBSC are 11-, 13- and 15-year-olds attending school. These age groups are selected because they represent the onset of adolescence, the challenge of physical and emotional changes, and the middle years when important life and

career decisions are beginning to be made. Table A provides a breakdown of the achieved mean ages for each country.

Table A: Mean ages of respondents by country and age group

	Age Group		
	11-year-olds	13-year-olds	15-year-olds
England	11.7	13.7	15.7
Ireland	11.6	13.5	15.5
Scotland	11.5	13.5	15.5
Wales	12.0	14.0	16.0

The survey was carried out with a nationally representative sample in each country, stratified by region and school type, and using the class or school as the primary sampling unit. Each country sample consisted of approximately 1500 respondents in each age group. This is the minimum sample requirement according to the international HBSC research protocol in order to ensure a confidence interval of +/- 3% around a proportion of 50%, and taking account of the complex sampling design (Roberts et al. 2004; 2007). Table B provides a breakdown of respondents for each country by age and gender.

Table B: Number of respondents by country, gender and age group

	Gender		Age group			
	Male	Female	11	13	15	Total
England	2308	2460	1655	1662	1451	4768
Ireland	2451	2389	1370	1785	1685	4840
Scotland	3032	3113	1691	2256	2198	6145
Wales	2169	2227	1505	1541	1350	4396

The survey was conducted at a time calculated to achieve the mean age according to national educational systems. Fieldwork dates for the four countries were:

- England: September–October 2006
- Ireland: April–June 2006
- Scotland: February–March 2006
- Wales: January–March 2006

The questionnaire was administered in the school classroom by fieldworkers or teachers who received precise instructions on how to carry this out. All questionnaires were sealed in envelopes on completion to ensure anonymity.

The HBSC survey questionnaire is designed and approved by the international HBSC research network to ensure that international comparisons can be made on key

indicators. Pilot tests are carried out prior to each survey and validation work on measures is continuously ongoing (e.g., Boyce et al, 2006; Elgar et al, 2005; Haugland and Wold, 2001; Vereecken and Maes, 2003; Ravens-Sieberer et al, 2008).

REPORT EXPLANATION

Significance level

A 99% significance level was employed in the analyses.

Item analyses

Cross-tabs complex analyses were used to compare percentages initially (which identify whether the population overall is significantly distributed over the various categories), followed by paired comparisons (which is a calculation of significance of differences between percentages using Z-values).

- Results are reported per individual item.
- Each section starts with a description of the measure and response options, followed by a table showing the distribution of the population in percentages by country, gender and age group.
- This is followed by a summary of the main gender, age, and country differences.
- Differences by family affluence are then reported. These are followed by a table showing the distribution of the population in percentages by family affluence, country, and gender.

Family Affluence Scale

Various aspects of socioeconomic status of young people are measured in the HBSC study, including the occupational status of parents, family affluence and family poverty. In this report, family affluence has been employed to classify young people's socioeconomic status.

The HBSC Family Affluence Scale (FAS) measure is based on a set of questions on the material conditions of the households in which young people live. The questions are straightforward for children and young people to answer and cover car ownership, bedroom occupancy, holidays and home computers.

The FAS measure has several benefits, such as the low percentage of missing responses from young people and its cross-national comparability (Currie et al, 1997, 2008; Boyce et al, 2004, 2006; Torsheim et al, 2004, 2006). By contrast, parental occupation measures tend to suffer from missing data and differences in countries' classification schemes.

Family poverty affects a minority of young people (although this varies from country to country), but all young people can be categorised according to their family affluence. To this end, young people in each country are classified according to the summed score of the items, and this overall score is recoded to give values of low, middle and high family affluence. Table C provides a breakdown of FAS for each country.

Table C: Distribution of family affluence by country

	FAS		
	Low	Medium	High
England	8.2	31.4	60.4
Ireland	16.1	46.7	37.3
Scotland	16.2	40.6	43.2
Wales	13.5	41.4	45.0

Calculating Family Affluence Scale

The four questions in Family Affluence Scale are the following:

Does your family own a car, van or truck?
Response categories were: No (=0); Yes, one (=1); Yes, two or more (=2).

Do you have your own bedroom for yourself?
Response categories were: No (=0); Yes (=1).

During the past 12 months, how many times did you travel away on holiday with your family?
Response categories were: Not at all (=0); Once (=1); Twice (=2); More than twice (=3).

How many computers does your family own?
Response categories were: None (=0); One (=1); Two (=2); More than two (=3).

A composite family affluence score was calculated for each young person based on his or her responses to these four items.

Following previous HBSC surveys, the two highest response categories ("two" and "three or more") of the last two items (holidays and computers) were combined. A three-point ordinal scale was composed for the analysis, in which:

- Family Affluence 1 (score = 0–3) indicated low affluence
- Family Affluence 2 (score = 4, 5) indicated middle affluence
- Family Affluence 3 (score = 6, 7) indicated high affluence

In the tables that follow family affluence is indicated by FAS – the Family Affluence Scale.

1. HEALTH OUTCOMES

Young people in Great Britain and Ireland have a lower relative morbidity compared to other stages of the life cycle; however this apparent time of good health can obscure the complexity of adolescent health issues. Young people's health is predominantly shaped by health behaviours and the impact of chronic and long-term conditions and is mediated by social inequalities including gender. Responding to the health needs of young people by decreasing risk and increasing resilience represent important areas for policy planning and public health development (Hawkins et al, 1999**;** Donaldson, 2008).

Central to the WHO definition of health is the subjective representation of quality of life and well-being (WHO, 2004). However quality of life research relating to children and young people and particularly their own perspectives on well-being represents a relatively new field, when compared against the body of work relating to adult quality of life (Ravens-Sieberer et al, 2001). Social research has identified that young people are not simply 'adult becomings' who can be moulded to adhere to adult defined health strategies. Instead young people hold their own generation-specific attitudes and definitions relating to health behaviours and well-being, which can be diametrically opposed to adult centred perspectives (Brooks & Magnusson, 2006; Wills et al, 2008). Consequently understanding how young people subjectively view their own health, health risks and quality of life becomes a vital analytic task if effective health promotion and health policies are to be developed. HBSC provides a unique resource for examining young people's perspectives on health outcomes by providing international comparisons on a range of subjective indicators of general well-being including; young people's life satisfaction, self-reported health, subjective health complaints and body image. This first section reports on:

a) Self reported health: A subjective indicator of general health that is associated with mental health.
b) Life satisfaction: A young person's overall evaluation of life represents an important aspect of well-being. Life satisfaction among young people is associated with a host of health related outcomes, as well as being strongly associated with school experiences.
c) Health complaints: A range of subjective health complaints appears to be common in adolescence and for some young people they are experienced as a cluster of multiple and recurrent health problems. This section focuses on commonly identified subjective health complaints such as headache, backache and feeling low.
d) Body image: The concept of body image brings together the idea of the physical embodied form with the more subjective perception of a person's size. Body image can be viewed as a mediating factor between physical size and emotional health; for

example feeling overweight can have a greater influence on emotional well-being than actually being overweight (Jansen et al, 2007).

The majority of young people across the countries participating in HBSC consistently report their overall health to be good and most are happy with their lives. Since 2002 the percentages of young people in Great Britain and Ireland who report high life satisfaction has remained relatively stable. However gender differences in life satisfaction and self-reported health have perpetuated, with older girls being less likely to report high life satisfaction or good self-rated health. Overall there are continued inverse relationships with age both for self-reported health and happiness, while family affluence is positively associated with good or excellent self-reported health.

A. Self-rated health

Young people were asked to describe their health ("Would you say your health is...?"), with response options "Excellent", "Good", "Fair" and "Poor". The findings presented here are the percentages of young people who reported their health as at least "Good".

Gender

Boys (84.7%) reported significantly more often than girls (78.2%) that their health was either "Good" or "Excellent". This gender difference was particularly marked for 13-year-olds in Scotland and Wales and for 15-year-old girls in England, Wales and Scotland, but not in Ireland.

Age

There was a significant difference between all age groups in the percentages of young people who reported having "Good" or "Excellent" health; this was lowest among the 15-year-olds (76.4%) followed by 13- (81.0%) and 11-year-olds (87.2%).

Country

The percentage of young people who reported having excellent or good health was highest in Ireland (88.4%), followed by England (81.4%), Scotland (79.5%) and Wales (76.1%).

Family affluence

Those with high family affluence (84.4%) were most likely to report that they have excellent or good health, followed by those with medium (80.7%) and low family affluence (73.5%).

Table 1.1: Percentages of young people who reported good or excellent self-rated health by gender, age and country

		Gender											
		Male				Female				Both genders			
Age		11	13	15	All	11	13	15	All	11	13	15	All
England	Yes	89.3	81.4	81.9	84.2	87.3	79.3	68.3	78.8	88.3	80.3	75.0	81.4
	No	10.7	18.6	18.1	15.8	12.7	20.7	31.7	21.2	11.7	19.7	25.0	18.6
Ireland	Yes	94.9	90.0	84.9	89.3	93.9	88.1	80.5	87.5	94.4	89.1	82.9	88.4
	No	5.1	10.0	15.1	10.7	6.1	11.9	19.5	12.5	5.6	10.9	17.1	11.6
Scotland	Yes	87.2	83.6	82.0	84.0	86.1	75.0	66.4	75.2	86.6	79.3	74.3	79.5
	No	12.8	16.4	18.0	16.0	13.9	25.0	33.6	24.8	13.4	20.7	25.7	20.5
Wales	Yes	82.7	80.3	79.8	80.9	77.4	69.5	67.2	71.5	79.9	74.8	73.5	76.1
	No	17.3	19.7	20.2	19.1	22.6	30.5	32.8	28.5	20.1	25.2	26.5	23.9

Table 1.2: Percentages of young people who reported good or excellent self-rated health by family affluence, gender and country

		Gender							
		Male				Female			
FAS		Low	Medium	High	All	Low	Medium	High	All
England	Yes	71.6	82.8	85.9	83.9	66.8	75.4	81.9	78.5
	No	28.4	17.2	14.1	16.1	33.2	24.6	18.1	21.5
Ireland	Yes	83.5	90.5	91.9	90.0	81.3	88.0	90.9	87.9
	No	16.5	9.5	8.1	10.0	18.7	12.0	9.1	12.1
Scotland	Yes	76.0	84.6	87.3	84.4	68.2	74.0	79.0	75.2
	No	24.0	15.4	12.7	15.6	31.8	26.0	21.0	24.8
Wales	Yes	71.1	80.2	83.6	80.8	64.3	68.7	77.0	71.6
	No	28.9	19.8	16.4	19.2	35.7	31.3	23.0	28.4

B. Life Satisfaction

The 'Cantril ladder' was used to measure young people's global assessment of their lives. Young people were asked to indicate the step on the ladder which best reflects their life at the moment: "Here is a picture of a ladder. The top of the ladder, 10, is the best possible life for you and the bottom, 0, is the worst possible life for you. In general, where on the ladder do you feel you stand at the moment?" A score of six or above is defined as a positive level of life satisfaction.

Gender

Boys (87.7%) were more likely than girls (81.5%) to report that they have positive life satisfaction.

Age

There was a significant difference between all age groups in the percentage of young people who reported that they have positive life satisfaction. Positive life satisfaction was lowest among the 15-year-olds (81.9%) followed by 13- (84.4%) and 11-year-olds (87.7%).

Country

The percentages of young people who reported that they have positive life satisfaction was highest in Ireland (87.4%), followed by England (85.3%), Scotland (84.2%) and Wales (81.2%). All countries differed significantly from each other.

Family affluence

Those with high family affluence (88.1%) were most likely to report that they have life satisfaction of 6 or above, followed by those with medium (83.5%) and low family affluence (76.1%). There were significant family affluence differences in life satisfaction among the different countries of Great Britain and Ireland, for example looking at those with a low family affluence; in England 72.0% and in Wales 74.0% of young people rated their life satisfaction to be 6 or above compared to over 80% in both Scotland and Ireland.

Table 1.3: Percentages of young people who reported positive life satisfaction by gender, age and country

		Gender											
		Male				Female				Both genders			
Age		11	13	15	All	11	13	15	All	11	13	15	All
England	Yes	88.4	86.5	88.9	87.9	87.7	81.0	79.4	82.9	88.1	83.7	84.0	85.3
	No	11.6	13.5	11.1	12.1	12.3	19.0	20.6	17.1	11.9	16.3	16.0	14.7
Ireland	Yes	92.0	89.5	86.7	89.1	91.6	87.1	78.2	85.7	91.7	88.3	82.8	87.4
	No	8.0	10.5	13.3	10.9	8.4	12.9	21.8	14.3	8.3	11.7	17.2	12.6
Scotland	Yes	87.9	88.8	87.4	88.1	86.3	80.6	75.8	80.5	87.1	84.7	81.6	84.2
	No	12.1	11.2	12.6	11.9	13.7	19.4	24.2	19.5	12.9	15.3	18.4	15.8
Wales	Yes	86.3	84.6	86.1	85.6	82.2	75.7	72.2	76.8	84.2	80.1	79.1	81.2
	No	13.7	15.4	13.9	14.4	17.8	24.3	27.8	23.2	15.8	19.9	20.9	18.8

Table 1.4: Percentages of young people who reported positive life satisfaction by family affluence, gender and country

		Gender							
		Male				Female			
FAS		Low	Medium	High	All	Low	Medium	High	All
England	Yes	72.0	86.1	91.0	88.1	75.4	77.7	86.9	83.0
	No	28.0	13.9	9.0	11.9	24.6	22.3	13.1	17.0
Ireland	Yes	81.5	89.6	92.2	89.4	78.4	85.6	89.4	85.8
	No	18.5	10.4	7.8	10.6	21.6	14.4	10.6	14.2
Scotland	Yes	81.5	88.6	90.3	88.2	71.9	78.9	85.3	80.5
	No	18.5	11.4	9.7	11.8	28.1	21.1	14.7	19.5
Wales	Yes	73.9	86.6	88.3	85.9	70.5	74.3	81.7	76.9
	No	26.1	13.4	11.7	14.1	29.5	25.7	18.3	23.1

C. Health Complaints

Young people were asked how often in the last six months they had experienced headaches, stomach aches and feeling low. Response options for each complaint ranged from "About every day" to "Rarely or never". The findings presented here are the percentages of young people who reported experiencing the health complaints at least weekly.

FEELING LOW

Gender

Girls (28.3%) were significantly more likely than boys (18.2%) to report that they feel low at least once a week.

Age

There were significant differences between all age groups in the percentages of young people who reported feeling low at least once a week, the highest percentages were found among the 15-year-olds (28.8%) followed by 13- (22.4%) and 11-year-olds (18.5%).

Country

The percentage of young people who reported that they feel low at least once a week was lowest in Scotland (19.3%), followed by Ireland (21.9%), Wales (23.2%) and England (30.2%). All countries differed significantly from one another with the exception of Ireland and Wales.

Family affluence

For both genders and across all countries, reports of feeling low were highest among those with low family affluence. Those with low family affluence (28.1%) reported significantly more often that they feel low at least once a week, than those with medium (23.5%) and high family affluence (21.9%).

Table 1.5: Percentages of young people who reported feeling low at least weekly by gender, age and country

		Gender											
		Male				Female				Both genders			
Age		11	13	15	All	11	13	15	All	11	13	15	All
England	Yes	21.6	24.0	26.8	24.0	27.0	36.2	45.7	35.9	24.4	30.3	36.5	30.2
	No	78.4	76.0	73.2	76.0	73.0	63.8	54.3	64.1	75.6	69.7	63.5	69.8
Ireland	Yes	13.8	17.7	21.5	18.2	14.4	23.8	38.9	25.7	14.2	20.6	29.5	21.9
	No	86.2	82.3	78.5	81.8	85.6	76.2	61.1	74.3	85.8	79.4	70.5	78.1
Scotland	Yes	12.7	13.0	15.3	13.8	16.6	23.2	32.6	24.6	14.8	18.2	23.9	19.3
	No	87.3	87.0	84.7	86.2	83.4	76.8	67.4	75.4	85.2	81.8	76.1	80.7
Wales	Yes	18.3	16.5	19.6	18.1	22.4	27.3	35.5	28.1	20.4	22.0	27.6	23.2
	No	81.7	83.5	80.4	81.9	77.6	72.7	64.5	71.9	79.6	78.0	72.4	76.8

Table 1.6: Percentages of young people who reported feeling low at least weekly by family affluence, gender and country

		Gender							
		Male				Female			
FAS		Low	Medium	High	All	Low	Medium	High	All
England	Yes	36.6	27.1	22.0	24.6	45.8	40.3	32.0	35.8
	No	63.4	72.9	78.0	75.4	54.2	59.7	68.0	64.2
Ireland	Yes	21.5	16.9	17.2	17.7	30.8	22.8	25.9	25.2
	No	78.5	83.1	82.8	82.3	69.2	77.2	74.1	74.8
Scotland	Yes	16.6	13.2	13.1	13.7	29.4	25.4	22.4	24.8
	No	83.4	86.8	86.9	86.3	70.6	74.6	77.6	75.2
Wales	Yes	26.3	19.4	15.5	18.4	32.7	29.1	25.4	28.0
	No	73.7	80.6	84.5	81.6	67.3	70.9	74.6	72.0

HEADACHE

Gender

Girls (31.5%) reported significantly more often than boys (20.7%) that they have a headache at least once a week. The gender difference is dramatically larger in the older age groups across all the countries. For example, in England at age 11 the percentages of boys and girls who reported having headaches at least weekly are relatively comparable (22% for boys and 23.9% for girls) and at age 15 this figure was similar for boys (22.9%), however for girls there was a marked difference; 45.1% of girls reported that they have a headache at least weekly.

Age

There were significant differences between all age groups in the percentages of young people who reported that they have a headache at least once a week, the highest percentage being found among the 15-year-olds (30.5%) followed by 13- (26.3%) and 11-year-olds (21.3%).

Country

The percentage of young people who reported that they have a headache at least once a week was significantly lower in Ireland (23.3%) and Scotland (23.9%) compared to England (28.4%) and Wales (30.3%).

Family affluence

Those with low family affluence (29.3%) reported significantly more often that they have a headache at least once a week, than those with medium (26.3%) and high family affluence (25.1%).

Table 1.7: Percentages of young people who reported having a headache at least weekly by gender, age and country

		Gender											
		Male				Female				Both genders			
Age		11	13	15	All	11	13	15	All	11	13	15	All
England	Yes	22.0	21.8	22.9	22.2	23.9	35.2	45.1	34.2	23.0	28.7	34.2	28.4
	No	78.0	78.2	77.1	77.8	76.1	64.8	54.9	65.8	77.0	71.3	65.8	71.6
Ireland	Yes	15.4	20.2	21.0	19.3	18.5	25.5	38.3	27.4	17.1	22.7	29.0	23.3
	No	84.6	79.8	79.0	80.7	81.5	74.5	61.7	72.6	82.9	77.3	71.0	76.7
Scotland	Yes	13.9	20.6	19.3	18.4	21.1	28.9	35.9	29.2	17.7	24.8	27.5	23.9
	No	86.1	79.4	80.7	81.6	78.9	71.1	64.1	70.8	82.3	75.2	72.5	76.1
Wales	Yes	24.9	24.0	23.0	24.0	30.1	36.1	43.7	36.4	27.6	30.2	33.4	30.3
	No	75.1	76.0	77.0	76.0	69.9	63.9	56.3	63.6	72.4	69.8	66.6	69.7

Table 1.8: Percentages of young people who reported having a headache at least weekly by family affluence, gender and country

		Gender							
		Male				Female			
FAS		Low	Medium	High	All	Low	Medium	High	All
England	Yes	26.6	23.8	21.7	22.7	44.3	36.8	31.5	34.3
	No	73.4	76.2	78.3	77.3	55.7	63.2	68.5	65.7
Ireland	Yes	19.6	18.4	19.0	18.8	31.0	25.1	28.0	27.1
	No	80.4	81.6	81.0	81.2	69.0	74.9	72.0	72.9
Scotland	Yes	20.6	18.2	17.1	18.1	33.7	30.0	26.6	29.1
	No	79.4	81.8	82.9	81.9	66.3	70.0	73.4	70.9
Wales	Yes	27.1	26.5	20.8	23.8	37.7	35.2	37.5	36.5
	No	72.9	73.5	79.2	76.2	62.3	64.8	62.5	63.5

STOMACH ACHE

Gender

Girls (21.6%) were significantly more likely than boys (11.9%) to report that they have a stomach ache at least once a week.

Age

No significant differences between age groups were identified (11-year-olds 17.9%, 13-year-olds 16.7% and 15-year-olds 16.0%).

Country

The percentage of young people who reported that they have a stomach ache at least once a week was significantly lower in Ireland (14.2%) and Scotland (15.2%) when compared to England (18.8%) and Wales (20.0%).

Family affluence

Those with low family affluence (20.7%) reported most often that they have a stomach ache at least once a week, followed by those with medium (16.7%) and high family affluence (15.2%). All family affluence groups differed significantly from one another.

