

2023

DATA BASED ON ICSRA DATA

# Growing up in Highland

## Planet Youth in Highland

### Survey Results 2023



# Growing Up in Highland

Results from the Planet Youth surveys, completed by 348 S4 pupils, in 5 Highland secondary schools, in Autumn 2023.

## Substance Use

**25%** have tried smoking

**14%** have tried cannabis

**39%** have tried vaping

**27%** vaped in last month

**25%** have tried smoking

**22%** have been drunk in the last month

**60%** have had alcohol in their own home

**54%** get alcohol from a family member

**6%** have tried other drugs

## Family

**92%** said it was easy or very easy to receive caring & warmth from their parents / carers

**83%** of parents / carers know where their child is on Saturday evenings

**67%** often or always spend time with their parents / carers at the weekends

Teenagers whose parents are less disapproving of drunkenness are more than x3 as likely to get drunk

## Screen Time

**58%** spent three hours or more on social media daily

**29%** of girls and

**17%** of boys reported being bullied online

Those that have been bullied online are more than twice as likely to report poor mental health

## Wellbeing

**54%** of boys and **34%** of girls reported their mental health as good or very good

**36%** reported self harm once or more

**55%** are not getting the recommended amount of sleep

**61%** reported good or very good physical health

## Leisure Time & Peers

**19%** were outside after midnight in the last week

Most young people didn't feel they had to drink, smoke or use cannabis to fit in with their group of friends

Young people over estimated the number of their friends that smoke, have been drunk, and use drugs

## Sexual Health & Behaviour

**17%** have sent a sexually explicit image through social media

**13%** of boys and

**8%** of girls reported using pornography as a source of information to learn about sex

## School Experience

**64%** reported feeling safe in school often or almost always

**64%** agree or strongly agree they try their best at school

## FOREWORD

The Planet Youth, Icelandic Prevention Model, focusses on primary prevention for all and uses a whole-systems approach to match the scale of the solution to the scale of the problem, which aligns with our values and priorities.

The survey results highlight the young people's experience of growing up in the Highlands. There are things to celebrate. The majority of the young people said it was easy or very easy to receive caring and warmth from their parents or carers, that they agree or strongly agree that they have supportive friends at school, and that they don't feel they have to drink, smoke or use cannabis to fit in with their group of friends.

However, there are also areas for improvement. The data show us that the mental health of our young people is low, that many of them are not getting enough sleep, that many young people are spending more than six hours on social media daily and that substance use is still prevalent in young people and starts at a young age. Adolescence is a time where our young people start to exert their independence, learn what they are capable of and are more likely to experiment with risk taking behaviours. As adults, we have a responsibility to provide an environment where they can do this in the safest way possible.

The Planet Youth in Highland Local Action Groups will work collaboratively to review the local data. They will then agree upon the community priorities and work towards increasing the protective factors in the lives of young people. Increasing protective factors in various domains of young peoples' lives, such as family, peers, school and leisure, can help to delay and reduce substance use and other risk taking behaviours by providing and promoting healthier alternatives.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We wish to express our thanks and gratitude to the teachers and other staff who organised the data collection phase of the model, and supported the completion of the surveys. More so, we wish to thank the young people for completing the survey, and doing this so honestly. We will strive to ensure the results will help inform improvements for young people in the Highlands.

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## INTRODUCTION

## What is Planet Youth

Planet Youth is an international, evidence based, primary prevention model developed in Iceland that has reduced substance use rates and increased physical and mental health outcomes amongst young people.

## What is a Public Health Approach

Planet Youth is an example of a public health approach. A public health approach helps us to understand:

- the epidemiology (the frequency and patterns of health and poor health);
- the risk and protective factors for substance use in the population, in this case young people in the Highlands;
- how we can work to prevent and delay risk taking behaviours including substance use
- how to improve support for those who are impacted.

## Planet Youth in Highland

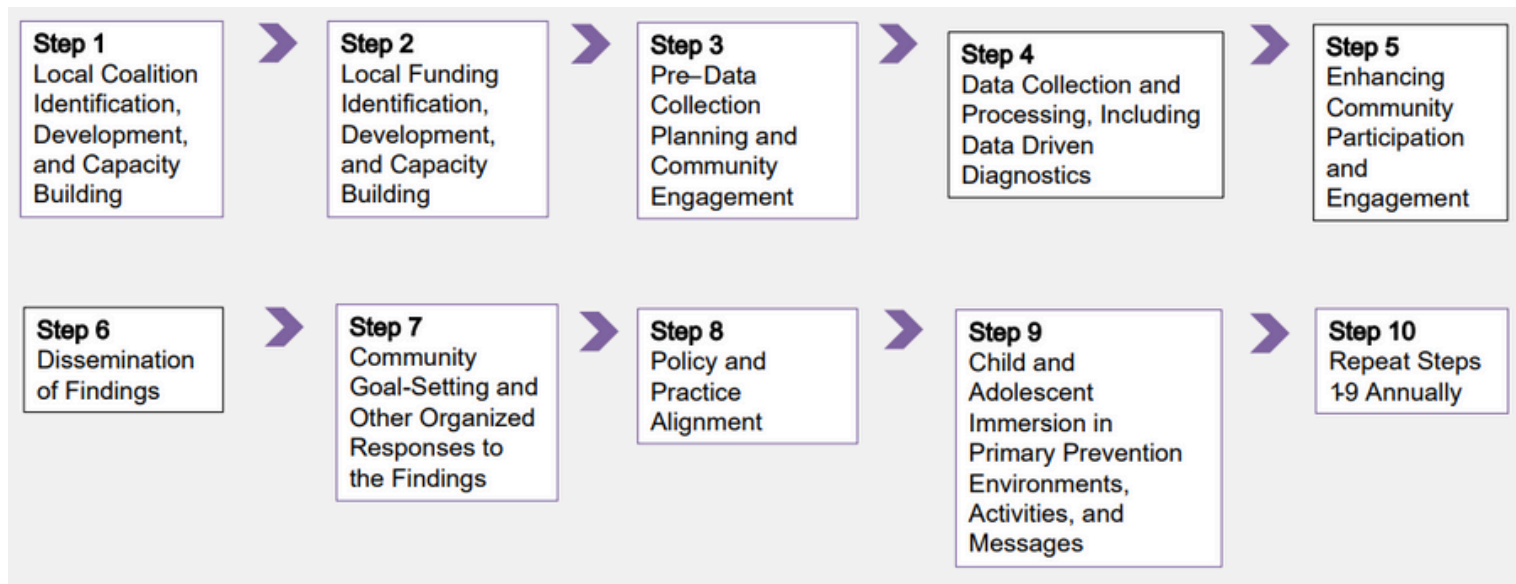
Highland is one of six pilot sites of the Planet Youth model across Scotland. Winning Scotland are coordinating the pilot. Highland has five secondary schools involved in the pilot.

## Guiding Principles & Core Steps

Planet Youth is guided by 5 key principles:

- 1 Apply a primary prevention approach** that is designed to enhance the social environment.
- 2 Emphasise community action** and embrace public schools as the natural hub of the neighbourhood / area efforts to support child and adolescent health, learning, and life success.
- 3 Engage and empower community members** to make practical decisions using local, high quality, accessible data and diagnostics.
- 4 Integrate researchers, policy makers, practitioners, and community members** into a unified team dedicated to solving complex, real-world problems.
- 5 Match the scope of the solution to the scope of the problem**, including emphasising long-term intervention and efforts to marshal adequate community resources.

There are 10 core steps of the Planet Youth model:



This report highlights some of the data findings from Step 4, in which anonymous health behaviour surveys were completed by 348 S4 pupils from five Highland secondary schools, in autumn 2023. The data monitors alcohol, tobacco and other drug use over time, and identifies factors that affect risk of alcohol, tobacco and other drug use. The report focuses on Step 6, *Dissemination of the Survey Findings* and will support subsequent steps in the process.

#### GOAL ONE

**Identify local risk and protective factors linked with alcohol, tobacco and other drug use**

#### GOAL TWO

**Using data, set strategic actions, tailored to the area, to support protective factors and reduce risk factors**

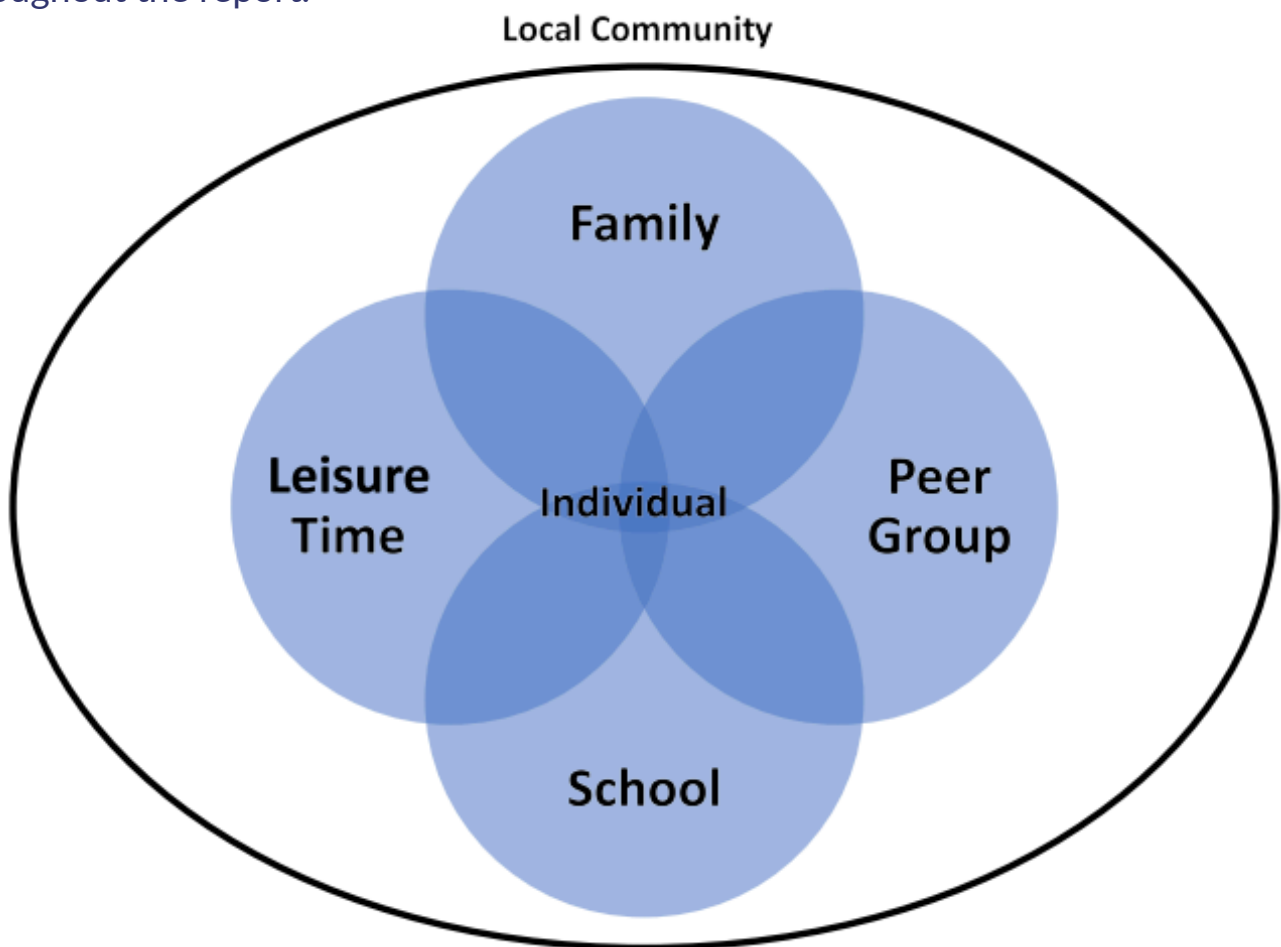
## Risk and Protective Factors

The survey that the young people complete includes questions about their health and wellbeing, and covers a wide range of topics that are related to risk and protective factors for alcohol, tobacco and other drug use in society.

There are four main areas, with known risk and protective factors, in young people's lives:

- parents / carers and family
- school
- peer group
- leisure time.

Each child is a product of four domains within their local community which is where most young people spend the vast majority of their time. Increasing protective factors can improve the physical and mental health outcomes of young people and help reduce risk taking behaviours such as starting to use substances at a young age, bullying, anti-social behaviour and early sexual relationships. Risk and protective factors will be highlighted throughout the report.



## Survey

All the pupils in Highland were from S4. In total, there were 348 young people who completed the survey.

Across Scotland 5,933 young people took part in the survey, however following Planet Youth's data cleaning process 94 records were removed. This was because there were large amounts of missing data (young people could 'skip', and therefore not answer, any questions they chose to), implausible response patterns, or because they reported use of a fictitious drug. This data cleaning process reassures us that what young people are reporting is a true reflection of their experience.

There were 88 questions asked in the survey. Initially we have focused on areas that Planet Youth advised as priorities.

Sometimes, percentages in the report may not add up to exactly 100%. This is due to rounding figures to the nearest whole number.

Where results have been split by gender, the young people that identified as non-conforming, other, or preferred not to say are not included due to small numbers and to protect against unintended disclosure.

Highland is part of a national pilot of Planet Youth in Scotland. There are five other local authority areas involved, and the pilot is being led by Winning Scotland.



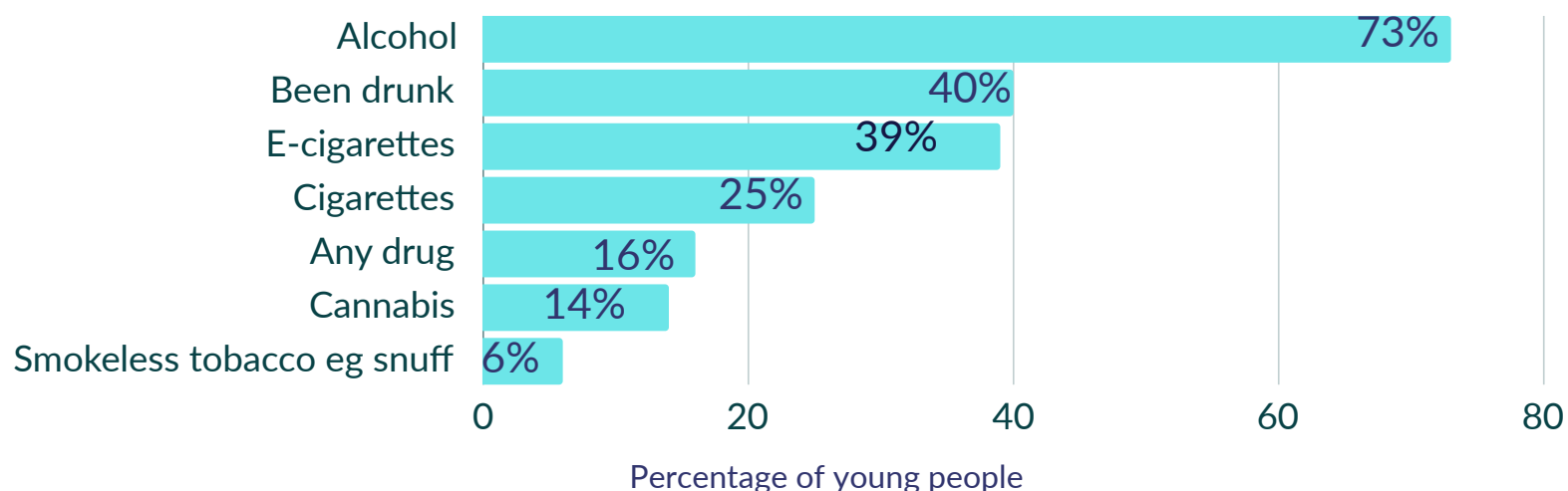


# Survey Results: Substance Use and Peer Group

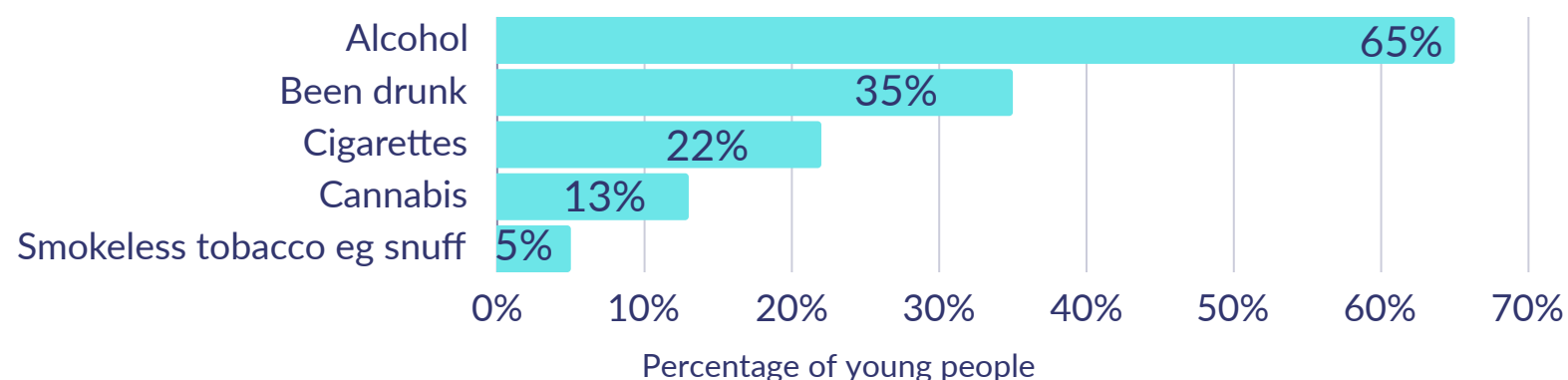
## Alcohol, tobacco and other drug use

Young people were asked if they had ever used substances in their lifetime, in the last 12 months, and in the last 30 days, as shown in the following graphs:

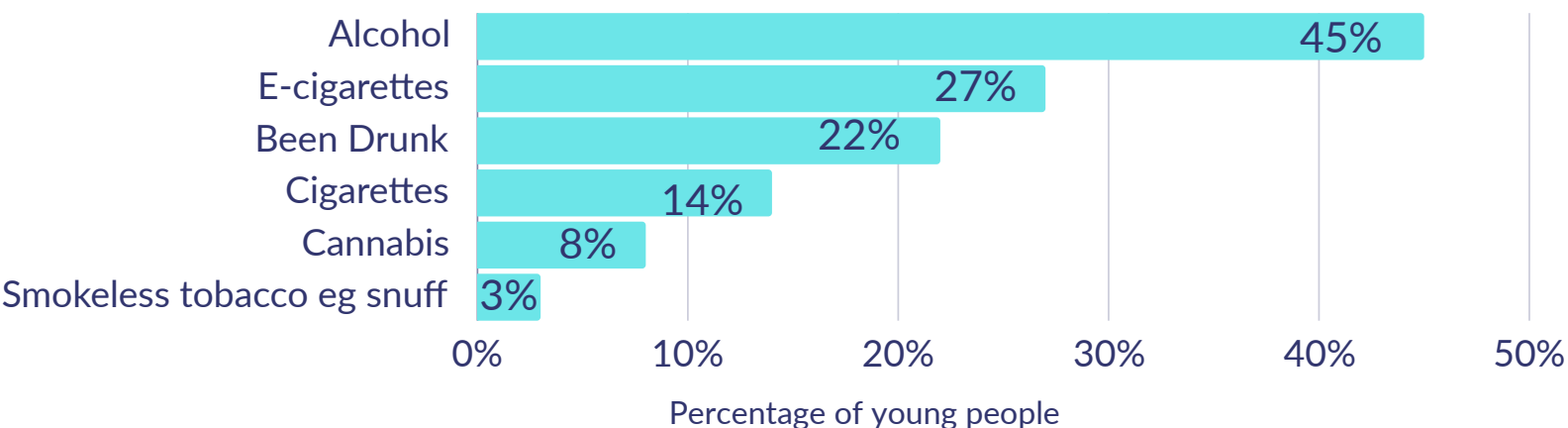
Substance use in lifetime (Smokeless tobacco not recorded in 2021 survey)



Substance use in last 12 months (Smokeless tobacco not recorded in 2021 survey)



Substance use in last 30 days (Smokeless tobacco not recorded in 2021 survey)

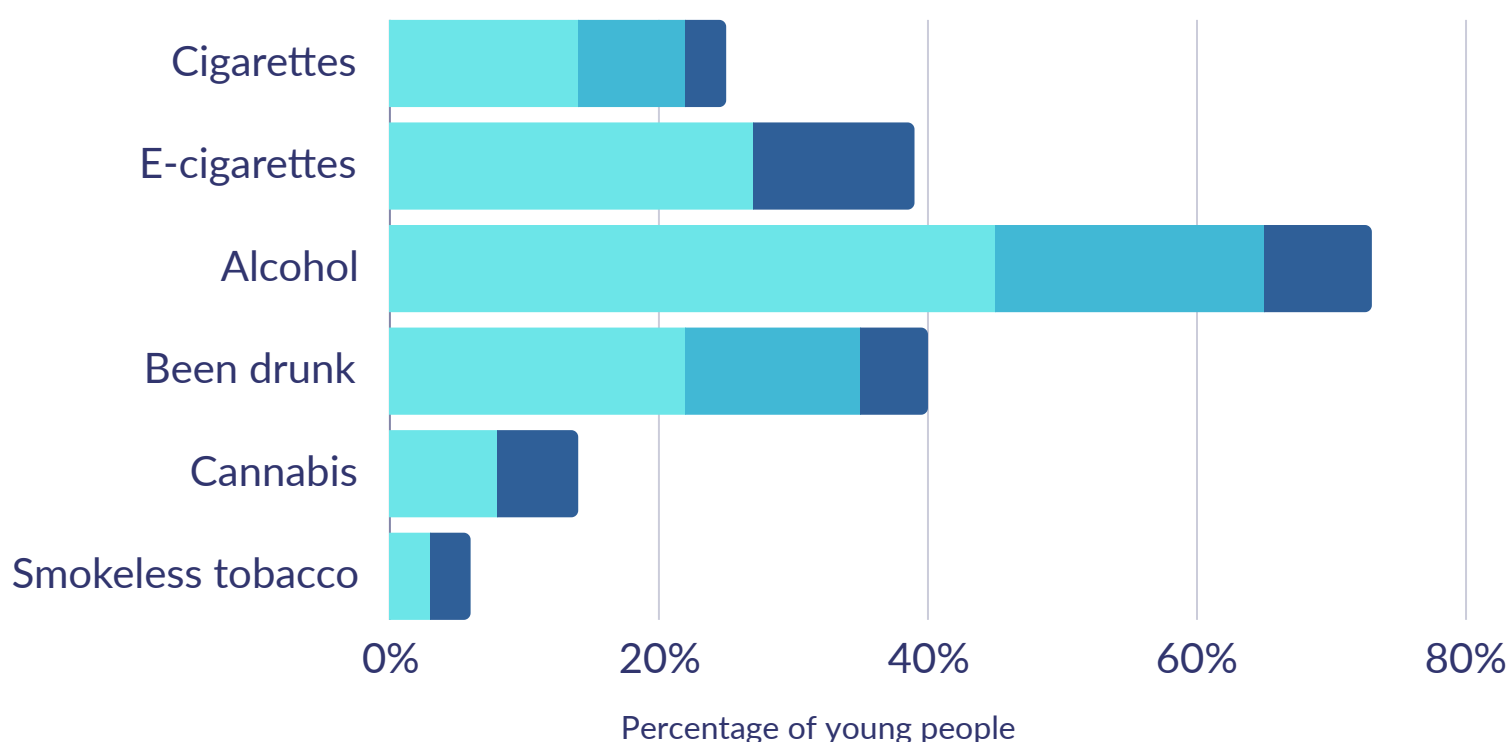


## Alcohol, tobacco and other drug use

This bar chart represents the percentage of young people using selected substances ever in their lifetime and is sub-divided to show their most recent use within the last 12 months or 30 days.

This chart shows the same information as the previous charts, in a different format. It highlights that recent use accounts for the majority of use for all substances.

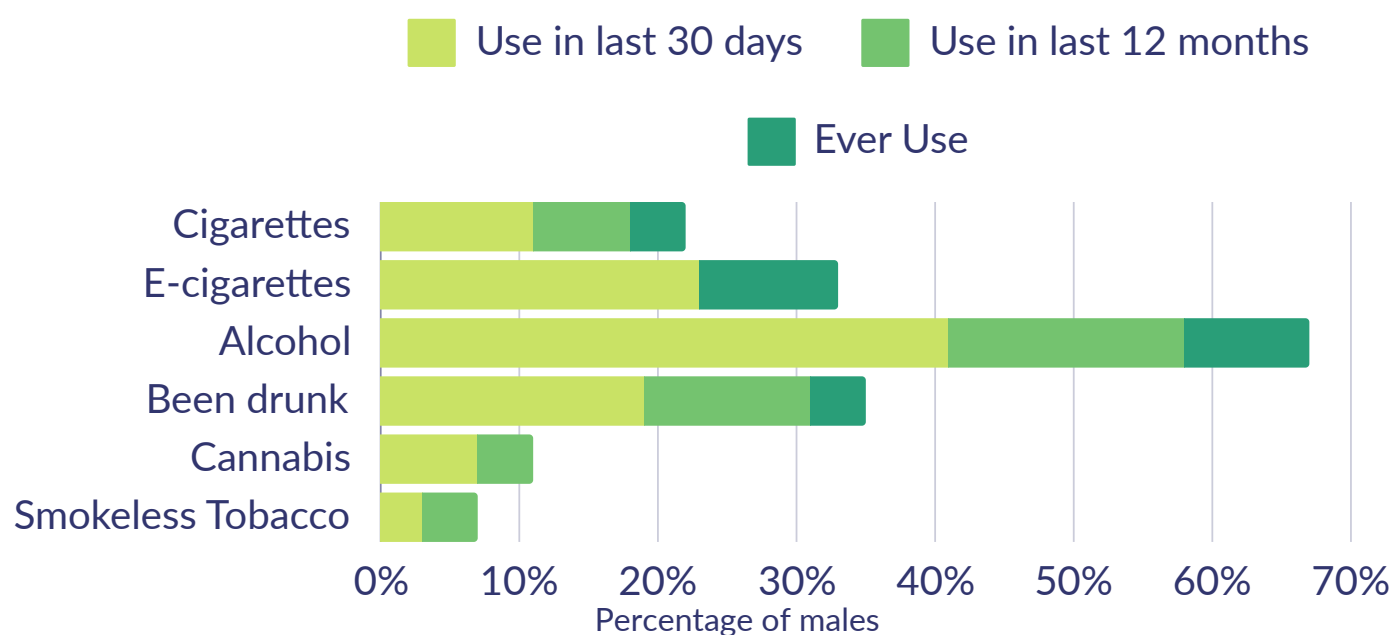
### Substance use in lifetime, last 12 months and last 30 days:



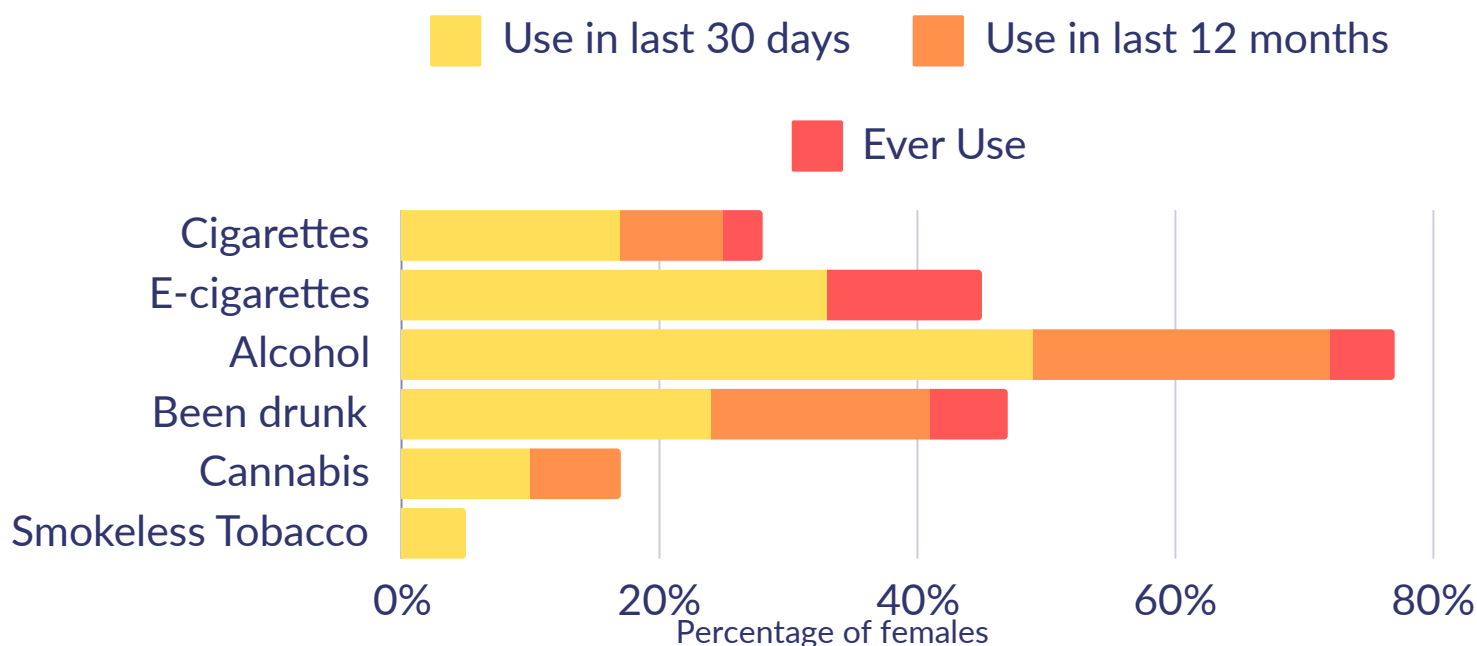
## Alcohol, tobacco and other drug use

These charts show separately for males and females, the percentage of young people using selected substances across different time frames. A comparison of the charts shows that a higher proportion of girls smoke, vape, drink, have been drunk, and have used cannabis than boys, overall and within each time frame.