Table 1.9: Percentages of young people who reported having a stomach ache at least weekly by gender, age and country

		Gender											
		Male				Female				Both genders			
Age		11	13	15	All	11	13	15	All	11	13	15	All
England	Yes	16.4	12.0	13.3	13.9	23.1	21.0	26.4	23.4	19.9	16.7	20.0	18.8
	No	83.6	88.0	86.7	86.1	76.9	79.0	73.6	76.6	80.1	83.3	80.0	81.2
Ireland	Yes	10.8	10.3	9.3	10.0	15.7	17.3	22.5	18.5	13.6	13.7	15.4	14.2
	No	89.2	89.7	90.7	90.0	84.3	82.7	77.5	81.5	86.4	86.3	84.6	85.8
Scotland	Yes	10.4	12.0	8.8	10.4	17.4	21.2	20.1	19.7	14.1	16.7	14.4	15.2
	No	89.6	88.0	91.2	89.6	82.6	78.8	79.9	80.3	85.9	83.3	85.6	84.8
Wales	Yes	18.7	15.2	8.3	14.2	29.0	25.3	21.9	25.6	24.0	20.4	15.1	20.0
	No	81.3	84.8	91.7	85.8	71.0	74.7	78.1	74.4	76.0	79.6	84.9	80.0

Table 1.10: Percentages of young people who reported having a stomach ache at least weekly by family affluence, gender and country

		Gender							
		Male				Female			
FAS		Low	Medium	High	All	Low	Medium	High	All
England	Yes	20.1	14.0	11.7	13.1	31.6	26.2	20.5	23.3
	No	79.9	86.0	88.3	86.9	68.4	73.8	79.5	76.7
Ireland	Yes	13.5	9.1	9.6	10.0	23.5	16.7	17.4	18.1
	No	86.5	90.9	90.4	90.0	76.5	83.3	82.6	81.9
Scotland	Yes	15.1	9.2	9.4	10.2	20.4	20.7	18.1	19.5
	No	84.9	90.8	90.6	89.8	79.6	79.3	81.9	80.5
Wales	Yes	15.7	15.1	12.0	13.7	31.5	25.4	23.0	25.3
	No	84.3	84.9	88.0	86.3	68.5	74.6	77.0	74.7

D. Body Image

Young people were asked about how they perceive their body. Response options ranged from "Much too thin" to "Much too fat". The findings presented here are the percentages of young people who reported perceiving their body to be "A bit too fat" or "Much too fat".

Gender

Girls (38.0%) were significantly more likely than boys (24.5%) to report that they perceive themselves as being a bit or much too fat. Importantly this gender difference was repeated across Great Britain and Ireland and becomes increasingly marked with age in all countries. For example, at age 11, 22.7% of boys and 26.4% of girls in England reported that they feel they are a bit or too fat. At age 15, the corresponding percentages are 23.2% for boys and 44.0% for girls.

Age

The tendency to feel that your body is too fat is more common among older age groups; the percentage of 11-year-olds (25.1%) who reported that they think they are a bit or much too fat was significantly lower than that of 13- (33.3%) and 15-year-olds (35.1%).

Country

The percentage of young people who reported that they were a bit or much too fat was lowest in Ireland (27.8%) followed by England (30.2%), Scotland (33.1%) and Wales (34.0%). All countries differed significantly from one another with the exception of Scotland and Wales.

Family affluence

Young people with low family affluence (35.4%) were significantly more likely to report that they perceive themselves as being a bit or much too fat, than those with medium (31.8%) and high family affluence (30.2%).

Table 1.11: Percentages of young people who reported that their body is too fat by gender, age and country

		Gender											
		Male				Female				Both genders			
Age		11	13	15	All	11	13	15	All	11	13	15	All
England	Yes	22.7	25.1	23.2	23.7	26.4	39.7	44.0	36.3	24.6	32.6	33.8	30.2
	No	77.3	74.9	76.8	76.3	73.6	60.3	56.0	63.7	75.4	67.4	66.2	69.8
Ireland	Yes	19.1	23.6	22.5	22.1	20.3	34.9	45.4	33.6	19.7	28.9	33.0	27.8
	No	80.9	76.4	77.5	77.9	79.7	65.1	54.6	66.4	80.3	71.1	67.0	72.2
Scotland	Yes	20.2	28.9	24.9	25.1	28.3	43.5	48.3	40.9	24.4	36.3	36.6	33.1
	No	79.8	71.1	75.1	74.9	71.7	56.5	51.7	59.1	75.6	63.7	63.4	66.9
Wales	Yes	28.3	28.1	25.9	27.5	34.0	40.9	47.0	40.4	31.2	34.6	36.5	34.0
	No	71.7	71.9	74.1	72.5	66.0	59.1	53.0	59.6	68.8	65.4	63.5	66.0

Table 1.12: Percentages of young people who reported that their body image is too fat by family affluence, gender and country

		Gender							
		Male				Female			
FAS		Low	Medium	High	All	Low	Medium	High	All
England	Yes	26.0	22.3	24.8	24.1	38.6	36.5	36.2	36.5
	No	74.0	77.7	75.2	75.9	61.4	63.5	63.8	63.5
Ireland	Yes	21.9	22.0	22.0	22.0	37.4	34.9	30.7	33.8
	No	78.1	78.0	78.0	78.0	62.6	65.1	69.3	66.2
Scotland	Yes	31.4	23.8	23.5	24.9	45.7	41.7	38.7	41.1
	No	68.6	76.2	76.5	75.1	54.3	58.3	61.3	58.9
Wales	Yes	30.7	27.8	26.8	27.7	43.8	42.9	37.2	40.6
	No	69.3	72.2	73.2	72.3	56.2	57.1	62.8	59.4

SUMMARY: HEALTH OUTCOMES

Overall the majority of young people across all countries reported good health and high life satisfaction. However the data also highlight that inequalities by family affluence and gender are important for young people's perceived health and well-being in Great Britain and Ireland.

The data presented here show that girls were significantly more likely than boys to report physical and emotional health complaints such as stomach aches, headaches, and feeling low. In line with this boys were more likely than girls to rate their health as better than poor or fair and to report significantly higher life satisfaction. Girls had poorer body image than boys; they are significantly more likely to report that they were a bit or much too fat across all the countries. This finding is important, as it is known that many teenage girls of healthy weight still engage in, potentially damaging, weight reduction strategies (Balding, 2007).

Age appears to be important; older age groups reported lower levels of perceived health and life satisfaction and higher levels of complaints, except for stomach aches where no significant differences were found between the age groups. The youngest group (11-year-olds) were much less likely than the older groups to perceive themselves as a bit or much too fat. Moreover the age distinction for many of the items relating to poorer health and well-being was dramatically more marked for girls than boys.

Although the majority of young people in Great Britain and Ireland reported their health to be good a number of issues warrant further exploration. First, why were young people in Ireland more likely to report their health as good? Second, why was the percentage of girls who reported poorer health higher among older young people and why was this gender distinction less marked in Ireland and most marked in Wales and England? The development of an understanding of the protective factors that may be contributing to higher levels of perceived health and well-being in Ireland compared to the countries of Great British is likely to be of value to policy makers and practitioners.

2. HEALTH BEHAVIOURS

Health behaviours such as physical activity and eating habits are under increasing international scrutiny given their importance to adolescent health. Physical activity in adolescence, for example, is associated with short- and long-term physical and mental health status, and with improved cognitive and academic performance (Hallal et al, 2006; Tomporowski et al, 2008). Healthy eating habits during childhood and adolescence promote health, growth and intellectual development and may prevent long-term health problems including cardiovascular disease (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 1997). Rising rates of overweight and obesity are a serious challenge across the WHO European region. Recent estimates suggest that around a fifth of adolescents are overweight, with implications for health-related quality of life during adolescence and the future burden of disease (WHO, 2007; Butland et al, 2007). Weight reduction problems, including eating disorders and body dissatisfaction, are also known to be problematic for adolescents, with consequences for physical and psychological development (Pesa, 1999). While weight control behaviour increases with body mass index, such behaviours are commonly found among those of normal weight (Shisslak et al, 2006).

Reflecting the importance of health behaviours, mandatory questions on physical activity, sedentary behaviours and eating habits have been included in HBSC since its inception. Given the growing concern over obesity, questions on height/weight (for calculation of body mass index) were introduced in 2001/02, alongside questions on weight reduction behaviour.

A substantial amount of evidence from HBSC has emerged in these areas. Previous analyses have illustrated, for example, trends in physical activity (Samdal et al, 2007), the effects of sedentary behaviour and physical activity on changes in BMI (Elgar et al, 2005), international comparisons in overweight and obesity and their association with physical activity and dietary patterns (Janssen et al, 2005), socio-demographic differences in physical activity and dietary patterns (Inchley et al, 2005; Vereecken et al, 2005) and the association between television viewing and eating habits (Vereecken et al, 2006).

A. Eating and Dieting

OVERWEIGHT

Young people were asked to give their height (without shoes) and weight (without clothes). BMI was calculated from this information and cut-offs for overweight allocated using age and gender specific percentile levels corresponding to a BMI of 25 kg/m^2 at age 18, projected backwards into childhood in a large international sample of young people (Cole et al, 2000). It should be noted that there were high percentages of missing data for BMI for 11-, 13- and 15-year-olds, respectively (England – 68%, 61%, 49%; Ireland – 82%, 69%, 54%; Scotland – 66%, 60%, 50%; Wales – 48%, 34%, 17%).

Gender

Across all four countries a significantly higher percentage of boys (16.6%) reported being overweight compared to girls (14.2%).

Age

With the exception of 11-year-olds in Scotland who were more likely to report being overweight than 15-year-olds, there were no significant differences by age group.

Country

Taking all three age groups together, the highest percentage of young people who reported that they were overweight can be found in Wales (19.1%), followed by Scotland (15.3%), Ireland (13.5%) and England (11.9%). The percentages of young people who reported overweight in Wales were found to be significantly higher than elsewhere. In addition, England was found to have significantly fewer who reported overweight compared with Scotland.

Family affluence

Across all four countries young people with low family affluence (81.0%) were significantly less likely to report that they were overweight compared to those with medium (84.5%) and high family affluence (85.5%).

Table 2.1: Percentages of young people who reported overweight by gender, age and country

		Gender											
		Male				Female				Both genders			
Age		11	13	15	All	11	13	15	All	11	13	15	All
England	No	86.8	85.9	87.4	86.7	90.4	86.4	91.9	89.6	88.6	86.1	89.5	88.1
	Yes	13.2	14.1	12.6	13.3	9.6	13.6	8.1	10.4	11.4	13.9	10.5	11.9
Ireland	No	80.3	86.6	85.1	85.0	87.4	86.5	90.4	88.5	83.9	86.5	87.4	86.5
	Yes	19.7	13.4	14.9	15.0	12.6	13.5	9.6	11.5	16.1	13.5	12.6	13.5
Scotland	No	78.1	83.6	85.6	83.2	84.8	85.3	88.0	86.3	81.3	84.4	86.7	84.7
	Yes	21.9	16.4	14.4	16.8	15.2	14.7	12.0	13.7	18.7	15.6	13.3	15.3
Wales	No	81.1	81.7	78.9	80.5	78.8	83.4	81.6	81.5	79.9	82.5	80.2	80.9
	Yes	18.9	18.3	21.1	19.5	21.2	16.6	18.4	18.5	20.1	17.5	19.8	19.1

Table 2.2: Percentages of young people who reported overweight by family affluence, gender and country

		Gender							
		Male				Female			
FAS		Low	Medium	High	All	Low	Medium	High	All
England	No	82.5	90.5	84.8	86.3	95.2	89.2	89.4	89.8
	Yes	17.5	9.5	15.2	13.7	4.8	10.8	10.6	10.2
Ireland	No	83.8	86.3	83.5	84.8	84.0	87.5	90.7	88.4
	Yes	16.2	13.7	16.5	15.2	16.0	12.5	9.3	11.6
Scotland	No	77.5	83.8	84.4	83.2	83.8	85.4	88.0	86.5
	Yes	22.5	16.2	15.6	16.8	16.2	14.6	12.0	13.5
Wales	No	73.3	81.0	82.4	80.9	79.5	79.9	84.0	81.7
	Yes	26.7	19.0	17.6	19.1	20.5	20.1	16.0	18.3

WEIGHT REDUCTION BEHAVIOUR

Young people were asked whether they were currently "on a diet or doing something else to lose weight". Response options were: "No, my weight is fine"; "No, but I should lose some weight"; "No, I need to put on weight"; and "Yes". The findings presented here are the percentages of young people who reported that they are currently engaged in weight reduction behaviour.

Gender

Across all four countries a significantly higher percentage of girls (19.9%) reported engaging in weight reduction behaviour compared with boys (10.5%). This gender difference was significant in all countries for 13- and 15-year-olds but not for 11-year-olds. Among boys in Scotland, 15-year-olds were significantly less likely to report weight reduction behaviour than 11- and 13-year-olds. Such differences were not found elsewhere. For girls, weight reduction behaviour was significantly more common among 15-year-olds in all four countries when compared with 11-year-olds and in Ireland, Scotland and Wales when compared with 13-year-olds. In addition, 13-year-olds were more likely than 11-year-olds to report this behaviour in England and Ireland.

Age

Overall 15-year olds (16.8%) were significantly more likely to report that they were on a diet or doing something else to lose weight than were 11- (13.6%) and 13-year olds (15.1%)

Country

Looking at 11- to 15-year-olds combined, the percentage of young people who were on a diet or doing something else to lose weight was highest in Wales (20.1%), followed by Scotland (16.3%), England (14.0%) and Ireland (10.6). Despite some minor variations by age group, the percentages of young people who reported weight reduction behaviour were significantly higher in Wales and lower in Ireland among both boys and girls.

Family affluence

Across the four countries, young people with low family affluence were most likely to report weight reduction behaviour (15.7%), followed by those with medium (15.3%) and high (15.2%) family affluence. These differences were not statistically significant.

Table 2.3: Percentages of young people who reported weight reduction behaviour by gender, age and country

		Gender											
		Male				Female				Both genders			
Age		11	13	15	All	11	13	15	All	11	13	15	All
England	Yes	10.8	9.3	7.9	9.4	13.0	19.6	22.8	18.3	11.9	14.6	15.5	14.0
	No	89.2	90.7	92.1	90.6	87.0	80.4	77.2	81.7	88.1	85.4	84.5	86.0
Ireland	Yes	7.3	7.9	8.2	7.9	8.0	13.0	19.1	13.4	7.7	10.3	13.2	10.6
	No	92.7	92.1	91.8	92.1	92.0	87.0	80.9	86.6	92.3	89.7	86.8	89.4
Scotland	Yes	12.5	12.0	7.7	10.6	16.9	20.6	27.3	21.9	14.8	16.3	17.4	16.3
	No	87.5	88.0	92.3	89.4	83.1	79.4	72.7	78.1	85.2	83.7	82.6	83.7
Wales	Yes	17.1	13.8	12.5	14.5	21.9	24.6	30.8	25.6	19.5	19.3	21.6	20.1
	No	82.9	86.2	87.5	85.5	78.1	75.4	69.2	74.4	80.5	80.7	78.4	79.9

Table 2.4: Percentages of young people who reported weight reduction behaviour by family affluence, gender and country

		Gender							
		Male				Female			
FAS		Low	Medium	High	All	Low	Medium	High	All
England	Yes	10.9	8.3	10.0	9.6	17.0	17.4	18.7	18.2
	No	89.1	91.7	90.0	90.4	83.0	82.6	81.3	81.8
Ireland	Yes	5.8	7.9	8.6	7.8	14.7	12.3	14.6	13.5
	No	94.2	92.1	91.4	92.2	85.3	87.7	85.4	86.5
Scotland	Yes	11.4	10.5	9.8	10.3	22.3	22.0	21.9	22.0
	No	88.6	89.5	90.2	89.7	77.7	78.0	78.1	78.0
Wales	Yes	14.3	14.9	14.0	14.4	26.9	27.5	23.1	25.5
	No	85.7	85.1	86.0	85.6	73.1	72.5	76.9	74.5

DAILY FRUIT CONSUMPTION

Young people were asked how often they eat fruit. Response options ranged from "Never" to "More than once a day". The findings presented here are the percentages of young people who reported eating fruit at least daily.

Gender

Reports of daily fruit consumption were significantly higher for girls (42.7%) than boys (34.0%). Among boys, 11- and 13-year-olds in England and 11-year-olds in Ireland and Scotland were significantly more likely to report daily fruit consumption. The same pattern can be seen for girls, with the exception of 13-year-olds in Scotland who were more likely to eat fruit daily compared with 15-year-olds. There were no significant age differences in Wales.

Age

There were significant differences between all age groups in daily fruit consumption with the percentage of children who eat fruit daily lower in the older age groups (11-year olds, 44.8%; 13-year olds, 37.3%; 15-year olds 33.7%).

Country

Looking at the three age groups combined, the percentage of young people who reported daily fruit consumption was highest in England (43.6%), followed by Scotland (38.7%), Ireland (36.5%) and Wales (34.6%). The differences between the various countries were all significant with the exception of those between Ireland and Scotland, and Ireland and Wales.

Family affluence

Boys in each country and girls in England and Scotland with high family affluence were significantly more likely to report daily fruit consumption than those with low and medium family affluence.

Table 2.5: Percentages of young people who reported at least daily fruit consumption by gender, age and country

		Gender											
		Male				Female				Both genders			
Age		11	13	15	All	11	13	15	All	11	13	15	All
England	Yes	41.8	40.3	32.9	38.5	50.2	50.5	43.6	48.3	46.2	45.6	38.4	43.6
	No	58.2	59.7	67.1	61.5	49.8	49.5	56.4	51.7	53.8	54.4	61.6	56.4
Ireland	Yes	37.7	30.2	28.8	31.5	47.9	38.2	39.3	41.7	43.4	34.0	33.6	36.5
	No	62.3	69.8	71.2	68.5	52.1	61.8	60.7	58.3	56.6	66.0	66.4	63.5
Scotland	Yes	46.3	33.3	28.6	35.0	54.6	40.0	34.5	42.2	50.7	36.7	31.5	38.7
	No	53.7	66.7	71.4	65.0	45.4	60.0	65.5	57.8	49.3	63.3	68.5	61.3
Wales	Yes	34.0	29.2	29.2	30.9	41.8	37.0	35.9	38.3	38.0	33.2	32.5	34.6
	No	66.0	70.8	70.8	69.1	58.2	63.0	64.1	61.7	62.0	66.8	67.5	65.4

Table 2.6: Percentages of young people who reported at least daily fruit consumption by family affluence, gender and country

		Gender							
		Male				Female			
FAS		Low	Medium	High	All	Low	Medium	High	All
England	Yes	29.7	34.8	41.4	38.5	31.8	41.6	54.0	48.1
	No	70.3	65.2	58.6	61.5	68.2	58.4	46.0	51.9
Ireland	Yes	26.7	28.0	38.0	31.7	32.0	42.2	46.1	41.9
	No	73.3	72.0	62.0	68.3	68.0	57.8	53.9	58.1
Scotland	Yes	28.5	33.1	39.5	35.2	33.9	39.2	49.3	42.6
	No	71.5	66.9	60.5	64.8	66.1	60.8	50.7	57.4
Wales	Yes	26.6	27.5	35.4	31.1	31.9	36.9	41.7	38.2
	No	73.4	72.5	64.6	68.9	68.1	63.1	58.3	61.8

DAILY VEGETABLE CONSUMPTION

Young people were asked how often they eat vegetables. Response options ranged from "Never" to "More than once a day". The findings presented here are the percentages of young people who reported eating vegetables at least daily.

Gender

Across all four countries girls (42.4%) were significantly more likely than boys (34.4%) to report eating vegetables daily. Girls were significantly more likely to report daily vegetable consumption than boys among all three age groups in Ireland and Scotland. This gender difference was found among 15-year-olds in England and 11-year-olds in Wales.

Age

Across the four countries there were no significant differences in daily vegetable consumption by age group. The percentages for 11-, 13- and 15-year-olds were 38.3%, 39.3% and 37.7%, respectively

Country

Combining the age groups the highest percentage of young people who reported that they eat vegetables daily was in England (42.4%), followed by Ireland (41.4%), Scotland (38.4%) and Wales (31.1%). There were significant differences between each of the four countries, with the exception of that between England and Ireland. Daily vegetable consumption was significantly higher in each age group across England, Ireland and Scotland when compared with Wales, except for 15-year-old boys.

Family affluence

Across all four countries young people with high family affluence were most likely to report daily vegetable consumption (44.9%) compared with those with medium (35.2%) and low family affluence (29.1%). The percentages in all three family affluence groups differed significantly from one another.

Table 2.7: Percentages of young people who reported at least daily vegetable consumption by gender, age and country

		Gender											
		Male				Female				Both genders			
Age		11	13	15	All	11	13	15	All	11	13	15	All
England	Yes	38.7	41.8	35.4	38.8	44.9	47.2	45.2	45.8	42.0	44.5	40.4	42.4
	No	61.3	58.3	64.6	61.2	55.1	52.8	54.8	54.2	58.0	55.5	59.6	57.6
Ireland	Yes	35.5	38.3	36.1	36.8	46.5	45.4	46.4	46.1	41.8	41.7	40.8	41.4
	No	64.5	61.7	63.9	63.2	53.5	54.6	53.6	53.9	58.2	58.3	59.2	58.6
Scotland	Yes	34.6	33.4	31.5	33.0	43.2	45.9	41.3	43.5	39.1	39.8	36.4	38.4
	No	65.4	66.6	68.5	67.0	56.8	54.1	58.7	56.5	60.9	60.2	63.6	61.6
Wales	Yes	27.2	28.3	31.5	28.9	33.3	31.9	34.8	33.3	30.3	30.1	33.1	31.1
	No	72.8	71.7	68.5	71.1	66.7	68.1	65.2	66.7	69.7	69.9	66.9	68.9

Table 2.8: Percentages of young people who reported at least daily vegetable consumption by family affluence, gender and country

		Gender							
		Male				Female			
FAS		Low	Medium	High	All	Low	Medium	High	All
England	Yes	24.7	29.9	45.9	39.4	30.2	41.1	50.8	46.0
	No	75.3	70.1	54.1	60.6	69.8	58.9	49.2	54.0
Ireland	Yes	29.7	34.8	44.5	37.7	35.3	44.7	53.8	46.4
	No	70.3	65.2	55.5	62.3	64.7	55.3	46.2	53.6
Scotland	Yes	27.6	30.7	38.2	33.5	33.8	40.4	50.6	43.7
	No	72.4	69.3	61.8	66.5	66.3	59.6	49.4	56.3
Wales	Yes	25.0	25.0	34.0	29.3	20.6	31.1	39.8	33.3
	No	75.0	75.0	66.0	70.7	79.4	68.9	60.2	66.7

DAILY SWEET CONSUMPTION

Young people were asked how often they eat sweets. Response options ranged from "Never" to "More than once a day". The findings presented here are the percentages of young people who reported eating sweets at least daily.

Gender

There was no significant difference in daily sweet consumption between boys (30.6%) and girls (30.7%), with the exception of 13-year-olds in Ireland, where girls were more likely than boys to report eating sweets daily.

Age

Significantly fewer 11-year-olds (26.6%) reported daily sweet consumption compared with 13- (31.7%) and 15-year-olds (33.3%). In Ireland and Scotland, 13- and 15-year-old girls and 15-year-old boys were more likely to report eating sweets daily, while in England 15-year-old girls were more likely to do so. There were no significant age differences in Wales.

Country

Broadly speaking rates of daily sweet eating were significantly higher in Ireland and Scotland, particularly for 13- and 15-year-old boys and girls. Daily sweet eating was most likely to be reported by young people in Ireland (35.6%), followed by Scotland (34.4%), Wales (27.0%) and England (24.2%). All differences between countries were significant, except between Ireland and Scotland.

Family affluence

For boys and girls in Scotland and for girls in Ireland the percentage who reported eating sweets daily was significantly higher among those with low family affluence compared to those with medium and high family affluence. In addition, boys with high and low family affluence in Ireland were significantly more likely to eat sweets daily when compared with those with medium family affluence. There were no significant family affluence differences in England and Wales.

Table 2.9: Percentages of young people who reported at least daily sweet consumption by gender, age and country

		Gender											
		Male				Female				Both genders			
Age		11	13	15	All	11	13	15	All	11	13	15	All
England	Yes	23.0	25.7	27.5	25.3	19.8	23.3	26.6	23.1	21.4	24.5	27.0	24.2
	No	77.0	74.3	72.5	74.7	80.2	76.7	73.4	76.9	78.6	75.5	73.0	75.8
Ireland	Yes	27.2	32.6	38.6	33.6	31.4	40.3	40.9	37.6	29.6	36.3	39.7	35.6
	No	72.8	67.4	61.4	66.4	68.6	59.7	59.1	62.4	70.4	63.7	60.3	64.4
Scotland	Yes	29.5	36.0	37.0	34.7	30.5	34.2	37.0	34.2	30.1	35.1	37.0	34.4
	No	70.5	64.0	63.0	65.3	69.5	65.8	63.0	65.8	69.9	64.9	63.0	65.6
Wales	Yes	24.7	30.6	25.4	27.0	26.7	27.5	27.0	27.1	25.7	29.0	26.2	27.0
	No	75.3	69.4	74.6	73.0	73.3	72.5	73.0	72.9	74.3	71.0	73.8	73.0

Table 2.10: Percentages of young people who reported at least daily sweet consumption by family affluence, gender and country

		Gender							
		Male				Female			
FAS		Low	Medium	High	All	Low	Medium	High	All
England	Yes	27.9	25.8	24.3	25.1	25.6	23.1	21.9	22.6
	No	72.1	74.2	75.7	74.9	74.4	76.9	78.1	77.4
Ireland	Yes	40.8	31.4	33.2	33.5	46.6	34.4	37.2	37.4
	No	59.2	68.6	66.8	66.5	53.4	65.6	62.8	62.6
Scotland	Yes	40.4	36.2	31.4	34.7	40.5	33.1	32.4	34.0
	No	59.6	63.8	68.6	65.3	59.5	66.9	67.6	66.0
Wales	Yes	27.5	26.9	28.0	27.5	29.4	26.8	26.5	27.0
	No	72.5	73.1	72.0	72.5	70.6	73.2	73.5	73.0

DAILY SOFT DRINK CONSUMPTION

Young people were asked how often they consumed soft drinks. Soft drinks were defined as "Coke or other soft drinks that contain sugar". Response options ranged from "Never" to "More than once a day". The findings presented here are the percentages of young people who reported consuming soft drinks at least daily.

Gender

Overall boys (28.7%) were significantly more likely than girls (23.1%) to report consuming soft drinks on a daily basis. Boys were significantly more likely to report consuming soft drinks daily among 13- and 15-year-olds in England, 15-year-olds in Ireland and Wales and among all three age groups in Scotland.

Age

Across the four countries 21.1% of 11-year-olds reported consuming soft drinks daily a figure that is higher for older children; 27.3% for 13-year-olds and 28.8% of 15-year-olds. With the exception of girls in England, the percentages of young people who reported daily soft drink consumption were significantly higher in the older age groups compared with 11-year-olds.

Country

Looking at the three age groups together the highest percentage of young people consuming soft drinks daily was found in Scotland and Wales (both 28.7%), followed by Ireland (23.9%) and England (21.6%). All differences between the countries were significant except that between Scotland and Wales.

Family affluence

Across the four countries daily soft drinks consumption was more likely to be reported by young people with low family affluence (34.2%) compared to those with medium (26.3%) and high family affluence (22.5%). Significant differences were found between those with high/medium family affluence and medium/low family affluence. For boys significant differences were found between those with high/medium and low family affluence in Ireland and Scotland and between those with medium and high family affluence in England. There were no significant family affluence differences in Wales. For girls there were significant differences between those with high/medium and low family affluence groups in Ireland, Scotland and Wales and between those with high/medium and high/low family affluence in England.

Table 2.11: Percentages of young people who reported at least daily soft drink consumption by gender, age and country

		Gender											
		Male				Female				Both genders			
Age		11	13	15	All	11	13	15	All	11	13	15	All
England	Yes	20.2	25.6	28.4	24.6	17.8	18.2	20.6	18.8	18.9	21.8	24.4	21.6
	No	79.8	74.4	71.6	75.4	82.2	81.8	79.4	81.2	81.1	78.2	75.6	78.4
Ireland	Yes	18.5	26.0	31.8	26.3	16.9	23.4	23.8	21.4	17.6	24.7	28.1	23.9
	No	81.5	74.0	68.2	73.7	83.1	76.6	76.2	78.6	82.4	75.3	71.9	76.1
Scotland	Yes	26.5	34.3	34.1	32.2	20.8	25.9	28.6	25.4	23.5	30.1	31.4	28.7
	No	73.5	65.7	65.9	67.8	79.2	74.1	71.4	74.6	76.5	69.9	68.6	71.3
Wales	Yes	25.4	33.6	34.0	31.0	22.9	30.5	25.9	26.5	24.1	32.0	29.9	28.7
	No	74.6	66.4	66.0	69.0	77.1	69.5	74.1	73.5	75.9	68.0	70.1	71.3

Table 2.12: Percentages of young people who reported at least daily soft drink consumption by family affluence, gender and country

		Gender							
		Male				Female			
FAS		Low	Medium	High	All	Low	Medium	High	All
England	Yes	30.5	27.8	21.6	24.1	26.2	22.8	15.2	18.6
	No	69.5	72.2	78.4	75.9	73.8	77.2	84.8	81.4
Ireland	Yes	32.9	24.3	25.0	25.9	31.4	20.8	16.3	20.9
	No	67.1	75.7	75.0	74.1	68.6	79.2	83.7	79.1
Scotland	Yes	37.9	33.4	27.7	31.6	36.0	24.0	21.8	25.0
	No	62.1	66.6	72.3	68.4	64.0	76.0	78.2	75.0
Wales	Yes	35.2	33.5	29.1	31.6	37.1	24.6	24.5	26.4
	No	64.8	66.5	70.9	68.4	62.9	75.4	75.5	73.6

DAILY CRISP CONSUMPTION

Young people were asked how often they consume crisps. Response options ranged from "Never" to "More than once a day". The findings presented here are the percentages of young people who reported that they eat crisps at least daily.

Gender

Overall reported daily crisp consumption (with the exception of 13-year-olds in Wales) was significantly higher for girls (25.7%) than boys (16.7%).

Age

Across the four countries there were no significant differences by age group in daily crisp consumption, which was reported by 22.6% of 11-year-olds, 20.9% of 13-year-olds and 20.5% of 15-year-olds.

Country

The percentages of young people who reported daily crisp consumption were significantly higher in England and Ireland for 15-year-old boys and 13- and 15-year-old girls. In addition, a significantly higher percentage of 11-year-old girls reported regular consumption in England. Taking the three age groups together, the percentage of young people eating crisps daily was highest in England (24.2%) and Ireland (22.8%). These two countries differed significantly in crisps consumption when compared with Scotland (19.0%) and Wales (19.8%).

Family affluence

Overall young people reported similar levels of daily crisp consumption irrespective of family affluence; with 20.5% of those with low family affluence, 21.5% of those with medium family affluence and 21.4% of those with high family affluence reporting daily crisp consumption.

Table 2.13: Percentages of young people who reported at least daily crisps consumption by gender, age and country

		Gender											
		Male				Female				Both genders			
Age		11	13	15	All	11	13	15	All	11	13	15	All
England	Yes	17.5	18.4	18.2	18.0	32.6	27.8	29.4	30.0	25.4	23.2	24.0	24.2
	No	82.5	81.6	81.8	82.0	67.4	72.2	70.6	70.0	74.6	76.8	76.0	75.8
Ireland	Yes	16.8	18.4	18.5	18.0	28.1	27.0	27.7	27.6	23.2	22.4	22.7	22.8
	No	83.2	81.6	81.5	82.0	71.9	73.0	72.3	72.4	76.8	77.6	77.3	77.2
Scotland	Yes	15.5	16.2	12.3	14.6	24.3	23.6	21.8	23.1	20.2	19.9	17.0	19.0
	No	84.5	83.8	87.7	85.4	75.7	76.4	78.2	76.9	79.8	80.1	83.0	81.0
Wales	Yes	17.0	16.8	16.7	16.9	25.7	19.7	22.6	22.6	21.5	18.3	19.7	19.8
	No	83.0	83.2	83.3	83.1	74.3	80.3	77.4	77.4	78.5	81.7	80.3	80.2

Table 2.14: Percentages of young people who reported at least daily crisps consumption by family affluence, gender and country

		Gender							
		Male				Female			
FAS		Low	Medium	High	All	Low	Medium	High	All
England	Yes	17.1	17.4	17.9	17.7	25.5	29.7	30.6	29.9
	No	82.9	82.6	82.1	82.3	74.5	70.3	69.4	70.1
Ireland	Yes	20.6	16.2	18.7	17.8	25.0	27.8	28.3	27.5
	No	79.4	83.8	81.3	82.2	75.0	72.2	71.7	72.5
Scotland	Yes	13.4	15.9	14.1	14.7	24.0	23.7	22.2	23.1
	No	86.6	84.1	85.9	85.3	76.0	76.3	77.8	76.9
Wales	Yes	14.3	18.1	17.2	17.2	23.0	23.1	21.7	22.5
	No	85.7	81.9	82.8	82.8	77.0	76.9	78.3	77.5

B. Physical Activity and Leisure

VIGOROUS PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Young people were asked to report the number of hours per week that they were usually physically active in their free time (outside school hours), so much that they got out of breath or sweated. The findings presented here are the percentages of young people who reported that they participated in such vigorous physical activity for two or more hours per week.

Gender

Across all four countries with the exception of 11-year-olds in Scotland, a significantly higher percentage of boys (61.1%) compared to girls (47.6%) reported that they engaged in vigorous physical activity.

Age

No significant differences were found between the percentages of each age group who reported vigorous physical activity for at least two hours a week (52.8% of 11-year-olds, 55.7% of 13-year-olds and 53.8% of 15-year-olds). For boys, the percentages were significantly lower among 11-year-olds in England and Scotland, with no significant age differences in Ireland and Wales.

Country

Overall the percentages of young people who reported vigorous physical activity two or more hours a week were highest in Ireland (55.6%), with similar figures for England (55.2%), Scotland (53.9%) and Wales (52.0%). These between-country differences were not significant.

Family affluence

Across the four countries, young people with high family affluence were most likely to engage in vigorous physical activity (60.2%), followed by those with medium (51.1%) and low family affluence (43.2%). This difference between family affluence groups was significant.

Table 2.15: Percentages of young people who reported vigorous activity for two or more hours per week by gender, age and country

		Gender											
		Male				Female				Both genders			
Age		11	13	15	All	11	13	15	All	11	13	15	All
England	Yes	58.8	66.2	62.8	62.7	50.2	51.1	43.3	48.4	54.2	58.3	52.8	55.2
	No	41.2	33.8	37.2	37.3	49.8	48.9	56.7	51.6	45.8	41.7	47.2	44.8
Ireland	Yes	62.5	62.1	61.6	62.1	49.5	53.0	44.7	49.2	55.2	57.7	53.7	55.6
	No	37.5	37.9	38.4	37.9	50.5	47.0	55.3	50.8	44.8	42.3	46.3	44.4
Scotland	Yes	55.4	60.9	63.3	60.3	49.4	47.3	46.9	47.8	52.3	54.0	55.0	53.9
	No	44.6	39.1	36.7	39.7	50.6	52.7	53.1	52.2	47.7	46.0	45.0	46.1
Wales	Yes	56.0	61.9	60.2	59.5	44.0	44.4	45.8	44.7	49.7	53.0	53.0	52.0
	No	44.0	38.1	39.8	40.5	56.0	55.6	54.2	55.3	50.3	47.0	47.0	48.0

Table 2.16: Percentages of young people who reported vigorously activity two or more hours per week by family affluence, gender and country

		Gender							
		Male				Female			
FAS		Low	Medium	High	All	Low	Medium	High	All
England	Yes	48.0	57.2	67.1	62.7	37.8	42.1	53.4	48.5
	No	52.0	42.8	32.9	37.3	62.2	57.9	46.6	51.5
Ireland	Yes	52.6	61.4	66.9	62.2	40.2	47.0	56.5	49.4
	No	47.4	38.6	33.1	37.8	59.8	53.0	43.5	50.6
Scotland	Yes	48.2	58.7	66.6	60.5	37.0	45.2	54.4	47.8
	No	51.8	41.3	33.4	39.5	63.0	54.8	45.6	52.2
Wales	Yes	51.5	57.5	63.4	59.6	33.4	39.9	53.2	44.6
	No	48.5	42.5	36.6	40.4	66.6	60.1	46.8	55.4

COMPUTER AND GAME CONSOLE USE

Young people were asked how many hours a day they usually play games on a computer or games console in their spare time on weekdays and at weekends. Response options ranged from “None at all” to “About 7 or more hours a day”. The findings presented here are the percentages of young people who reported computer/game console use for at least two hours a day on weekdays and at weekends.

Gender

Across all four countries a significantly higher percentage of boys (41.0%) compared to girls (15.5%) reported that they played computer games at least two hours per day.

Age

Some variation can be seen by age group across the countries, with 11-year-olds significantly more likely to have reported regular computer game playing in Ireland and Scotland and 13-year-olds more likely in England and Wales. Among girls, 11-year-olds in England and 11- and 13-year-olds in Scotland and Wales were most likely to report playing games at this level, with no significant differences found in Ireland. Overall 15-year-olds (23.3%) were significantly less likely than 11-year-olds (30.3%) and 13-year-olds (30.1%) to report playing on a computer or games console for two or more hours a day.

Country

Taking all three age groups together the highest percentage of young people who reported playing on a computer or games console for two or more hours a day were in Scotland (34.1%), followed by Wales (30.9%), England (26.4%) and Ireland (18.0%). These country differences were significant.

Family affluence

Young people with low family affluence (32.1%) were most likely to play computer games, followed by those with medium (28.7%) and high family affluence (25.7%). These differences were significant. Among boys, those of low/medium family affluence were significantly more likely to play computer games in England and Wales, and those with low family affluence significantly more likely to do so in Ireland and Scotland.

Table 2.17: Percentages of young people who reported playing on a computer/games console two or more hours a day by gender, age and country

		Gender											
		Male				Female				Both genders			
Age		11	13	15	All	11	13	15	All	11	13	15	All
England	Yes	38.9	46.0	37.2	40.9	15.2	14.2	10.3	13.4	26.1	29.3	23.3	26.4
	No	61.1	54.0	62.8	59.1	84.8	85.8	89.7	86.6	73.9	70.7	76.7	73.6
Ireland	Yes	33.5	27.3	24.1	27.6	9.2	8.9	7.6	8.6	19.7	18.5	16.3	18.0
	No	66.5	72.7	75.9	72.4	90.8	91.1	92.4	91.4	80.3	81.5	83.7	82.0
Scotland	Yes	56.2	51.8	42.5	49.6	25.1	21.5	12.4	19.3	39.8	36.4	27.3	34.1
	No	43.8	48.2	57.5	50.4	74.9	78.5	87.6	80.7	60.2	63.6	72.7	65.9
Wales	Yes	42.9	48.9	36.6	43.0	24.1	20.0	13.7	19.4	33.0	34.2	25.1	30.9
	No	57.1	51.1	63.4	57.0	75.9	80.0	86.3	80.6	67.0	65.8	74.9	69.1

Table 2.18: Percentages of young people who reported playing on a computer/games console two or more hours a day by family affluence, gender and country

		Gender							
		Male				Female			
FAS		Low	Medium	High	All	Low	Medium	High	All
England	Yes	49.3	44.5	37.6	40.6	14.7	15.5	12.0	13.4
	No	50.7	55.5	62.4	59.4	85.3	84.5	88.0	86.6
Ireland	Yes	36.9	26.4	24.3	27.2	10.8	7.4	8.6	8.4
	No	63.1	73.6	75.7	72.8	89.2	92.6	91.4	91.6
Scotland	Yes	55.8	53.1	44.2	49.6	22.7	18.8	18.4	19.3
	No	44.2	46.9	55.8	50.4	77.3	81.2	81.6	80.7
Wales	Yes	47.5	47.0	38.4	42.9	20.9	20.6	17.2	19.2
	No	52.5	53.0	61.6	57.1	79.1	79.4	82.8	80.8

SUMMARY: HEALTH BEHAVIOURS

Boys were more likely to report being overweight, consuming soft drinks daily, being physically active and playing games on a computer or games console, while girls were more likely to report daily consumption of fruit, vegetables and crisps and to report being engaged in weight reduction behaviours. There were few differences between boys and girls in terms of the percentages of young people who reported regularly consuming sweets. These findings on gender were generally consistent by country and age group, with the most consistent gender differences seen for fruit and crisp consumption, physical activity and playing computer games. Some variations emerged by country and age group, such as the lack of a gender difference in weight reduction behaviour for 11-year-olds in any country.

Significant age patterns were found; weight reduction behaviour and consumption of sweets and soft drinks were more common among the older age groups. These findings mask some interesting differences by gender and country. For example the pattern of more weight reduction behaviour in the older age groups was only significant for girls, and for boys in Scotland this pattern was reversed, with the percentages reporting such behaviour lower in older age groups. In Wales, the decline in fruit consumption with age was not significant, possibly because of the particularly low percentages of young people who reported regular fruit consumption at age 11.

A mixed picture emerged across countries. Both being overweight and weight reduction behaviour were higher in Wales. Looking at each of the foodstuffs in turn, daily consumption of fruit was highest in Scotland and England, vegetables in England, sweets in Ireland and Scotland, soft drinks in Scotland and Wales and crisps in England and Ireland.

Young people with high family affluence were generally more likely to report daily consumption of fruit and vegetables and less likely to report such consumption of sweets and soft drinks. They were also more likely to report regular physical activity and less likely to regularly play games on a computer or games console. There were no family affluence differences for being overweight, on a diet or doing something else to lose weight or crisp consumption. Interesting variations in the patterns can be seen; for example there was no association between family affluence and sweet consumption in England and Wales or between family affluence and soft drink consumption for girls in England and Ireland, while the association between family affluence and computer/console based game playing was significant for boys only.

3. RISK BEHAVIOURS

A. Sexual Health Behaviours

Positive, meaningful sexual health is a central component of overall well-being and a key component of a healthy lifestyle. Sexual health is aligned to and includes reproductive health, and the term Reproductive and Sexual Health (RSH) is used within key policy and strategic documents to refer to one interlinking component of a holistic approach to health (UN Millennium Project, 2006). In adolescence issues of RSH are sometimes rendered more complex by the dependent nature of childhood, social norms about the appropriateness of adolescent sexual activity, and the biologically driven developmental changes of adolescence and how they interact with sexual behaviour. Nevertheless, from a pragmatic perspective, it is clear that many adolescents are sexually active and engaging in sexual risk behaviour, including the risks associated with early pregnancy and the contraction of sexually transmitted infections (Avery & Lazdane, 2007). Thus while sexual health is a positive aspect of life, the focus is often on sexual risk-taking and prevention of negative outcomes of sexual activity among young people (e.g. WHO, 2007; Fergus et al, 2007).

Early sexual intercourse can be conceptualised as part of a broad suite of risk-relevant behaviours, each at least partially reinforcing the other, that can place the individual student at risk for a range of negative outcomes, including early pregnancy, substance use, school drop-out and economic challenge (Godeau et al, 2008a). Early sex also has implications for self-perceptions, well-being, social status and future health behaviour including sexual behaviour (Fergus et al, 2007; Magnusson & Trost, 2006). Appropriate protection against pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections for adolescents is an important part of sexual health education, but the challenges for maximising the sexual health of adolescents are subtantial (WHO, 2007).

Previous analyses of cross-national patterns in adolescent sexual behaviour have indicated that a substantial minority of 15-year-olds across Europe have already engaged in sexual intercourse, and that the vast majority of those in most countries could be considered as 'well-protected' against both pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections (Godeau et al, 2008b; Currie et al, 2008). Mandatory HBSC questions include: 'ever having had sex', 'age of sexual initiation' and 'contraceptive use at last sexual intercourse'.

SEXUAL INITIATION

Young people were asked if they had ever had sex. Response options were "Yes" and "No". These questions were only asked of 15-year-olds in England, Scotland and Wales. The findings presented here are the percentages of young people who reported that they had ever had sex.

Gender

Overall 15-year-old girls (35.0%) were significantly more likely to have reported that they had ever had sex than 15-year-old boys (28.9%), but within countries this gender difference was only significant for Wales.