### Males: Substance use in lifetime, last 12 months and last 30 days



### Females: Substance use in lifetime, last 12 months and last 30 days



## Alcohol, tobacco and other drug use

The table shows percentage of substance use over the various time frames, split by gender. The percentages for girls are shown in **orange**, while percentages for boys are shown in **green**. Young people that didn't identify in these ways are not included in gender splits to ensure confidentiality.

### Female & male substance use in lifetime, last 12 months and last 30 days

	Smoke	Vape	Drink	Been drunk	Cannabis	Smokeless Tobacco
Lifetime Use	27% 22%	45% 33%	77% 67%	47% 35%	17% 11%	5% 7%
Last 12 months	25% 18%	n/a	71% 58%	41% 31%	16% 11%	5% 5%
Last 30 days	17% 11%	33% 23%	49% 41%	24% 19%	10% 7%	4% 3%

More girls than boys smoke, vape, drink, have been drunk, and have used cannabis, in each time frame, apart from lifetime use of smokeless tobacco.



## Alcohol

### TAKEAWAY

72% have had alcohol  
in their lifetime

40% have been drunk  
in their lifetime



### TAKEAWAY

65% have had alcohol  
in the last 12 months

35% have been drunk  
in the last 12 months



### TAKEAWAY

45% have had alcohol  
in the last 30 days

22% have been drunk  
in the last 30 days

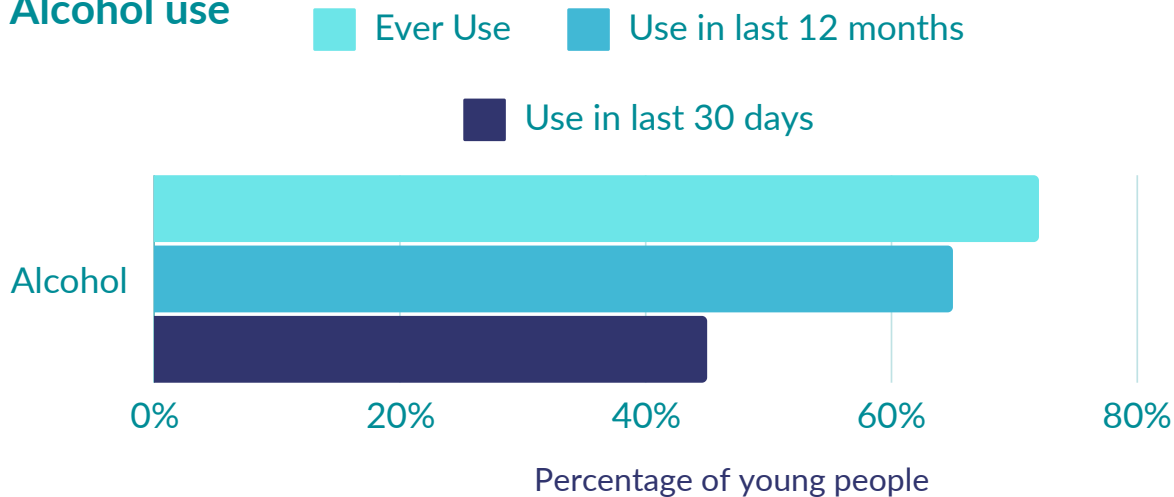


## Alcohol use and getting drunk

About their alcohol use, the chart shows that:

- **72%** have drunk alcohol in their lifetime
- **65%** have drunk alcohol in the last 12 months
- **45%** have drunk alcohol in the last 30 days.

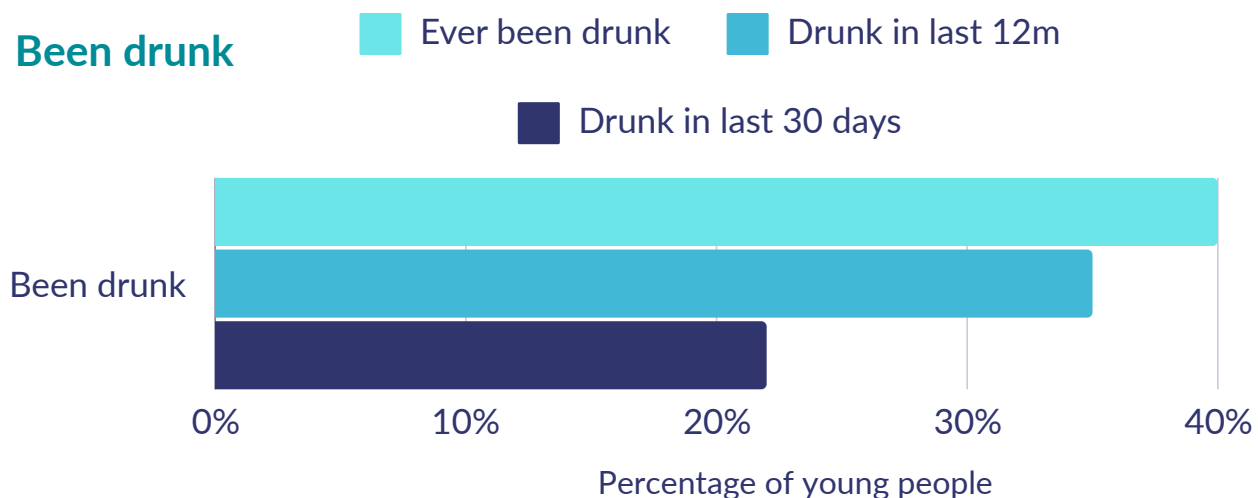
### Alcohol use



About being drunk, the chart shows that:

- **40%** have been drunk in their lifetime
- **35%** have been drunk in the last 12 months
- **22%** have been drunk in the last 30 days.

### Been drunk



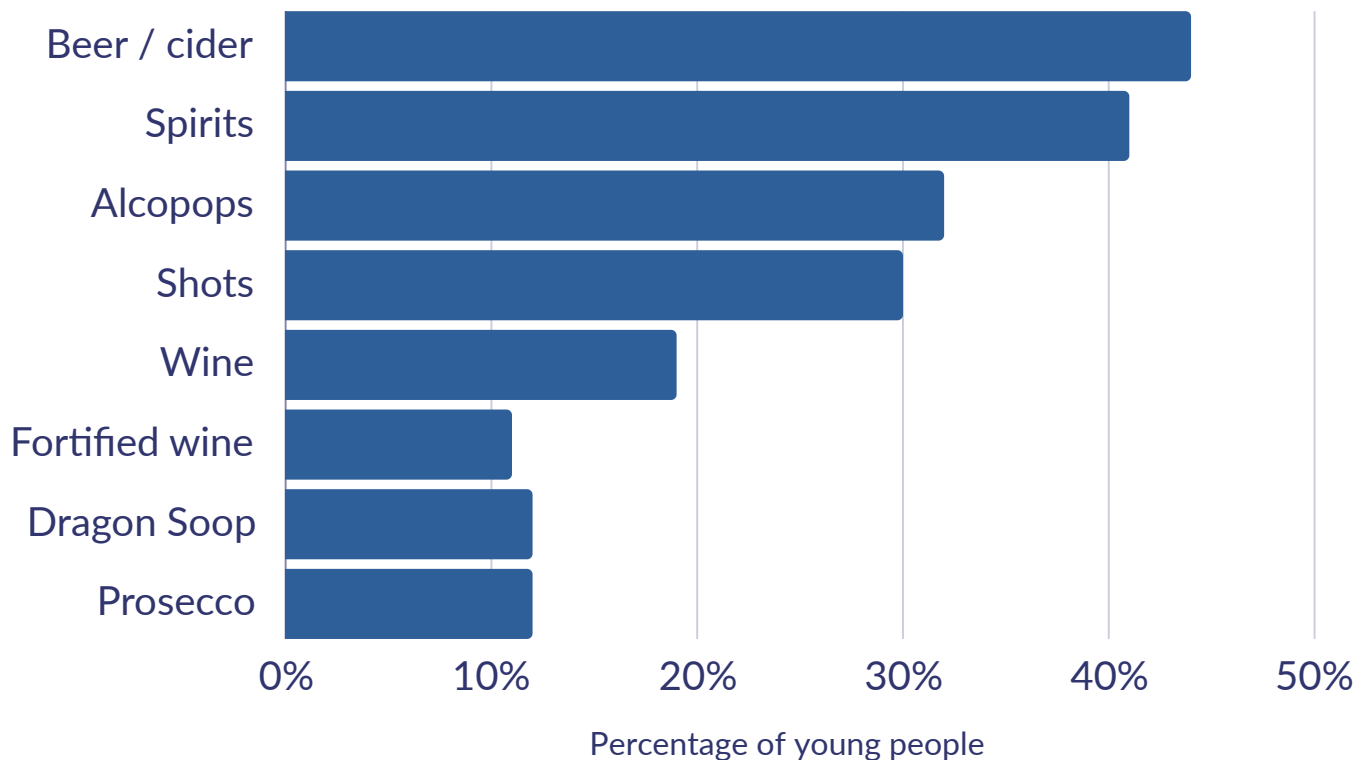
## Types of alcohol

Young people were asked about which types of alcohol they had had in the previous month. Of the young people that had had alcohol;

- **44%** had beer / cider
- **41%** had spirits (e.g. vodka, gin, whisky)
- **32%** had alcopops (WKD, Smirnoff Ice, Hooch)
- **30%** had shots (Sourz)
- **19%** had wine
- **11%** had fortified wine (Mad Dog, Bucky, Buckfast)
- **12%** had Dragon Soop (caffeinated alcoholic drink)
- **12%** had prosecco.

Beer / cider and spirits are the types of alcohol young people most often use. Young people may have been counted more than once if they had different types of alcohol.

### Types of alcohol used in previous month:



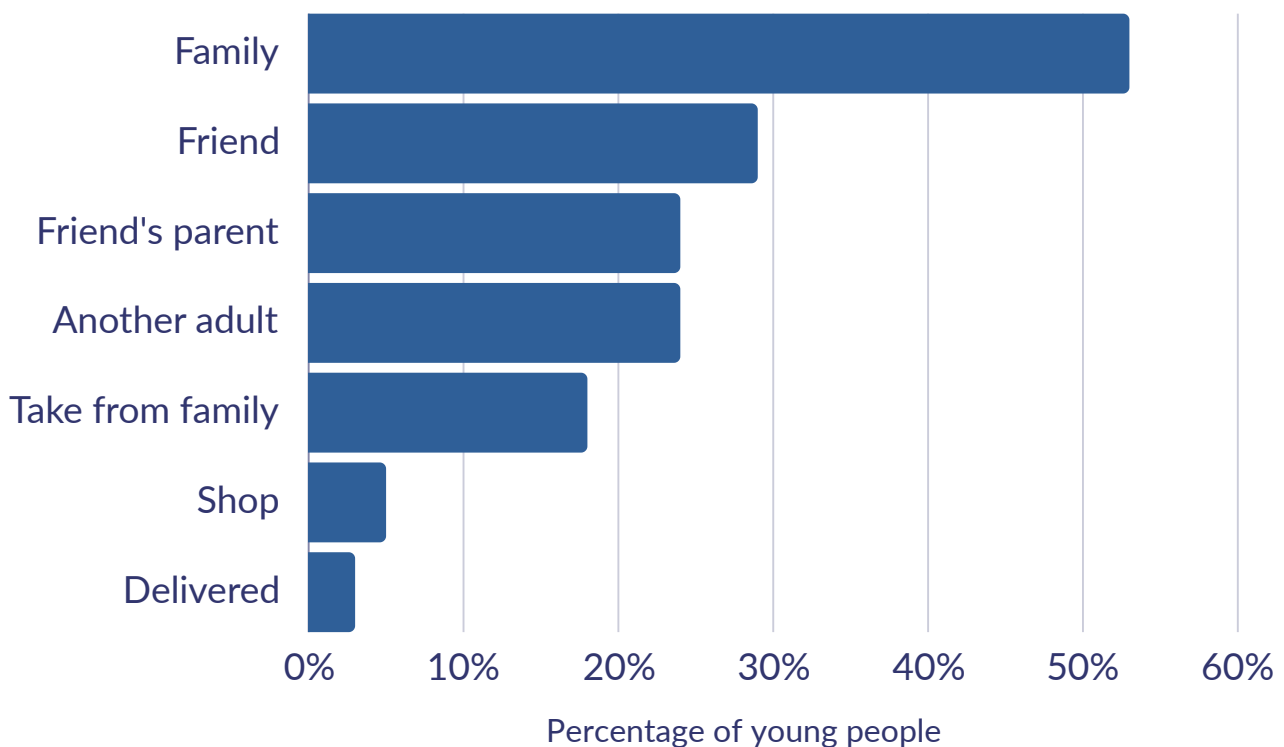
## Access to alcohol

Young people were asked how they get the alcohol they drink. Young people got alcohol from the following sources:

- **53%** got it from member of their family
- **29%** got it from friends or schoolmates
- **24%** got it from a friend's parent
- **24%** got it from another adult
- **18%** took it from a family member without them knowing
- **5%** bought it in a shop
- **3%** got it delivered
- A small proportion of young people took it from a shop without paying for it.

Most often, young people who used alcohol got alcohol from their family members, followed by a friend's parent. Young people may have been counted more than once if they were accessing alcohol through more than one source.

### Access to alcohol:



## Cigarettes and e-cigarettes

### TAKEAWAY

25% had smoked in their lifetime

22% had smoked in the last 12 months

14% had smoked in the last 30 days



### TAKEAWAY

39% had used e-cigarettes in their lifetime

27% had used e-cigarettes in the last 30 days



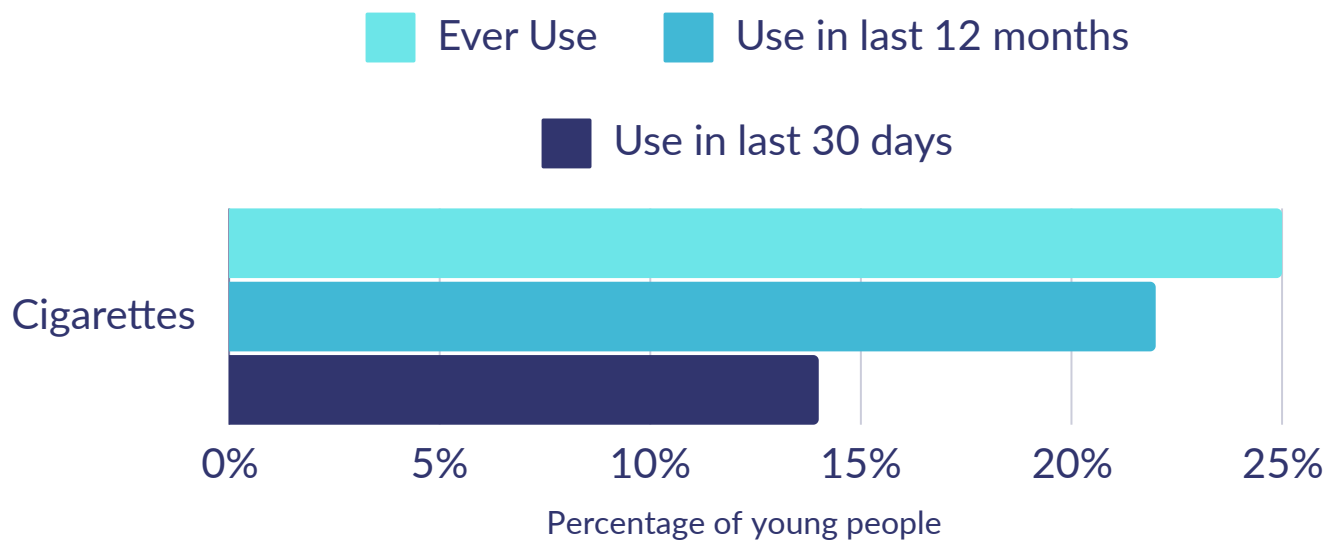


## Cigarettes and e-cigarettes

### Cigarette use:

This chart shows:

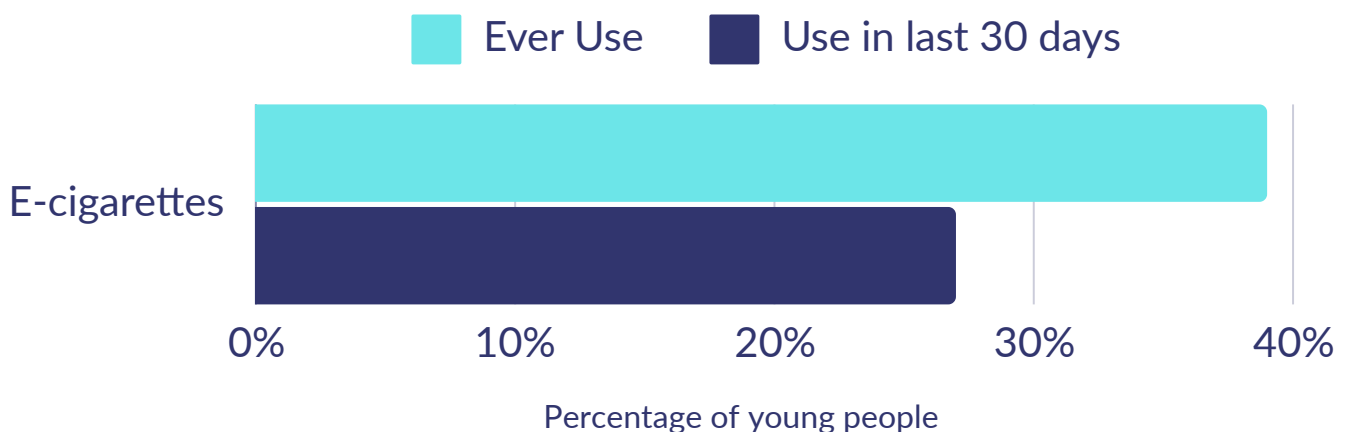
- **25%** had smoked cigarettes in their lifetime
- **22%** had smoked cigarettes in the last 12 months
- **14%** had smoked cigarettes in the last 30 days.



### E-cigarette use:

This chart shows:

- **39%** had used e-cigarettes their lifetime
- **27%** had used e-cigarettes in the last 30 days.



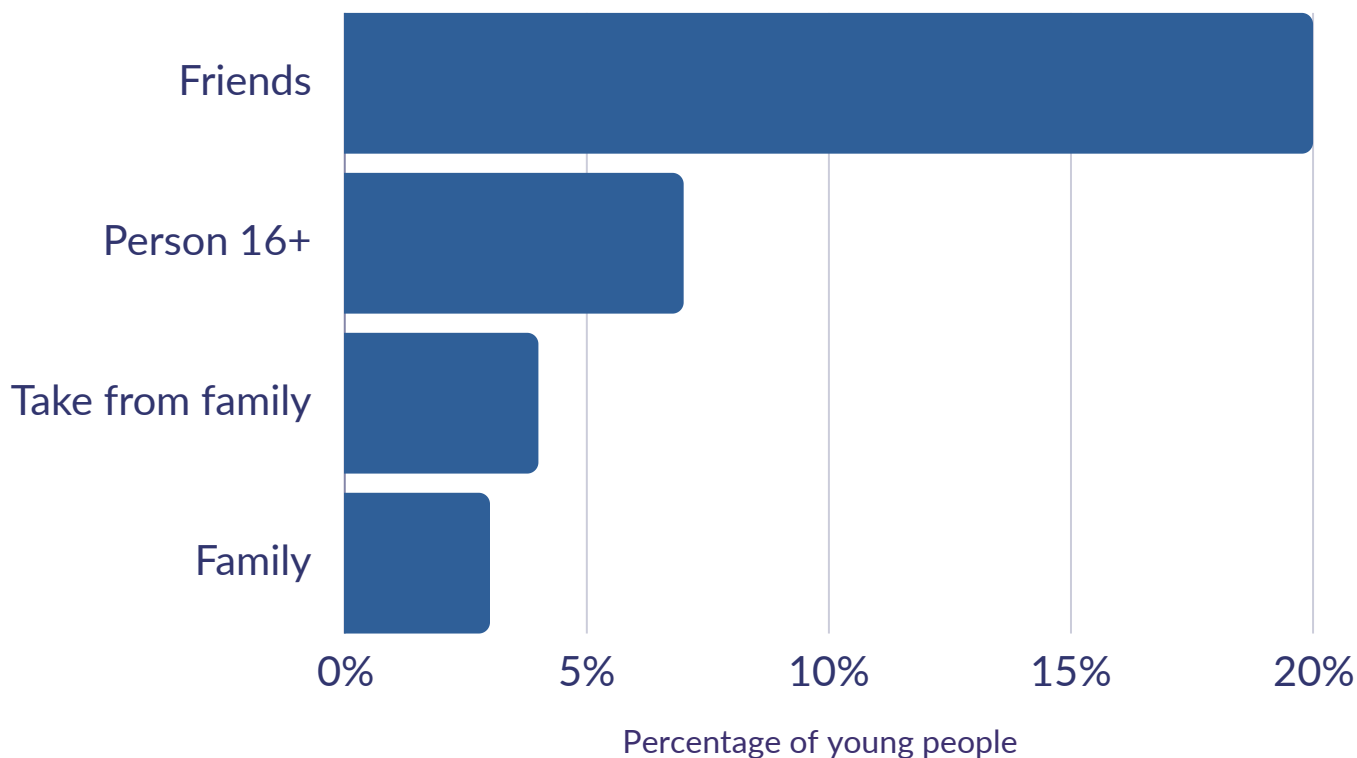
## Access to cigarettes

Young people were asked how they get cigarettes. Young people get cigarettes from the following sources:

- **20%** get them from their friends or schoolmates
- **7%** get them from a person 16 or older who isn't in their family
- **4%** take them from a family member without them knowing
- **3%** get them from a family member
- A small amount buy them in a shop or online
- A small proportion of young people take them from a shop without paying.

Most often, young people get cigarettes from their friends or schoolmates, followed by a person 16 or over who isn't in their family. Young people may be counted more than once if they access cigarettes in more than one way.

### Access to cigarettes:



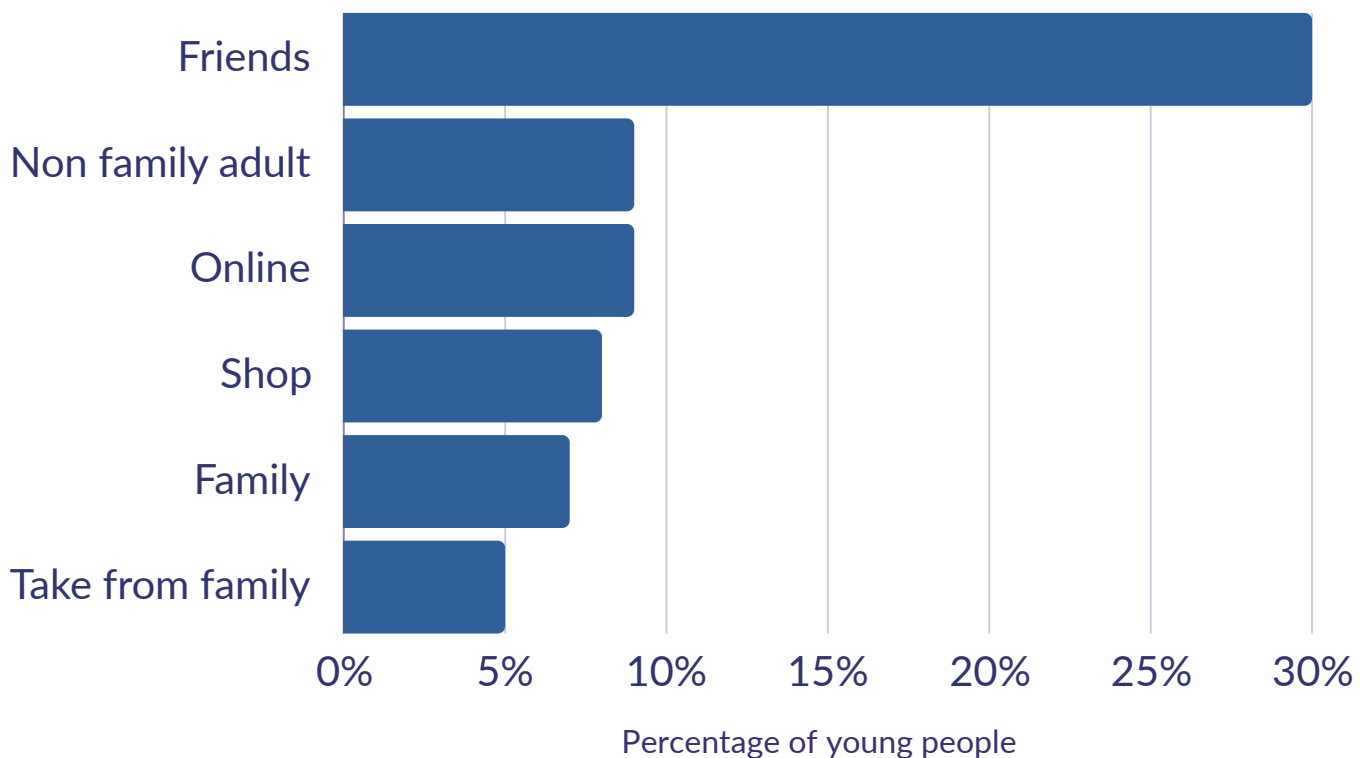
## Access to e-cigarettes

Young people were asked how they get e-cigarettes. Young people got cigarettes from the following sources;

- **30%** got them from their friends or schoolmates
- **9%** got them from an adult who isn't in their family
- **9%** online sales
- **8%** bought them in a shop
- **7%** got them from a family member
- **5%** took them from a family member without them knowing
- A small proportion of young people took them from a shop without paying.

Most often, young people got cigarettes from their friends or schoolmates, followed by an adult who isn't in their family or from online sales. Young people may have been counted more than once if they accessed cigarettes in more than one way.

### Access to e-cigarettes:

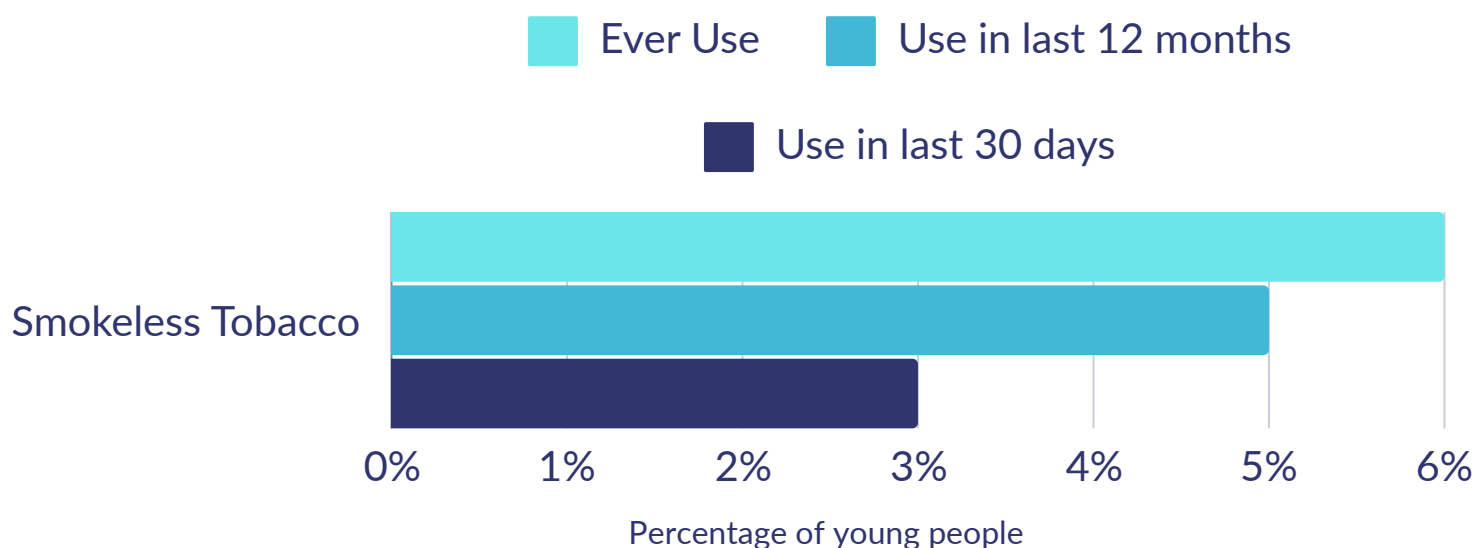


## Access to Smokeless Tobacco eg snuff, chewing tobacco, nicotine pouches etc (New question for 2023).

### Smokeless tobacco use:

This chart shows:

- **6%** had used smokeless tobacco in their lifetime
- **5%** had used smokeless tobacco in the last 12 months
- **3%** had used smokeless tobacco in the last 30 days.