Country

The percentage of young people who reported that they have had sex was highest in Wales (35.6%), followed by Scotland (31.7%) and England (28.8%). No overall significant country differences were identified, but girls in Wales more likely to have reported having had sex than girls in England or Scotland.

Family affluence

Those with low family affluence (34.3%) were most likely to have reported that they had a sexual experience, followed by those with medium (33.4%) and high family affluence (29.9%). The family affluence groups did not differ significantly from one another.

Table 3.1: Percentages of young people who reported ever having sex by gender and country

		Gender		
		Male	Female	Both genders
Age		15	15	15
England	No	73.6	68.8	71.2
	Yes	26.4	31.2	28.8
Scotland	No	70.3	66.3	68.3
	Yes	29.7	33.7	31.7
Wales	No	69.7	59.0	64.4
	Yes	30.3	41.0	35.6

Table 3.2: Percentages of young people who reported ever having sex by family affluence, gender and country

		Gender							
		Male				Female			
FAS		Low	Medium	High	All	Low	Medium	High	All
England	No	72.3	70.2	75.3	73.3	62.5	68.3	69.4	68.4
	Yes	27.7	29.8	24.7	26.7	37.5	31.7	30.6	31.6
Scotland	No	69.1	70.7	72.7	71.3	64.0	64.7	69.2	66.6
	Yes	30.9	29.3	27.3	28.7	36.0	35.3	30.8	33.4
Wales	No	71.3	70.3	69.8	70.2	56.5	56.8	61.0	58.5
	Yes	28.8	29.7	30.2	29.8	43.5	43.2	39.0	41.5

EARLY SEXUAL INITIATION

Young people (15-year-olds only) were asked how old they were when they had sexual intercourse for the first time. Response options ranged from "I never had sexual intercourse" to "17 years old". The findings presented here are the percentages of young people who reported that they first had sexual intercourse at or before the age of 14 expressed as a percentage of those who had ever had sex.

Gender

Of those who have ever had sexual intercourse, 15-year-old girls (55.8%) were more likely to report that they had sexual intercourse at the age of 14 or younger than boys (52.0%). However this gender difference was not significant.

Country

Of those who have ever had sexual intercourse, 15-year-olds in Wales (43.2%) were significantly less likely to have reported that they had sexual intercourse at the age or 14 or younger than 15-year-olds in England (54.7%) or Scotland (61.5%).

Family affluence

Of those who have ever had sexual intercourse, those with medium family affluence were most likely to report that they had had sexual intercourse at the age or 14 or younger (55.5%), followed by those with low (53.8%) and high family affluence (52.7%). However, the family affluence groups did not differ significantly from one another.

Table 3.3: Percentages of sexually active young people who reported having had sex by age 14 or younger by gender and country

		Gender		
		Male	Female	Both genders
Age		15	15	15
England	No	46.7	44.1	45.3
	Yes	53.3	55.9	54.7
Scotland	No	40.9	36.3	38.5
	Yes	59.1	63.7	61.5
Wales	No	59.9	54.4	56.8
	Yes	40.1	45.6	43.2

Table 3.4: Percentages of sexually active young people who reported having had sex by age 14 or younger by family affluence, gender and country

		Gender							
		Male				Female			
FAS		Low	Medium	High	All	Low	Medium	High	All
England	No	53.8	41.5	49.5	46.8	45.8	42.1	44.1	43.6
	Yes	46.2	58.5	50.5	53.2	54.2	57.9	55.9	56.4
Scotland	No	36.2	39.5	45.5	41.5	46.0	38.2	31.4	36.6
	Yes	63.8	60.5	54.5	58.5	54.0	61.8	68.6	63.4
Wales	No	69.6	59.2	56.8	59.3	42.5	50.8	62.9	54.2
	Yes	30.4	40.8	43.2	40.7	57.5	49.2	37.1	45.8

CONDOM USE

Young people (15-year-olds only) were asked what method(s) had been used at their last sexual intercourse to prevent pregnancy. A list of contraceptive methods was provided. The findings presented here are the percentages of young people who reported condom use by themselves or their partner the last time they had sex, expressed as a percentage of those who had ever had sex.

Gender

Overall sexually active 15-year-old boys (82.4%) were more likely to report that they used a condom during their last sexual intercourse than did sexually active 15-year-old girls (75.0%).

Country

More15-year olds in England (82.4%) reported that they used a condom during their last sexual intercourse than 15-year olds in Scotland (77.9%) and Wales (75.9%). These country differences were not significant.

Family affluence

Sexually active 15-year-olds with high family affluence (81.8%) were most likely to report that they used a condom during their last sexual intercourse, followed by those with medium (77.3%) and low family affluence (70.6%). Overall those with high family affluence were more likely to report condom use at last intercourse than those with low family affluence.

Table 3.5: Percentages of sexually active young people who reported that they used a condom at last intercourse by gender and country

		Gender		
		Male	Female	Both genders
Age		15	15	15
England	No	15.8	19.1	17.6
	Yes	84.2	80.9	82.4
Scotland	No	17.9	25.9	22.1
	Yes	82.1	74.1	77.9
Wales	No	17.8	28.7	24.1
	Yes	82.2	71.3	75.9

Table 3.6: Percentages of sexually active young people who reported using a condom at last intercourse by family affluence, gender and country

		Gender							
		Male				Female			
FAS		Low	Medium	High	All	Low	Medium	High	All
England	No	23.1	21.5	12.6	16.8	29.2	19.7	17.1	19.4
	Yes	76.9	78.5	87.4	83.2	70.8	80.3	82.9	80.6
Scotland	No	31.9	18.4	11.6	17.7	28.0	27.0	21.9	25.1
	Yes	68.1	81.6	88.4	82.3	72.0	73.0	78.1	74.9
Wales	No	17.4	17.1	17.9	17.5	37.5	27.0	27.6	28.8
	Yes	82.6	82.9	82.1	82.5	62.5	73.0	72.4	71.2

CONTRACEPTIVE PILL USE

Young people (15-year-olds only) were asked what method(s) had been used at their last sexual intercourse to prevent pregnancy. A list of contraceptive methods was provided. The findings presented here are the percentages of young people who reported that the contraceptive pill was used by them or their partner the last time they had sex, expressed as a percentage of those who had ever had sex.

Gender

Overall sexually active 15-year-old girls (26.9%) were significantly more likely to report that they used the contraceptive pill at last sexual intercourse than were sexually active 15-year-old boys (20.2%).

Country

Sexually active 15-year-olds in Wales were significantly more likely to state that they used the contraceptive pill at their last sexual intercourse (31.0%) than were those in England (21.0%) or Scotland (20.5%).

Family affluence

Sexually active 15-year-olds with low family affluence (24.4 %) were more likely to report that they had used the contraceptive pill at last sexual intercourse, followed by those with high (23.8%) and medium family affluence (23.5%). However, the family affluence groups did not differ significantly from one another.

Table 3.7: Percentages of sexually active young people who reported that they used the contraceptive pill at last intercourse by gender and country

		Gender		
		Male	Female	Both genders
Age		15	15	15
England	No	81.5	76.8	79.0
	Yes	18.5	23.2	21.0
Scotland	No	85.1	74.6	79.5
	Yes	14.9	25.4	20.5
Wales	No	70.3	68.0	69.0
	Yes	29.7	32.0	31.0

Table 3.8: Percentages of sexually active young people who reported that they used the contraceptive pill at last intercourse by family affluence, gender and country

		Gender							
		Male				Female			
FAS		Low	Medium	High	All	Low	Medium	High	All
England	No	92.3	80.0	82.1	82.1	70.8	73.7	78.4	75.8
	Yes	7.7	20.0	17.9	17.9	29.2	26.3	21.6	24.2
Scotland	No	89.4	84.2	86.0	85.8	70.0	77.6	73.7	74.9
	Yes	10.6	15.8	14.0	14.2	30.0	22.4	26.3	25.1
Wales	No	73.9	68.4	72.6	71.1	65.0	73.0	63.8	68.3
	Yes	26.1	31.6	27.4	28.9	35.0	27.0	36.2	31.7

EMERGENCY CONTRACEPTION USE

Young people (15-year-olds only) were asked what method(s) had been used at their last sexual intercourse to prevent pregnancy. A list of contraceptive methods was provided. The findings presented here are the percentages of young people who reported that emergency contraception was used by them or their partner after the last time they had sex, expressed as a percentage of those who had ever had sex.

Gender

Overall sexually active 15-year-old boys (7.1%) were less likely to report that their partner had used emergency contraception after their last sexual intercourse than were sexually active 15-year-old girls (9.9%). However, this gender difference was not significant.

Country

Sexually active 15-year-olds in England and Scotland (both 8.7%) were more likely to report the use of emergency contraception after their last sexual intercourse than were those in Wales (8.4%). However these country differences were not significant.

Family affluence

No significant differences between the family affluence groups were identified in the percentages of sexually active 15-year-olds who reported having used emergency contraception after their last sexual intercourse (low family affluence 8.6%; medium family affluence 8.5%; high family affluence 8.6%).

Table 3.9: Percentages of sexually active young people who reported that they used emergency contraception after the last time they had sex by gender and country

		Gender		
		Male	Female	Both genders
Age		15	15	15
England	No	94.0	89.1	91.3
	Yes	6.0	10.9	8.7
Scotland	No	92.2	90.5	91.3
	Yes	7.8	9.5	8.7
Wales	No	93.1	90.4	91.6
	Yes	6.9	9.6	8.4

Table 3.10: Percentages of sexually active young people who reported that they used emergency contraception after last intercourse by family affluence, gender and country

		Gender							
		Male				Female			
FAS		Low	Medium	High	All	Low	Medium	High	All
England	No	100.0	98.5	90.5	94.2	100.0	86.8	88.3	89.1
	Yes	0.0	1.5	9.5	5.8	0.0	13.2	11.7	10.9
Scotland	No	93.6	91.2	92.6	92.2	88.0	91.4	91.2	90.9
	Yes	6.4	8.8	7.4	7.8	12.0	8.6	8.8	9.1
Wales	No	87.0	92.1	94.7	92.8	87.5	90.5	91.4	90.4
	Yes	13.0	7.9	5.3	7.2	12.5	9.5	8.6	9.6

SUMMARY: SEXUAL HEALTH BEHAVIOUR

Significant gender differences emerged on sexual health behaviour; girls were more likely to have ever had sex, to have had sex at or before the age of 14, and to have used the contraceptive pill and emergency contraception at last intercourse. On the other hand, boys were more likely than girls to report that they had used a condom the last time they had sex.

Between-country differences in sexual initiation were larger for girls than for boys, and girls in Wales were most likely to report that they had ever had sex. On the other hand, young people in Wales were less likely to report very early sex (at or before the age of 14). Interesting between-country differences emerged on contraception use; young people in England were more likely to report condom use, while young people in Wales were more likely to report contraceptive pill use than those in Scotland or England. In keeping with this, the reported rates of emergency contraception were lower in Wales than in Scotland and England, though not significantly so.

Few significant differences emerged between family affluence groups on reported sexual health behaviours. There was a trend for young people with high family affluence to be less likely to have ever had sex or to have had sex at or before the age of 14. Those with high family affluence were significantly more likely to report condom use, but there was no particular family affuence pattern in reported use of the contraceptive pill or emergency contraception.

B. Substance Use

Substance use is a major health and public order concern worldwide. Alcohol, drug and tobacco use and abuse have been substantially linked to the overall burden of disease in Europe with the highest level of drinking alcohol in the world (WHO, 2004; Anderson & Baumberg, 2006), around 2 million drug users and an estimate of a third of the population that smokes tobacco (Anderson, 2006). The tobacco epidemic kills 5.4 million people a year from lung cancer, heart disease and other illnesses.

Tobacco use is a risk factor for six of the eight leading causes of deaths in the world (http://www.who.int/topics/tobacco/facts/en/index.html). Alcohol causes 1.8 million deaths (3.2% of total) and a loss of 58.3 million (4% of total) of Disability-Adjusted Life Years (WHO, 2002). In Europe alone, alcohol consumption was responsible for over 55,000 deaths among young people aged 15–29 years in 1999 (Rehm & Eschmann, 2002). Cannabis is the most commonly used illicit substance in Europe (EMCDDA, 2008).

Questions on alcohol and tobacco use have been included in HBSC since 1982, and mandatory questions on cannabis use were added in 2002. All countries in Great Britain and Ireland included questions on substance use prior to them becoming mandatory across the international study, indicating the importance of substance use in our countries. This is also reflected in national and regional health policy; England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales all include measures to reduce adolescent smoking, alcohol consumption and illicit drug use in their national health and educational strategies.

Previous analyses based on HBSC data have illustrated trends in substance use (e.g. Godeau et al, 2007; Simons-Morton et al, 2009), the links between risk behaviours (e.g. Boyce et al, 2008; Pickett et al, 2002), the elevated health and social risks associated with early substance use (e.g. Kokkevi et al, 2006) and the importance of the social context of young peoples lives in understanding substance use (Kuntsche & Delgrande Jordan, 2006; Schmid & Ter Bogt, 2004; Ter Bogt et al, 2006).

SMOKING

Young people were asked how often they smoke tobacco at present. Response options ranged from “Every day” to “I do not smoke”. The findings presented here reflect those who reported that they smoked at least daily.

Gender

Overall girls (7.4%) were more likely than boys (5.4%) to report that they smoked daily; gender differences were significant among 13- and 15-year-olds in both Scotland and Wales, but not for any age group in England or Ireland.

Age

There were significant differences between age groups in the percentages of young people that smoked daily, with 15-year-olds (13.7%) most likely to report daily smoking followed by 13- (4.5%) and 11-year-olds (0.7%). Significant age differences were found for both genders in each country.

Country

Daily smoking was least likely in England (5.1%), followed by Ireland (6.5%), Wales (6.7%) and Scotland (7.1%). None of the countries differed significantly overall although significantly more 13-year-old girls in Wales reported daily smoking compared to those in England, Scotland and Ireland, and significantly more 15-year-old boys in Ireland reported daily smoking than those in England and Wales.

Family affluence

Young people with low family affluence (10.3%) were more likely to report that they smoked daily compared to those with medium (6.3%) and high family affluence (5.1%). This was particularly clear among girls.

Table 3.11: Percentages of young people who reported at least daily smoking by gender, age and country

		Gender											
		Male				Female				Both genders			
Age		11	13	15	All	11	13	15	All	11	13	15	All
England	Yes	0.6	3.5	9.5	4.4	0.6	4.8	13.2	5.9	0.6	4.2	11.4	5.1
	No	99.4	96.5	90.5	95.6	99.4	95.2	86.8	94.1	99.4	95.8	88.6	94.9
Ireland	Yes	1.2	2.8	14.3	6.7	0.3	3.5	15.1	6.2	0.7	3.1	14.7	6.5
	No	98.8	97.2	85.7	93.3	99.7	96.5	84.9	93.8	99.3	96.9	85.3	93.5
Scotland	Yes	1.0	2.8	11.7	5.6	0.5	5.4	18.5	8.6	0.7	4.1	15.1	7.1
	No	99.0	97.2	88.3	94.4	99.5	94.6	81.5	91.4	99.3	95.9	84.9	92.9
Wales	Yes	0.8	5.1	8.5	4.7	0.7	8.9	17.5	8.7	0.7	7.0	13.0	6.7
	No	99.2	94.9	91.5	95.3	99.3	91.1	82.5	91.3	99.3	93.0	87.0	93.3

Table 3.12: Percentages of young people who reported at least daily smoking by family affluence, gender and country

		Gender							
		Male				Female			
FAS		Low	Medium	High	All	Low	Medium	High	All
England	Yes	7.1	5.9	3.1	4.3	13.0	6.7	4.3	5.8
	No	92.9	94.1	96.9	95.7	87.0	93.3	95.7	94.2
Ireland	Yes	9.9	5.5	5.4	6.1	10.6	4.8	5.7	6.1
	No	90.1	94.5	94.6	93.9	89.4	95.2	94.3	93.9
Scotland	Yes	7.2	5.7	4.1	5.2	12.4	8.3	7.3	8.5
	No	92.8	94.3	95.9	94.8	87.6	91.7	92.7	91.5
Wales	Yes	7.0	4.7	4.1	4.7	14.2	8.4	7.4	8.8
	No	93.0	95.3	95.9	95.3	85.8	91.6	92.6	91.2

WEEKLY BEER DRINKING

Young people were asked how often they drink anything alcoholic and were given a list of drinks, including beer. Response options ranged from “Never” to “Every day”. The findings presented here are the percentages of young people who reported drinking beer at least weekly.

Gender

Overall boys (12.9%) were significantly more likely than girls (3.7%) to report that they drink beer weekly; gender differences were significant in every country and at all age groups, expect for 11-year-olds in Ireland.

Age

There were significant differences between age groups in the percentages of young people who drink beer weekly; highest among 15-year-olds (16.5%) followed by 13- (6.0%) and 11-year-olds (1.9%). Significant age differences were found in both genders in each country.

Country

Young people in England were most likely to report drinking beer at least weekly (11.2%), followed by Wales (10.2%), Scotland (8.0%) and Ireland (3.8%). No between-country differences were found among 11-year-old girls, but there were overall between-country differences for older girls and all age groups of boys. There were no significant differences between England and Wales for either girls or boys in any age group, or between Ireland and Scotland for girls in any age group.

Family affluence

Young people with high family affluence (9.3%) were more likely to report that they drink beer weekly than those with medium (7.4%) and low family affluence (6.9%). However, these differences were not significant in any country or overall.

Table 3.13: Percentages of young people who reported at least weekly beer drinking by gender, age and country

		Gender											
		Male				Female				Both genders			
Age		11	13	15	All	11	13	15	All	11	13	15	All
England	Yes	5.1	12.1	33.1	16.2	1.4	5.4	13.6	6.5	3.2	8.7	23.1	11.2
	No	94.9	87.9	66.9	83.8	98.6	94.6	86.4	93.5	96.8	91.3	76.9	88.8
Ireland	Yes	0.9	3.0	11.1	5.5	0.4	1.0	4.5	1.9	0.6	2.0	8.1	3.8
	No	99.1	97.0	88.9	94.5	99.6	99.0	95.5	98.1	99.4	98.0	91.9	96.3
Scotland	Yes	2.7	9.4	26.8	14.1	0.5	1.4	4.3	2.2	1.5	5.4	15.6	8.0
	No	97.3	90.6	73.2	85.9	99.5	98.6	95.7	97.8	98.5	94.6	84.4	92.0
Wales	Yes	3.1	14.0	31.5	15.8	0.8	3.5	10.5	4.7	1.9	8.7	21.0	10.2
	No	96.9	86.0	68.5	84.2	99.2	96.5	89.5	95.3	98.1	91.3	79.0	89.8

Table 3.14: Percentages of young people who reported at least weekly beer drinking by family affluence, gender and country

		Gender							
		Male				Female			
FAS		Low	Medium	High	All	Low	Medium	High	All
England	Yes	12.7	16.4	17.5	16.8	5.7	7.1	6.2	6.5
	No	87.3	83.6	82.5	83.2	94.3	92.9	93.8	93.5
Ireland	Yes	6.0	4.4	5.8	5.2	2.3	1.4	2.3	1.9
	No	94.0	95.6	94.2	94.8	97.7	98.6	97.7	98.1
Scotland	Yes	11.1	12.7	15.7	13.8	2.1	2.4	2.1	2.2
	No	88.9	87.3	84.3	86.2	97.9	97.6	97.9	97.8
Wales	Yes	15.8	15.0	17.1	16.1	6.0	4.8	4.6	4.9
	No	84.2	85.0	82.9	83.9	94.0	95.2	95.4	95.1

WEEKLY WINE DRINKING

Young people were asked how often they drink anything alcoholic and were given a list of drinks, including wine. Response options ranged from “Never” to “Every day”. The findings presented here are the percentages of young people who reported drinking wine at least weekly.

Gender

Overall no significant gender differences were observed for weekly wine drinking (boys 3.3%, girls 3.5%); the only significant differences observed within countries were for 15-year-olds in England and Wales, in both cases girls were more likely to report drinking wine at least weekly than boys.

Age

Overall there were significant differences between age groups in the percentages of young people who drink wine weekly; it was highest among 15-year-olds (5.8%) followed by 13- (3.1%) and 11-year-olds (1.2%). Significant age differences were found in both genders in each country, with the exception of boys in Ireland.

Country

Young people in England were most likely to report drinking wine weekly (5.4%), followed by Wales (3.7%), Scotland (3.3%) and Ireland (1.2%). There were few significant between-country differences at age 11, but differences emerged among older young people, although there were no differences between England and Wales for either girls or boys at any age.

Family affluence

Overall young people with high family affluence (4.2%) were more likely to report that they drink wine weekly than those with medium (2.7%) or low family affluence (2.3%); however these differences were not significant within countries.

Table 3.15: Percentages of young people who reported at least weekly wine drinking by gender, age and country

		Gender											
		Male				Female				Both genders			
Age		11	13	15	All	11	13	15	All	11	13	15	All
England	Yes	2.7	4.3	7.4	4.7	1.2	5.5	12.1	6.0	1.9	4.9	9.8	5.4
	No	97.3	95.7	92.6	95.3	98.8	94.5	87.9	94.0	98.1	95.1	90.2	94.6
Ireland	Yes	0.7	1.0	2.1	1.3	0.4	0.2	2.6	1.1	0.5	0.6	2.3	1.2
	No	99.3	99.0	97.9	98.7	99.6	99.8	97.4	98.9	99.5	99.4	97.7	98.8
Scotland	Yes	1.0	3.9	5.8	3.8	0.7	2.3	4.9	2.8	0.9	3.1	5.3	3.3
	No	99.0	96.1	94.2	96.2	99.3	97.7	95.1	97.2	99.1	96.9	94.7	96.7
Wales	Yes	1.0	4.6	4.4	3.3	1.3	3.4	8.2	4.2	1.2	4.0	6.3	3.7
	No	99.0	95.4	95.6	96.7	98.7	96.6	91.8	95.8	98.8	96.0	93.7	96.3

Table 3.16: Percentages of young people who reported at least weekly wine drinking by family affluence, gender and country

		Gender							
		Male				Female			
FAS		Low	Medium	High	All	Low	Medium	High	All
England	Yes	3.4	4.0	5.5	4.9	3.1	5.7	6.7	6.1
	No	96.6	96.0	94.5	95.1	96.9	94.3	93.3	93.9
Ireland	Yes	1.2	0.9	1.8	1.3	0.9	0.8	1.3	1.0
	No	98.8	99.1	98.2	98.7	99.1	99.2	98.7	99.0
Scotland	Yes	3.1	3.3	3.9	3.6	3.1	1.8	3.6	2.8
	No	96.9	96.7	96.1	96.4	96.9	98.2	96.4	97.2
Wales	Yes	2.5	2.3	4.3	3.3	1.7	4.0	4.7	4.0
	No	97.5	97.7	95.7	96.7	98.3	96.0	95.3	96.0

WEEKLY ALCOPOP DRINKING

Young people were asked how often they drink anything alcoholic and were given a list of drinks, including Alcopops. Response options ranged from “Never” to “Every day”. The findings presented here are the percentages of young people who reported drinking Alcopops at least weekly.

Gender

Overall significantly more girls (10.2%) than boys (7.7%) reported that they drink Alcopops weekly; within countries girls were more likely to report weekly Alcopop drinking in England, Scotland and Wales at age 15, and boys were more likely than girls to report weekly Alcopop drinking at age 11 in Scotland.

Age

There were significant differences between age groups in the percentages of young people who drink Alcopops weekly, with 15-year-olds (15.7%) most likely to report weekly Alcopop drinking, followed by 13- (8.6%) and 11-year-olds (2.0%). Significant age differences were found in both genders in each country.

Country

Young people in Ireland were significantly less likely to report drinking Alcopops weekly (4.0%) than those in the England (10.0%), Scotland (10.4%) and Wales (11.0%). Fewest differences were observed among the 11-year-old young people, and in all age groups there were no significant differences between England and Scotland or England and Wales for either gender.

Family affluence

Young people with high family affluence (9.6%) were most likely to have reported that they drink Alcopops weekly followed by those with low (9.0%) and medium family affluence (8.6%); however, none of these differences were significant.

Table 3.17: Percentages of young people who reported at least weekly Alcopop drinking by gender, age and country

		Gender											
		Male				Female				Both genders			
Age		11	13	15	All	11	13	15	All	11	13	15	All
England	Yes	2.7	8.9	13.6	8.3	1.5	10.2	25.1	11.7	2.1	9.5	19.5	10.0
	No	97.3	91.1	86.4	91.7	98.5	89.8	74.9	88.3	97.9	90.5	80.5	90.0
Ireland	Yes	1.1	3.2	7.0	4.1	0.6	2.0	9.5	4.0	0.8	2.6	8.2	4.0
	No	98.9	96.8	93.0	95.9	99.4	98.0	90.5	96.0	99.2	97.4	91.8	96.0
Scotland	Yes	3.6	10.0	12.9	9.4	1.3	9.8	21.3	11.4	2.4	9.9	17.1	10.4
	No	96.4	90.0	87.1	90.6	98.7	90.2	78.7	88.6	97.6	90.1	82.9	89.6
Wales	Yes	2.7	11.0	12.1	8.5	2.1	14.1	25.3	13.4	2.4	12.6	18.7	11.0
	No	97.3	89.0	87.9	91.5	97.9	85.9	74.7	86.6	97.6	87.4	81.3	89.0

Table 3.18: Percentages of young people who reported at least weekly Alcopop drinking by family affluence, gender and country

		Gender							
		Male				Female			
FAS		Low	Medium	High	All	Low	Medium	High	All
England	Yes	8.0	7.7	9.0	8.5	9.9	13.4	11.3	11.9
	No	92.0	92.3	91.0	91.5	90.1	86.6	88.7	88.1
Ireland	Yes	4.2	3.3	4.7	4.0	6.2	3.3	3.5	3.9
	No	95.8	96.7	95.3	96.0	93.8	96.7	96.5	96.1
Scotland	Yes	8.1	8.6	10.1	9.2	12.3	10.7	12.3	11.6
	No	91.9	91.4	89.9	90.8	87.7	89.3	87.7	88.4
Wales	Yes	6.7	9.2	9.3	8.9	15.2	12.9	14.1	13.7
	No	93.3	90.8	90.7	91.1	84.8	87.1	85.9	86.3

WEEKLY CIDER DRINKING

Young people were asked how often they drink anything alcoholic and were given a list of drinks, including cider. Response options ranged from “Never” to “Every day”. The findings presented here are the percentages of young people who reported drinking cider at least weekly.

Gender

Overall boys (7.0%) were more likely than girls (4.5%) to report that they drink cider weekly; however this gender difference was only significant among 11-year-olds in England and 15-year-olds in England and Wales.

Age

There were significant differences between age groups in the percentages of young people who drink cider weekly, with 15-year-olds (10.3%) most likely to report weekly cider drinking followed by 13- (5.2%) and 11-year-olds (1.3%). Significant age differences were found in both genders in each country.

Country

The percentage of young people in Ireland who drink cider weekly (4.1%) was significantly lower than in England (6.2%), Scotland (6.1%) and Wales (6.4%).

Family affluence

Overall young people with low family affluence were most likely to report that they drink cider weekly (6.1%), closely followed by young people with high family affluence (6.0%), and those with medium family affluence (5.1%). These differences were not significant within countries.

Table 3.19: Percentages of young people who reported at least weekly cider drinking by gender, age and country

		Gender											
		Male				Female				Both genders			
Age		11	13	15	All	11	13	15	All	11	13	15	All
England	Yes	3.3	5.7	16.7	8.3	0.7	5.1	7.6	4.3	1.9	5.4	12.0	6.2
	No	96.7	94.3	83.3	91.7	99.3	94.9	92.4	95.7	98.1	94.6	88.0	93.8
Ireland	Yes	0.9	3.4	10.1	5.3	0.4	1.6	6.5	2.8	0.6	2.6	8.5	4.1
	No	99.1	96.6	89.9	94.7	99.6	98.4	93.5	97.2	99.4	97.4	91.5	95.9
Scotland	Yes	2.0	6.0	11.7	7.1	0.6	5.2	9.0	5.2	1.2	5.6	10.3	6.1
	No	98.0	94.0	88.3	92.9	99.4	94.8	91.0	94.8	98.8	94.4	89.7	93.9
Wales	Yes	2.0	7.8	13.7	7.7	0.8	7.3	7.9	5.2	1.4	7.5	10.8	6.4
	No	98.0	92.2	86.3	92.3	99.2	92.7	92.1	94.8	98.6	92.5	89.2	93.6

Table 3.20: Percentages of young people who reported at least weekly cider drinking by family affluence, gender and country

		Gender							
		Male				Female			
FAS		Low	Medium	High	All	Low	Medium	High	All
England	Yes	6.7	8.3	9.0	8.7	4.2	3.8	4.3	4.2
	No	93.3	91.7	91.0	91.3	95.8	96.2	95.7	95.8
Ireland	Yes	4.9	4.4	5.5	4.9	4.2	2.2	2.5	2.6
	No	95.1	95.6	94.5	95.1	95.8	97.8	97.5	97.4
Scotland	Yes	6.3	6.2	7.8	6.9	7.2	5.2	4.4	5.2
	No	93.7	93.8	92.2	93.1	92.8	94.8	95.6	94.8
Wales	Yes	8.4	6.9	8.3	7.7	6.7	4.9	5.1	5.2
	No	91.6	93.1	91.7	92.3	93.3	95.1	94.9	94.8

DRUNKENNESS

Young people were asked whether they had ever had so much alcohol that they were "really drunk". Response options ranged from "No, never" to "Yes, more than 10 times". The findings presented here are the percentages of young people who reported that they have been drunk at least four times.

Gender

Boys (13.2%) were significantly more likely than girls (11.4%) to report that they had been drunk 4 or more times; however within countries this gender difference was only significant among 11-year-olds in Scotland.

Age

There were significant differences between age groups in the percentages of young people who reported that they were drunk more than 4 times, with 15-year-olds most likely to report drunkenness (25.9%) followed by 13- (8.6%) and 11-year-olds (1.6%). Significant age differences were found in both genders in each country.

Country

The highest percentage of young people who have been drunk at least 4 times were found in Wales (14.1%) and Scotland (14.0%) followed by England (12.0%) and Ireland (8.6%). Although no differences were found among 11-year-olds, overall all countries were significantly different from one another, with the exception of Scotland and Wales.

Family affluence

Those with low family affluence (12.9%) were most likely to report that they had been drunk at least 4 times, followed by those with high (12.8%) and medium family affluence (11.5%). Within countries, significant patterns were only identified in Ireland, where boys and girls from low family affluence were more likely to report drunkenness.

Table 3.21: Percentages of young people who reported four or more episodes of lifetime drunkenness by gender, age and country

		Gender											
		Male				Female				Both genders			
Age		11	13	15	All	11	13	15	All	11	13	15	All
England	Yes	2.6	9.4	25.4	12.1	1.2	8.2	29.0	12.0	1.8	8.8	27.2	12.0
	No	97.4	90.6	74.6	87.9	98.8	91.8	71.0	88.0	98.2	91.2	72.8	88.0
Ireland	Yes	1.0	4.2	22.2	10.2	0.3	3.4	17.5	7.0	0.6	3.8	20.1	8.6
	No	99.0	95.8	77.8	89.8	99.7	96.6	82.5	93.0	99.4	96.2	79.9	91.4
Scotland	Yes	3.0	11.5	25.5	14.5	0.8	8.8	28.7	13.6	1.9	10.1	27.1	14.0
	No	97.0	88.5	74.5	85.5	99.2	91.2	71.3	86.4	98.1	89.9	72.9	86.0
Wales	Yes	2.9	13.9	31.9	15.8	1.1	10.0	27.9	12.4	2.0	11.9	29.9	14.1
	No	97.1	86.1	68.1	84.2	98.9	90.0	72.1	87.6	98.0	88.1	70.1	85.9

Table 3.22: Percentages of young people who reported four or more episodes of lifetime drunkenness by family affluence, gender and country

		Gender							
		Male				Female			
FAS		Low	Medium	High	All	Low	Medium	High	All
England	Yes	11.7	12.6	12.5	12.5	13.5	12.7	11.1	11.8
	No	88.3	87.4	87.5	87.5	86.5	87.3	88.9	88.2
Ireland	Yes	14.3	8.1	9.7	9.7	9.3	5.6	7.3	6.8
	No	85.7	91.9	90.3	90.3	90.7	94.4	92.7	93.2
Scotland	Yes	12.8	13.4	15.3	14.2	13.6	13.4	14.2	13.8
	No	87.2	86.6	84.7	85.8	86.4	86.6	85.8	86.2
Wales	Yes	17.5	14.7	17.2	16.2	11.3	12.4	13.8	12.8
	No	82.5	85.3	82.8	83.8	88.7	87.6	86.2	87.2

CANNABIS USE

Young people (15-year-olds only) were asked whether they had taken cannabis in the last 30 days. Response options ranged from “Never” to “40 times or more”. The findings presented here are the percentages of young people who reported using cannabis at least once in the last 30 days.

Gender

15-year-old boys (11.7%) were more likely than 15-year-old girls (9.5%) to report that they used cannabis at least once during the last 30 days; however these differences were not significant in individual countries.

Country

The percentage of young people who reported that they had used cannabis at least once in the last 30 days was highest in Scotland (12%), followed by Wales (11.3%), Ireland (9.6%) and England (9.2%). Only Scotland and England differed significantly from one another; young people in Scotland were more likely to report cannabis use than those in England.

Family affluence

Young people with low family affluence (15.9%) were more likely to report that they had used cannabis at least once in the last 30 days than those with medium and high family affluence (both 9.6%). These patterns were clearest among boys in Ireland and girls in England.

Table 3.23: Percentages of young people who reported cannabis use in the last 30 days by gender and country

		Gender		
		Male	Female	Both genders
Age		15	15	15
England	Yes	10.3	8.1	9.2
	No	89.7	91.9	90.8
Ireland	Yes	11.6	7.3	9.6
	No	88.4	92.7	90.4
Scotland	Yes	12.7	11.3	12.0
	No	87.3	88.7	88.0
Wales	Yes	11.6	11.0	11.3
	No	88.4	89.0	88.7

Table 3.24: Percentages of young people who reported cannabis use in the last 30 days by family affluence, gender and country

		Gender							
		Male				Female			
FAS		Low	Medium	High	All	Low	Medium	High	All
England	Yes	18.0	10.5	9.7	10.6	22.7	7.9	5.5	8.0
	No	82.0	89.5	90.3	89.4	77.3	92.1	94.5	92.0
Ireland	Yes	22.1	7.6	10.7	11.1	12.8	5.4	5.7	6.7
	No	77.9	92.4	89.3	88.9	87.2	94.6	94.3	93.3
Scotland	Yes	15.2	12.5	11.2	12.4	13.1	12.4	9.7	11.3
	No	84.8	87.5	88.8	87.6	86.9	87.6	90.3	88.7
Wales	Yes	13.3	10.0	12.3	11.5	12.9	9.1	12.2	10.9
	No	86.7	90.0	87.7	88.5	87.1	90.9	87.8	89.1

SUMMARY: SUBSTANCE USE BEHAVIOURS

Girls were more likely to report that they smoke and drink Alcopops, while boys were more likely to drink beer, cider and wine and to have taken cannabis. However these general patterns mask some interesting variations by country, substance and age group. For example girls in Scotland and Wales were more likely than boys to smoke daily, but no such pattern was observed for young people in Ireland or England. Gender differences in alcohol were most consistent for beer drinking; and less so for cider and wine drinking. An age by country by gender interaction was observed for Alcopops, with 11-year-old boys in Scotland more likely to report Alcopop consumption than their female counterparts, but the opposite gender pattern was identified among 15-year-old young people in England, Scotland and Wales – where girls were more likely to report weekly Alcopop consumption.

Significant age patterns were found for each substance in each country and for both genders, with only one exception: there was no age-related pattern in wine consumption among boys in Ireland.

Between-country differences in smoking were minor, ranging only from 5.1% to 7.1%; although both 13-year-old girls in Wales and 15-year-old boys in Ireland were more likely to report daily smoking than their respective gender-specific cross-national peers. In relation to alcohol consumption, the clearest pattern was the lower levels of self-reported consumption of all alcoholic beverages among young people in Ireland; and that differences were somewhat more likely to emerge among the older young people than the 11-year-olds. Young people in England and Wales were least likely to differ from one another; this was the case for weekly beer, wine and Alcopop consumption. Smaller between-country differences were found for frequent drunkenness than for consumption of specific types of alcoholic beverages. Cannabis use was significantly higher among 15-year-olds in Scotland than Ireland, but overall the between-country variations were small.

Young people with low family affluence were, in general, more likely to report daily smoking and weekly consumption of beer, cider, wine and Alcopops. They were also more likely to report frequent drunkenness and recent cannabis use. However, not all these patterns were statistically significant; those for beer drinking and wine drinking were only significant in Scotland, while those for Alcopops and cider were not significant in any of the four countries. The family affluence patterns in smoking were clearest for girls and those for drunkenness were significant among both boys and girls in Ireland. That young people with low family affluence were more likely to report cannabis use was most consistent among boys in Ireland and girls in England.

4. SOCIAL CONTEXT OF HEALTH

The life circumstances of young people are inevitably interwoven with their ability to establish and sustain good health, as well as navigate their exposure to health risk behaviours. A core objective of the HBSC study is to explore the individual and social resources available to young people, and to acquire an insight into the influence that social contexts have on their health and lifestyles. Specific analysis is provided in this report on the following areas:

Family: Over the last 30 years there has been a major social change in the composition and structure of family households within Great Britain and Ireland that have significant implications for the adolescent population. For example, in 2006 25% of all families with dependent children in the UK were headed by a lone parent compared to 8% in 1971 (Coleman and Brooks, 2009). Stress and conflict within families and the experience of family break up can have highly negative impacts on young people's well-being (The Children's Society, 2005; 2006). However the quality of relationships within the family unit and particularly how a family communicates may also prove to be as important an influence on young people's well-being as family structure (Pedersen et al, 2004). In the HBSC 2002 study there were strong associations for the Great British countries and Ireland between perceived ease of communication with parents and self-rated health.

Peers: The importance of the peer group during adolescence is widely recognised and represents a significant area of adult concern. A young person's relationship with their peer group and quality of friendships are likely to be influential in determining a young person's emotional well-being and overall social competence.

In terms of health related behaviours peers are often represented as a key influence in determining patterns of risk-taking among young people. However peers have also been found to feature strongly in young peoples' repertoire of sources of health related information and support, particularly emotional support (Coleman and Brooks, 2009). Understanding how the process of peer influence can contribute to both health risk and health promoting behaviours is likely to be of critical importance to the development of future effective health promotion policies.

School environment: A positive school experience is a resource for health and well-being. The school environment provides a means to engender positive health behaviours and promote self-esteem, through personal development and academic achievement. However young people who find school to be a negative experience through perceived low academic achievement or bullying are at greatest risk of adopting unhealthy behaviours and poorer quality of life when compared to peers with high school satisfaction (Torsheim & Wold, 2001; Samdal, 1998).

A. Family

FAMILY STRUCTURE

Young people were asked to indicate the people who lived in the home where they lived all or most of the time by ticking the relevant boxes. Based on their responses, young people's family structure was classified as living with: 'both parents", "single parent", "step-parent" or "other". The findings presented here are the percentages of young people living in different circumstances.

Gender

Family structure varied significantly by gender; among boys 71.7% lived with both parents, 16.9% with one parent, 9.7% with a step-family and 1.7% in another type of family structure, while 70.2% of girls lived with both parents, 16.9% with one parent, 11.2% with a step-family and 1.7% in another type of family structure. Significantly more girls lived in a step-family than boys.

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Age

Significant age differences were found in family structure, 72.5% of 11-year-olds reported that they lived with both parents, 16.7% with one parent, 9.3% with step-families and 1.5% in another type of family structure, 70.2% of 13-year-olds reported that they lived with both parents, 17.2% with one parent, 11.0% with step-families and 1.6% in another type of family structure, and 70.3% of 15-year-olds reported that they lived with both parents, 16.7% with one parent, 11.0% with step-families and 2.0% in another type of family structure. Significantly more 11-year-olds lived in families with both parents than 13- and 15-year-olds, and significantly fewer 11-year-olds lived in step-families than 13- and 15-year-olds.

Country

A significant country difference was found in family structure, 70.3% of young people in England lived with both parents, 16.3% with one parent, 12.0% with step-families and 1.3% in another type of family structure, 80.7% of young people in Ireland lived with both parents, 12.6% with one parent, 5.1% with step-families and 1.5% in another type of family structure, 67.7% of young people in Scotland lived with both parents, 19.1% with one parent, 11.8% with step-families and 1.5% in another type of family structure, and 65.7% of younger teenagers in Wales lived with both parents, 19.0% with one parent, 12.8% with step-families and 2.5% in another type of family structure. All countries differed significantly from one another in the percentage who reported that they lived with both parents, apart from Scotland and Wales. All countries differed significantly from one another in the percentage that live with a single parent, apart from Scotland and Wales. The percentage of young people in Ireland that lived in step-families was significantly lower than in England, Scotland and Wales, while the

Table 4.1: Percentages of young people who reported that they lived with both parents, a single parent, a step-family and in another family structure by gender, age and country

		Gender											
	Family structure*	Male				Female				Both genders			
Age		11	13	15	All	11	13	15	All	11	13	15	All
England	both	73.3	69.8	68.3	70.5	72.0	68.8	69.8	70.2	72.6	69.3	69.1	70.3
	single	15.5	15.2	18.3	16.3	15.3	17.8	15.9	16.4	15.4	16.5	17.1	16.3
	step	10.1	13.7	11.3	11.8	11.8	12.1	13.0	12.3	11.0	12.9	12.2	12.0
	other	1.1	1.3	2.0	1.5	0.9	1.3	1.3	1.1	1.0	1.3	1.6	1.3
Ireland	both	82.9	81.1	82.2	82.0	79.8	80.5	78.0	79.5	81.1	80.8	80.2	80.7
	single	11.2	12.1	12.2	11.9	12.9	12.9	14.3	13.4	12.2	12.5	13.1	12.6
	step	4.6	5.5	3.5	4.5	6.4	5.1	5.8	5.8	5.6	5.3	4.6	5.1
	other	1.3	1.3	2.2	1.6	0.9	1.5	1.9	1.4	1.1	1.4	2.0	1.5
Scotland	both	71.8	67.2	67.9	68.7	67.2	67.3	66.0	66.8	69.3	67.2	66.9	67.7
	single	19.9	19.1	18.5	19.1	20.0	19.0	18.4	19.1	20.0	19.0	18.4	19.1
	step	7.1	12.5	11.9	10.8	11.1	12.6	13.8	12.6	9.3	12.6	12.9	11.8
	other	1.2	1.2	1.7	1.4	1.7	1.1	1.9	1.5	1.5	1.1	1.8	1.5
Wales	both	68.5	65.2	64.6	66.1	68.4	62.2	65.4	65.3	68.5	63.7	65.0	65.7
	single	19.0	20.3	19.8	19.7	18.1	20.8	15.7	18.3	18.5	20.6	17.7	19.0
	step	10.1	11.6	13.7	11.8	11.2	14.4	15.8	13.7	10.7	13.1	14.8	12.8
	other	2.4	2.8	2.0	2.4	2.3	2.6	3.1	2.6	2.3	2.7	2.6	2.5

* family structure is classified in: both parents, single parents, step-family and other .

percentage of young people in Wales that lived in another type of family structure was significantly higher than in England, Ireland and Scotland.