The majority of young people who use smokeless tobacco products purchase them online, with a small amount getting them from another adult who isn't a family member.

## Drugs

### TAKEAWAY

14% used cannabis  
in their lifetime

13% used cannabis  
in the last 12 months

8% used cannabis  
in the last 30 days



### TAKEAWAY

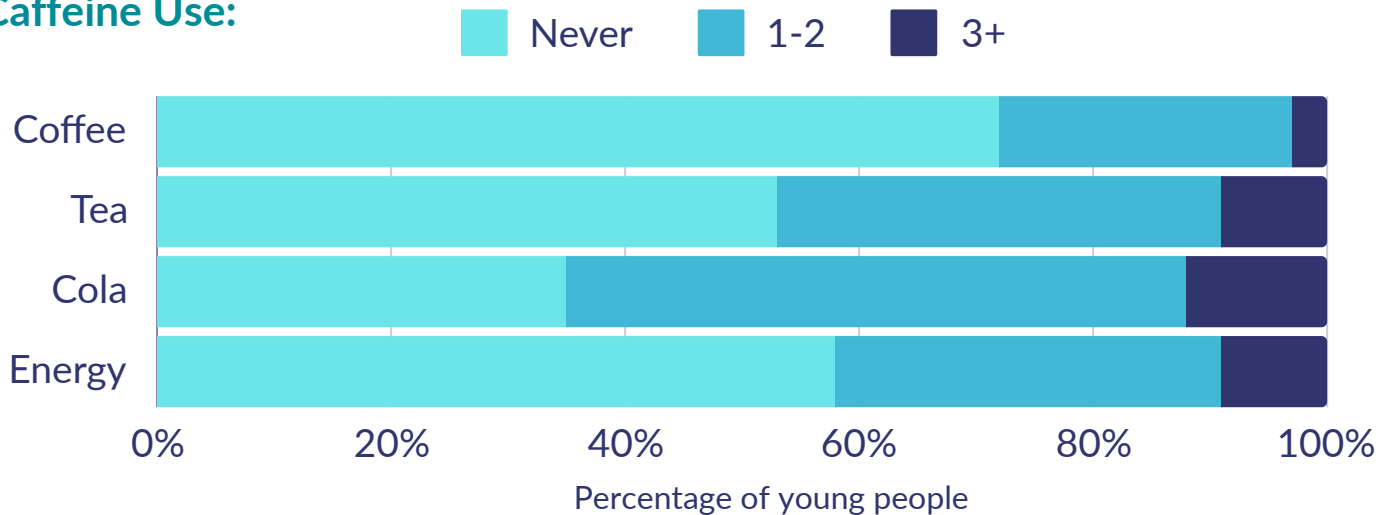
3% had ever used  
synthetic cannabis  
A small number had  
used cocaine,  
ecstasy, magic  
mushrooms and  
nitrous oxide



## Caffeine

Young people were asked about their daily caffeine use, measured by regular sized cups or cans. The majority of young people don't consume coffee or energy drinks on a daily basis, however more than half of young people (75%) have at least one cola drink daily, and a large proportion have at least one cup of tea daily (47%).

### Caffeine Use:

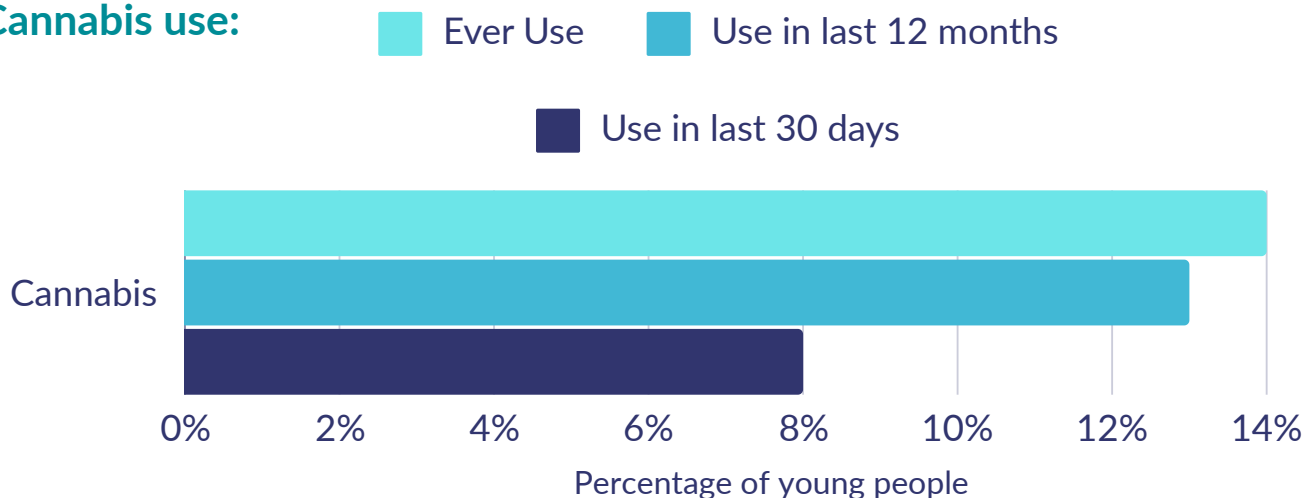


## Cannabis use

Young people were asked about cannabis use over different time periods:

- **14%** used cannabis in their lifetime
- **13%** used cannabis in the last 12 months
- **8%** used cannabis in the last 30 days.

### Cannabis use:





## Access to drugs

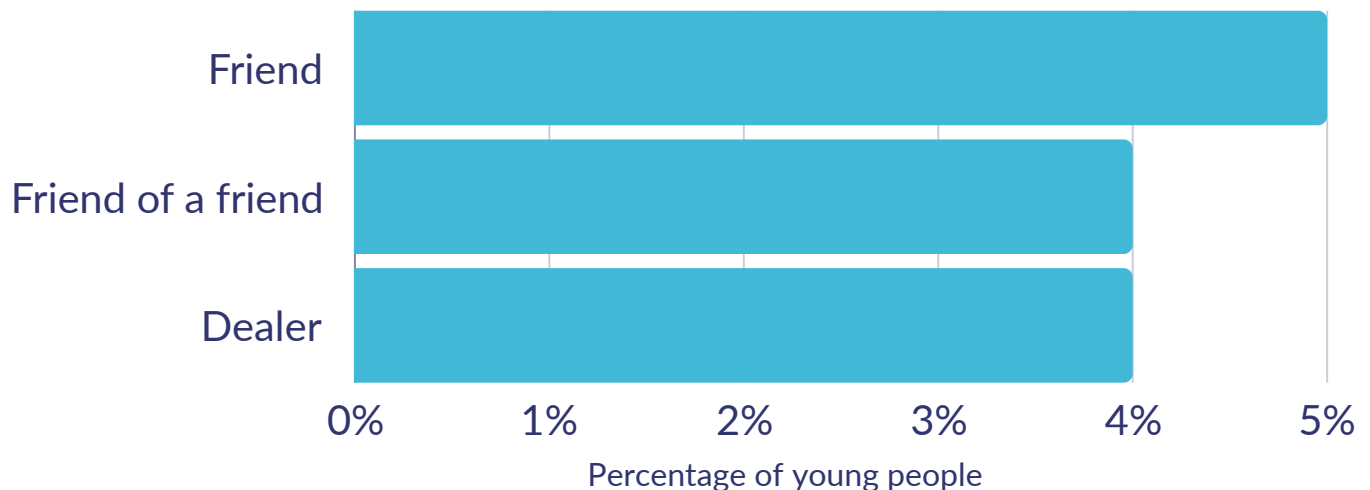
Young people were asked how they get drugs.

The most common way for young people to access drugs was:

- through a friend (5%)
- from a friend of a friend (4%)
- from a dealer (4%)
- a small proportion got drugs from a stranger
- a small proportion of young people got drugs from their friend's parent, a family member without them knowing, and online.

Young people may be counted more than once if they had accessed drugs in more than one way.

### Access to drugs:





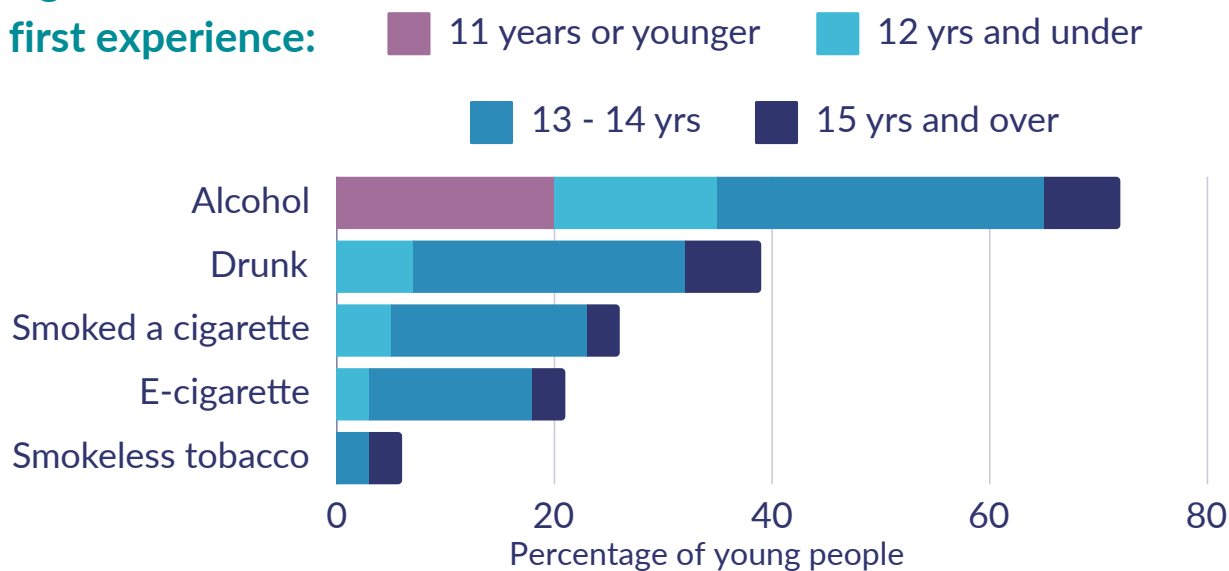
## Age at first use

Young people were asked at what age they first:

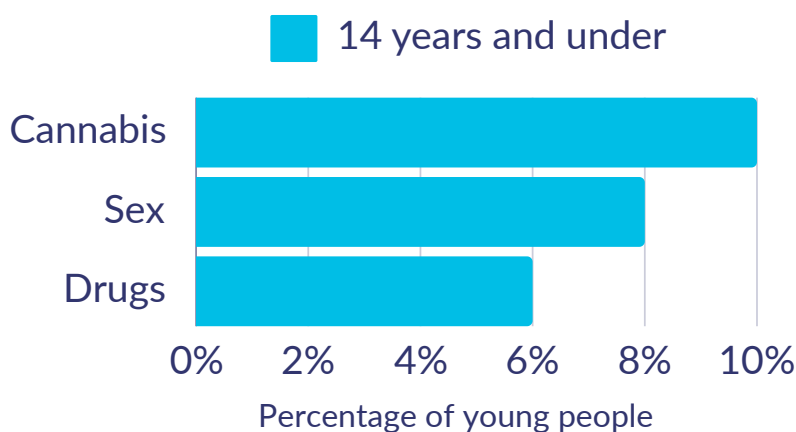
- Had a drink of alcohol
- Got drunk
- Smoked a cigarette
- Smoked cigarettes daily
- Used an electronic cigarette/vaped.
- Had sexual intercourse
- Used cannabis
- Used illegal drugs.

Alcohol use was shown to be experienced by most young people, including from a young age; **35%** of young people had alcohol aged 12 or younger.

### Age at first use or first experience:



\* a small proportion of young people smoked daily at 12 years and under



Approximately ten per cent of young people had first used cannabis by 14 years of age and a small number as young as 11 or 12 years.

About one sixth of young people had their first experience of sexual intercourse by the age of 15 years.

## Fitting in

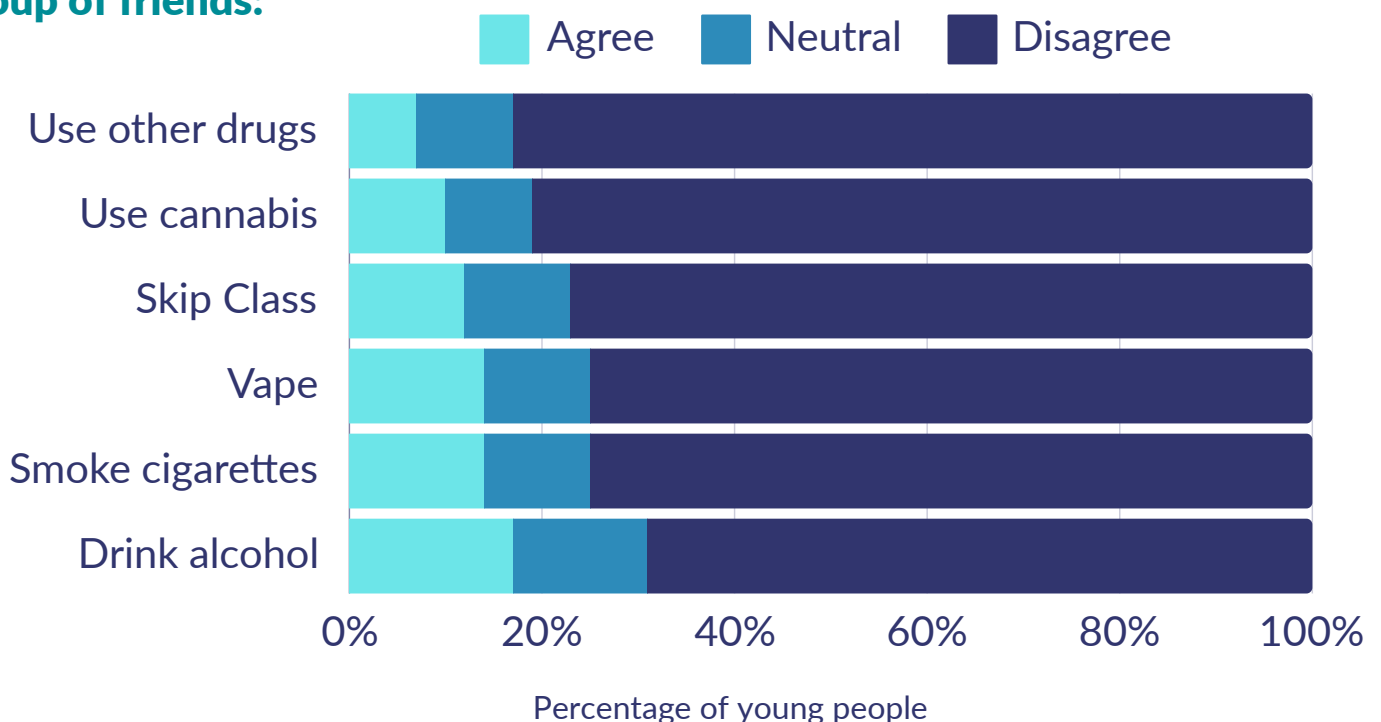
Young people were asked if they felt they needed to do certain things to not feel left out by their group of friends. Most young people disagreed that they had to use substances or skip classes to fit in.

Although the majority didn't feel they had to, more young people felt they had to drink to fit in with their group of friends than any of the other behaviours.

- **83%** of young people did not agree they had to use other drugs to fit in.
- **81%** of young people did not agree they had to use cannabis to fit in
- **77%** of young people did not agree they had to skip classes to fit in
- **75%** of young people did not agree they had to smoke cigarettes to fit in
- **75%** of young people did not agree they had to vape to fit in
- **69%** of young people did not agree they had to drink alcohol to fit in

This is important because the young people that feel they need to do these things to fit in with friends are more likely to use alcohol, tobacco and other drugs.

### Sometimes you need to do this so you don't feel left out by your group of friends:



## Over-estimates of substance use by young people

Young people were asked to estimate the number of their friends who use substances and had sex.

They over-estimated the number of their friends that smoke, have been drunk, used vapes, drank alcohol, use drugs and had had sex. **This is important because over-estimates lead to young people thinking using substances are usual things to do, and if they seem normal to do, then young people are more inclined to do them.**

Highland young people are more likely to get drunk if they believe their peers get drunk.



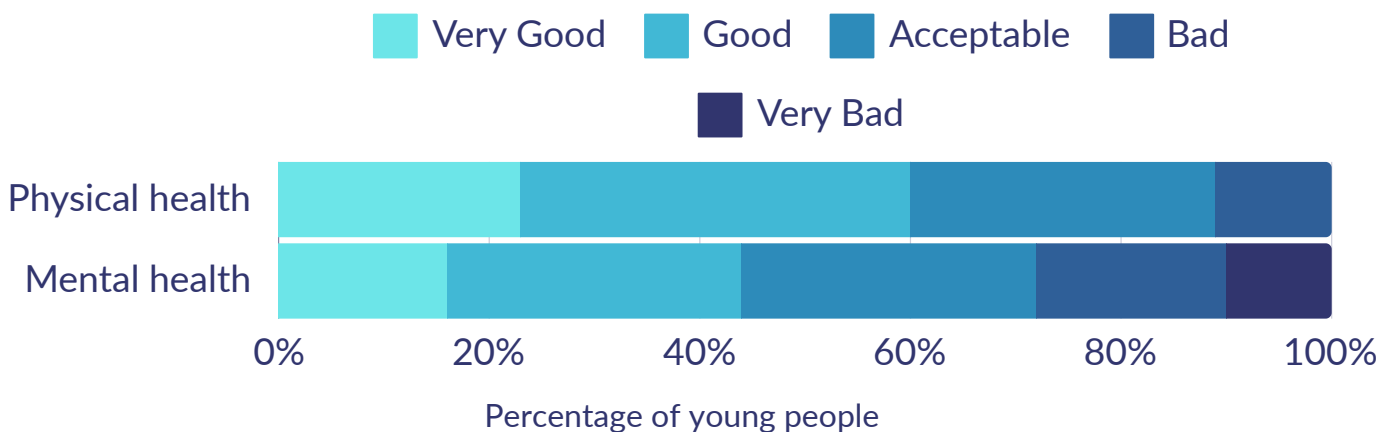
Young people over-estimated the number of their friends that smoke, have been drunk, drank alcohol, used vapes, use drugs and had sex

## Mental health and wellbeing

### Physical and mental health rating:

Young people were asked to rate their physical health and mental health.

- **60%** rated their physical health as good or very good.
- **44%** rated their mental health as good or very good



There is a difference between boys' and girls' mental health:

- **54%** of boys reported their mental health as good or very good
- **34%** of girls reported their mental health as good or very good.



## Mental health and substance use in the last 12m

These graphs show how young people rate their mental health alongside an indication of their substance use in the last 12 months. Substance use refers to having had alcohol, having been drunk, smoked cigarettes, or used cannabis. Where substances were used in the last 12 months, there were a greater proportion who rated their mental health as **bad** or **very bad**, compared to those who didn't use substances in the last 12 months:

- **50%** who had smoked cigarettes in the last 12 months rated their mental health as bad or very bad
- **47%** who had vaped in the last 30 days rated their mental health as bad or very bad ( there is no 12m data for vaping).
- **47%** who had used cannabis in the last 12 months rated their mental health as bad or very bad.
- **42%** who had been drunk in the last 12 months rated their mental health as bad or very bad
- **34%** who had alcohol in the last 12 months rated their mental health as bad or very bad

Mental health rating:



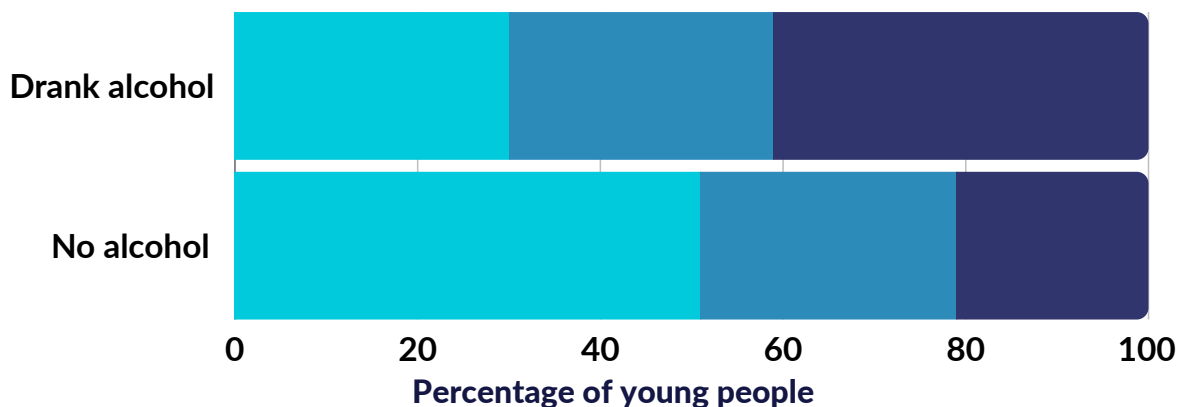
Very good/ good



Acceptable



Bad/ very bad



Mental health rating:



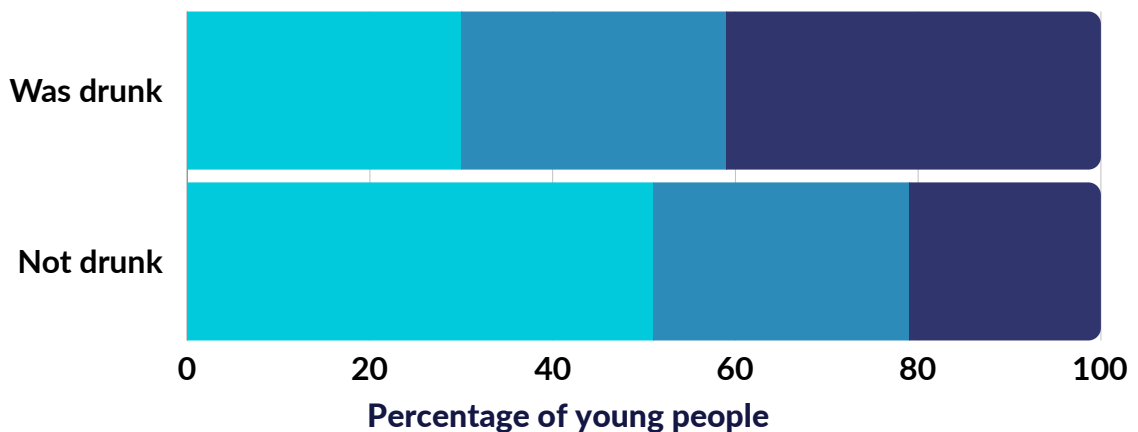
Very good/ good



Acceptable

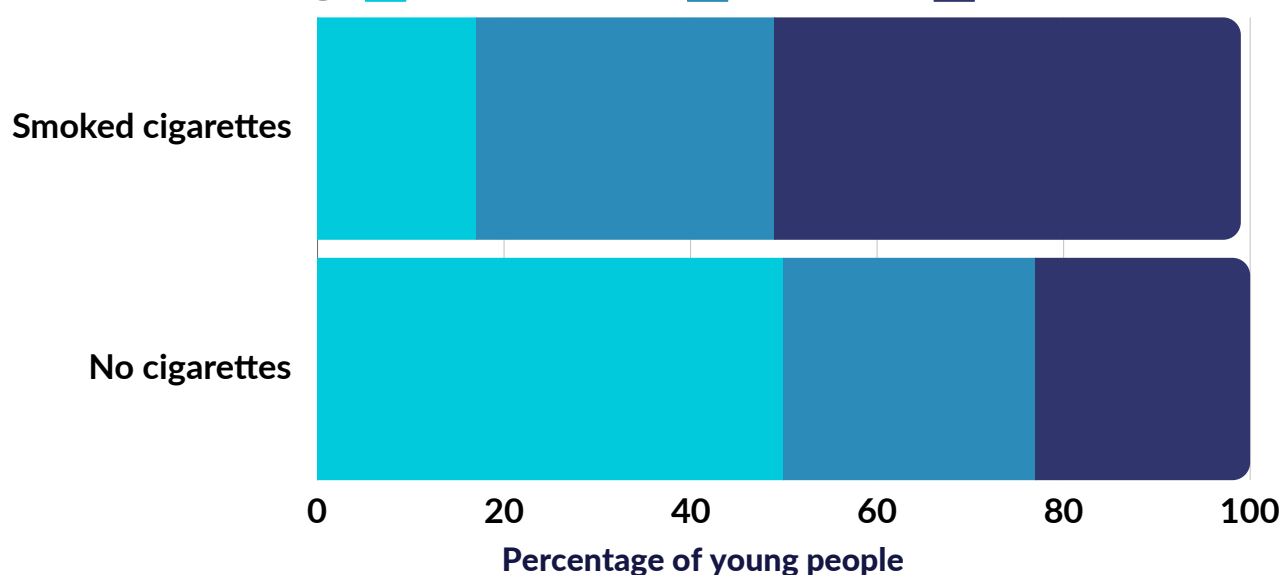


Bad/ very bad



## Mental health and substance use in the last 12m

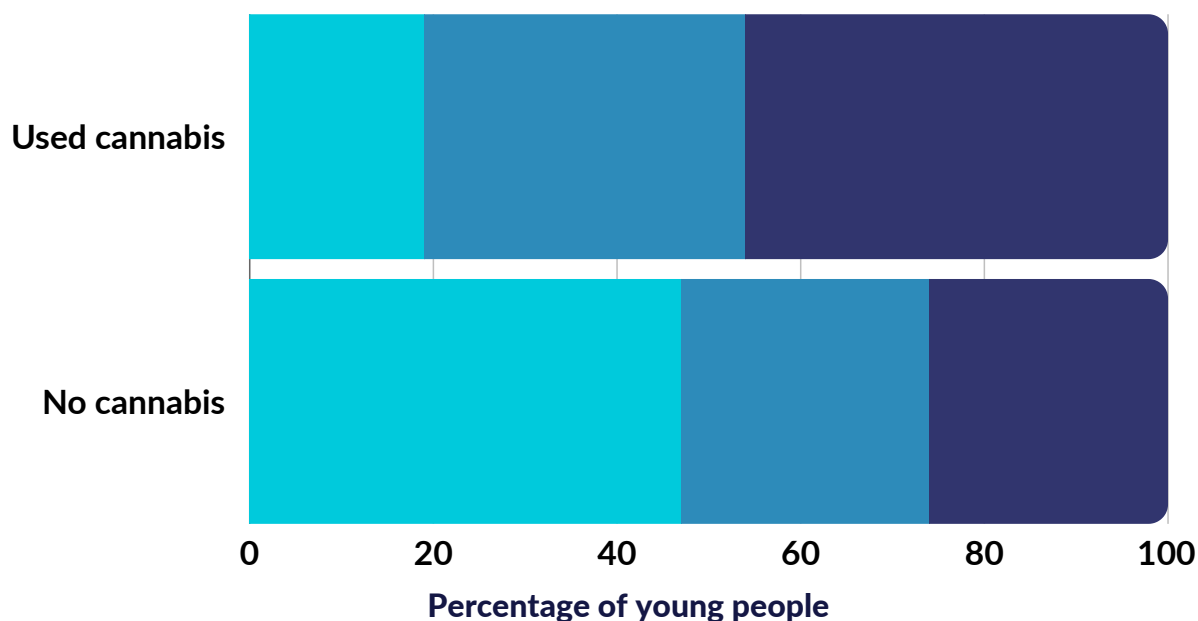
Mental health rating: ■ Very good/good ■ Acceptable ■ Bad/ very bad



Mental health rating:

■ Very good/good ■ Acceptable

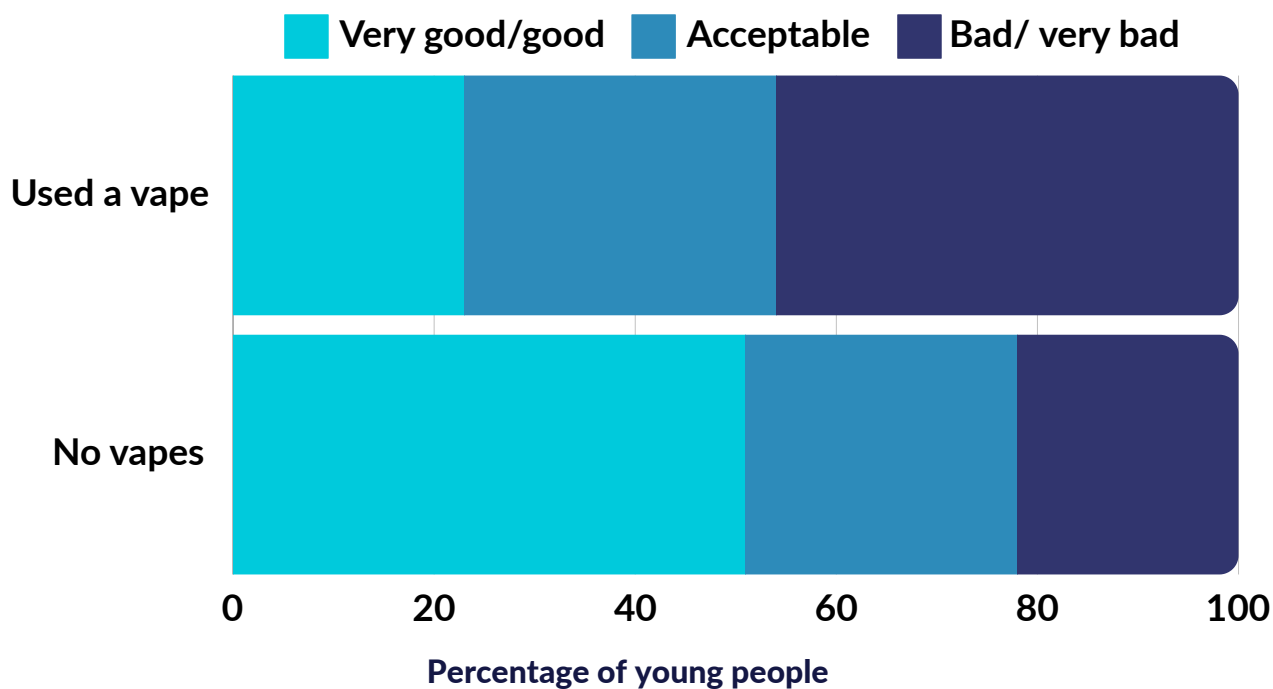
■ Bad/ very bad





## Mental health and vape use in the last 30 days

Mental health rating:

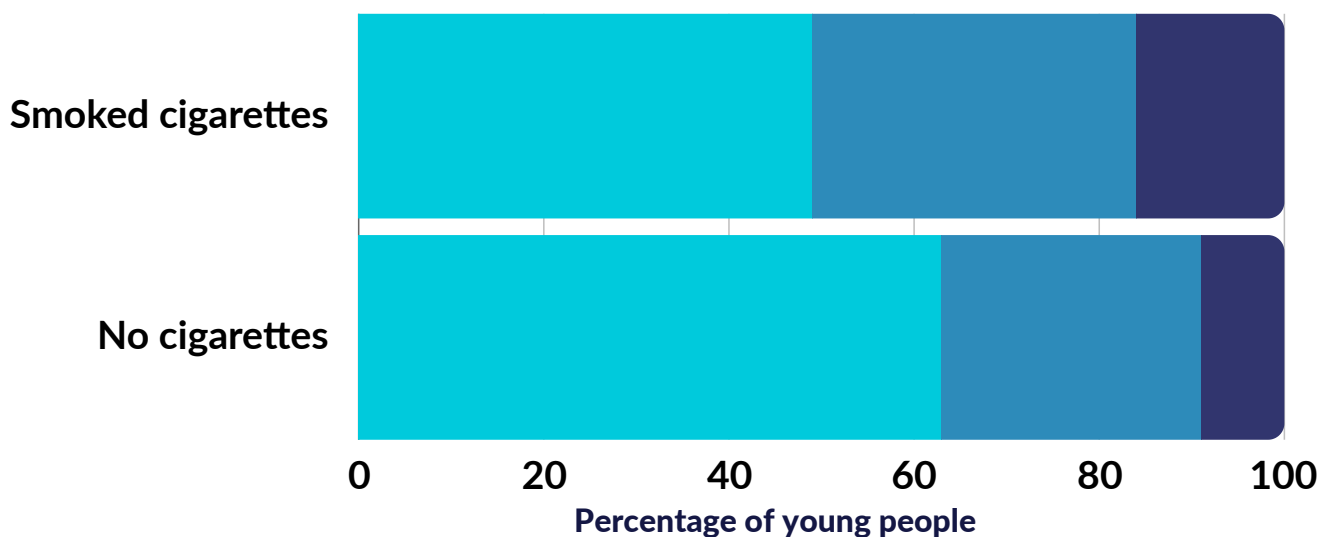


## Physical health and substance use in the last 12m

Young people were asked to rate their physical health, and substance use in the last 12 months. These graphs show the number of young people who have used substances in the last 12 months, and have rated their physical health as very good, good, acceptable, or bad or very bad. There is a small relationship between substance use in the last 12 months and how young people rated their physical health, more so with cigarette usage than the other substances.

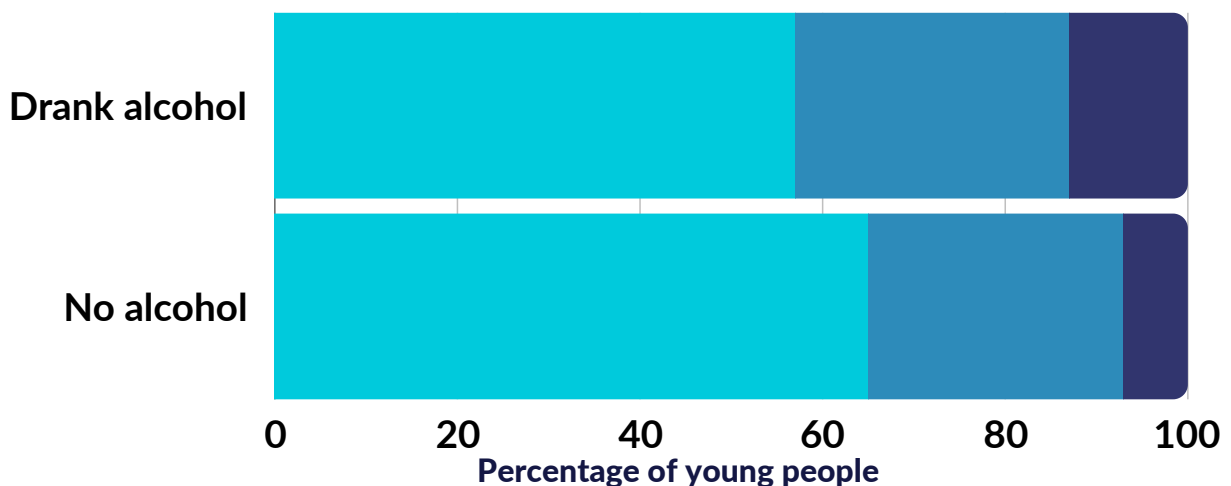
**Physical health rating:** ■ Very good/good ■ Acceptable

■ Bad/very bad



**Physical health rating:** ■ Very good/good ■ Acceptable

■ Bad/very bad



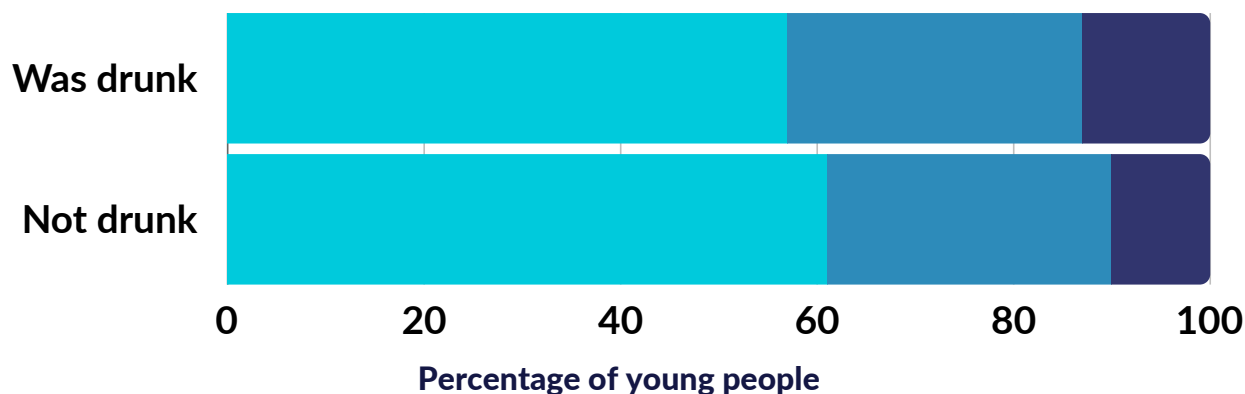


## Physical health and substance use in last the 12m

Physical health rating:

Very good/good Acceptable

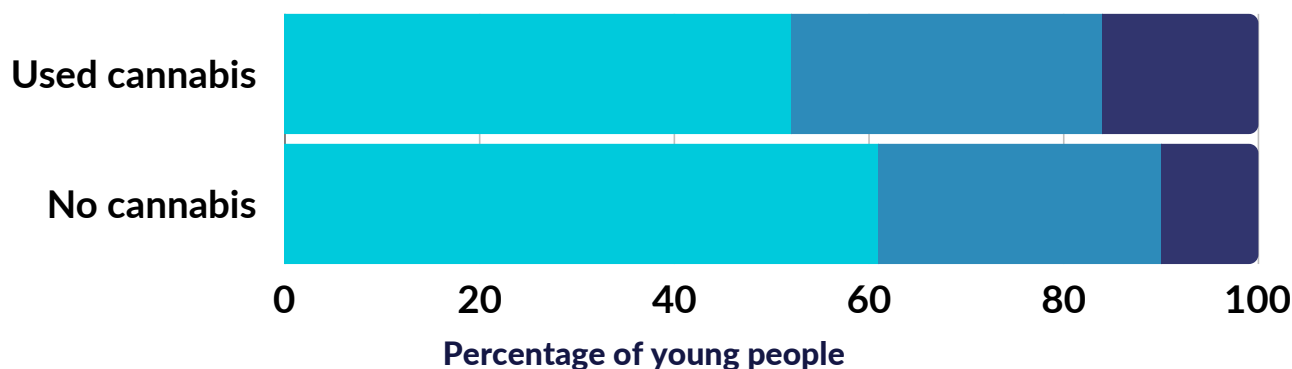
Bad/very bad



Physical health rating:

Very good/good Acceptable

Bad/very bad

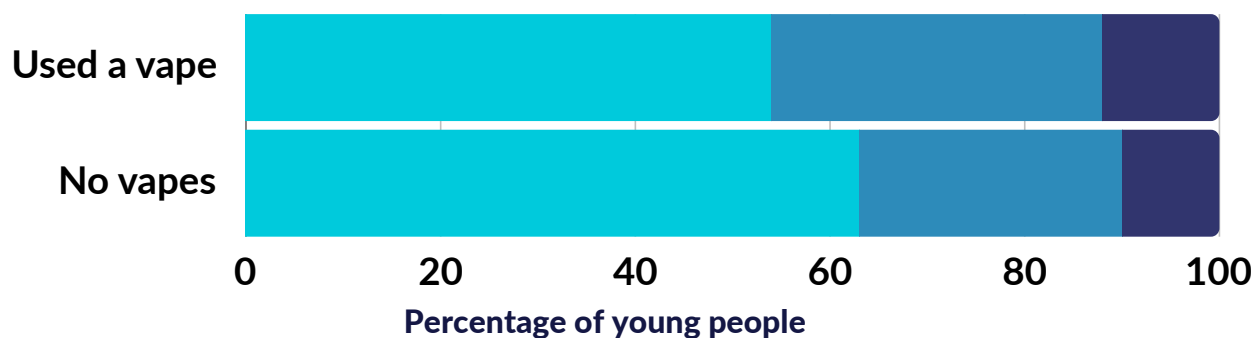


## Physical health and vape use in last 30 days

Physical health rating:

Very good/good Acceptable

Bad/very bad



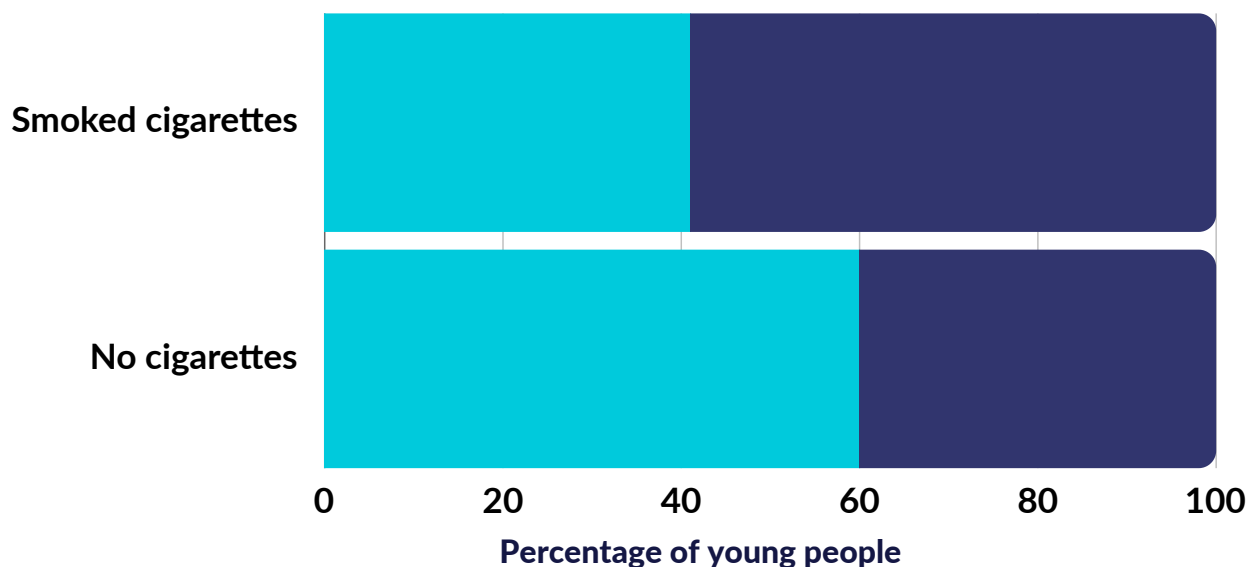
## Thoughts of self harm and substance use in the last 12m

Young people were asked if they thought about self harm, and their substance use in the last 12 months. Overall, **43%** of young people had thought about self harm. These graphs show the number of young people who had thought about self harm and if they had used various substances. Where substances were used in the last 12 months, there were a greater proportion who had thought about self-harm, compared to those who hadn't used substances in the last 12 months.

### Thoughts of self harm:

Never thought about

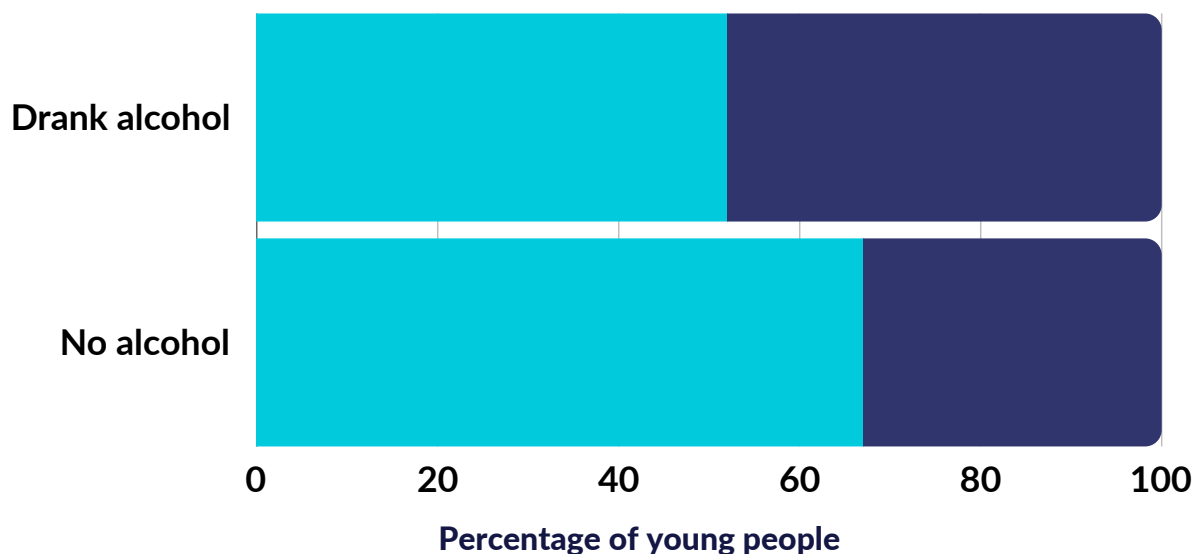
Have thought about



### Thoughts of self harm:

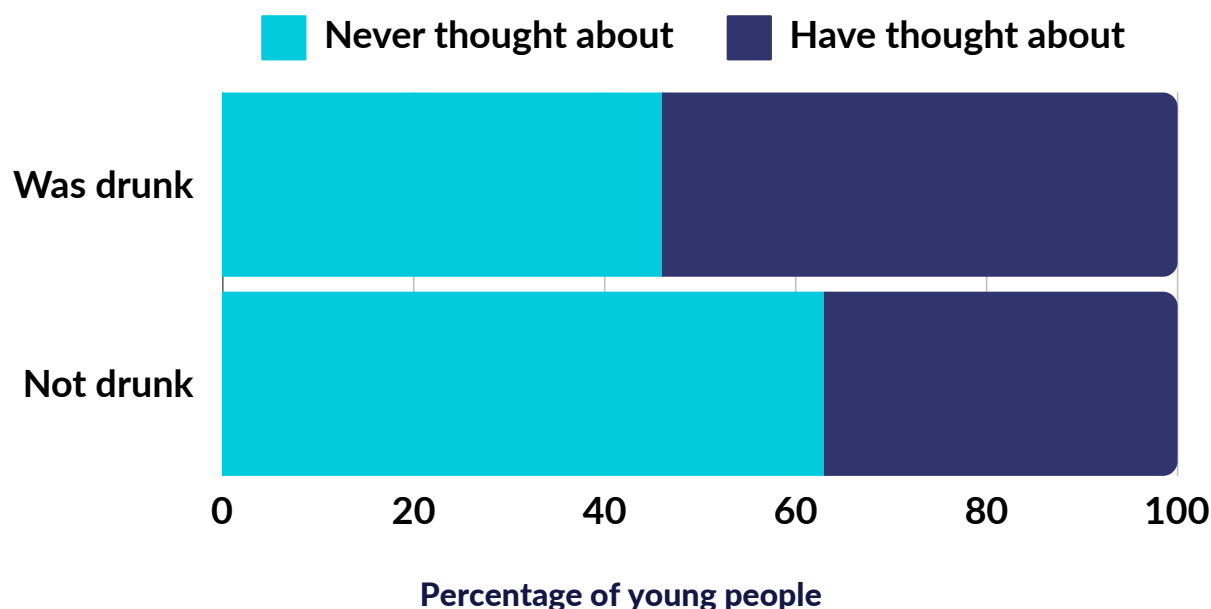
Never thought about

Have thought about

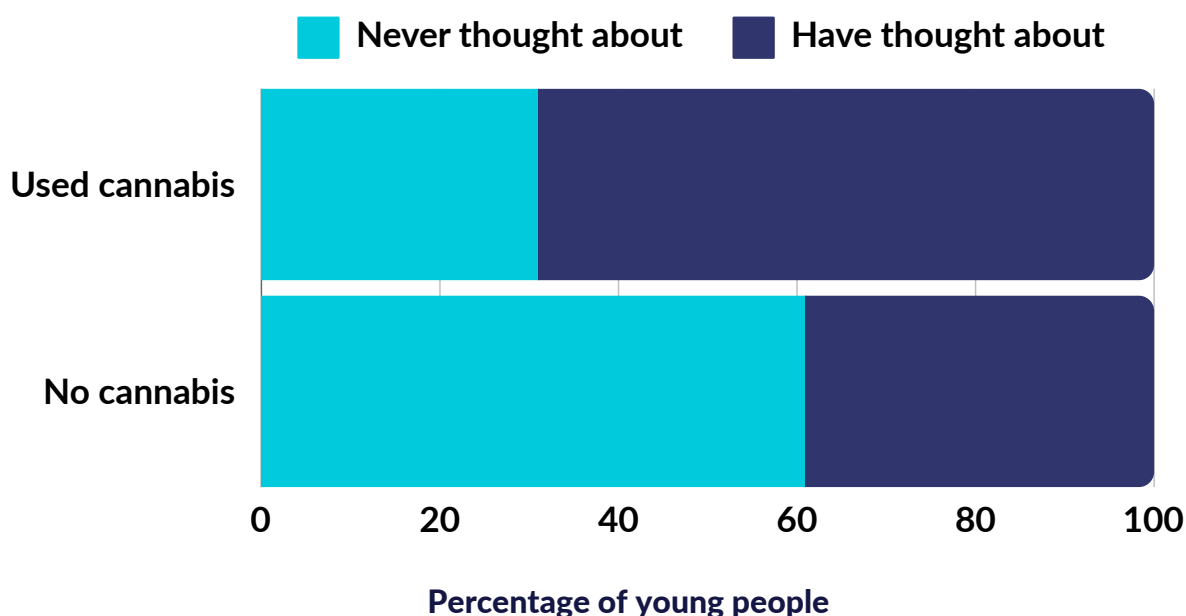


## Thoughts of self harm and substance use in the last 12m

### Thoughts of self harm:

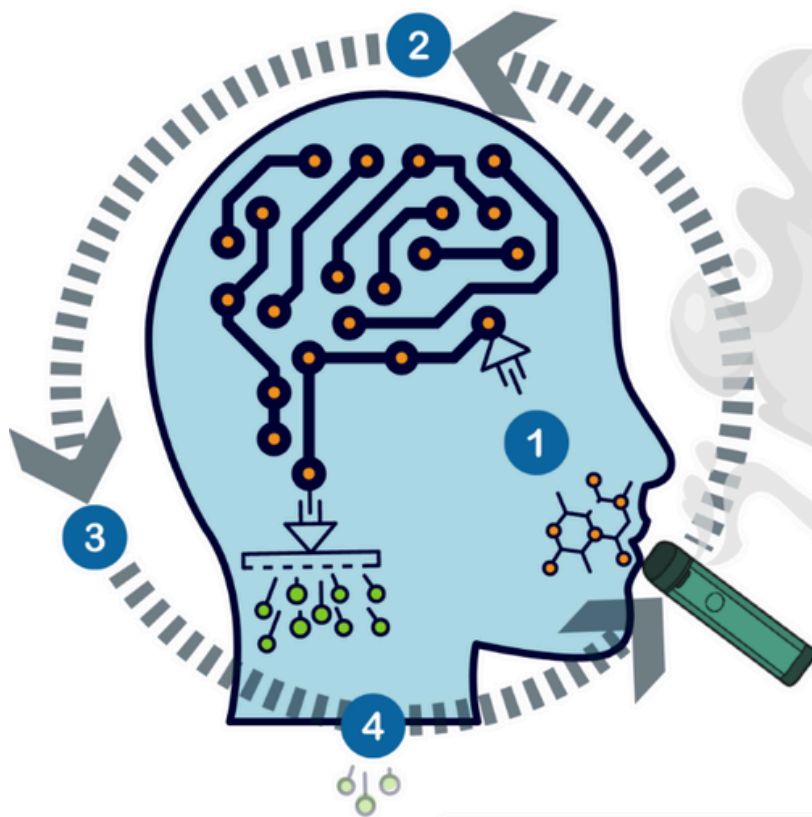
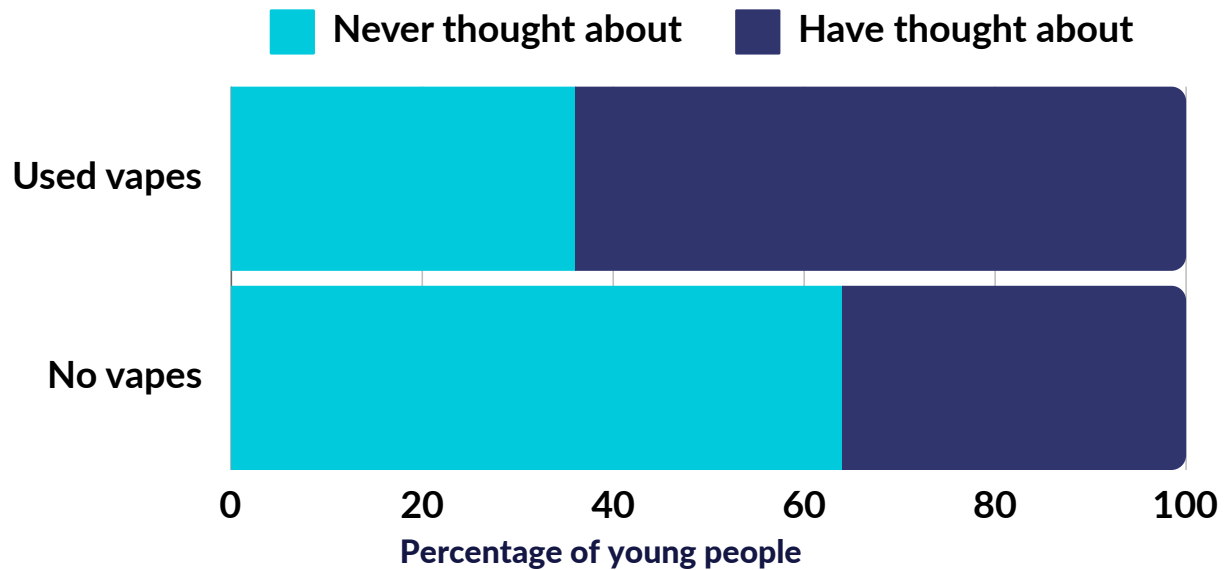


### Thoughts of self harm:



## Thoughts of self harm and vape use in the last 30 days

### Thoughts of self harm:



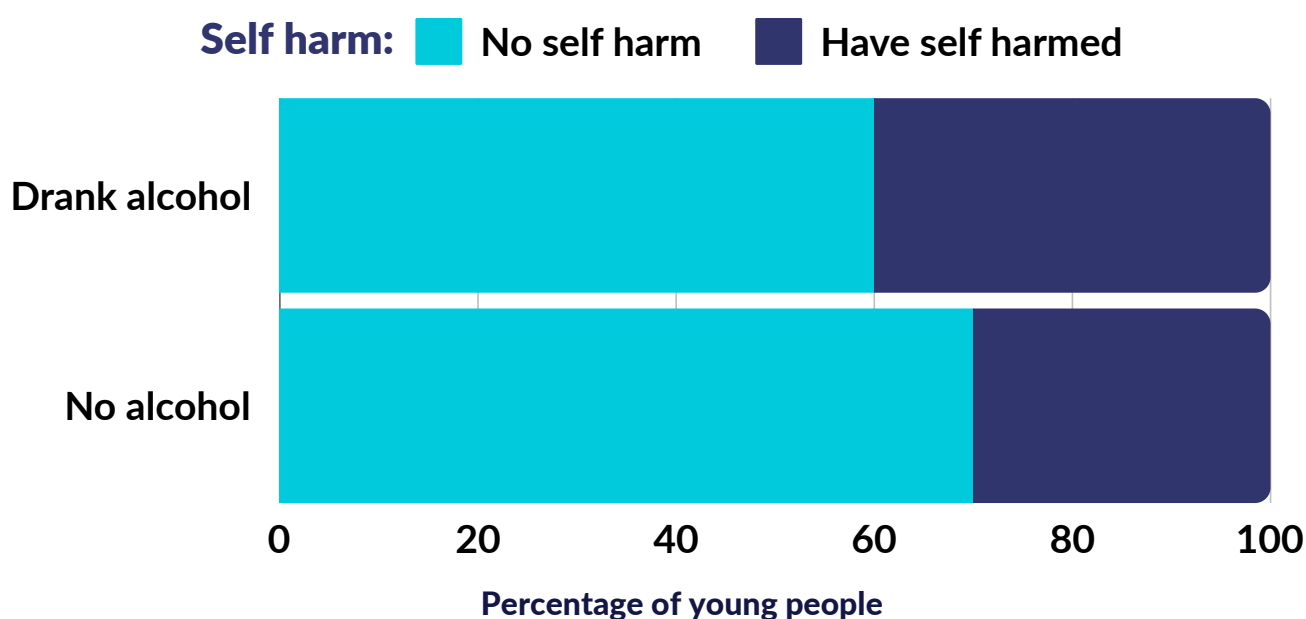
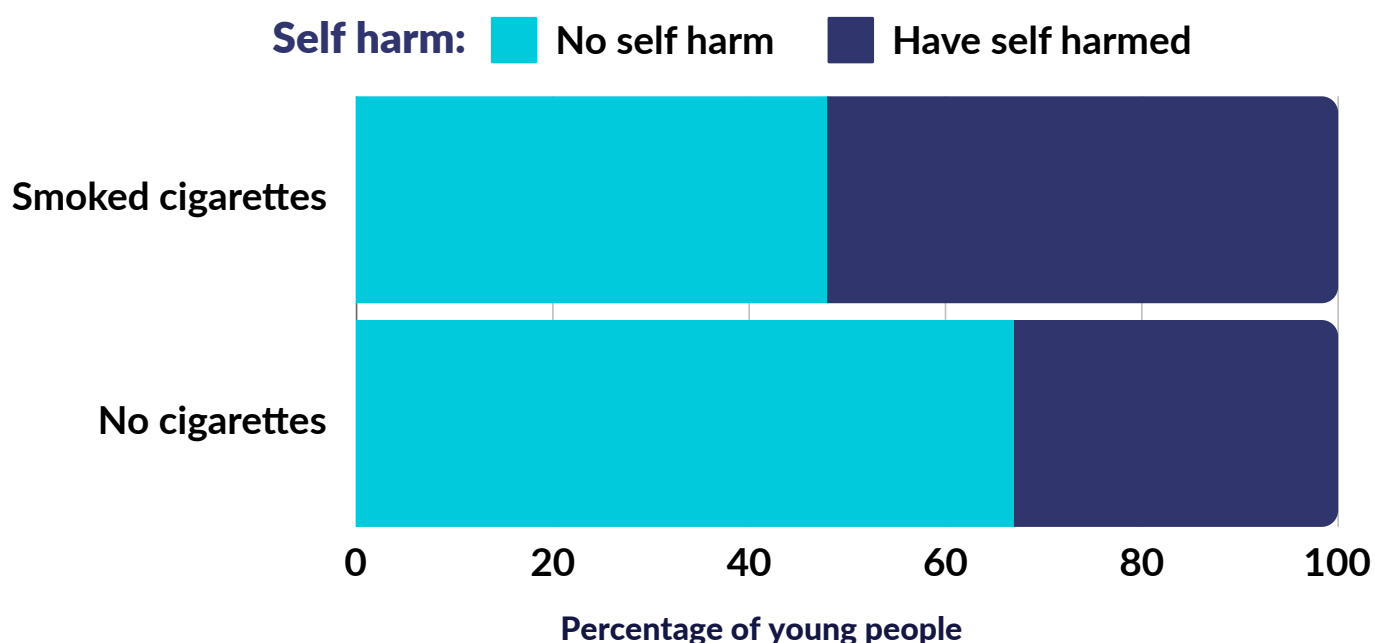
### The development of nicotine dependence

- 1 Nicotine delivered by vaping and travels to the brain
- 2 Nicotine activates nicotinic receptors which stimulate the release of Dopamine
- 3 Dopamine released, leading to pleasant feelings of calmness and reward
- 4 Dopamine levels reduce, leading to withdrawal symptoms of stress and anxiety, which triggers the desire for more vaping.