Family affluence

Those with a high family affluence (77.4%) were most likely to report that they lived with both parents, followed by those with medium family affluence (69.2%) and low family affluence (56.1%). Those with low family affluence were most likely to report that they lived with a single parent (30.9%), followed by those with medium family affluence (19.0%) and those with high family affluence (10.7%) (these differences were significant); The family affluence groups did not differ significantly in the percentages of young people living in step-families (low 10.4%, medium 10.1% and high 10.%); The percentage of young people living in other family structures was significantly higher among the low family affluence group (2.5%) compared to those with medium (1.7%) and high (1.3%) family affluence.

Table 4.2: Percentages of young people who reported that they lived with both parents, a single parent, a step-family and in another family structure by gender, family affluence and country

		Gender							
	Family structure*	Male				Female			
FAS		low	med	high	All	low	med	high	All
England	both	51.6	62.3	77.8	71.1	47.4	64.1	76.9	70.3
	single	33.3	23.4	9.8	15.7	38.4	20.7	11.1	16.5
	step	13.1	13.2	11.0	11.8	11.6	14.0	11.1	12.1
	other	2.0	1.1	1.4	1.4	2.6	1.1	0.9	1.1
Ireland	both	75.1	82.5	85.4	82.5	65.7	78.8	86.8	79.5
	single	16.4	12.1	8.9	11.6	25.8	13.2	7.9	13.4
	step	4.9	4.3	4.3	4.4	5.8	6.8	4.3	5.7
	other	3.6	1.1	1.4	1.6	2.7	1.2	1.0	1.4
Scotland	both	54.4	66.9	76.0	68.9	50.5	65.0	75.6	67.2
	single	32.6	20.8	12.5	19.0	34.3	21.0	10.6	18.7
	step	10.8	11.1	10.5	10.8	13.1	12.1	12.7	12.5
	other	2.2	1.3	1.1	1.3	2.1	1.9	1.0	1.5
Wales	both	47.9	65.7	71.4	66.2	50.2	63.8	72.8	65.6
	single	36.8	23.0	12.4	19.7	34.3	20.4	11.0	18.4
	step	12.8	9.3	13.6	11.8	12.9	12.3	14.5	13.3
	other	2.5	2.0	2.6	2.3	2.6	3.5	1.7	2.6

* family structure is classified in: both parents, single parents, step-family and other .

GRANDPARENTS LIVING IN MAIN HOME

Young people were asked if their grandparents lived with them in the main home. The findings presented here are the percentages of young people who reported that one or more grandparents lived with them in the main home.

Gender

Boys (8.5%) were significantly more likely than girls (6.9%) to report that at least one grandparent lived in the main home.

Age

A significantly higher percentage of those aged 11 (9.4%) reported they have a grandparent living with them than did 13- (7.4%) and 15-year-olds (6.4%).

Country

Young people in England were most likely to report that they lived with one or more of their grandparents (9.9%), followed by Ireland (8.1%), Scotland (6.7%) and Wales (6.4%). These differences were significant between all countries except between Scotland and Wales.

Family affluence

No significant differences were found between family affluence groups with regards to the percentage of young people who reported that one or more grandparents lived at home (low family affluence 8.0%, medium family affluence 7.5% and high family affluence 7.8%).

Table 4.3: Percentages of young people who reported that their grandparents lived in the main home, by gender, age and country

		Gender											
		Male				Female				Both genders			
Age		11	13	15	All	11	13	15	All	11	13	15	All
England	Yes	12.0	12.1	10.7	11.7	10.2	7.4	6.9	8.2	11.1	9.7	8.8	9.9
	No	88.0	87.9	89.3	88.3	89.8	92.6	93.1	91.8	88.9	90.3	91.2	90.1
Ireland	Yes	9.5	8.6	7.4	8.4	9.7	7.0	6.7	7.8	9.6	7.8	7.1	8.1
	No	90.5	91.4	92.6	91.6	90.3	93.0	93.3	92.2	90.4	92.2	92.9	91.9
Scotland	Yes	9.1	8.2	5.3	7.4	8.5	5.5	4.7	6.0	8.8	6.8	5.0	6.7
	No	90.9	91.8	94.7	92.6	91.5	94.5	95.3	94.0	91.2	93.2	95.0	93.3
Wales	Yes	8.7	6.3	5.5	6.9	7.7	4.5	5.5	5.9	8.2	5.4	5.5	6.4
	No	91.3	93.7	94.5	93.1	92.3	95.5	94.5	94.1	91.8	94.6	94.5	93.6

Table 4.4: Percentages of young people who reported that their grandparents lived in the main home by family affluence, gender and country

		Gender							
		Male				Female			
FAS		Low	Medium	High	All	Low	Medium	High	All
England	Yes	10.9	11.9	12.4	12.2	9.7	8.6	7.8	8.2
	No	89.1	88.1	87.6	87.8	90.3	91.4	92.2	91.8
Ireland	Yes	8.1	7.8	8.7	8.2	9.3	7.6	7.3	7.8
	No	91.9	92.2	91.3	91.8	90.7	92.4	92.7	92.2
Scotland	Yes	8.7	6.9	7.2	7.3	7.6	5.5	6.2	6.1
	No	91.3	93.1	92.8	92.7	92.4	94.5	93.8	93.9
Wales	Yes	5.3	6.5	7.3	6.8	5.1	7.4	4.4	5.8
	No	94.7	93.5	92.7	93.2	94.9	92.6	95.6	94.2

SIZE OF HOUSEHOLD

Young people were asked to indicate the people who lived in the home where they lived all or most of the time by ticking the relevant boxes and writing down the number of brothers and sisters who lived there. Based on their answers the size of the household was classified according to the following categories: “two people”, “three people”, “four people” and “five or more people”. The findings presented here are the percentages of young people who reported living in different sized households.

Gender

A significant gender difference was found in size of household; of boys 4.1% lived in a two people household, 14.9% in a three people household, 34.2% in a four people household and 46.9% in a five or more people household. Specifically boys lived in significantly more three-person households than girls.

Age

No significant age differences were found in size of household, 3.9% of 11-year-olds reported that they lived with one other person, 14.3 with two other people, 34.0% with three other people and 48.0% with four or more other people, 3.6% of 13-year-olds reported that they lived with one other person, 13.5 with two other people, 34.0% with three other people and 49.0% with four or more other people, and 3.9% of 15-year-olds reported that they lived with one other person, 15.0% with two other people, 35.4% with three other people and 45.7% with four or more other people.

Country

A significant country difference was found in size of household, 3.9% of young people in England lived with one other person, 15.5% lived with two other people, 36.3% lived with three other people and 44.3% lived with four or more other people, 2.6% of young people in Ireland lived with one other person, 9.0% lived with two other people, 24.9% lived with three other people and 63.5% lived with four or more other people, 4.2% of young people in Scotland lived with one other person, 16.0% lived with two other people, 38.9% lived with three other people and 40.8% lived with four or more other people, and 4.2% of young people in Wales lived with one other person, 15.8% lived with two other people, 36.8% lived with three other people and 43.2% lived with four or more other people.

A significantly lower percentage of young people in Ireland lived in two, three or four people households than did young people in England, Scotland and Wales. Consequently a significant higher portion of young people in Ireland lived in households that had 5 or more people. Furthermore, young people in England were significantly less likely than young people in Scotland to report that they lived in four

Table 4.5: Percentages of young people living in different size households, by gender, age and country

	No. of people	Gender											
		Male				Female				Both genders			
Age		11	13	15	All	11	13	15	All	11	13	15	All
England	2	4.8	3.5	3.9	4.1	3.9	3.5	3.9	3.8	4.3	3.5	3.9	3.9
	3	17.9	15.6	18.9	17.4	14.7	12.3	14.4	13.8	16.2	13.9	16.6	15.5
	4	33.6	33.7	37.8	34.9	34.8	38.9	39.0	37.5	34.2	36.4	38.4	36.3
	5 or more	43.8	47.1	39.4	43.6	46.6	45.3	42.6	45.0	45.3	46.2	41.1	44.3
Ireland	2	2.4	2.4	2.5	2.4	3.4	2.1	3.0	2.8	3.0	2.2	2.7	2.6
	3	9.2	9.2	9.7	9.4	9.0	7.9	9.2	8.7	9.1	8.6	9.5	9.0
	4	27.4	24.1	26.3	25.7	25.0	24.8	22.2	24.0	26.0	24.4	24.4	24.9
	5 or more	60.9	64.4	61.5	62.4	62.6	65.2	65.6	64.5	61.9	64.8	63.4	63.5
Scotland	2	4.7	4.8	4.4	4.7	4.0	3.2	4.4	3.8	4.4	4.0	4.4	4.2
	3	16.7	13.9	17.8	16.1	15.3	16.6	15.9	16.0	16.0	15.3	16.9	16.0
	4	40.1	37.7	40.8	39.5	38.9	37.4	38.8	38.3	39.5	37.6	39.8	38.9
	5 or more	38.5	43.6	36.9	39.8	41.7	42.8	40.9	41.8	40.2	43.2	39.0	40.8
Wales	2	4.4	5.6	5.3	5.1	3.2	3.5	3.3	3.3	3.8	4.5	4.3	4.2
	3	15.8	15.8	18.5	16.6	13.4	16.2	15.7	15.1	14.6	16.0	17.1	15.8
	4	33.2	36.6	36.3	35.4	36.2	37.2	41.3	38.1	34.8	36.9	38.8	36.8
	5 or more	46.6	42.0	39.9	42.9	47.2	43.1	39.7	43.5	46.9	42.6	39.8	43.2

person households. In addition young people in England were more likely to report that they lived in a household with five or more people than were young people in Scotland.

Family affluence

The family affluence groups significantly differed from one another in household size. Those with low family affluence were most likely to report that they lived with one other person (5.9%), followed by those with medium family affluence (4.3%) and those with high family affluence (2.4%). Among those with high family affluence (13.1%) a significantly lower percentage of young people reported that they lived with two other people than did those with medium (14.9%) and low family affluence (15.4%). All family affluence groups differed significantly in the percentage of young people who reported that they lived with three other people, with the highest percentage among those with high family affluence (39.6%), followed by those with medium family affluence (32.8%) and those with high family affluence (24.9%). All family affluence groups differed significantly in the percentage of young people who reported that they lived with four or more other people. In this case those with low family affluence were most likely to report living with four or more others (53.8%), followed by those with medium family affluence (47.9%) and those with high family affluence (44.9%).

Table 4.6: Percentages of young people living in different size households, by gender, family affluence and country

	No. of people	Gender							
		Male				Female			
FAS		low	med	high	All	low	med	high	All
England	2	9.7	6.8	1.8	3.9	5.8	5.7	2.4	3.8
	3	20.1	17.6	16.0	16.8	16.3	14.8	12.7	13.7
	4	22.1	30.5	39.7	35.5	24.7	31.2	43.7	38.1
	5 or more	48.1	45.1	42.5	43.7	53.2	48.4	41.1	44.5
Ireland	2	3.9	2.1	1.7	2.2	4.6	3.1	1.5	2.8
	3	11.3	8.7	9.4	9.3	12.2	8.6	7.6	8.8
	4	17.3	25.7	29.7	25.9	18.4	24.6	26.3	24.2
	5 or more	67.6	63.5	59.3	62.5	64.8	63.6	64.6	64.2
Scotland	2	6.9	5.4	3.2	4.7	6.0	4.8	1.8	3.7
	3	18.3	18.1	13.3	16.0	15.4	18.4	14.1	16.0
	4	28.5	38.6	45.1	39.8	31.0	38.1	42.0	38.6
	5 or more	46.3	37.9	38.4	39.5	47.5	38.6	42.2	41.6
Wales	2	7.0	4.9	4.3	4.8	5.1	3.0	2.8	3.2
	3	18.9	17.4	15.6	16.7	13.8	17.0	13.6	15.1
	4	24.3	35.5	39.1	35.8	28.3	36.4	44.1	38.5
	5 or more	49.8	42.3	41.0	42.6	52.7	43.5	39.4	43.1

COMMUNICATION WITH MOTHER

Young people were asked how easy they find it to talk to their mother about the things that really bother them. Response options were “Very easy”, “Easy”, “Difficult”, “Very difficult” and “Don’t have or see this person”. The findings presented here are the percentages of young people who reported that they find communication with their mothers easy or very easy.

Gender

No significant gender difference was found in the reported ease of communication with mother about things that really bother them (boys 81.6%, girls 81.5%).

Age

Older young people find it less easy to talk to their mother than younger age groups. These differences were significant between all age groups. Overall 89.1% of 11-year-olds find it easy to talk to their mothers, compared to 82.1% of 13-year-olds and 74.1% of 15-year-olds.

Country

The percentage of young people who find it easy to talk to their mother about things that really bother them was highest in Wales (83.8%), followed by Ireland (82.2%), England (81.0%) and Scotland (79.9%). Young people in Scotland differed significantly from those in Wales and Ireland, and young people in Wales differed significantly from those in England.

Family affluence

Those with high family affluence (83.1%) were most likely to report that they find it easy to talk to their mother, followed by those with medium (81.0%) and low family affluence (77.9%). All family affluence groups differed significantly from one another.

Table 4.7: Percentages of young people who reported easy or very easy communication with their mother by gender, age, and country

		Gender											
		Male				Female				Both genders			
Age		11	13	15	All	11	13	15	All	11	13	15	All
England	Yes	88.3	81.8	77.5	82.7	86.9	78.0	72.4	79.4	87.6	79.9	74.9	81.0
	No	11.7	18.2	22.5	17.3	13.1	22.0	27.6	20.6	12.4	20.1	25.1	19.0
Ireland	Yes	90.2	81.9	74.6	81.3	91.3	84.7	73.5	83.2	90.8	83.3	74.1	82.2
	No	9.8	18.1	25.4	18.8	8.7	15.3	26.5	16.8	9.2	16.7	25.9	17.8
Scotland	Yes	87.7	80.3	70.0	78.5	88.0	82.6	74.6	81.3	87.9	81.4	72.3	79.9
	No	12.3	19.7	30.0	21.5	12.0	17.4	25.4	18.7	12.1	18.6	27.7	20.1
Wales	Yes	91.1	85.7	79.0	85.3	90.4	82.9	73.4	82.5	90.7	84.3	76.2	83.8
	No	8.9	14.3	21.0	14.7	9.6	17.1	26.6	17.5	9.3	15.7	23.8	16.2

Table 4.8: Percentages of young people who reported easy or very easy communication with their mother, by family affluence, gender and country

		Gender							
		Male				Female			
FAS		Low	Medium	High	All	Low	Medium	High	All
England	Yes	80.0	80.5	83.7	82.5	71.1	76.0	82.3	79.3
	No	20.0	19.5	16.3	17.5	28.9	24.0	17.7	20.7
Ireland	Yes	75.2	83.0	81.9	81.4	79.9	83.6	84.7	83.4
	No	24.8	17.0	18.1	18.6	20.1	16.4	15.3	16.6
Scotland	Yes	79.0	78.1	79.1	78.7	77.2	81.8	82.8	81.5
	No	21.0	21.9	20.9	21.3	22.8	18.2	17.2	18.5
Wales	Yes	82.1	82.3	87.8	84.9	77.7	81.6	84.6	82.3
	No	17.9	17.7	12.2	15.1	22.3	18.4	15.4	17.7

COMMUNICATION WITH FATHER

Young people were asked how easy they find it to talk to their father about the things that really bother them. Response options were “Very easy”, “Easy”, “Difficult”, “Very difficult” and “Don’t have or see this person”. The findings presented are the percentages of young people who reported that communication with their fathers was easy or very easy.

Table 4.9: Percentages of young people who reported easy or very easy

Gender

Boys (72.6%) were significantly more likely than girls (55.9%) to report that they found it easy or very easy to talk to their father about things that really bother them.

Age

Older young people were least likely to report that they find it easy to talk to their father about things. These differences were significant between all age groups. Overall 74.2% of 11-year-olds reported that they find it easy or very easy to talk to their father, as did 64.3% of 13-year-olds and 54.8% of 15-year-olds.

Country

The percentage of young people who reported that they find it easy to talk to their father was highest in Ireland (67.4%), followed by Wales (66.8%), England (64.5%) and Scotland (59.4%). Young people in Scotland reported that they find it significantly more difficult to talk to their father about things that really bother them than young people in Wales, Ireland and England. In addition young people in England were less likely to report easy communication with fathers than those in Ireland.

Family affluence

Those with high family affluence (66.8%) were most likely to report that they find it easy to talk to their father about things that really bother them, followed by those with medium (62.8%) and low family affluence (56.1%). All family affluence groups differed significantly from one another.

Table 4.9: Percentages of young people who reported easy or very easy communication with their father by gender, age, and country

		Gender											
		Male				Female				Both genders			
Age		11	13	15	All	11	13	15	All	11	13	15	All
England	Yes	77.4	73.8	65.0	72.3	66.3	54.2	49.7	57.1	71.7	63.8	57.2	64.5
	No	22.6	26.2	35.0	27.7	33.7	45.8	50.3	42.9	28.3	36.2	42.8	35.5
Ireland	Yes	83.8	76.3	66.1	74.4	69.9	60.3	50.4	60.1	76.2	68.8	58.9	67.4
	No	16.2	23.7	33.9	25.6	30.1	39.7	49.6	39.9	23.8	31.2	41.1	32.6
Scotland	Yes	80.9	71.1	56.8	68.6	65.5	50.3	38.0	50.4	72.9	60.6	47.6	59.4
	No	19.1	28.9	43.2	31.4	34.5	49.7	62.0	49.6	27.1	39.4	52.4	40.6
Wales	Yes	83.7	76.0	69.4	76.4	70.2	54.0	47.1	57.4	76.7	65.0	58.3	66.8
	No	16.3	24.0	30.6	23.6	29.8	46.0	52.9	42.6	23.3	35.0	41.7	33.2

Table 4.10: Percentages of young people who reported easy or very easy communication with their father, by family affluence, gender and country

		Gender							
		Male				Female			
FAS		Low	Medium	High	All	Low	Medium	High	All
England	Yes	66.1	68.2	73.5	71.4	42.6	55.3	59.4	57.0
	No	33.9	31.8	26.5	28.6	57.4	44.7	40.6	43.0
Ireland	Yes	67.2	73.7	77.8	74.4	50.5	60.4	63.7	60.2
	No	32.8	26.3	22.2	25.6	49.5	39.6	36.3	39.8
Scotland	Yes	64.4	67.2	70.8	68.5	42.4	51.0	52.0	50.2
	No	35.6	32.8	29.2	31.5	57.6	49.0	48.0	49.8
Wales	Yes	70.1	73.8	79.5	76.2	48.7	54.9	62.3	57.5
	No	29.9	26.2	20.5	23.8	51.3	45.1	37.7	42.5

OWN BEDROOM

Young people were asked if they had their own bedroom with response options ”Yes” and ”No”. The findings presented here are the percentages of young people who reported that they have their own bedroom.

Gender

No significant gender difference was found among young people reporting that they had their own bedroom (boys 81.0%, girls 81.2%).

Age

Older young people were significantly more likely to report that they had their own bedroom than were those in the younger age groups. These differences were significant between all age groups, with 77.6% of 11-year-olds having their own room compared to 81.1% of 13-year-olds and 84.4% of 15-year-olds.

Country

Young people in England were most likely to report that they had their own bedroom (85.5%), followed by those in Wales (83.8%), Scotland (80.4%) and Ireland (75.3%).

Table 4.11: Percentages of young people who reported that they have their own bedroom by gender, age and country

		Gender											
		Male				Female				Both genders			
Age		11	13	15	All	11	13	15	All	11	13	15	All
England	Yes	82.3	87.6	87.7	85.9	81.6	86.8	87.5	85.2	81.9	87.2	87.6	85.5
	No	17.7	12.4	12.3	14.1	18.4	13.2	12.5	14.8	18.1	12.8	12.4	14.5
Ireland	Yes	69.0	74.2	78.9	74.6	72.1	75.3	80.6	76.0	70.8	74.7	79.7	75.3
	No	31.0	25.8	21.1	25.4	27.9	24.7	19.4	24.0	29.2	25.3	20.3	24.7
Scotland	Yes	75.3	80.8	83.5	80.3	76.8	79.4	85.0	80.6	76.1	80.1	84.2	80.4
	No	24.7	19.2	16.5	19.7	23.2	20.6	15.0	19.4	23.9	19.9	15.8	19.6
Wales	Yes	80.4	85.6	86.6	84.3	82.1	81.1	87.6	83.4	81.3	83.3	87.1	83.8
	No	19.6	14.4	13.4	15.7	17.9	18.9	12.4	16.6	18.7	16.7	12.9	16.2

COMPUTER OWNERSHIP

Young people were asked how many computers their family owned. The response options were “None”, “One”, “Two” and “More than two”. The findings presented here are the percentages of young people who reported that they had at least one computer at home.

Gender

No significant gender difference was found for having one or more computers in one’s home (boys 96.1%, girls 95.7%).

Age

Overall 11-year-olds (95.0%) were significantly less likely to have at least one computer at home than were 13- (96.2%) and 15-year-olds (96.4%).

Country

Young people in England were most likely to report that they had at least one computer at home (98.1%), followed by Wales (97.4%), Scotland (96.5%) and Ireland (91.6%). All countries differed significantly from one another except for England and Wales.