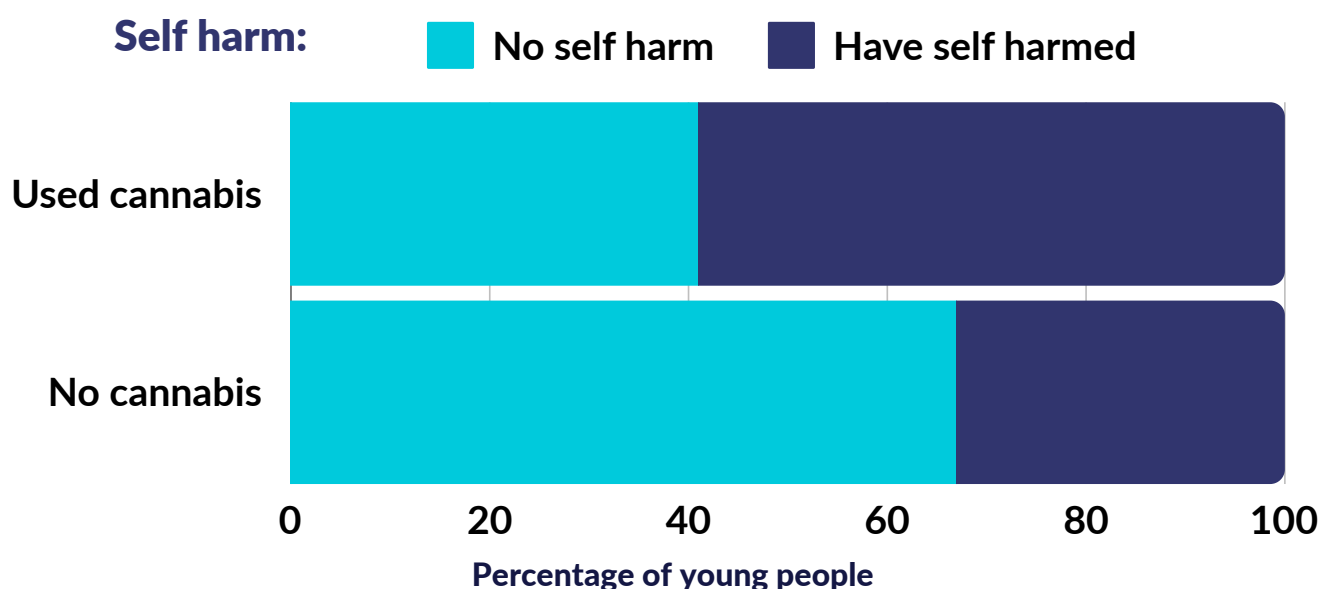
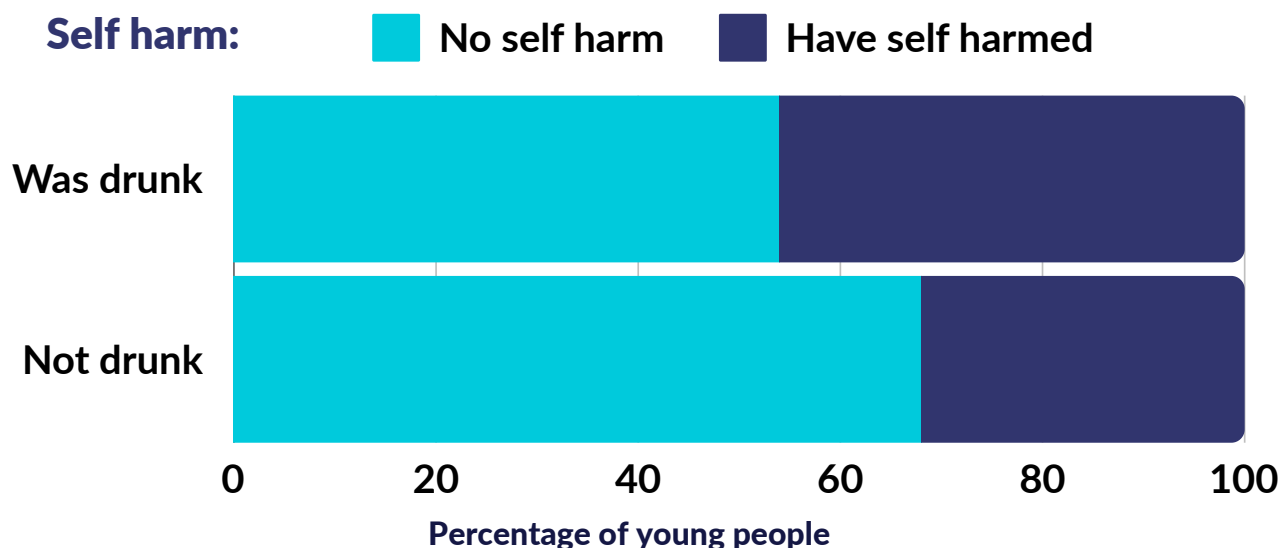
© ASH Scotland

## Reported self harm and substance use in the last 12m

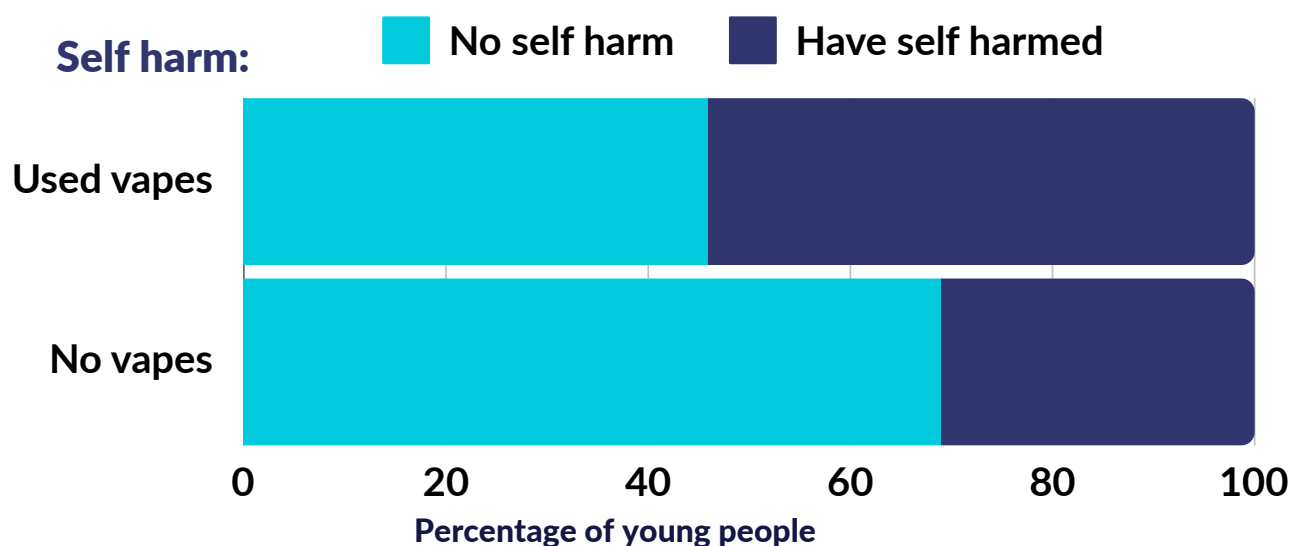
Young people were asked about self harm and their substance use in the last 12 months. **37%** of young people had ever self harmed. These graphs show the number of young people who reported they had self harmed and if they had used substances. Where substances were used in the last 12 months, there were a greater proportion who had self-harmed, compared to those who hadn't used substances in the last 12 months.



## Reported self harm and substance use in the last 12m



## Reported self harm and vape use in the last 30 days





## Bullying

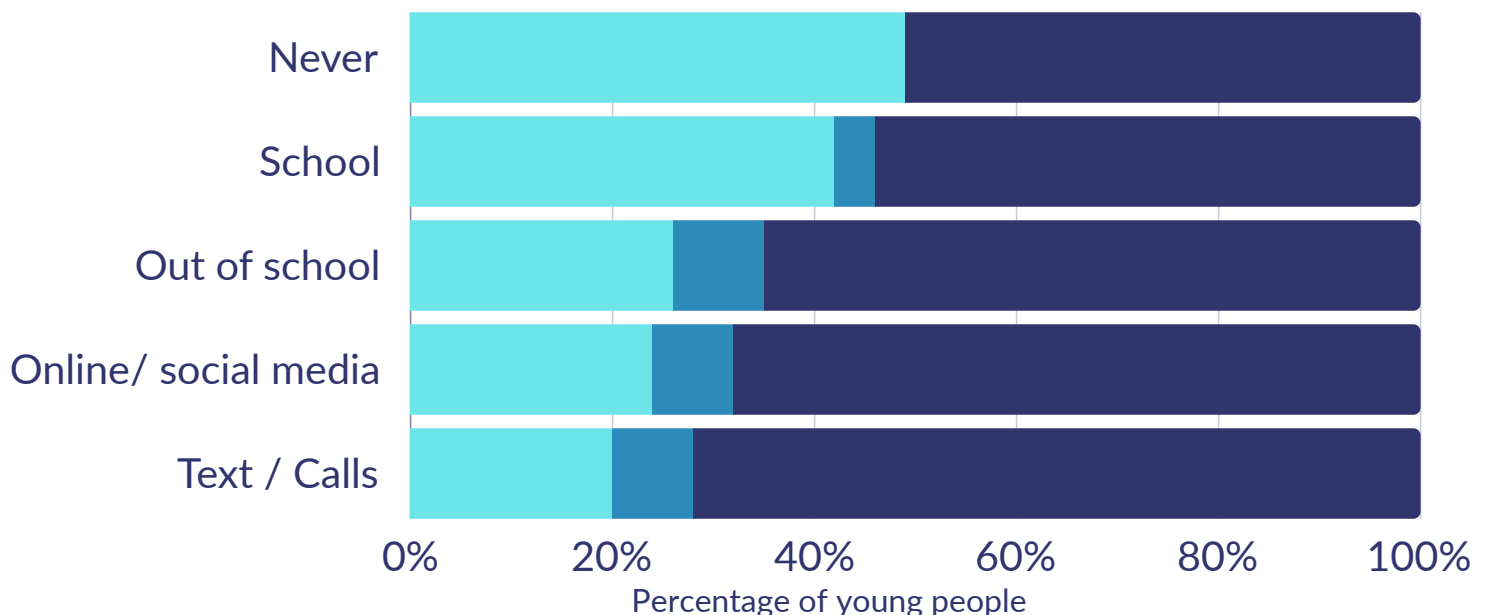
Young people were asked questions about their experience of bullying:

- 49% agreed, they had never been bullied
- 42% agreed, they had been bullied during school
- 26% agreed, they had been bullied out of school
- 24% agreed, they had been bullied online/ via social media
- 20% agreed, they had been bullied through text message / phone calls.

School was the most common setting for young people to experience bullying, with almost half of the young people experiencing bullying during school.

### Been bullied:

Agree Neutral Disagree



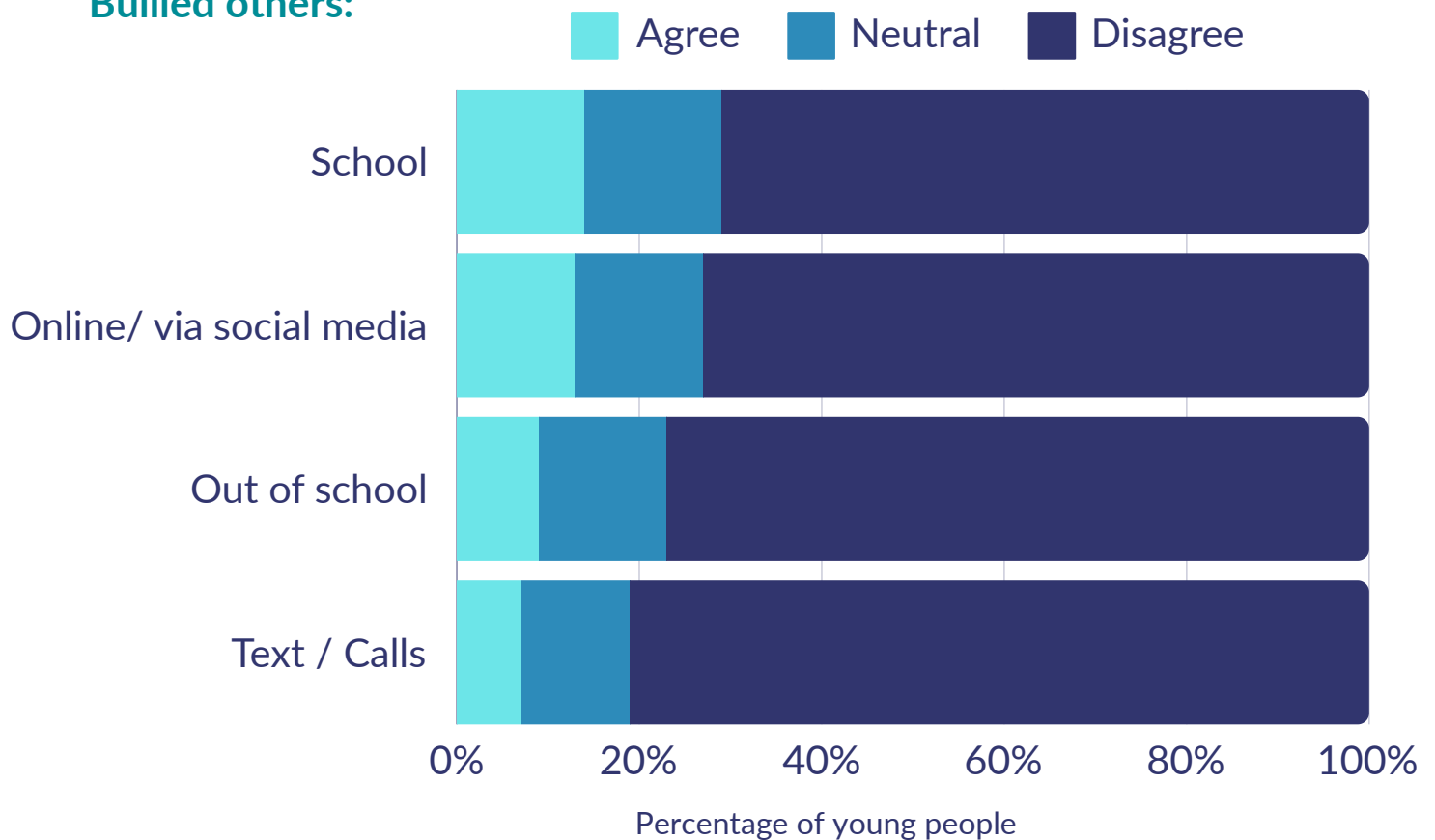
## Bullying

Young people were asked questions about if they had bullied others:

- **14%** agreed, they had bullied someone during school
- **13%** agreed, they had bullied someone online/ via social media
- **9%** agreed, they had bullied someone out of school
- **7%** agreed, they had bullied someone through text message / phone calls.

The majority of young people stated they weren't bullies. For those who had bullied, the most common setting for that was during school, followed by online.

### Bullied others:



## Social media and online time

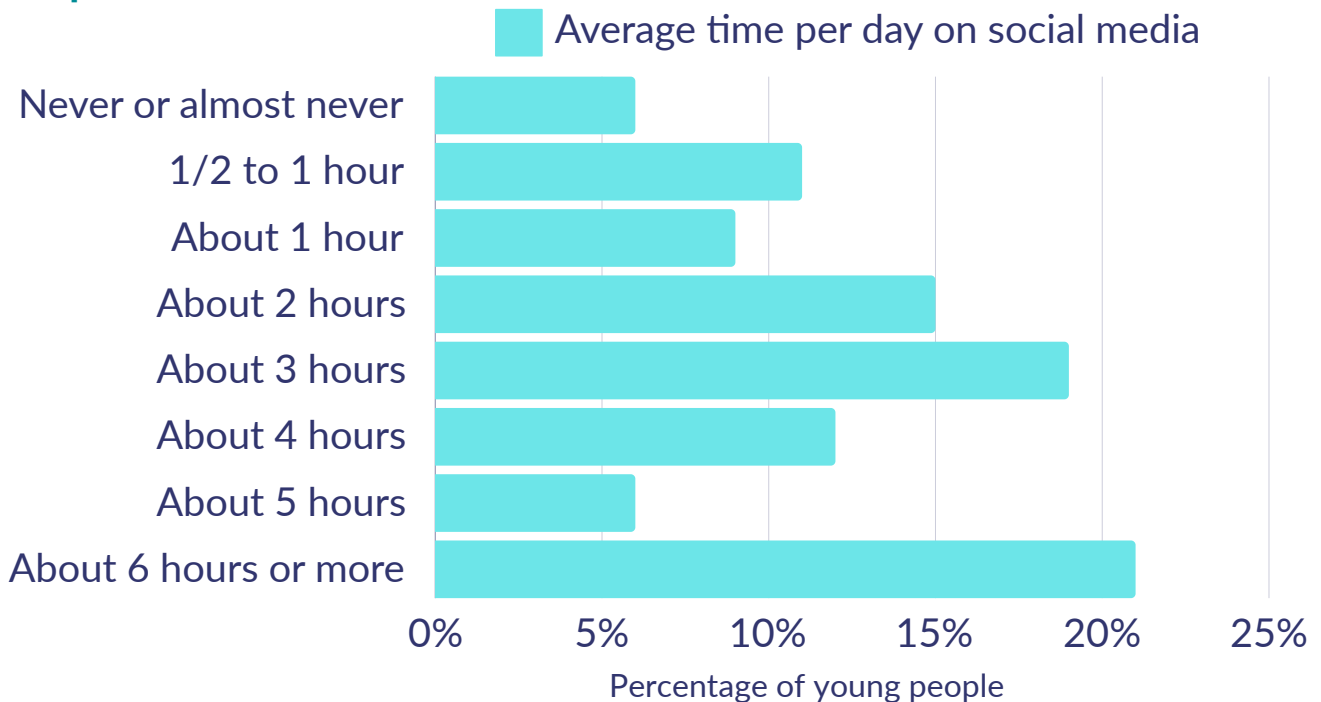
Young people were asked about their daily time on social media:

- **58%** of teenagers spend 3 hours or more on social media daily
- **21%**, one fifth, of young people spend 6 hours or more on social media.

Young people were also asked questions about bullying online.

- **30%** of girls and **24%** of boys reported being bullied online.

### Time spent on Social media

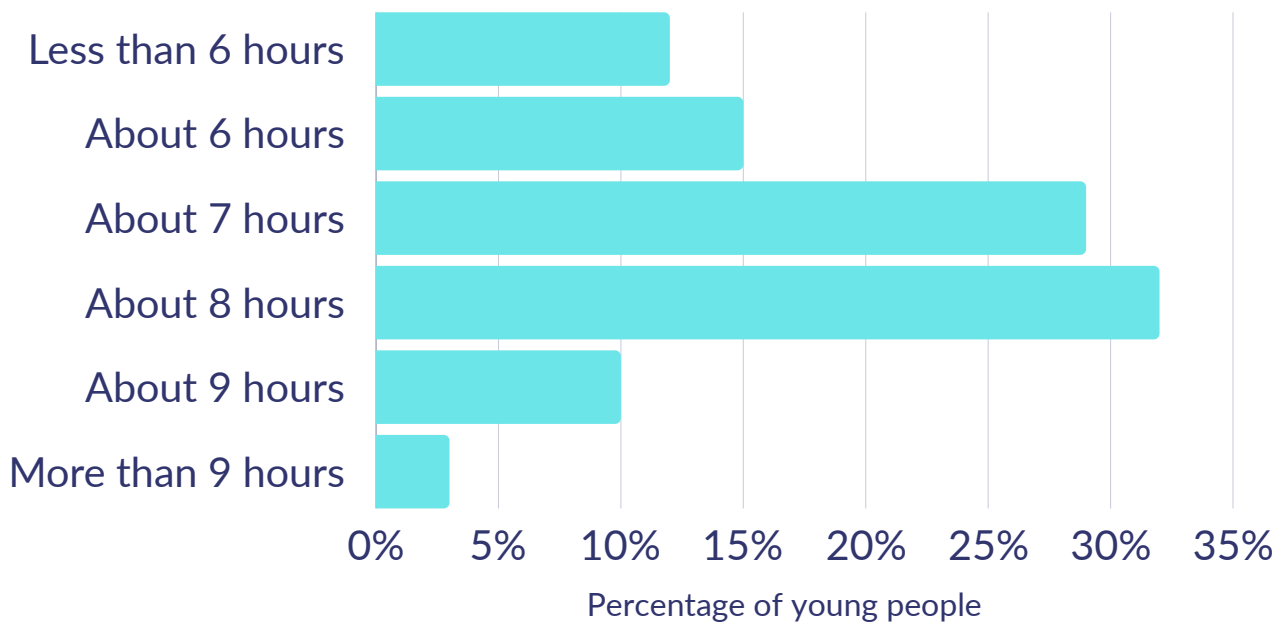


## Sleep

Young people were asked about the amount of sleep they get in hours, on average every night:

- **56%** of pupils are getting less than the recommended 8 hours of sleep on average
- **27%** get around 6 hours or less of sleep every night

### Hours of sleep:



#### TAKEAWAY

**56% of young people aren't getting enough sleep**



## Sexual health and behaviour

Young people were asked about their sexual health and behaviour.

### TAKEAWAY

8% of girls and  
23% of boys  
said they used  
pornography as a  
source of  
information to  
learn about sex



### TAKEAWAY

34% of the young  
people had been sent  
a sexually explicit  
image, from a  
stranger, that they  
had not requested.



## Sexual health and behaviour

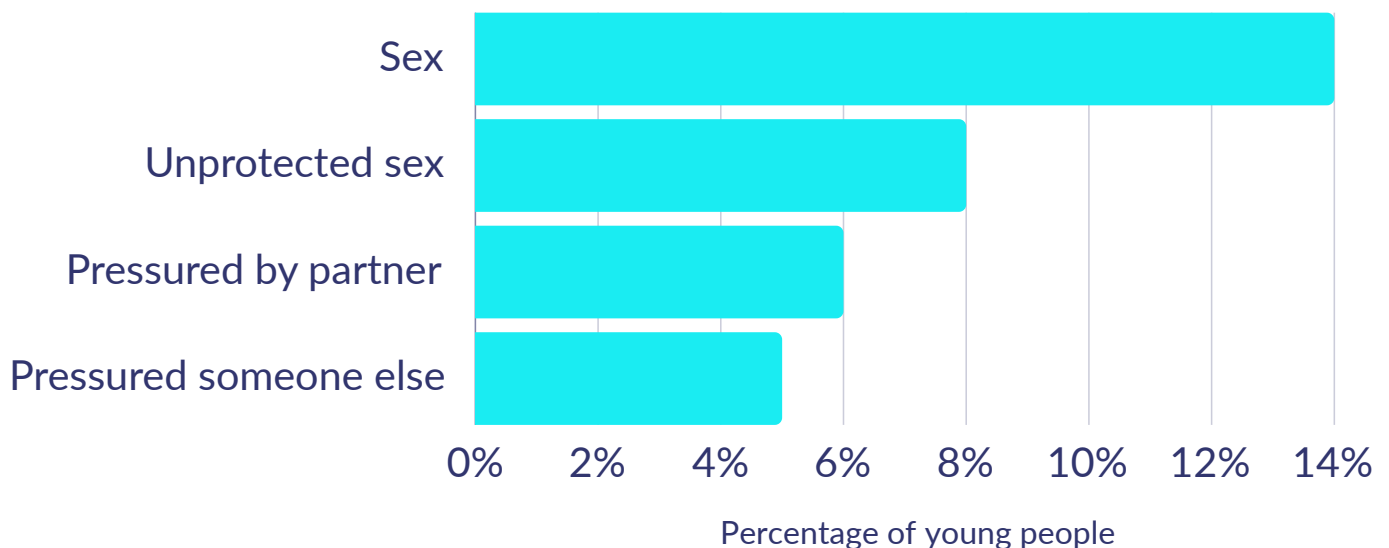
Young people were asked questions about their sexual health and behaviour in the last year:

- **13%** had sexual intercourse
- **8%** had unprotected sex (without using contraception, i.e. the pill, implant, injection, condom)
- **6%** felt pressured to have sex by a partner
- **5%** felt pressured to have sex by someone else
- A small number felt pressured to have sex without protection (condom etc).

A small proportion of young people stated they had pressured someone else into having sex.

### Sexual experience:

Once or more



#### TAKEAWAY

**8% had sex whilst under the influence of alcohol**



#### TAKEAWAY

**A small number had sex whilst under the influence of drugs**



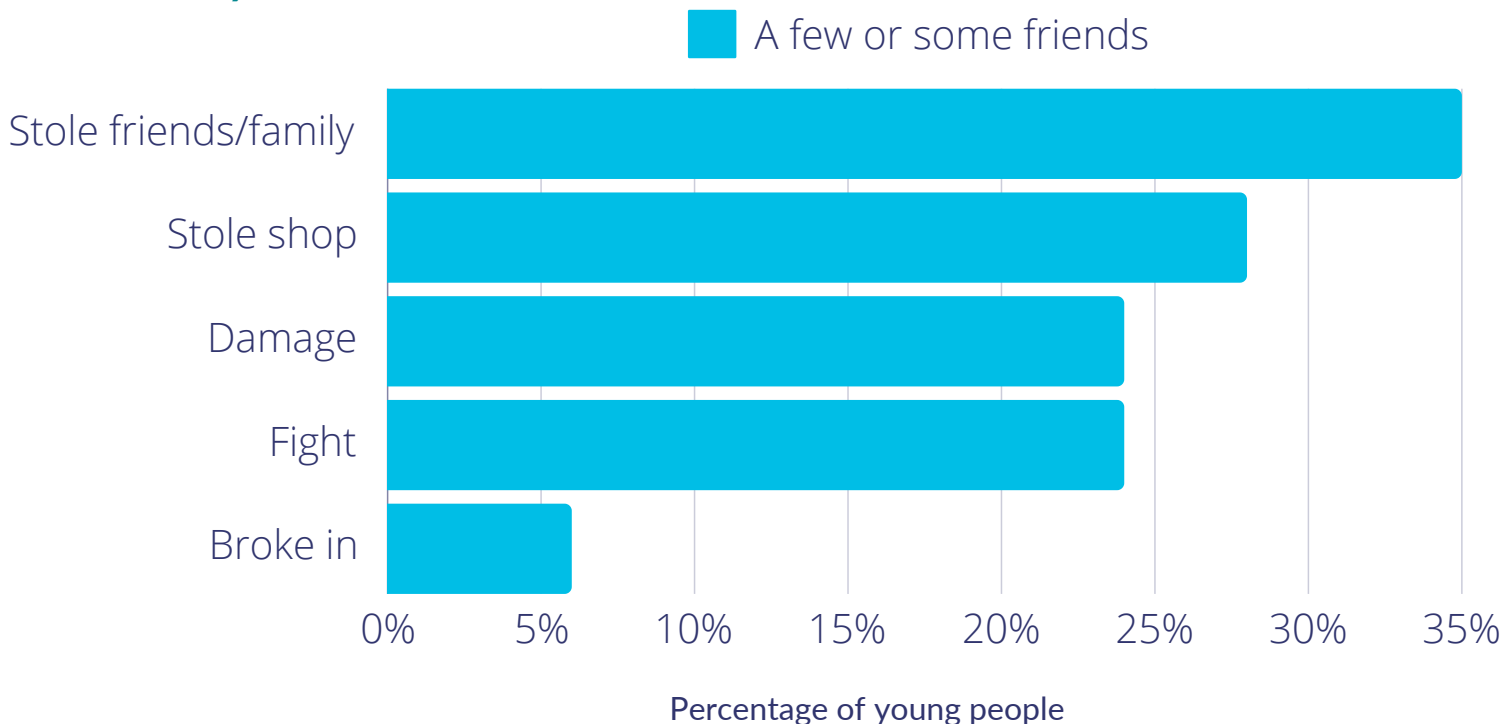
## Risky behaviour

Young people were asked how many of their friends had done the following, in the last 12 months:

- **35%** had stolen something from family or friends
- **28%** had stolen something from a shop
- **24%** said a few or some friends had picked a fight or searched out fights
- **24%** had damaged or vandalized things that did not belong to them
- **6%** had broken into a building or a car in order to steal.

A small proportion of young people said most or almost all of their friends had stolen something worth less than £20, stolen something worth more than £20, damaged or vandalised things that did not belong to them and picked a fight or searched out fights.

### Others risky behaviour:



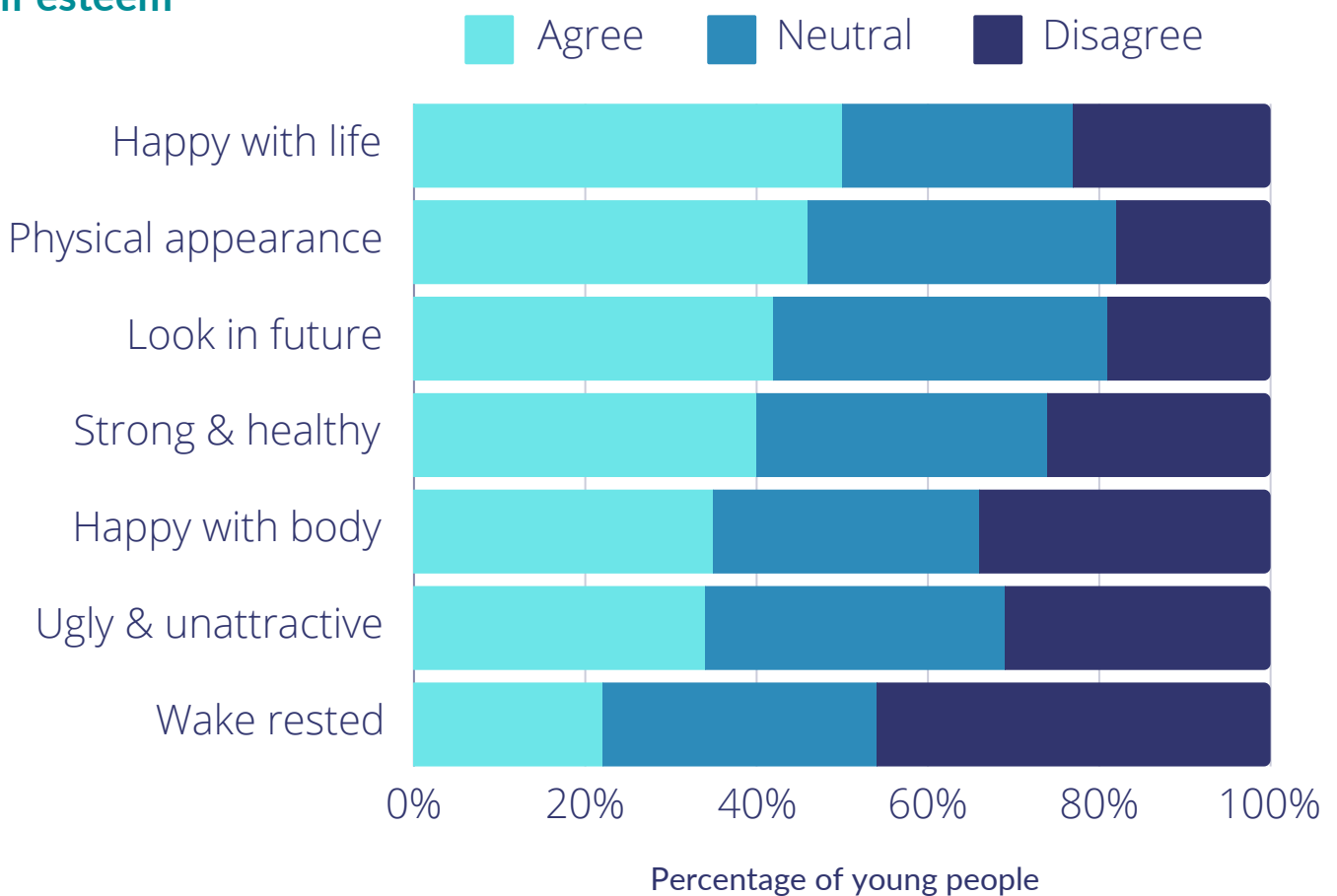
**Avoiding being involved in risky behaviours is a protective factor for young people.**

## Self esteem

Young people were asked series of questions about themselves, and how the statement apply to them:

- **50%** agreed, I'm happy with my life
- **46%** agreed, when I think about how my physical appearance will be in the future, I am pleased
- **42%** agreed, when I think about how I will look in the future, I'm pleased
- **40%** agreed, physically and mentally I feel strong and healthy
- **35%** agreed, I'm happy with my body
- **34%** agreed, I think that I'm ugly and unattractive
- **22%** agreed, I wake up in the morning feeling fresh and rested.

### Self esteem



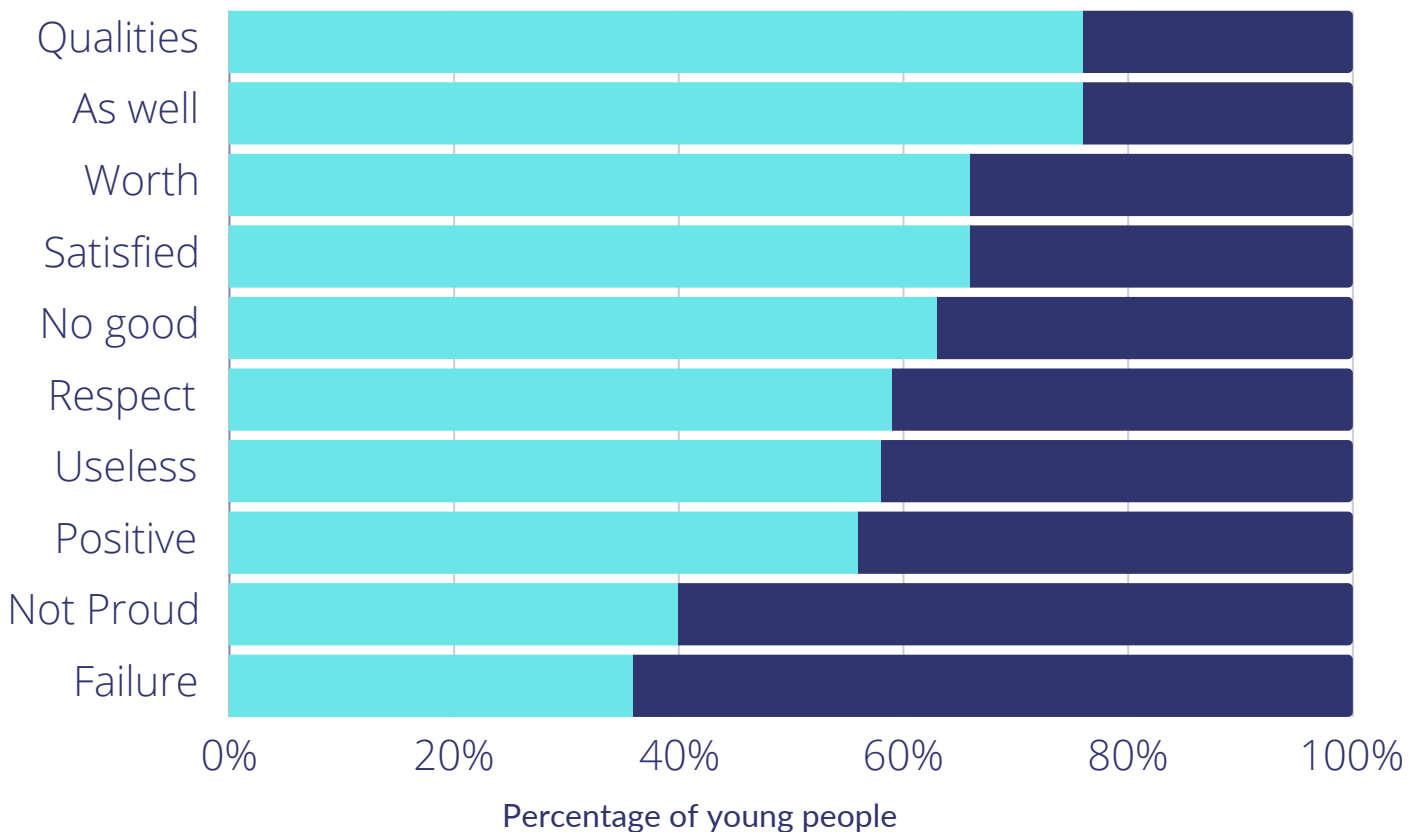
## Self esteem

Young people were asked series of questions about themselves, and how the statement apply to them:

- **76%** agreed, they feel they have a number of good qualities
- **76%** agreed, they are able to do things as well as most other people
- **66%** agreed, they feel that they are a person of worth, at least on an equal plane with others
- **66%** agreed, on the whole, they are satisfied with themselves
- **63%** agreed, at times, they think they are no good at all
- **59%** agreed, they wish they could have more respect for themselves
- **58%** agreed, they certainly feel useless at times
- **56%** agreed, they take a positive attitude toward themselves
- **40%** agreed, they feel they do not have much to be proud of
- **36%** agreed, all in all, they are inclined to feel that they are a failure.

### Self esteem rating

Agree Disagree

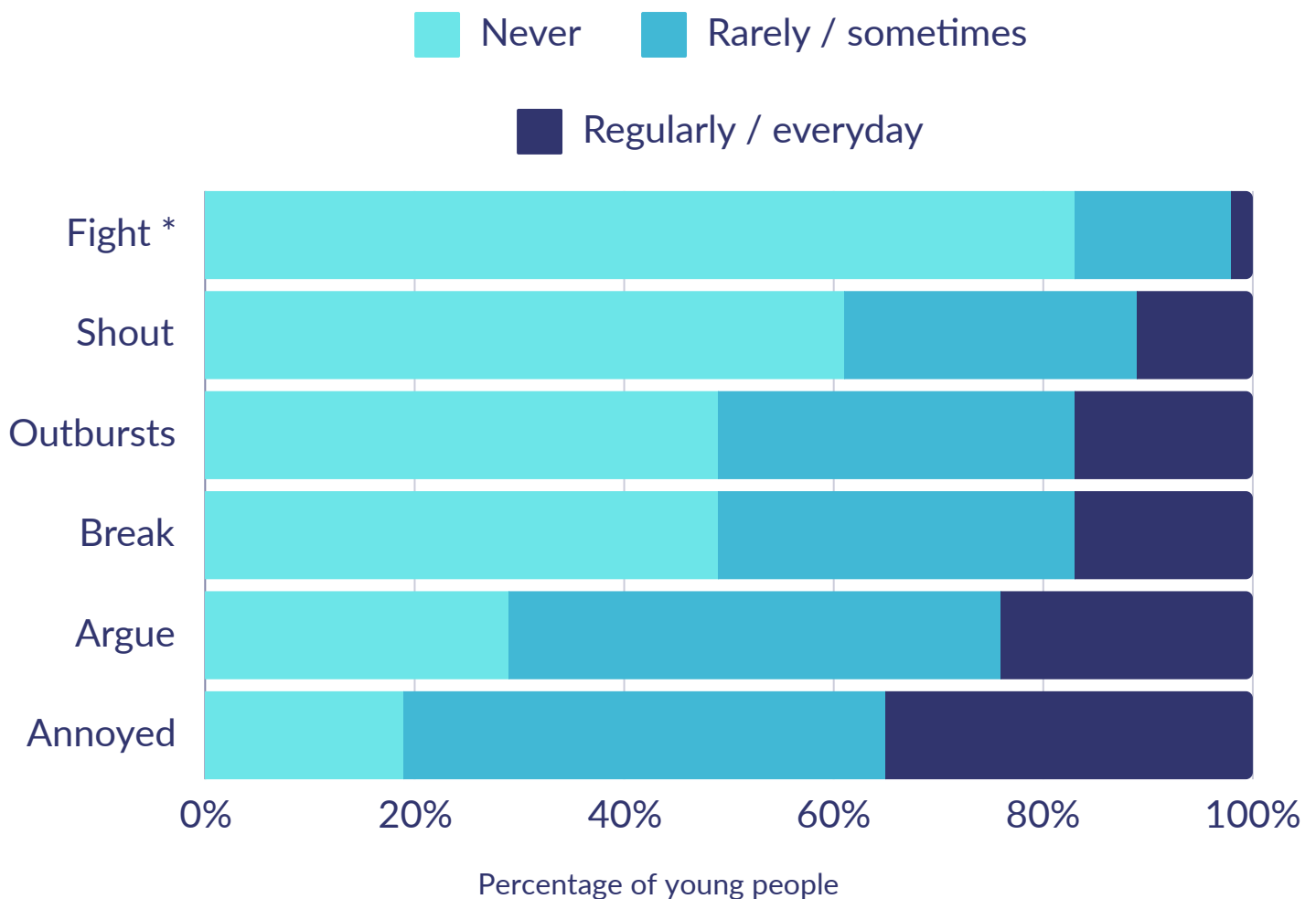


## Mood

Young people were asked series of questions about mood in the previous week:

- **83%** never had a physical fight with someone. (\* a small proportion of young people stated they had a physical fight with someone regularly / everyday).
- **61%** never aggressively shouted at somebody or threw things
- **49%** never experienced outbursts of anger that they could not control
- **49%** never wanted to break or damage things
- **29%** never had an argument with someone
- **19%** were never easily annoyed or irritated

### Mood in the previous week



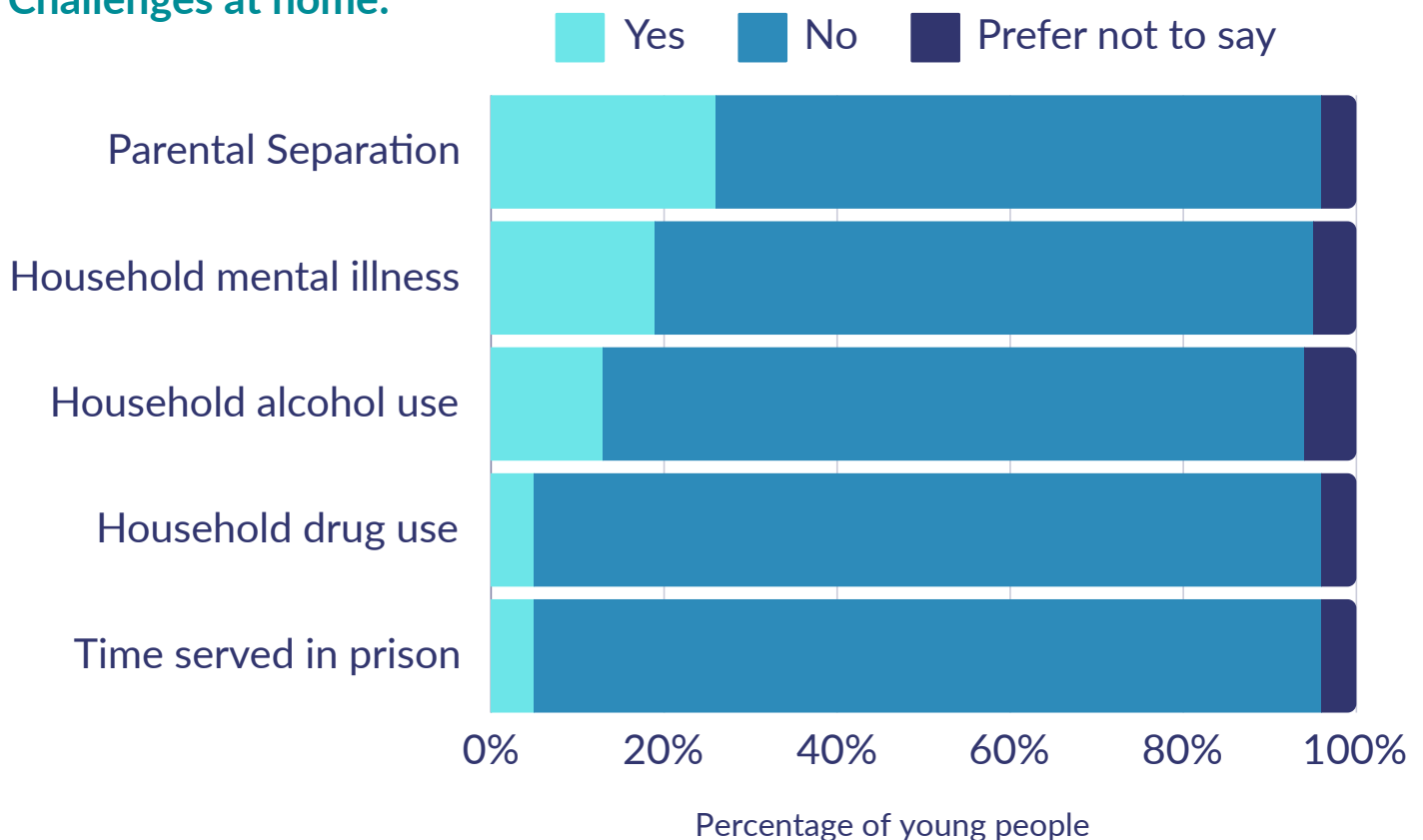
## Challenges at home

Young people were asked if the following had happened to them:

- **26%** experienced parental separation
- **19%** experienced household mental illness (live with someone depressed, mentally ill or suicidal)
- **13%** experienced household alcohol use that's a problem (live with someone who drinks too much alcohol)
- **5%** experienced household drug use (live with someone who uses drugs, including using prescription medicine inappropriately)
- **5%** experienced someone they live with serve time in prison or a young offenders' institution.

A number of young people selected 'prefer not to say' in these responses. Therefore, they did not indicate if they experienced these situations or not.

### Challenges at home:



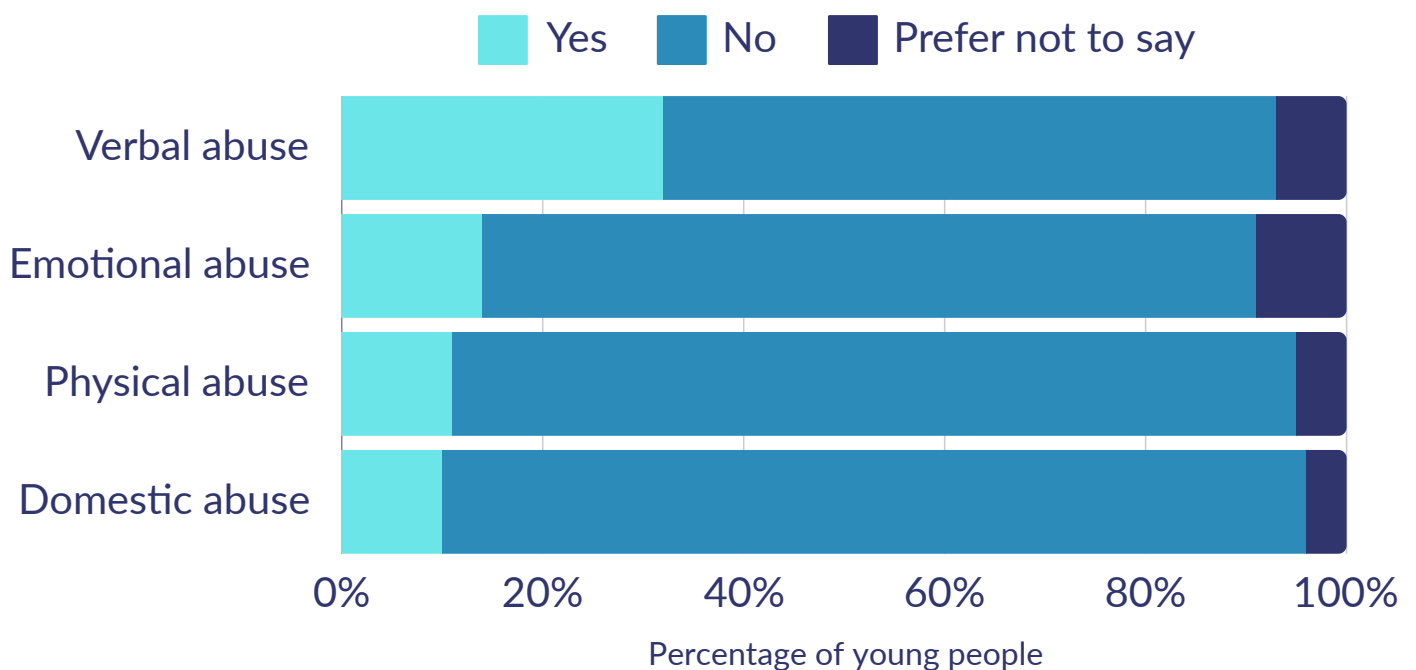
## Abuse

Young people were asked if the following had happened to them:

- **32%** had experienced verbal abuse (your parent / carer has sworn at you, insulted you or put you down)
- **14%** had experienced emotional neglect ( your parent / carer does not respond to or care about your emotional needs)
- **11%** had experienced physical abuse (your parent / carer has hit or physically hurt you in any way)
- **10%** had experienced household domestic violence.

A number of young people selected 'prefer not to say' in these responses. Therefore, they did not indicate if they experienced abuse or not.

### Abuse at home



**Young people who experienced abuse were more likely to have been drunk in the last 30 days and used cannabis in their lifetime.**



2023

DATA BASED ON ICSRA DATA

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# Survey Results: Family

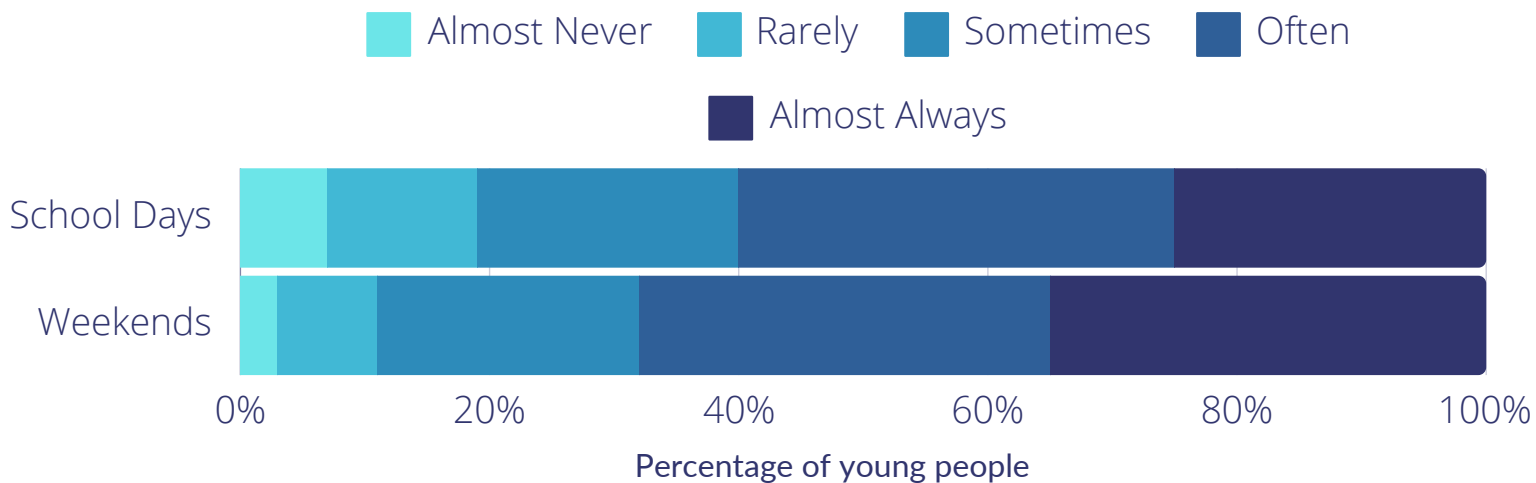
## Family time

Young people were asked how frequently they spent time with their parents / carers outside school hours on school days, and during the weekends.

Increasing time spent with parents, including parents of friends, is a protective factor for young people, and is associated with less substance use among young people in Highland.

**68%** often or always spend time with their parents during the weekends. Planet Youth representatives viewed this figure as low, re-enforcing the importance of families spending time together.

### Frequency of time spent with Family



#### TAKEAWAY

**68% often or almost always spend time with their parents during the weekends**

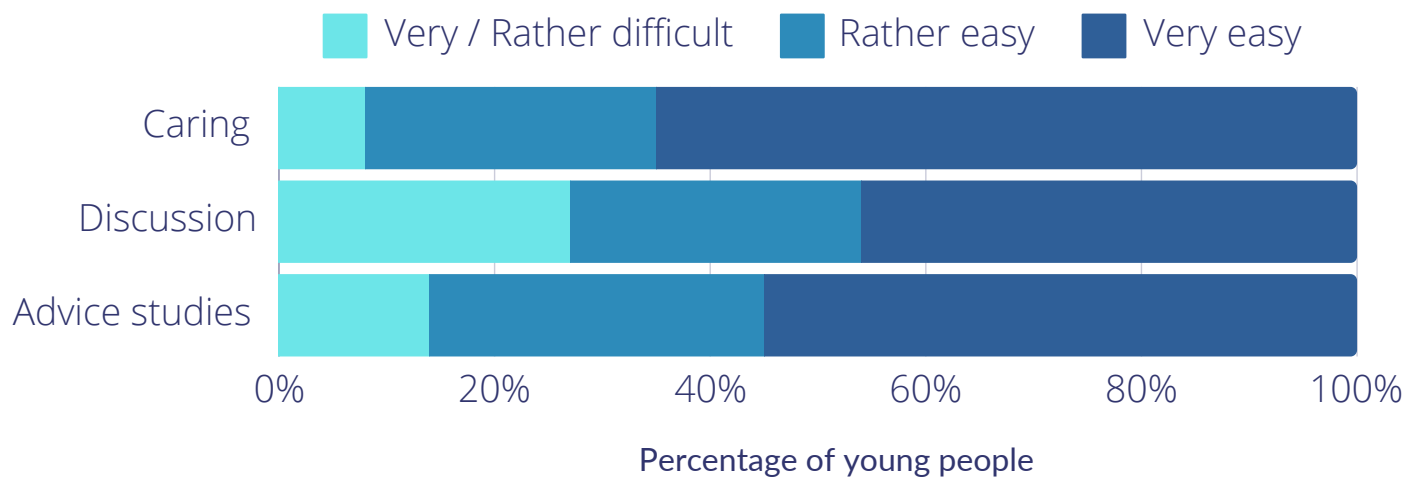
## Family support

Young people were asked how easy or difficult it is to get various types of support from their parent(s) or carer(s):

- **92%** found it easy or very easy to receive caring and warmth
- **73%** found it easy or very easy to have discussion about personal matters
- **86%** found it easy or very easy to get advice about schoolwork/studies

This is important because parent or carer support is a protective factor for young people. Increasing support for young people is beneficial.