Table 4.12: Percentages of young people who reported that they had one or more computers at their homes by gender, age and country

		Gender											
		Male				Female				Both genders			
Age		11	13	15	All	11	13	15	All	11	13	15	All
England	Yes	97.7	98.4	98.5	98.2	96.6	98.8	98.9	98.1	97.1	98.6	98.7	98.1
	No	2.3	1.6	1.5	1.8	3.4	1.2	1.1	1.9	2.9	1.4	1.3	1.9
Ireland	Yes	91.1	92.9	92.6	92.3	89.0	91.2	92.3	90.9	89.9	92.1	92.5	91.6
	No	8.9	7.1	7.4	7.7	11.0	8.8	7.7	9.1	10.1	7.9	7.5	8.4
Scotland	Yes	94.9	96.8	97.1	96.4	96.0	97.0	96.9	96.7	95.5	96.9	97.0	96.5
	No	5.1	3.2	2.9	3.6	4.0	3.0	3.1	3.3	4.5	3.1	3.0	3.5
Wales	Yes	97.8	97.4	98.2	97.8	96.7	97.1	97.6	97.1	97.2	97.3	97.9	97.4
	No	2.2	2.6	1.8	2.2	3.3	2.9	2.4	2.9	2.8	2.7	2.1	2.6

VEHICLE OWNERSHIP

Young people were asked if their family owns at least one or more cars (the question includes vans or trucks). The response options were “No”, “Yes, one” and “Yes, two or more”. The findings presented here are the percentages of young people who reported that their family has at least one vehicle.

Gender

No significant gender difference was found for having one or more vehicles in the family (boys 93.7%, girls 93.7%).

Age

There were no significant differences between age groups in relation to having one or more vehicles (11-year-olds 93.1%, 13-year-olds 93.7%, 15-year-olds 94.3%).

Country

Young people in England were most likely to report that their household owns one or more vehicles (96.0%), followed by Ireland (94.8%), Wales (94.0%) and Scotland (91.0%). The percentage of families of young people in Scotland who own cars was significantly lower than those in England, Ireland and Wales.

Table 4.13: Percentages of young people who reported that their family has one or more vehicle by gender, age and country

		Gender											
		Male				Female				Both genders			
Age		11	13	15	All	11	13	15	All	11	13	15	All
England	Yes	95.9	96.5	95.9	96.1	95.1	96.4	95.9	95.8	95.5	96.4	95.9	96.0
	No	4.1	3.5	4.1	3.9	4.9	3.6	4.1	4.2	4.5	3.6	4.1	4.0
Ireland	Yes	95.3	95.6	93.7	94.8	94.2	94.5	96.0	94.9	94.7	95.0	94.8	94.8
	No	4.7	4.4	6.3	5.2	5.8	5.5	4.0	5.1	5.3	5.0	5.2	5.2
Scotland	Yes	90.6	89.9	91.9	90.8	88.3	91.4	93.4	91.2	89.4	90.7	92.6	91.0
	No	9.4	10.1	8.1	9.2	11.7	8.6	6.6	8.8	10.6	9.3	7.4	9.0
Wales	Yes	93.3	94.1	94.7	94.1	93.9	93.2	94.6	93.8	93.6	93.6	94.6	94.0
	No	6.7	5.9	5.3	5.9	6.1	6.8	5.4	6.2	6.4	6.4	5.4	6.0

B. Peers

NUMBER OF MALE FRIENDS

Young people were asked about how many close male friends they have. The findings presented here are the percentages of young people who reported having three or more close male friends.

Gender

Boys (89.5%) were significantly more likely than girls (67.1%) to report that they had three or more close male friends.

Age

All age groups significantly differed from one another in the percentages of young people who reported that they had three or more close male friends. The highest percentage of participants who reported three or more close male friends was found among 13-year-olds (80.5%) followed by 15-year-olds (78.7%) and 11-year-olds (74.8%).

Country

The highest percentage of young people who reported three or more close male friends was in Scotland (79.0%), followed by Ireland (78.2%), Wales (77.9%) and England (77.2%). There were no significant differences between countries

Family affluence

Those with high family affluence (79.1%) were most likely to report that they had three or more close male friends, followed by those with medium (77.5%) and low family affluence (75.9%). The only significant difference was between the low family affluence and high family affluence groups.

Table 4.14: Percentages of young people who reported that they have three or more close male friends by gender, age and country

		Gender											
		Male				Female				Both genders			
Age		11	13	15	All	11	13	15	All	11	13	15	All
England	Yes	90.1	90.5	87.4	89.4	61.9	67.9	67.9	65.8	75.3	78.8	77.5	77.2
	No	9.9	9.5	12.6	10.6	38.1	32.1	32.1	34.2	24.7	21.2	22.5	22.8
Ireland	Yes	88.4	91.4	89.4	89.9	61.9	70.1	66.9	66.4	73.5	81.2	79.0	78.2
	No	11.6	8.6	10.6	10.1	38.1	29.9	33.1	33.6	26.5	18.8	21.0	21.8
Scotland	Yes	88.0	91.3	88.5	89.4	60.1	71.8	72.1	68.7	73.6	81.5	80.4	79.0
	No	12.0	8.7	11.5	10.6	39.9	28.2	27.9	31.3	26.4	18.5	19.6	21.0
Wales	Yes	88.2	91.1	87.8	89.1	66.7	69.1	65.7	67.2	76.8	79.9	76.7	77.9
	No	11.8	8.9	12.2	10.9	33.3	30.9	34.3	32.8	23.2	20.1	23.3	22.1

Table 4.15: Percentages of young people who reported that they have three or more close male friends by family affluence, gender and country

		Gender							
		Male				Female			
FAS		Low	Medium	High	All	Low	Medium	High	All
England	Yes	86.5	90.5	89.2	89.4	67.0	64.8	66.3	65.9
	No	13.5	9.5	10.8	10.6	33.0	35.2	33.7	34.1
Ireland	Yes	86.2	89.8	91.8	90.0	63.8	65.7	69.1	66.6
	No	13.8	10.2	8.2	10.0	36.2	34.3	30.9	33.4
Scotland	Yes	85.0	90.3	89.9	89.3	68.8	67.9	69.0	68.5
	No	15.0	9.7	10.1	10.7	31.2	32.1	31.0	31.5
Wales	Yes	86.6	87.6	91.2	89.2	67.9	66.1	67.7	67.1
	No	13.4	12.4	8.8	10.8	32.1	33.9	32.3	32.9

NUMBER OF FEMALE FRIENDS

Young people were asked about how many close female friends they had. The findings presented here are the percentages of young people who reported having three or more close female friends,

Gender

Girls (90.4%) were significantly more likely than boys (67.9%) to report that they had three or more close female friends

Age

All age groups significantly differed from one another in the percentages of young people who reported three or more close female friends. Overall 13-year-olds were most likely to report having three or more close female friends (81.8%) followed by 15-year-olds (79.9%) and 11-year-olds (76.6%).

Country

Young people in Ireland were most likely to report having three or more close female friends (80.6%), followed by those in England (79.8%), Wales (79.4%) and Scotland (78.7%). However, there were no significant differences between countries.

Family affluence

Those with high family affluence (80.5%) were most likely to report that they had three or more close female friends, followed by those with medium (79.5%) and low family affluence (76.2%). Those with low family affluence differed significantly those with high family affluence.

Table 4.16: Percentages of young people who reported that they have three or more close female friends by gender age and country

		Gender											
		Male				Female				Both genders			
Age		11	13	15	All	11	13	15	All	11	13	15	All
England	Yes	60.2	71.2	68.2	66.6	92.7	91.4	90.7	91.6	77.6	81.8	79.8	79.8
	No	39.8	28.8	31.8	33.4	7.3	8.6	9.3	8.4	22.4	18.2	20.2	20.2
Ireland	Yes	60.7	73.9	72.6	70.1	91.0	91.0	90.3	90.8	78.1	82.3	80.9	80.6
	No	39.3	26.1	27.4	29.9	9.0	9.0	9.7	9.2	21.9	17.7	19.1	19.4
Scotland	Yes	58.2	69.9	69.6	66.7	87.2	91.5	90.0	89.8	73.8	81.1	80.0	78.7
	No	41.8	30.1	30.4	33.3	12.8	8.5	10.0	10.2	26.2	18.9	20.0	21.3
Wales	Yes	62.5	72.1	70.2	68.5	89.8	91.4	86.9	89.5	77.1	82.1	78.7	79.4
	No	37.5	27.9	29.8	31.5	10.2	8.6	13.1	10.5	22.9	17.9	21.3	20.6

Table 4.17: Percentages of young people who reported that they have three or more close female friends by family affluence, gender and country

		Gender							
		Male				Female			
FAS		Low	Medium	High	All	Low	Medium	High	All
England	Yes	56.7	66.6	67.4	66.4	88.6	91.2	92.3	91.6
	No	43.3	33.4	32.6	33.6	11.4	8.8	7.7	8.4
Ireland	Yes	64.9	70.5	71.2	69.9	86.8	90.1	93.4	90.7
	No	35.1	29.5	28.8	30.1	13.2	9.9	6.6	9.3
Scotland	Yes	60.9	67.5	67.3	66.4	85.3	90.0	91.4	89.8
	No	39.1	32.5	32.7	33.6	14.7	10.0	8.6	10.2
Wales	Yes	68.1	66.7	69.9	68.4	89.9	87.8	90.6	89.3
	No	31.9	33.3	30.1	31.6	10.1	12.2	9.4	10.7

NUMBER OF CLOSE FRIENDS

Young people were asked about how many close friends of both genders they have. The findings presented in this section represent a combination of the responses to the questions on how many male friends and how many female friends.

Gender

Girls (95.4%) were significantly more likely than boys (94.3%) to report that they had three or more close friends.

Age

Overall 11-year-olds (93.2%) were significantly less likely than 13- (95.6%) and 15-year-olds (95.6%) to report that they have three or more close friends.

Country

The highest percentage of young people who reported three or more close friends was in England (95.4%), followed by Scotland (94.9%), Wales (94.94%) and Ireland (94.4%). However, there were no significant differences between countries.

Family affluence

Those with high family affluence (95.9%) were most likely to report having three or more close friends, followed by those with medium (94.7 %) and low family affluence (92.0%). All family affluence groups were significantly different from one another.

Table 4.18: Percentages of young people who reported that they have three or more close friends of either or both genders by gender, age and country

		Gender											
		Male				Female				Both genders			
Age		11	13	15	All	11	13	15	All	11	13	15	All
England	Yes	93.2	95.0	95.4	94.5	96.0	96.4	96.0	96.2	94.7	95.8	95.7	95.4
	No	6.8	5.0	4.6	5.5	4.0	3.6	4.0	3.8	5.3	4.2	4.3	4.6
Ireland	Yes	93.2	94.5	94.8	94.3	93.7	94.9	94.7	94.4	93.5	94.7	94.8	94.4
	No	6.8	5.5	5.2	5.7	6.3	5.1	5.3	5.6	6.5	5.3	5.2	5.6
Scotland	Yes	91.3	95.8	95.0	94.3	91.8	95.9	97.8	95.4	91.5	95.8	96.4	94.9
	No	8.7	4.2	5.0	5.7	8.2	4.1	2.2	4.6	8.5	4.2	3.6	5.1
Wales	Yes	91.8	95.3	94.7	94.0	94.7	96.9	95.8	95.8	93.3	96.1	95.3	94.9
	No	8.2	4.7	5.3	6.0	5.3	3.1	4.2	4.2	6.7	3.9	4.7	5.1

Table 4.19: Percentages of young people who reported that they have three or more close friends of either or both genders by family affluence, gender and country

		Gender							
		Male				Female			
FAS		Low	Medium	High	All	Low	Medium	High	All
England	Yes	93.5	95.5	94.3	94.6	92.8	95.5	97.1	96.2
	No	6.5	4.5	5.7	5.4	7.2	4.5	2.9	3.8
Ireland	Yes	90.7	93.5	97.0	94.4	90.9	94.4	96.2	94.5
	No	9.3	6.5	3.0	5.6	9.1	5.6	3.8	5.5
Scotland	Yes	90.7	94.7	95.4	94.4	92.8	95.9	96.2	95.5
	No	9.3	5.3	4.6	5.6	7.2	4.1	3.8	4.5
Wales	Yes	90.4	94.1	94.9	94.0	95.8	94.6	96.9	95.7
	No	9.6	5.9	5.1	6.0	4.2	5.4	3.1	4.3

TIME SPENT WITH FRIENDS AFTER SCHOOL

Young people were asked about how many days per week they spend time with their friends after school. The findings presented here are the percentages of young people who reported that they usually spend four or more days per week with friends after school.

Gender

Boys (42.8%) were significantly more likely than girls (34.8%) to report that they spend four or more days per week with friends after school.

Age

Overall 15-year-olds (35.1%) were significantly less likely to report that they spend four or more days per week with friends after school than 11- (39.6%) and 13-year-olds (41.3%).

Country

The percentage of young people who spend time after school with friends at least 4 days a week was significantly lower in England (33.1%), than those in Ireland (41.1%), Scotland (40.8%) and Wales (39.3%).

Family affluence

Those with low family affluence (46.8%) were most likely to report that they spend time after school with friends at least 4 days a week, followed by those with medium (38.7%) and high family affluence (35.6%). All family affluence groups differed significantly from one another.

Table 4.20: Percentages of young people who reported spending time with friends after school four or more times per week by gender, age and country

		Gender											
		Male				Female				Both genders			
Age		11	13	15	All	11	13	15	All	11	13	15	All
England	Yes	37.2	40.3	36.6	38.1	27.3	31.2	26.6	28.4	31.9	35.6	31.5	33.1
	No	62.8	59.7	63.4	61.9	72.7	68.8	73.4	71.6	68.1	64.4	68.5	66.9
Ireland	Yes	46.4	44.1	42.6	44.1	42.2	38.1	34.1	38.2	44.0	41.2	38.7	41.1
	No	53.6	55.9	57.4	55.9	57.8	61.9	65.9	61.8	56.0	58.8	61.3	58.9
Scotland	Yes	46.8	47.6	42.4	45.5	40.3	39.5	29.9	36.4	43.4	43.5	36.2	40.8
	No	53.2	52.4	57.6	54.5	59.7	60.5	70.1	63.6	56.6	56.5	63.8	59.2
Wales	Yes	41.1	48.1	38.4	42.7	38.5	41.3	27.4	36.0	39.7	44.6	32.9	39.3
	No	58.9	51.9	61.6	57.3	61.5	58.7	72.6	64.0	60.3	55.4	67.1	60.7

Table 4.21: Percentages of young people who reported spending time with friends after school four or more times per week by family affluence, gender and country

		Gender							
		Male				Female			
FAS		Low	Medium	High	All	Low	Medium	High	All
England	Yes	38.6	39.9	36.0	37.4	33.0	31.0	26.2	28.4
	No	61.4	60.1	64.0	62.6	67.0	69.0	73.8	71.6
Ireland	Yes	49.3	43.5	41.3	43.5	49.9	36.7	35.2	38.3
	No	50.7	56.5	58.7	56.5	50.1	63.3	64.8	61.7
Scotland	Yes	51.9	44.0	43.4	45.0	45.7	36.2	32.1	36.0
	No	48.1	56.0	56.6	55.0	54.3	63.8	67.9	64.0
Wales	Yes	51.0	42.6	40.1	42.4	44.3	34.7	33.8	35.7
	No	49.0	57.4	59.9	57.6	55.7	65.3	66.2	64.3

TIME SPENT WITH FRIENDS IN THE EVENINGS

Young people were asked about how many evenings per week they spend out with friends. Response options were, "0" to "7" evenings per week. The findings presented here are the percentages of young people who reported that they usually spend four or more evenings per week out with friends.

Gender

Boys (45.9%) were significantly more likely to spend four or more evenings per week out with friends than girls (36.6%).

Age

There were significant differences between all age groups in how often they reported that they spend four or more evenings out with friends; with 13-year-olds (43.9%) most likely to report that they spend four evenings or more with friends, followed by 15-year-olds (40.8%) and 11-year-olds (38.2%).

Country

The percentage of young people who spend time out with friends at least four evenings a week was significantly higher in Scotland (46.5%), followed by Wales (42.3%), Ireland (42.1%) and England (32.2%). All differences between countries were significant with the exception of the difference between Ireland and Wales.

Family affluence

Those with low family affluence (49.1%) were most likely to report that they spend time out with friends at least four evenings a week, followed by those with medium (42.2%) and high family affluence (37.6%). All family affluence groups differed significantly from one another.

Table 4.22: Percentages of young people who reported that they spent four or more evenings per week out with friends by gender, age and country

		Gender											
		Male				Female				Both genders			
Age		11	13	15	All	11	13	15	All	11	13	15	All
England	Yes	32.4	40.0	39.8	37.4	25.0	26.7	30.9	27.4	28.5	33.1	35.3	32.2
	No	67.6	60.0	60.2	62.6	75.0	73.3	69.1	72.6	71.5	66.9	64.7	67.8
Ireland	Yes	50.5	45.4	43.3	45.9	43.5	38.8	32.9	38.4	46.5	42.2	38.5	42.1
	No	49.5	54.6	56.7	54.1	56.5	61.2	67.1	61.6	53.5	57.8	61.5	57.9
Scotland	Yes	45.7	53.9	52.7	51.3	38.9	45.8	40.1	41.9	42.1	49.8	46.4	46.5
	No	54.3	46.1	47.3	48.7	61.1	54.2	59.9	58.1	57.9	50.2	53.6	53.5
Wales	Yes	41.8	52.3	46.8	47.2	32.3	45.4	34.2	37.5	36.9	48.8	40.5	42.3
	No	58.2	47.7	53.2	52.8	67.7	54.6	65.8	62.5	63.1	51.2	59.5	57.7

Table 4.23: Percentages of young people who reported that they spent four or more evenings per week out with friends by family affluence, gender and country

		Gender							
		Male				Female			
FAS		Low	Medium	High	All	Low	Medium	High	All
England	Yes	39.5	42.0	34.3	37.0	32.3	30.3	25.3	27.5
	No	60.5	58.0	65.7	63.0	67.7	69.7	74.7	72.5
Ireland	Yes	51.8	46.1	41.7	45.3	48.4	38.2	33.7	38.3
	No	48.2	53.9	58.3	54.7	51.6	61.8	66.3	61.7
Scotland	Yes	58.6	50.4	48.8	51.0	48.5	42.3	37.9	41.4
	No	41.4	49.6	51.2	49.0	51.5	57.7	62.1	58.6
Wales	Yes	54.9	48.0	45.0	47.4	44.7	36.6	36.6	37.8
	No	45.1	52.0	55.0	52.6	55.3	63.4	63.4	62.2

COMMUNICATION WITH BEST FRIEND

Young people were asked how easy they find it to talk to their best friend about the things that really bother them. Response options were “Very easy”, “Easy”, “Difficult”, “Very difficult” and “Don’t have or see this person”. The findings presented here are the percentages of young people who reported that they find communication with their best friend easy or very easy.

Gender

Girls (59.7%) were more likely to report that they found it easy to talk to their best friend about things that really bother them compared to boys (42.7%).

Age

Overall 15-year-olds (55.4%) were significantly more likely than 11- (49.1%) and 13-year-olds (49.6%) to report that they find it easy to talk to their best friend about things that really bother them.

Country

Young people in England were most likely to report that they find it easy to talk to their best friend about things that really bother them (54.2%) followed by those in Wales (51.4%), Scotland (50.2%) and Ireland (49.7%). Young people in England were significantly different from those in Ireland and Scotland. No other significant between-country differences were identified.

Family affluence

Those with high family affluence (53.7%) were most likely to report that they find it easy to talk to their best friend, followed by those with medium (50.2%) and low family affluence (48.1%). The high family affluence group differed significantly from the medium and low family affluence group.

Table 4.24: Percentages of young people who reported easy or very easy communication with their best friend by gender, age and country

		Gender											
		Male				Female				Both genders			
Age		11	13	15	All	11	13	15	All	11	13	15	All
England	Yes	44.8	44.6	51.7	46.9	54.8	59.5	69.8	61.0	50.0	52.4	61.0	54.2
	No	55.2	55.4	48.3	53.1	45.2	40.5	30.2	39.0	50.0	47.6	39.0	45.8
Ireland	Yes	41.4	36.0	41.9	39.5	55.9	58.8	64.9	59.9	49.7	46.9	52.7	49.7
	No	58.6	64.0	58.1	60.5	44.1	41.2	35.1	40.1	50.3	53.1	47.3	50.3
Scotland	Yes	42.5	37.8	43.6	41.2	52.4	58.5	64.0	58.7	47.8	48.3	53.8	50.2
	No	57.5	62.2	56.4	58.8	47.6	41.5	36.0	41.3	52.2	51.7	46.2	49.8
Wales	Yes	42.9	42.3	46.9	44.0	54.6	60.4	62.9	59.2	49.1	51.6	55.0	51.9
	No	57.1	57.7	53.1	56.0	45.4	39.6	37.1	40.8	50.9	48.4	45.0	48.1

Table 4.25: Percentages of young people who reported easy or very easy communication with their best friend by family affluence, gender and country

		Gender							
		Male				Female			
FAS		Low	Medium	High	All	Low	Medium	High	All
England	Yes	41.7	43.2	49.2	46.8	55.4	62.1	61.7	61.3
	No	58.3	56.8	50.8	53.2	44.6	37.9	38.3	38.7
Ireland	Yes	42.7	38.3	39.3	39.4	58.0	57.6	64.0	60.0
	No	57.3	61.7	60.7	60.6	42.0	42.4	36.0	40.0
Scotland	Yes	38.0	41.2	42.3	41.2	54.7	57.2	62.3	58.9
	No	62.0	58.8	57.7	58.8	45.3	42.8	37.7	41.1
Wales	Yes	41.4	41.6	46.7	44.0	50.0	59.4	62.4	59.3
	No	58.6	58.4	53.3	56.0	50.0	40.6	37.6	40.7

C. School

LIKING SCHOOL

Young people were asked how they feel about school at present. Response options ranged from “I like it a lot” to “I don’t like it at all”. The findings presented here are the percentages of young people who reported that they like school a lot.

Gender

Girls (30.1%) were significantly more likely than boys (24.2%) to report that they like school a lot.

Age

There were significant differences between all age groups in the percentages of young people reporting that they like school a lot. The percentages were higher for 11-year-olds (39.0%) than for 13-year-olds (25.7%) or 15-year-olds (17.9%).

Country

Young people in England were significantly more likely to report that they like school a lot (37.2%) compared to young people in Ireland (24.1%), Scotland (24.5%) and Wales (23.9%).