### Family support:



**96% said my parents or carers think it's important that young people do well with their school work.**

#### TAKEAWAY

**83% said they often or almost always feel safe at home**



#### TAKEAWAY

**92% said it is easy or very easy to receive caring and warmth from their parents or carers**

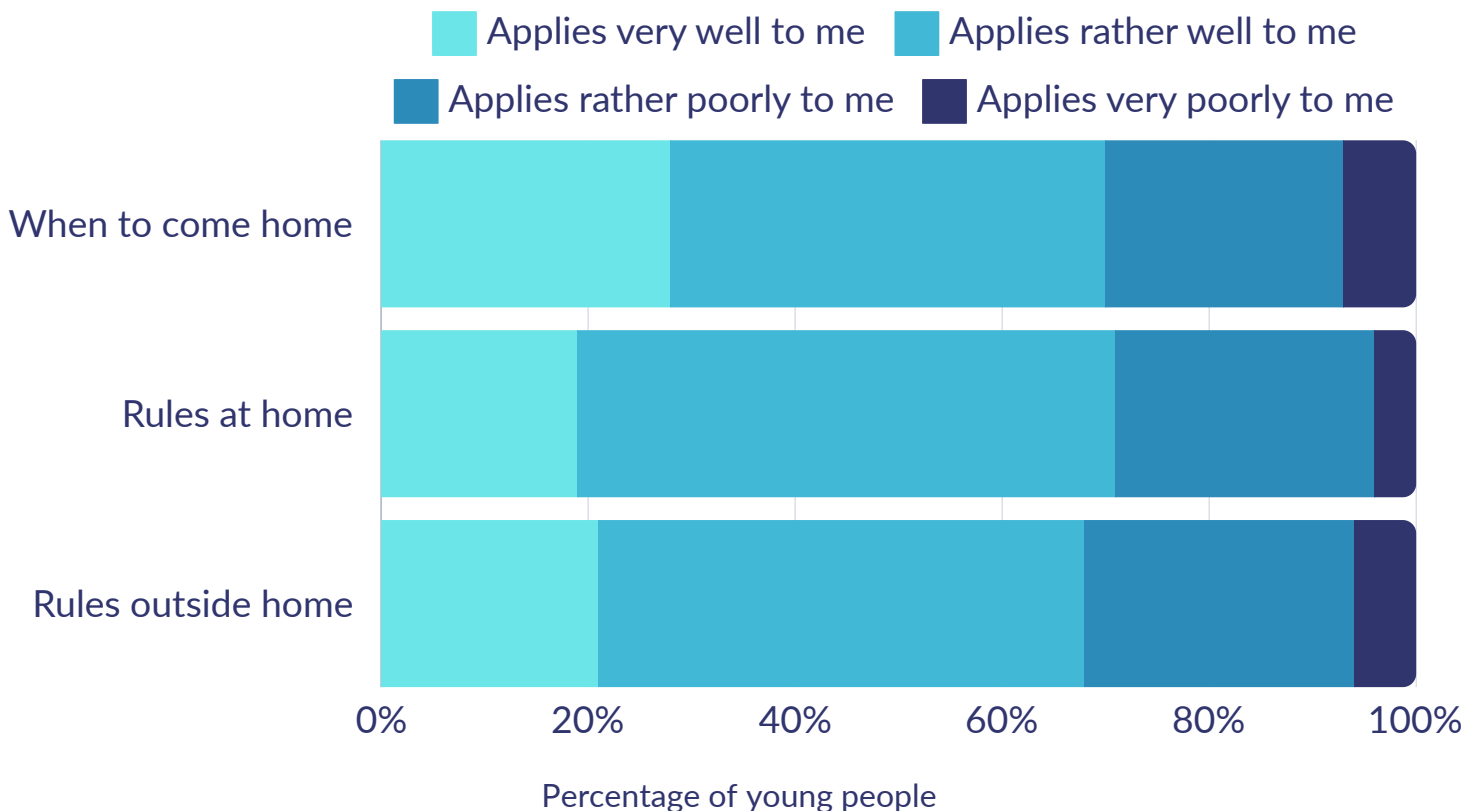
## Clear boundaries and rules

Young people were also asked about rules set by their parent(s) or carer(s):

- My parents or carers set definite rules about when I should be home in the evening  
**70%** of young people said this applied very well or rather well to them
- My parents or carers set definite rules about what I can do at home  
**71%** of young people said this applied very well or rather well to them
- My parents or carers set definite rules about what I can do outside the home  
**68%** of young people said this applied very well or rather well to them.

Families having clear boundaries and rules are an important protective factor for young people.

### Boundaries and rules:



## Family monitoring and social capital

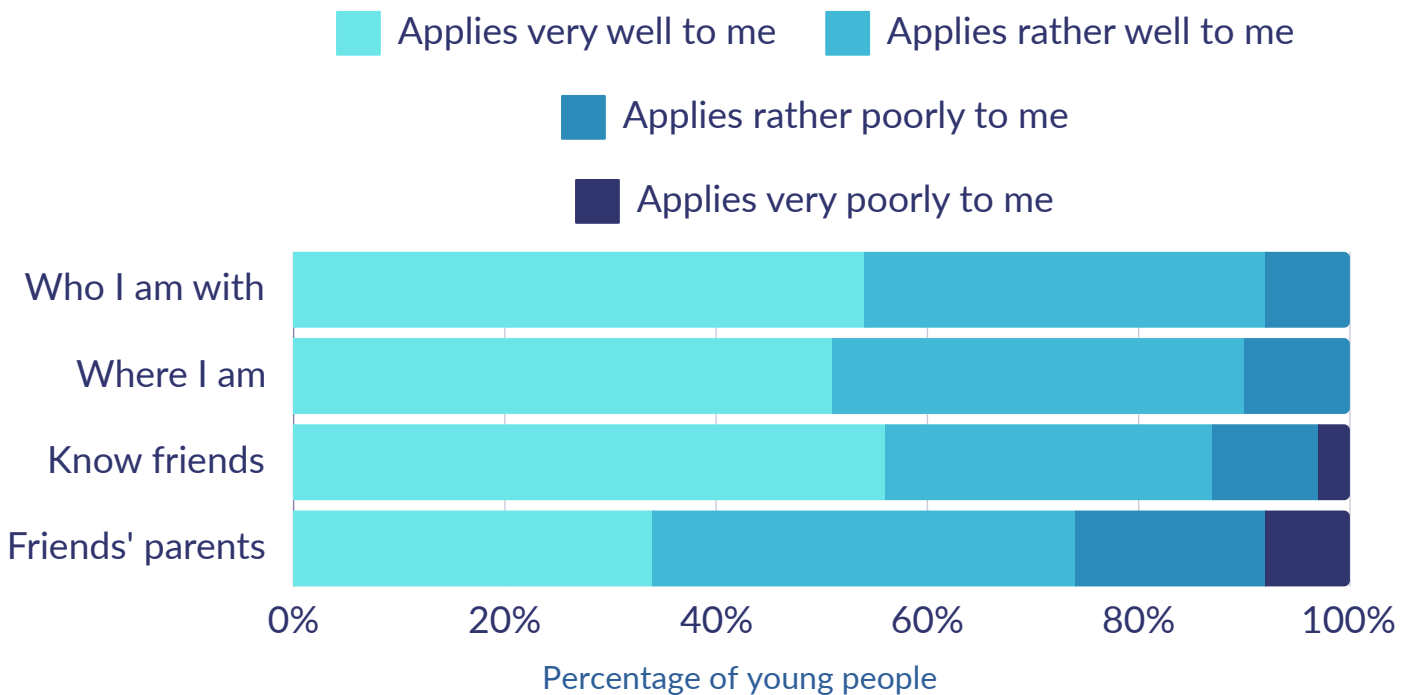
Young people were asked about parental monitoring and social capital. The percent of young people who said these situations applied very or rather well to them were:

- **92%** said my parents or carers know who I am with in the evenings
- **90%** said my parents or carers know where I am in the evenings
- **87%** said my parents or carers know my friends
- **74%** said my parents or carers know the parents of my friends.

When parents or carers know the friends of their children, and the parents or carers of those friends, this provides a supportive network around each young person. Parents and carers knowing where their children are is a protective factor.

**90% of parents or carers know where their child is in the evening.**

### Monitoring and social capital:



**Young people with parents or carers that don't know their whereabouts are more likely to smoke daily, have been drunk in the last 30 days, and use cannabis in their lifetime.**

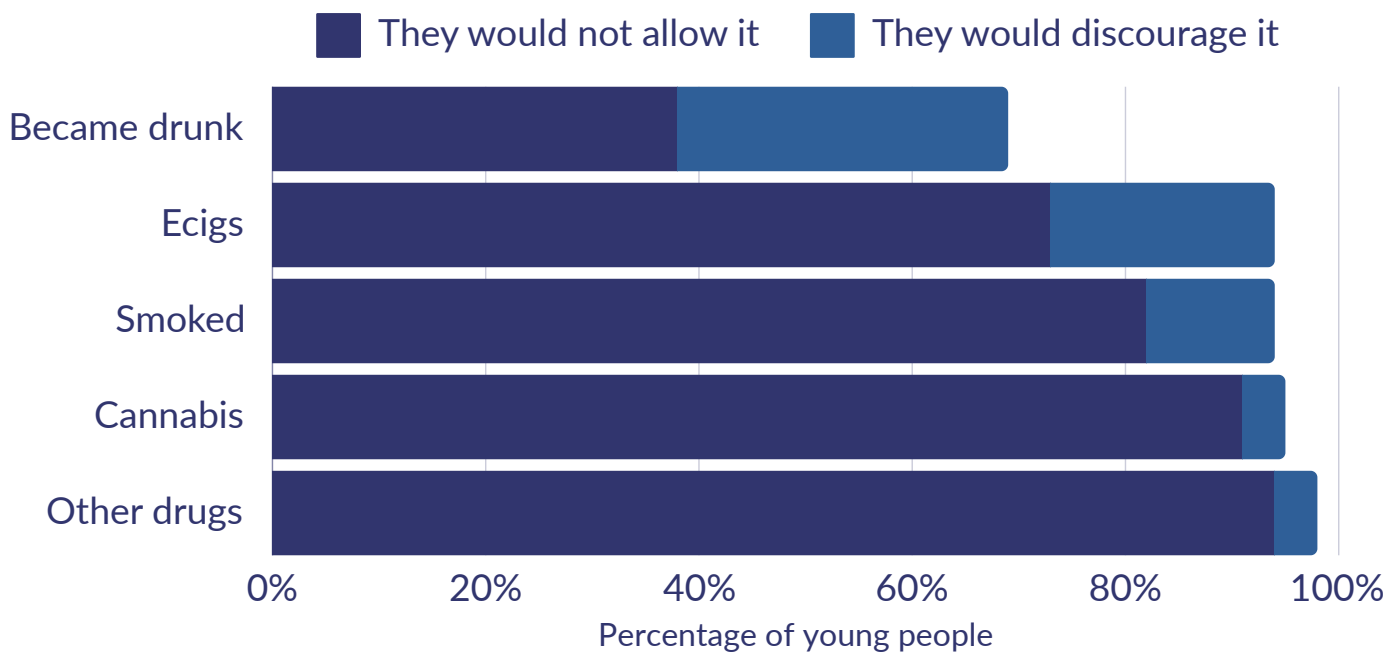
## Perceived parental reactions to alcohol, tobacco and other drug use

Young people were asked about how their parent(s) or carer(s) would react if they:

- Became drunk - **38%** of parents or carers would not allow this
- Used e-cigarettes - **73%** of parents or carers would not allow this
- Smoked cigarettes - **82%** of parents or carers would not allow this
- Used cannabis - **91%** of parents or carers would not allow this
- Used other drugs - **94%** of parents or carers would not allow this.

Parents and carers having firm boundaries around access to alcohol, tobacco and other drugs is a protective factor for young people, and challenges perceptions of acceptance of these behaviours, which can lead to increased use.

### Perceived parental reactions to substance use:



**70% of boys' parents and 67% of girls' parents would not allow or discourage becoming drunk.**



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# Survey Results: School

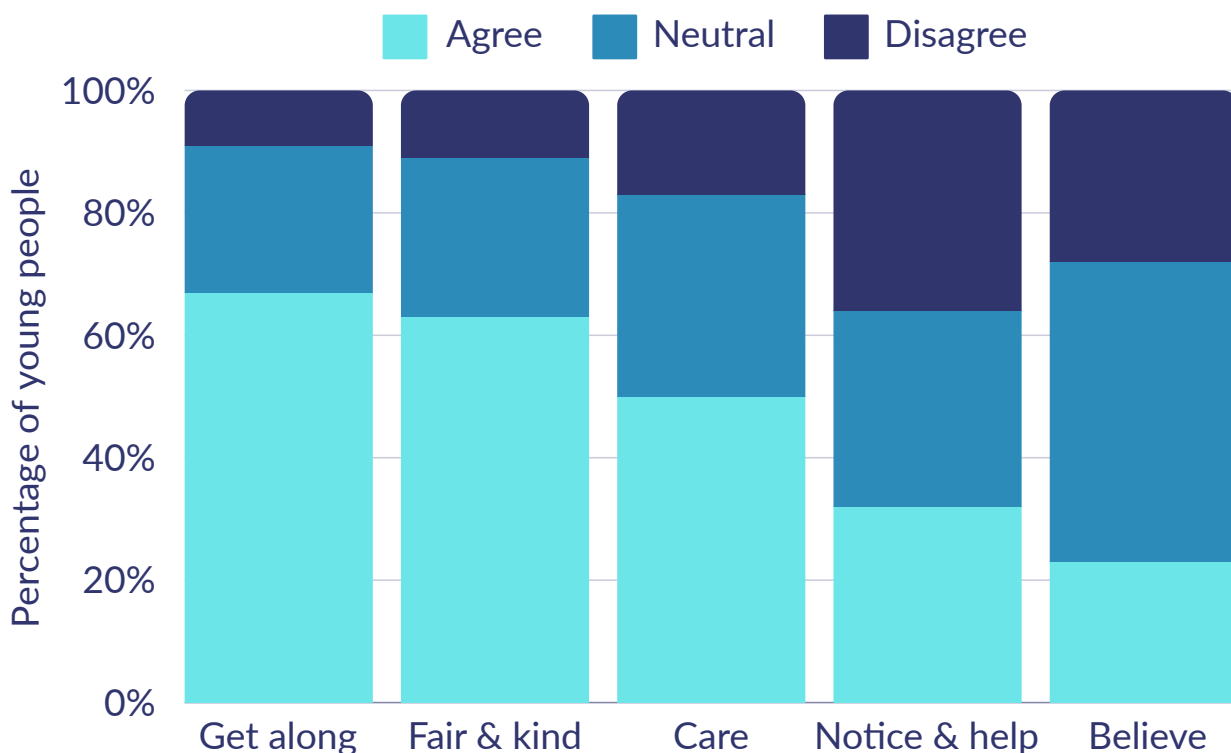
## Supportive adults at school

Young people were asked about their experience of supportive adults at school:

- **67%** agreed they get along with the teachers
- **63%** agreed the adults at my schools are fair and kind to me
- **50%** agreed the adults at my school care about me
- **32%** agreed the adults at my school notice when they are having a hard time and offer to help them
- **23%** agreed the adults at my school believe they can make the world a better place.

It is important to have access to supportive adults at school, especially for young people that don't have high levels of support at home.

### Supportive adults at school:



**Young people that disagree with statements about access to supportive adults are more likely to have been drunk in the last 30 days and used cannabis in their lifetime.**

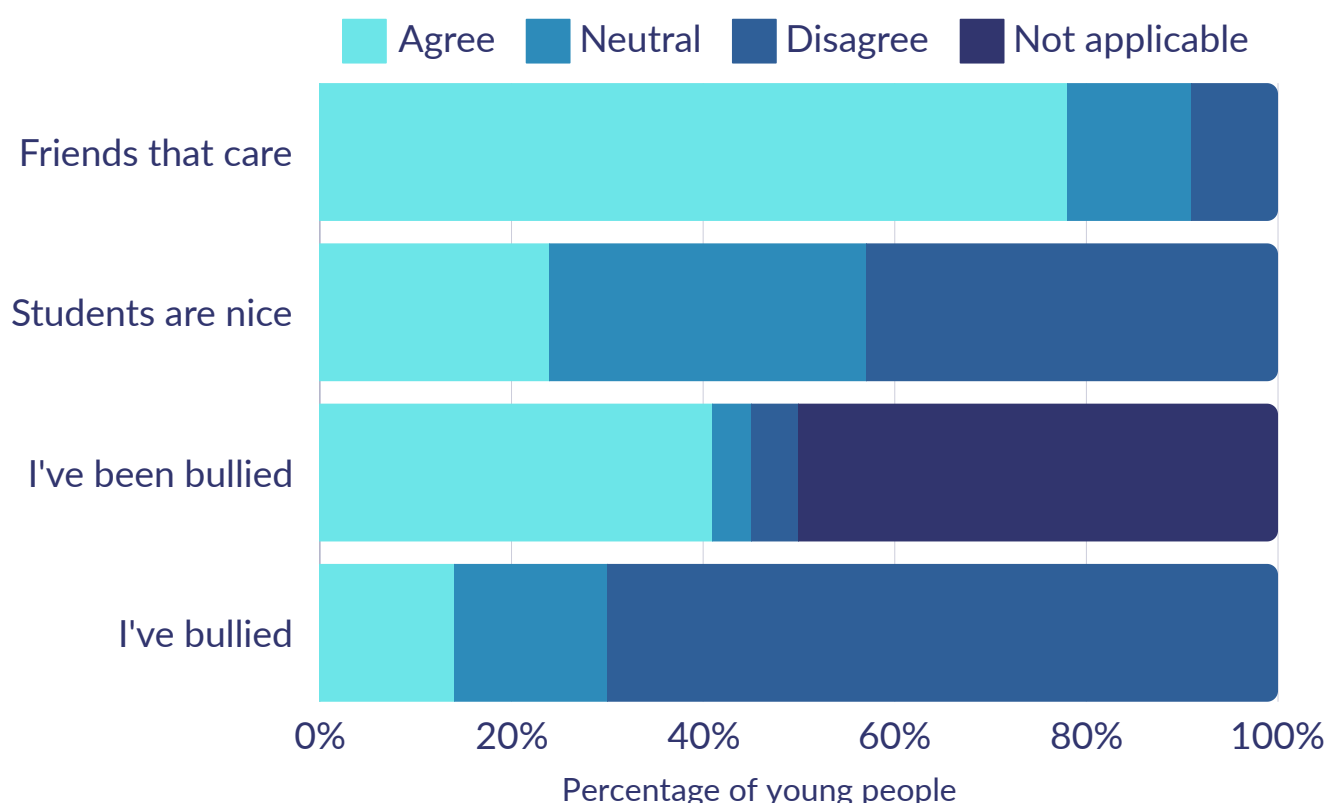
## Peers at school

Young people were asked about their experience of supportive peers at school:

- **78%** agreed, they have friends in school that care about me
- **24%** agreed, the students at my school are nice to each other
- **41%** agreed, they have been bullied during school
- **14%** agreed, they have bullied someone during school.

It is important to have a supportive culture at school, for young people to have supportive peers at school, and for school to be a comfortable place to be. Supporting young people to be friendly with one another, and challenging people being left out or being bullied is key.

### Peers at school:



## Attitude to school

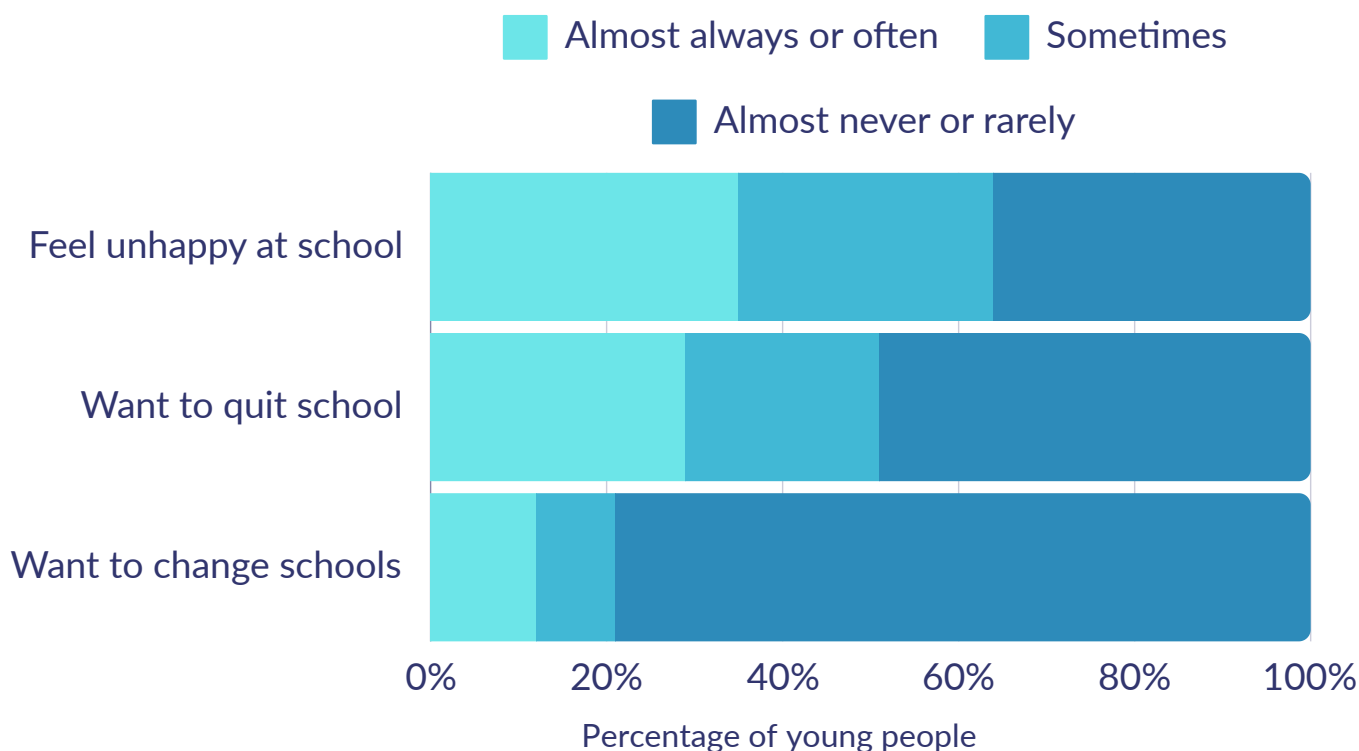
Young people were asked about their attitudes towards school:

- **35%** almost always or often feel unhappy at school
- **29%** almost always or often want to quit school
- **12%** almost always or often want to change schools.



Having a positive attitude to school is an important protective factor.

### Attitudes to school:



Young people are more likely to use substances if they want to change schools.

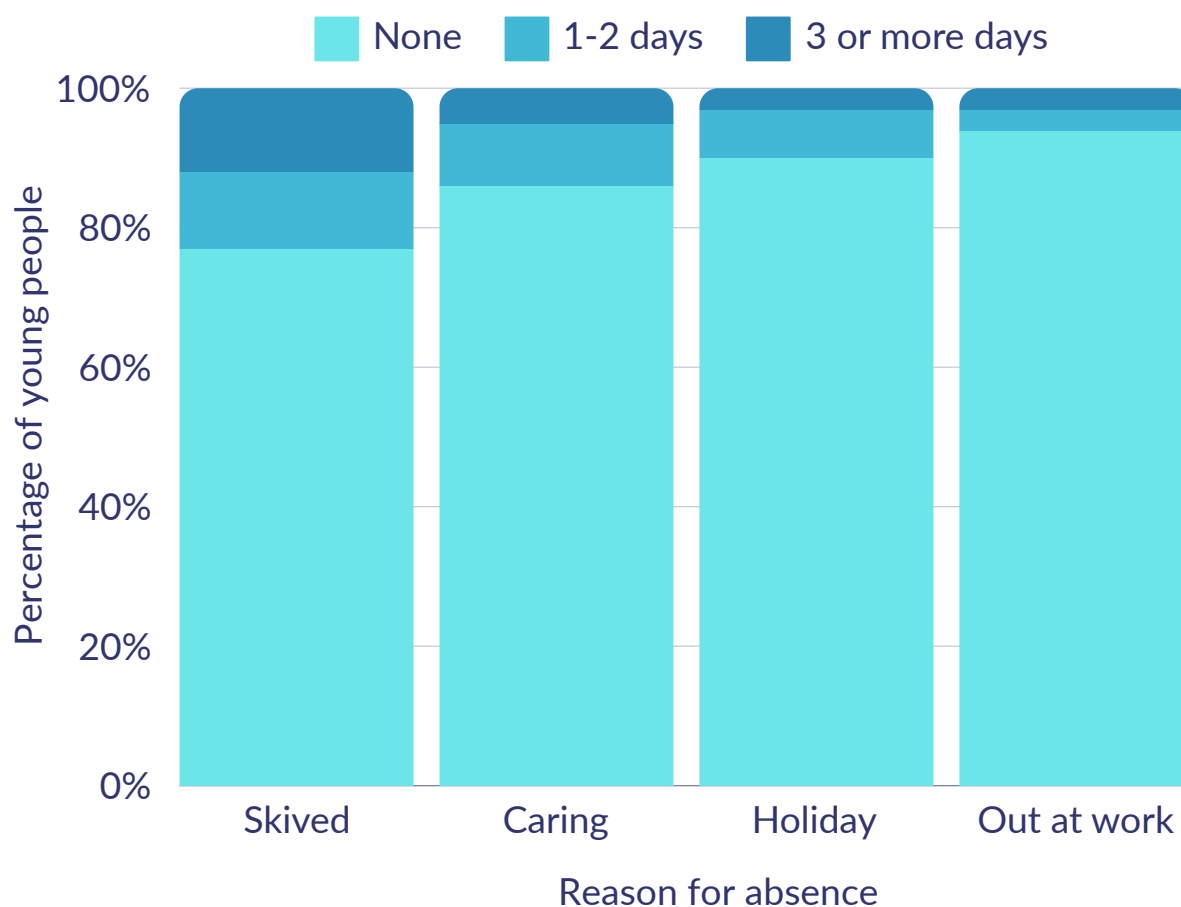
## School absenteeism

Young people were asked about any whole days they were absent from school during the last 30 days:

- **23%** because they skipped or skived classes
- **14%** because they were caring for someone
- **10%** because they were on holiday.
- **6%** because they were out at work

Being in school is a protective factor, and while young people might need to be off for valid reasons, avoiding unexplained absenteeism is something to work against to reduce risk factors experience by those young people.

### Number of days absent and reason for absence from school in last 30 days



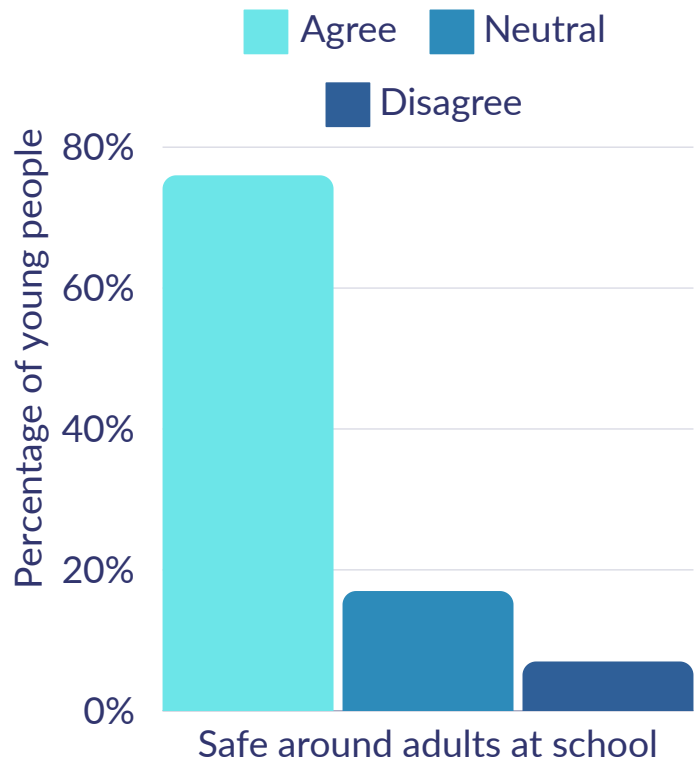
## School sense of safety

Young people were asked about the sense of school safety:

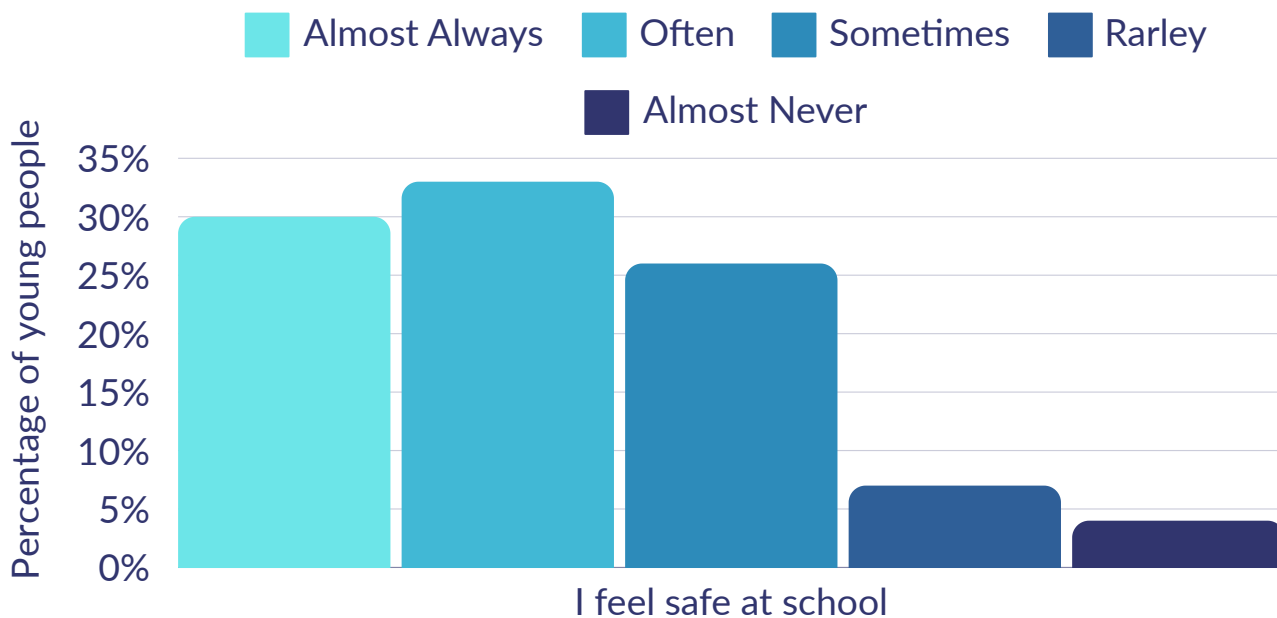
- **76%** agree it is safe to be around the adults at my school
- **30%** almost always feel safe at school

Feeling safe at school is very important. Aggressive or violent behaviour or bullying should be taken very seriously.