Family affluence

Young people with high family affluence (30.7%) were significantly more likely to report that they liked school a lot compared to those with medium (24.9%) and low family affluence (22.8%).

Table 4.26: Percentages of young people who reported that they like school a lot by gender, age and country

		Gender											
		Male				Female				Both genders			
Age		11	13	15	All	11	13	15	All	11	13	15	All
England	Yes	51.5	30.9	25.5	36.1	56.3	32.6	24.1	38.2	54.1	31.8	24.8	37.2
	No	48.5	69.1	74.5	63.9	43.7	67.4	75.9	61.8	45.9	68.2	75.2	62.8
Ireland	Yes	21.9	23.0	13.0	19.0	33.4	33.9	20.2	29.3	28.4	28.2	16.3	24.1
	No	78.1	77.0	87.0	81.0	66.6	66.1	79.8	70.7	71.6	71.8	83.7	75.9
Scotland	Yes	32.5	21.7	12.4	21.3	44.7	24.8	16.3	27.5	38.9	23.3	14.4	24.5
	No	67.5	78.3	87.6	78.7	55.3	75.2	83.7	72.5	61.1	76.7	85.6	75.5
Wales	Yes	30.3	18.9	17.3	22.3	36.1	21.1	19.0	25.6	33.3	20.0	18.2	23.9
	No	69.7	81.1	82.7	77.7	63.9	78.9	81.0	74.4	66.7	80.0	81.8	76.1

Table 4.27: Percentages of young people who reported that they like school a lot by family affluence, gender and country

		Gender							
		Male				Female			
FAS		Low	Medium	High	All	Low	Medium	High	All
England	Yes	24.7	32.8	39.2	36.1	30.9	33.5	42.0	38.3
	No	75.3	67.2	60.8	63.9	69.1	66.5	58.0	61.7
Ireland	Yes	19.4	17.8	21.4	19.4	24.3	30.6	31.4	29.8
	No	80.6	82.2	78.6	80.6	75.7	69.4	68.6	70.2
Scotland	Yes	22.4	19.4	22.3	21.2	22.1	25.3	31.8	27.6
	No	77.6	80.6	77.7	78.8	77.9	74.7	68.2	72.4
Wales	Yes	18.9	20.7	23.2	21.7	23.4	23.4	28.3	25.5
	No	81.1	79.3	76.8	78.3	76.6	76.6	71.7	74.5

PERCEIVED SCHOOL PERFORMANCE

Young people were asked to report what, in their opinion, their class teacher(s) think about their school performance compared to their classmates. Response options ranged from “Very good” to “Below average”. The findings presented here are the percentages of young people who reported their perceived school performance as good or very good compared to their classmates.

Gender

Girls (73.9%) were significantly more likely than boys (67.8%) to report that they perceive their school performance is good or very good compared to their classmates.

Age

There were significant differences between all age groups in the percentages of young people who reported that they perceived their school performance is good compared to their classmates. This was lowest in the older age groups (11-year-olds 77.4%; 13-year-olds 70.7%; 15-year-olds 65.1%).

Country

A significantly lower percentage of young people in Scotland (67.2%) reported that they perceived their school performance is good compared to their classmates than young people in England (72.1%), Ireland (72.6%) and Wales (72.8%).

Family affluence

Those with high family affluence (74.2%) were most likely to report that they perceived their school performance is good compared to their classmates, followed by those with medium (70.2%) and low family affluence (63.6%). All family affluence groups differed significantly from one another.

Table 4.28: Percentages of young people who reported good or very good perceived school performance compared to their classmates by gender, age and country

		Gender											
		Male				Female				Both genders			
Age		11	13	15	All	11	13	15	All	11	13	15	All
England	Yes	76.0	68.4	65.9	70.1	79.7	74.5	66.7	73.9	78.0	71.6	66.3	72.1
	No	24.0	31.6	34.1	29.9	20.3	25.5	33.3	26.1	22.0	28.4	33.7	27.9
Ireland	Yes	76.9	67.9	60.6	67.4	84.5	78.2	71.2	77.9	81.2	72.8	65.5	72.6
	No	23.1	32.1	39.4	32.6	15.5	21.8	28.8	22.1	18.8	27.2	34.5	27.4
Scotland	Yes	70.4	67.0	58.7	64.9	76.8	69.3	63.7	69.4	73.8	68.2	61.2	67.2
	No	29.6	33.0	41.3	35.1	23.2	30.7	36.3	30.6	26.2	31.8	38.8	32.8
Wales	Yes	73.2	70.3	65.5	69.8	81.3	71.8	73.8	75.7	77.3	71.1	69.7	72.8
	No	26.8	29.7	34.5	30.2	18.7	28.2	26.2	24.3	22.7	28.9	30.3	27.2

Table 4.29: Percentages of young people who reported good or very good perceived school performance compared to their classmates by family affluence, gender and country

		Gender							
		Male				Female			
FAS		Low	Medium	High	All	Low	Medium	High	All
England	Yes	61.6	65.0	73.8	70.2	65.8	71.2	76.5	73.8
	No	38.4	35.0	26.2	29.8	34.2	28.8	23.5	26.2
Ireland	Yes	62.3	68.5	71.3	68.6	73.2	79.5	80.0	78.7
	No	37.7	31.5	28.7	31.4	26.8	20.5	20.0	21.3
Scotland	Yes	56.8	65.3	68.2	65.2	61.8	68.1	73.9	69.6
	No	43.2	34.7	31.8	34.8	38.2	31.9	26.1	30.4
Wales	Yes	61.0	67.6	73.3	69.5	67.8	75.0	78.5	75.4
	No	39.0	32.4	26.7	30.5	32.2	25.0	21.5	24.6

PRESSURED BY SCHOOL WORK

Young people were asked how pressured they feel by the schoolwork they have to do. Response options ranged from “A lot” to “Not at all”. The findings presented here are the percentages of young people who reported feeling a lot pressured by their schoolwork.

Gender

Girls (20.9%) were significantly more likely to report that they feel pressured by schoolwork than boys (18.5%).

Age

There were significant differences between all age groups in the percentages of young people who reported that they perceive themselves to be pressured by schoolwork. The percentage of young people who perceive this pressure is highest in the older age groups (11-year-olds 13.2%; 13-year-olds 15.7%; 15-year-olds 28.5%).

Country

All countries differed significantly from one another in the percentage of young people who report that they feel pressured by schoolwork, except for Ireland and Wales. Young people in England (25.3%) feel the most pressured followed by those in Wales (21.1%), Ireland (21.0%) and Scotland (12.5%).

Family affluence

Those with low family affluence (20.4%) were most likely to report that they feel pressured by schoolwork, followed by those with medium (19.6%) and high family affluence (19.4%). However the family affluence groups did not differ significantly from one another.

Table 4.30: Percentages of young people who reported that they feel pressured by school work a lot by gender age and country

		Gender											
		Male				Female				Both genders			
Age		11	13	15	All	11	13	15	All	11	13	15	All
England	Yes	20.8	19.6	30.5	23.6	17.0	20.6	43.4	26.9	18.7	20.1	37.3	25.3
	No	79.2	80.4	69.5	76.4	83.0	79.4	56.6	73.1	81.3	79.9	62.7	74.7
Ireland	Yes	9.2	20.7	25.1	20.0	8.4	19.1	34.3	22.1	8.8	20.0	29.6	21.0
	No	90.8	79.3	74.9	80.0	91.6	80.9	65.7	77.9	91.2	80.0	70.4	79.0
Scotland	Yes	9.4	9.7	12.4	10.7	11.4	9.1	19.7	14.2	10.4	9.4	16.3	12.5
	No	90.6	90.3	87.6	89.3	88.6	90.9	80.3	85.8	89.6	90.6	83.7	87.5
Wales	Yes	14.0	15.2	33.0	21.1	12.3	11.8	38.4	21.1	13.1	13.4	35.8	21.1
	No	86.0	84.8	67.0	78.9	87.7	88.2	61.6	78.9	86.9	86.6	64.2	78.9

Table 4.31: Percentages of young people who reported that they feel pressured by school work a lot by family affluence, gender and country

		Gender							
		Male				Female			
FAS		Low	Medium	High	All	Low	Medium	High	All
England	Yes	29.1	23.8	22.9	23.6	22.2	30.3	25.5	26.8
	No	70.9	76.2	77.1	76.4	77.8	69.7	74.5	73.2
Ireland	Yes	23.9	19.0	18.0	19.4	21.0	20.9	23.9	22.0
	No	76.1	81.0	82.0	80.6	79.0	79.1	76.1	78.0
Scotland	Yes	13.8	9.4	10.6	10.6	17.1	15.1	12.2	14.2
	No	86.2	90.6	89.4	89.4	82.9	84.9	87.8	85.8
Wales	Yes	24.6	20.4	20.3	20.9	20.6	21.7	20.7	21.1
	No	75.4	79.6	79.7	79.1	79.4	78.3	79.3	78.9

CLASSMATES KIND AND HELPFUL

Young people were asked to show how much they agreed or disagreed with the statement: “Most of the students in my class(es) are kind and helpful”. Response options ranged from “Strongly agree” to “Strongly disagree”. The findings presented here are the percentages of young people who either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement.

Gender

Girls (69.3%) were significantly more likely than boys (64.0%) to report that their classmates are kind and helpful.

Age

There were significant differences between all age groups in the percentage of young people who reported that their classmates are kind and helpful. Younger respondents were most likely to agree that their classmates are kind and helpful: 11-year-olds (77.3%); 13-year-olds (63.9%); 15-year-olds (60.1%).

Country

All countries differed significantly from one another in the percentage of participants agreeing that their classmates are kind and helpful, except for Ireland and Scotland. Young people in England were most likely to agree (73.8%), followed by those in Ireland (68.3%), Scotland (66.8%) and Wales (57.7%).

Family affluence

Those with low family affluence (63.1%) were significantly less likely to report that their classmates are kind and helpful than those with medium (66.6%) and high family affluence (68.3%).

Table 4.32: Percentages strongly of young people who reported that they strongly agreed or agreed that their classmates are kind and helpful by gender, age and country

		Gender											
		Male				Female				Both genders			
Age		11	13	15	All	11	13	15	All	11	13	15	All
England	Yes	79.0	66.2	68.4	71.1	84.3	71.8	72.0	76.2	81.8	69.1	70.2	73.8
	No	21.0	33.8	31.6	28.9	15.7	28.2	28.0	23.8	18.2	30.9	29.8	26.2
Ireland	Yes	78.3	62.5	52.7	62.7	84.0	73.3	64.6	74.0	81.5	67.7	58.2	68.3
	No	21.7	37.5	47.3	37.3	16.0	26.7	35.4	26.0	18.5	32.3	41.8	31.7
Scotland	Yes	81.4	66.6	55.5	66.6	84.4	62.7	57.4	67.1	83.0	64.6	56.4	66.8
	No	18.6	33.4	44.5	33.4	15.6	37.3	42.6	32.9	17.0	35.4	43.6	33.2
Wales	Yes	59.4	50.9	55.2	55.1	64.9	55.3	60.5	60.2	62.2	53.2	57.9	57.7
	No	40.6	49.1	44.8	44.9	35.1	44.7	39.5	39.8	37.8	46.8	42.1	42.3

Table 4.33: Percentages of young people who reported that they strongly agreed or agreed that their classmates are kind and helpful by family affluence, gender and country

		Gender							
		Male				Female			
FAS		Low	Medium	High	All	Low	Medium	High	All
England	Yes	64.9	67.9	73.4	71.1	71.4	73.1	78.6	76.2
	No	35.1	32.1	26.6	28.9	28.6	26.9	21.4	23.8
Ireland	Yes	62.8	65.1	60.6	63.0	76.1	74.1	73.4	74.2
	No	37.2	34.9	39.4	37.0	23.9	25.9	26.6	25.8
Scotland	Yes	58.0	69.0	67.3	66.5	63.2	67.1	68.7	67.2
	No	42.0	31.0	32.7	33.5	36.8	32.9	31.3	32.8
Wales	Yes	51.3	53.2	57.1	54.8	58.4	61.3	60.9	60.7
	No	48.7	46.8	42.9	45.2	41.6	38.7	39.1	39.3

CLASSMATES ACCEPT ME

Young people were asked if they felt their "classmates accepted them as they are". Responses ranged from "Strongly agree" to "Strongly disagree". The findings presented here are the percentages of young people who either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement.

Gender

Boys (78.4%) and girls (77.1%) did not significantly differ on whether they agreed that other classmates accept them as they are.

Age

Overall 11-year-olds (81.8%) were significantly more likely than 13- (76.9%) and 15-year-olds (75.0%) to report that they agreed that other classmates accept them as they are.

Country

All countries differed significantly from one another in the percentage of young people who agreed that other classmates accept them as they are, with the exception of England and Ireland. The rates of agreement were highest among young people in England (80.7%), followed by those in Ireland (80.1%), Scotland (77.8%) and Wales (72.2%).

Family affluence

Those with high family affluence (79.7%) were most likely to report that other classmates accept them as they are, followed by those with medium (77.2%) and low family affluence (73.6%). All family affluence groups differed significantly from one another.

Table 4.34: Percentages of young people who reported that their classmates accept them as they are by gender, age and country

		Gender											
		Male				Female				Both genders			
Age		11	13	15	All	11	13	15	All	11	13	15	All
England	Yes	83.9	76.9	79.2	80.0	87.3	77.6	79.2	81.4	85.8	77.3	79.2	80.7
	No	16.1	23.1	20.8	20.0	12.7	22.4	20.8	18.6	14.2	22.7	20.8	19.3
Ireland	Yes	84.9	82.1	77.1	80.9	83.8	78.9	75.0	79.2	84.3	80.6	76.1	80.1
	No	15.1	17.9	22.9	19.1	16.2	21.1	25.0	20.8	15.7	19.4	23.9	19.9
Scotland	Yes	84.6	79.4	74.7	79.1	84.8	76.0	70.3	76.5	84.7	77.6	72.5	77.8
	No	15.4	20.6	25.3	20.9	15.2	24.0	29.7	23.5	15.3	22.4	27.5	22.2
Wales	Yes	71.3	72.4	76.4	73.3	73.1	69.9	70.3	71.1	72.2	71.1	73.4	72.2
	No	28.7	27.6	23.6	26.7	26.9	30.1	29.7	28.9	27.8	28.9	26.6	27.8

Table 4.35: Percentages of young people who reported that their classmates accept them as they are by family affluence, gender and country

		Gender							
		Male				Female			
FAS		Low	Medium	High	All	Low	Medium	High	All
England	Yes	71.1	77.5	82.3	80.0	75.9	80.0	82.7	81.2
	No	28.9	22.5	17.7	20.0	24.1	20.0	17.3	18.8
Ireland	Yes	80.2	82.5	78.9	80.8	75.9	79.8	80.4	79.4
	No	19.8	17.5	21.1	19.2	24.1	20.2	19.6	20.6
Scotland	Yes	74.4	79.5	80.3	79.0	72.3	74.3	80.3	76.5
	No	25.6	20.5	19.7	21.0	27.7	25.7	19.7	23.5
Wales	Yes	72.7	72.1	75.9	74.0	64.6	70.9	74.4	71.5
	No	27.3	27.9	24.1	26.0	35.4	29.1	25.6	28.5

BEING BULLIED

Young people were asked how often they had been bullied at school in the past couple of months. The question was preceded by the following definition of bullying:

> "We say a student is being bullied when another student, or a group of students, say or do nasty and unpleasant things to him or her. It is also bullying when a student is teased repeatedly in a way he or she does not like or when he or she is deliberately left out of things. But it is **not** bullying when two students of about the same strength or power argue or fight. It is also **not** bullying when a student is teased in a friendly and playful way."

Response options ranged from "I was not bullied at school in the past couple of months" to "Several times a week". The findings presented here are the percentages of young people who reported being bullied at least twice at school in the past couple of months.

Gender

No significant gender difference was found in how often young people reported that they had been bullied (boys 10.2%; girls 9.3%).

Age

Those aged 15- (8.1%) were significantly less likely to report that they were bullied than 11- (10.9%) and 13-year-olds (10.3%).

Country

Young people in Wales were significantly more likely to report that they had been bullied (11.4%) than those in England (9.7%), Ireland (8.6%) and Scotland (9.4%).

Family affluence

Those with low family affluence (12.3%) were more likely to report that they had been bullied than those with medium (9.5%) and high family affluence (8.8%).

Table 4.36: Percentages of young people who reported that they have been bullied at least twice at school in the past couple of months by gender, age and country

		Gender											
		Male				Female				Both genders			
Age		11	13	15	All	11	13	15	All	11	13	15	All
England	Yes	11.4	12.4	8.6	10.9	9.2	9.0	7.7	8.7	10.2	10.6	8.1	9.7
	No	88.6	87.6	91.4	89.1	90.8	91.0	92.3	91.3	89.8	89.4	91.9	90.3
Ireland	Yes	10.8	10.2	9.0	9.9	7.8	7.1	7.2	7.3	9.1	8.7	8.2	8.6
	No	89.2	89.8	91.0	90.1	92.2	92.9	92.8	92.7	90.9	91.3	91.8	91.4
Scotland	Yes	10.6	10.4	7.3	9.3	10.2	11.7	6.7	9.5	10.4	11.1	7.0	9.4
	No	89.4	89.6	92.7	90.7	89.8	88.3	93.3	90.5	89.6	88.9	93.0	90.6
Wales	Yes	13.2	11.2	8.7	11.1	14.2	9.9	10.8	11.7	13.7	10.6	9.8	11.4
	No	86.8	88.8	91.3	88.9	85.8	90.1	89.2	88.3	86.3	89.4	90.2	88.6

Table 4.37: Percentages of young people who reported that they have been bullied at least twice at school in the past couple of months by family affluence, gender and country

		Gender							
		Male				Female			
FAS		Low	Medium	High	All	Low	Medium	High	All
England	Yes	13.7	10.9	10.1	10.6	10.8	9.4	8.0	8.7
	No	86.3	89.1	89.9	89.4	89.2	90.6	92.0	91.3
Ireland	Yes	9.9	9.1	10.6	9.8	7.7	7.3	6.7	7.2
	No	90.1	90.9	89.4	90.2	92.3	92.7	93.3	92.8
Scotland	Yes	11.8	8.9	8.5	9.2	14.6	8.8	8.2	9.5
	No	88.2	91.1	91.5	90.8	85.4	91.2	91.8	90.5
Wales	Yes	14.5	11.7	9.5	11.0	16.5	11.6	9.1	11.3
	No	85.5	88.3	90.5	89.0	83.5	88.4	90.9	88.7

SUMMARY: SOCIAL CONTEXTS OF HEALTH

Families: As noted earlier the quality of communication within families is likely to be an important factor in creating positive emotional well-being among young people. The majority of all young people across all countries reported finding it easy or very easy to talk to their mothers about issues that really bother them. Proportionately more young people found communication with their mother easy compared to communication with fathers. However reported ease of communication with both mothers and fathers is significantly lower in older age groups. Ease of talking to fathers reveals some important gender based and cultural patterns across the countries.

Communication with fathers appears to be significantly easier for boys and younger age groups than for girls and especially older girls. Young people in Ireland were more likely to report that they could talk to their fathers about issues that concerned them, than in the countries of Great Britain. Increasingly health and social policy across the countries aims to enhance support for parents; effective communication with older adolescents is likely to represent an important area for further research and intervention development.

Access to material resources within a family has important implications for young people's life experiences and attainment; computer access for example is increasingly associated with school attainment. The majority of young people across all countries lived in families that own a vehicle, have their own bedroom and have access to a computer. Young people in Ireland were the least likely to have their own bedroom or own a computer.

Peers and friendships: Young people's close friendship groups are gendered in so far as boys are more likely to have three or more male friends and girls to have three or more female friends. However, girls with lower family affluence were less likely to have three or more female friends than those with medium or high family affluence. Overall more than 90% of young people across the four countries reported that they had three of more close friends.

In terms of support offered by friends, more girls than boys reported that it was easy for them to talk to their best friend about issues that really bothered them. Young people in England and Wales were more likely to feel that they could talk to their best friend about problems than in Ireland and Scotland.

Analysis of the frequency of spending time with friends reveals age-related, gender, country and family affluence differences. Across all countries boys were more likely to spend four or more evenings a week with friends after school than girls. However,

regular after school contact with friends was less common in the older age groups and the amount of time spent with friends after school was lower in England than other countries and lower among high family affluence groups. These differences may reflect different social, community and gendered attitudes towards young people occupying street and public spaces.

School: Perceptions of school were most differentiated by age, in that reported liking school was lower in the older age groups, for example at age eleven 51.5% of boys in England liked school a lot but among those aged 15 this was 25.5%. Key elements of school life may also be experienced more negatively as young people age, for example perceptions that classmates were kind and helpful was lowest in the older age groups.

However, there were also significant differences in responses to overall perceptions of school among young people by country and family affluence. For example young people in England and those with higher family affluence across all countries were more likely report that they enjoyed school a lot and that their classmates were kind and helpful than those in the other three countries and particularly those with lower family affluence.

In terms of peer relationships within school, the majority of young people felt that their classmates were kind and helpful, accepted them and the majority had not recently been bullied. Although bullying is lower in the older age groups, and did not differ by gender, those with lower family affluence were more likely to report having experienced bullying recently than those with high or medium family affluence. In addition a significantly higher percentage of young people in Wales (11.4%) reported that they had been bullied than young people in England (9.7%), Ireland (8.6%) and Scotland (9.4%).

Schoolwork inevitably brings some degree of pressure for young people, while coping with external demands can be positive, excessive pressure can be damaging to young people's emotional health. Although the majority of young people across all countries did not feel overly pressured by schoolwork, significant country differences emerged; just over 25% of young people in England felt pressured by schoolwork compared to 12.5% in Scotland. There were no significant differences by family affluence in how much young people felt pressured by schoolwork.

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