### Feeling safe around adults at school:



### Feeling safe at school:



Young people are more likely to skip or skive classes if they don't feel safe at school.



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# Survey Results: Leisure Time

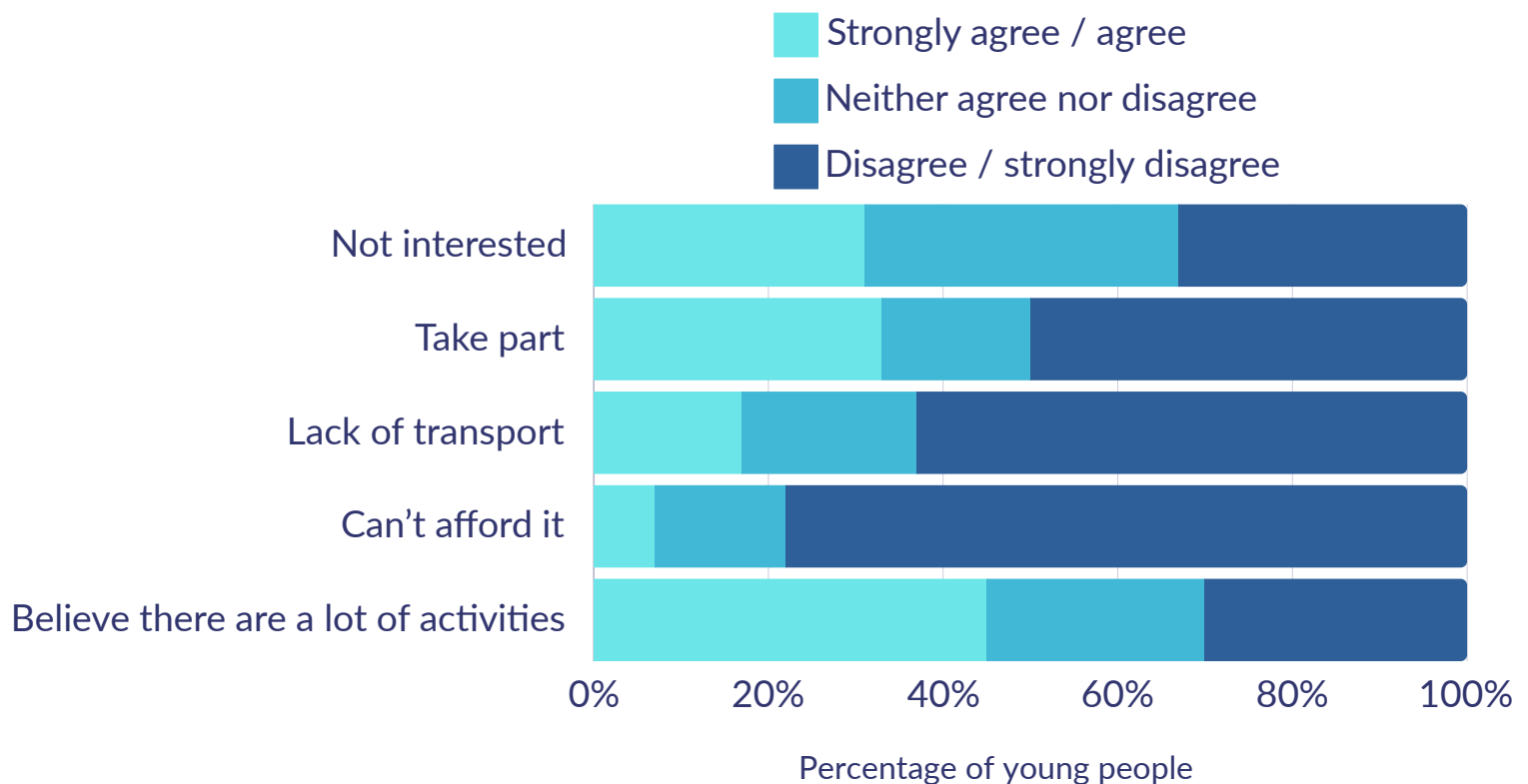
## Access to and participation in organised recreational and extracurricular activities

Taking part in organised leisure activities is an important protective factor.

Diversionary activities help with character building, support a pro-social environment in which young people are happy to play with and be around each other. These questions focus on this domain. Young people were asked about their access to, and participation in organised recreational and extracurricular activities. The % who **strongly agree or agree** are:

- **31%** - there's nothing that they are interested in
- **33%** - there's lot to do in their neighbourhood or community and they take part
- **17%** - they can't take part due to lack of transport
- **7%** - can't do activities because their parents or carers can't afford them
- **45%** - believe there are a lot of activities in their neighbourhood

### Access to and participation in organised recreational and extracurricular activities :

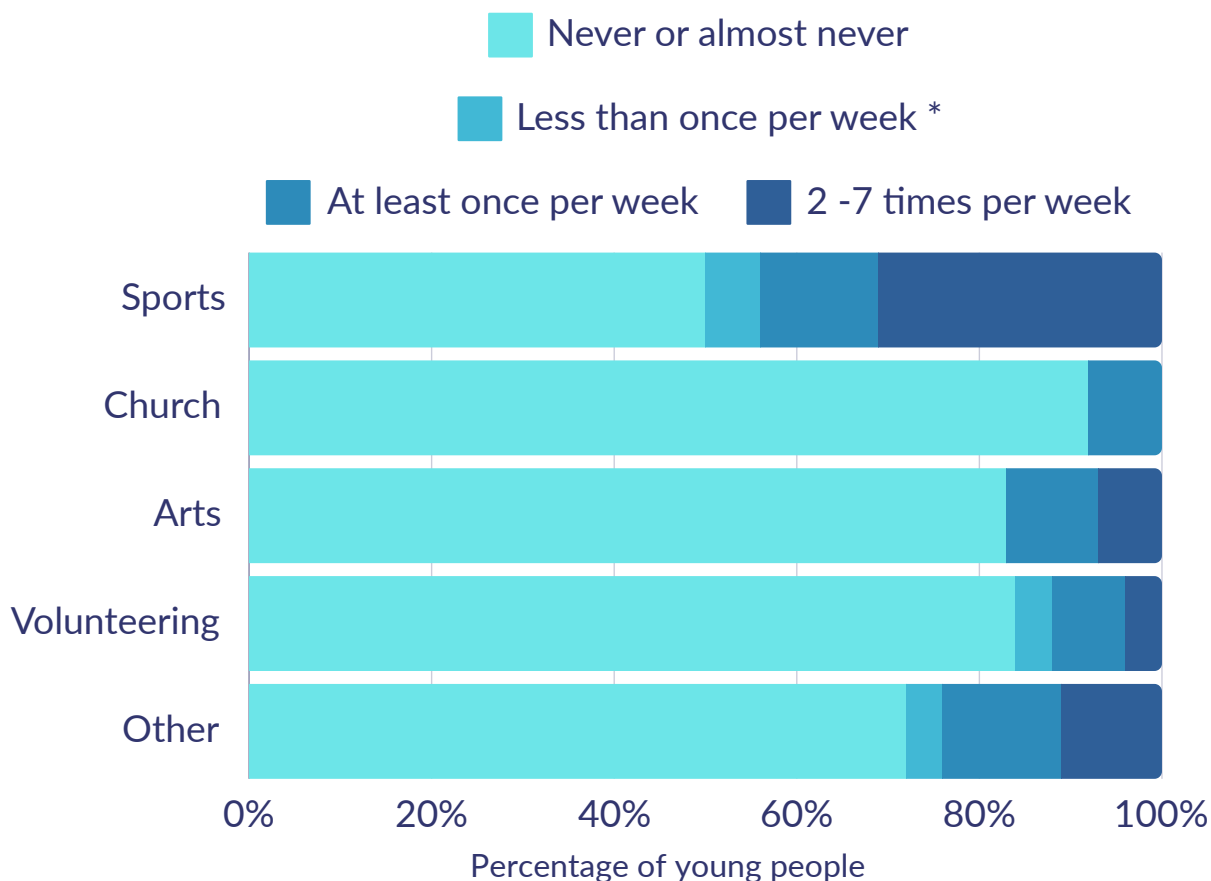


## Access to and participation in organised recreational and extracurricular activities

Young people were asked how many times a week they participate in activities out of school supervised by adults:

- **50%** take part in sports (practise or compete) with a sports club/team at least once a week
- **8%** attend church or community groups at least once a week (\* a small proportion of young people stated they attended church or community groups less than once per week)
- **17%** take part in music, art, drama or dance at least once a week (\* a small proportion of young people stated they attended music, art, drama or dance less than once per week)
- **16%** take part in volunteering in the community at least once a week
- **28%** take part in other after school activities at least once a week.

### Frequency of organised recreational and extracurricular activities:



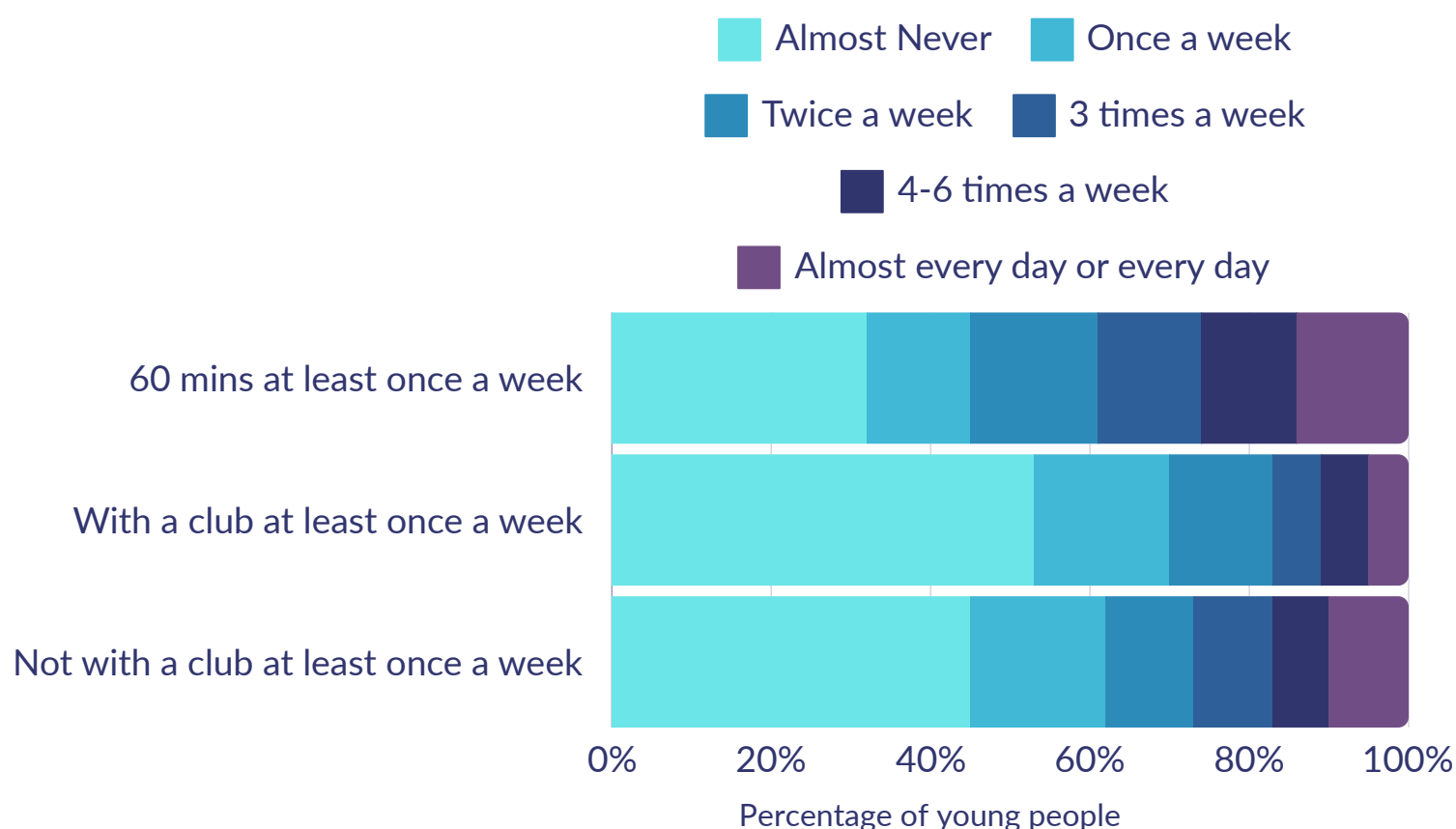
## Access to and participation in organised recreational and extracurricular activities

Young people were asked how often they do the following activities:

- **68%** take part in physical activity for more than 60 minutes at least once a week
- **55%** take part in physical activity outside school hours not with a club or team at least once a week.
- **47%** take part in physical activity outside school hours with a club or team at least once a week.

**Improving engagement with organised recreational and extracurricular activities are protective factors.**

### Frequency of participation in physical activities

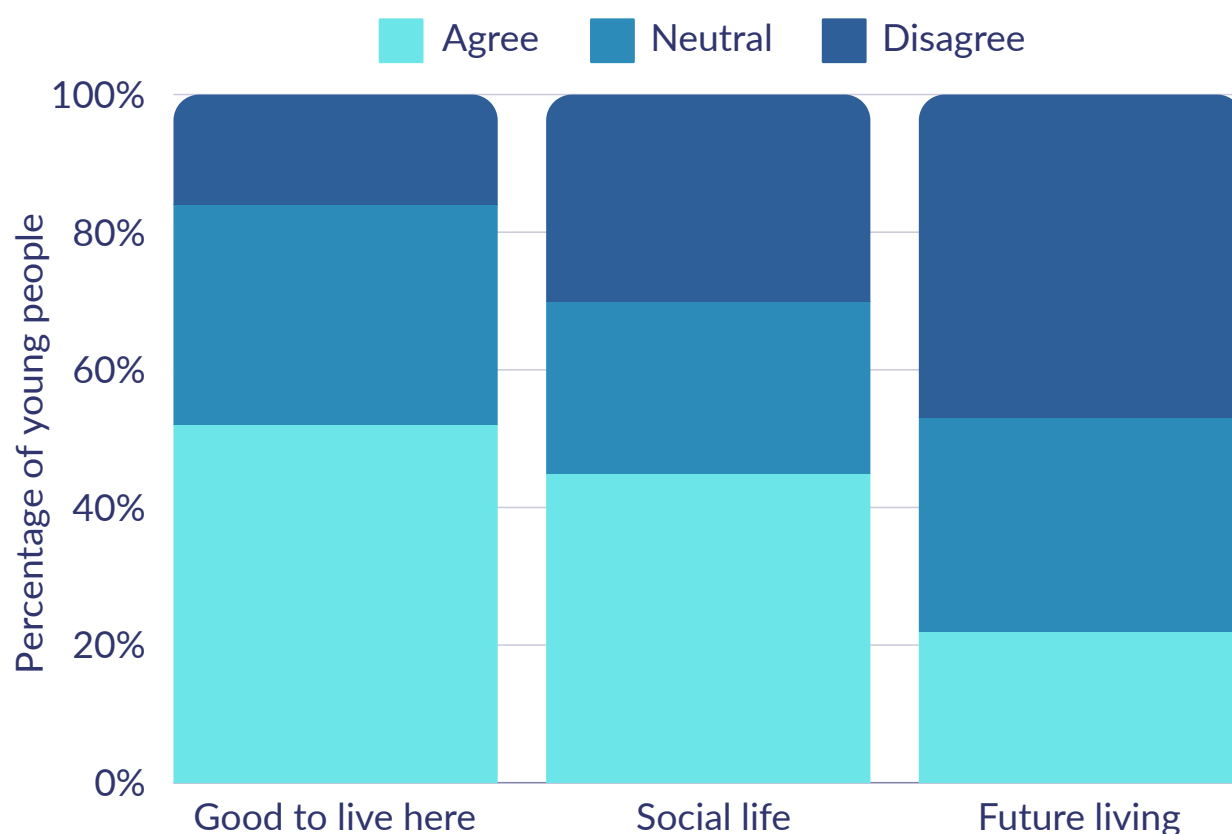


## Community life

Young people were asked about life in their community or neighbourhood and gave responses as to whether they agreed with the following:

- **52%** agree it is good to live in their neighbourhood or community
- **45%** agree there is a great deal of social life available in their neighbourhood or community such as youth clubs, sport facilities, etc.
- **22%** agree that in the future they would like to continue to live in the neighbourhood or community that they live in now.

### Views about living in their Community:



**22% agree in the future they would like to continue to live where they live now.**

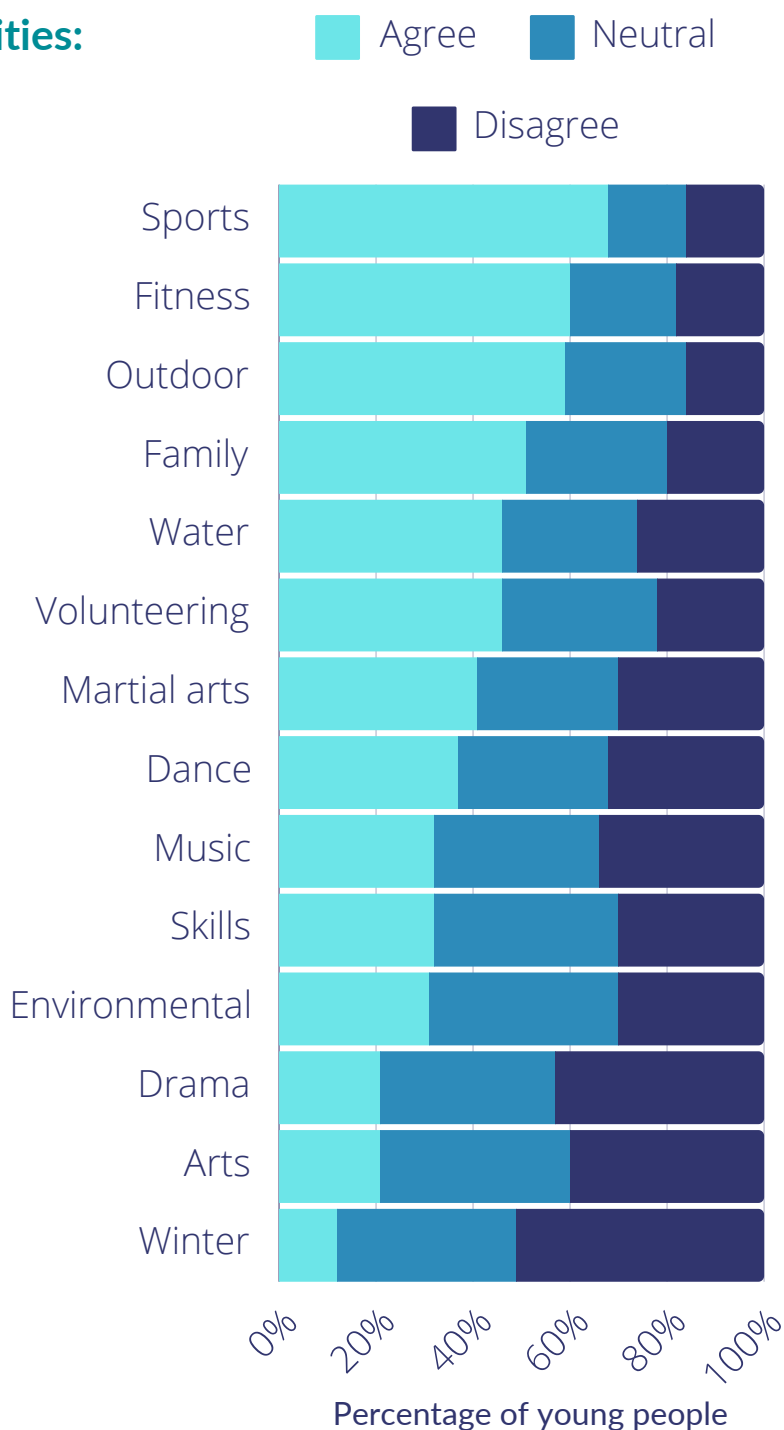
## Community life

Young people were asked about availability of opportunities to take part in. The following data and graph show the percentage of young people who **agreed there was opportunity to take part in these activities**:

### Opportunities to take part in activities:

- **68%** for sports
- **60%** for fitness activities
- **59%** for outdoor activities (walking, cycling)
- **51%** for activities with my family
- **46%** for water-based activities
- **46%** for volunteering
- **41%** for martial arts
- **37%** for dance activities
- **32%** for musical activities
- **32%** for skills development (mechanics, DIY, plumbing, building, woodwork, engineering)
- **31%** for environmental activities (community recycling)
- **21%** for drama / theatre
- **21%** for arts and crafts activities (painting / ceramics)
- **12%** for winter sports

**Having a range of options to suit all young people is important.**





## What activities would you like to do:



## Here are some common themes among students' answers:

### Can't afford the activities

#### Lack of facilities

- Football pitches in bad shape
- No swimming pools
- No girls teams
- No coaches

### Age limits in gyms

### Lack of activities available in walking distance

### Lack of transport

### Students not sure what is available in their community but would like to participate

### Costs to play football on astroturf

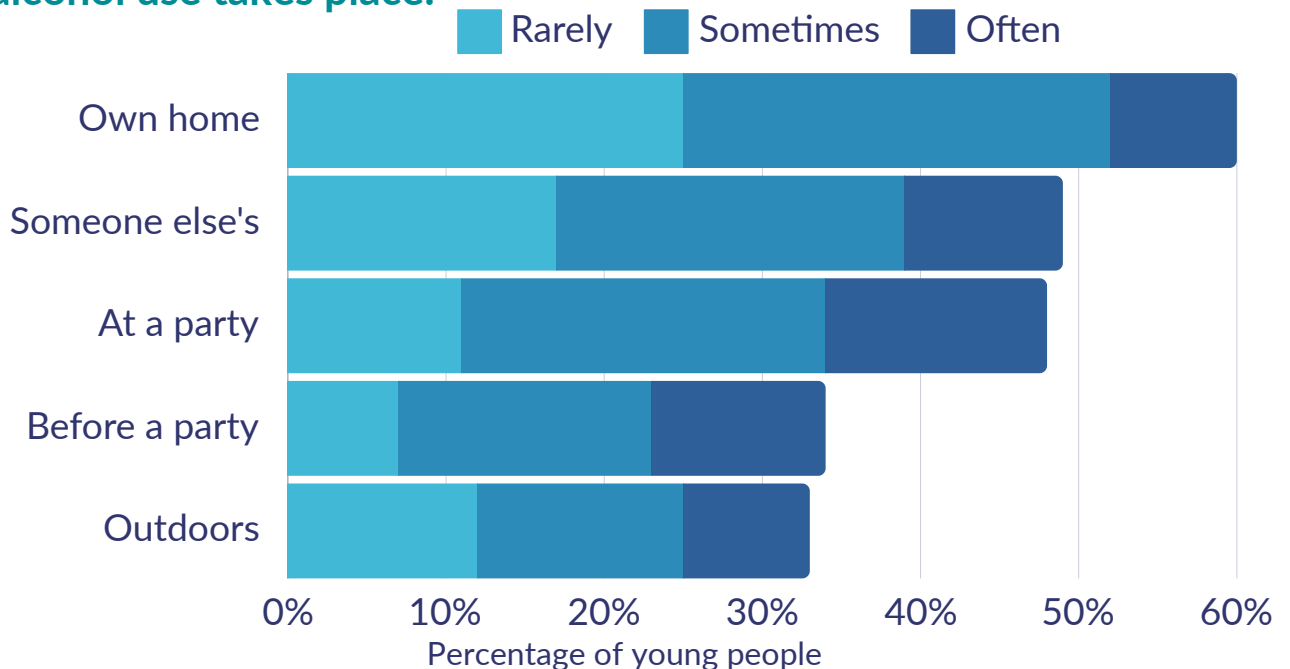


## Where alcohol use takes place

Young people were asked about where alcohol use takes place:

- **60%** had consumed alcohol in their home
- **49%** had consumed alcohol in someone else's home
- **48%** had consumed alcohol at a party or organised event
- **34%** had consumed alcohol before a party or organised event
- **33%** had consumed alcohol outdoors
- **6%** had consumed alcohol on a school tour or day trip (not shown in graph).

### Where alcohol use takes place:



#### TAKEAWAY

**60% had consumed alcohol in their own home**

**48% had consumed alcohol in someone else's home**

**This is important as it shows where alcohol use is accepted. Challenging this is a protective factor for young people.**



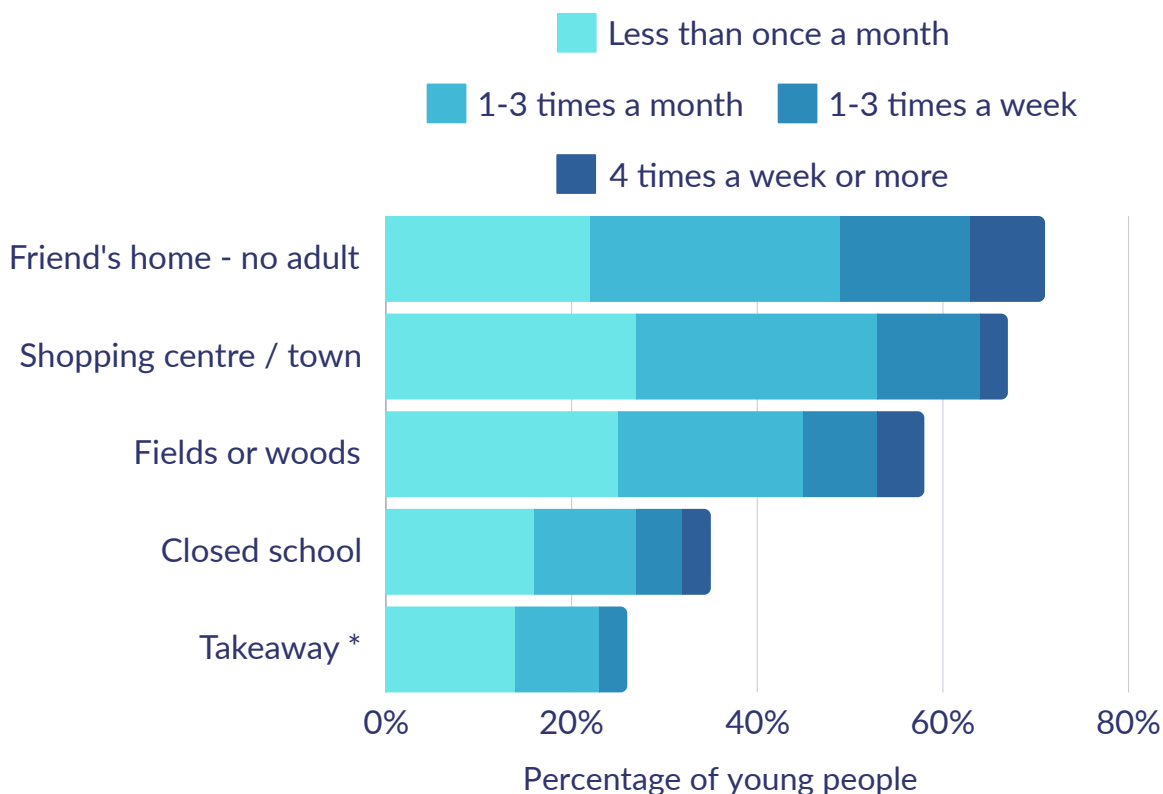
## Unorganised leisure time

Young people were asked how often do you:

- **71%** hang out at a friend's home with no adult present
- **69%** hang out with friends at a shopping centre or in town
- **56%** hang out with friends in fields or woods
- **35%** hang out with friends at a nearby school when the school is closed
- **25%** hang out with friends at a takeaway (\* a small proportion hang out with friends at a takeaway 4 times a week or more).

**Unorganised leisure or hang out time is a risk factor, and so reducing the amount of time spent in this way is important for reducing risk.**

### Frequency of unorganised leisure time by location



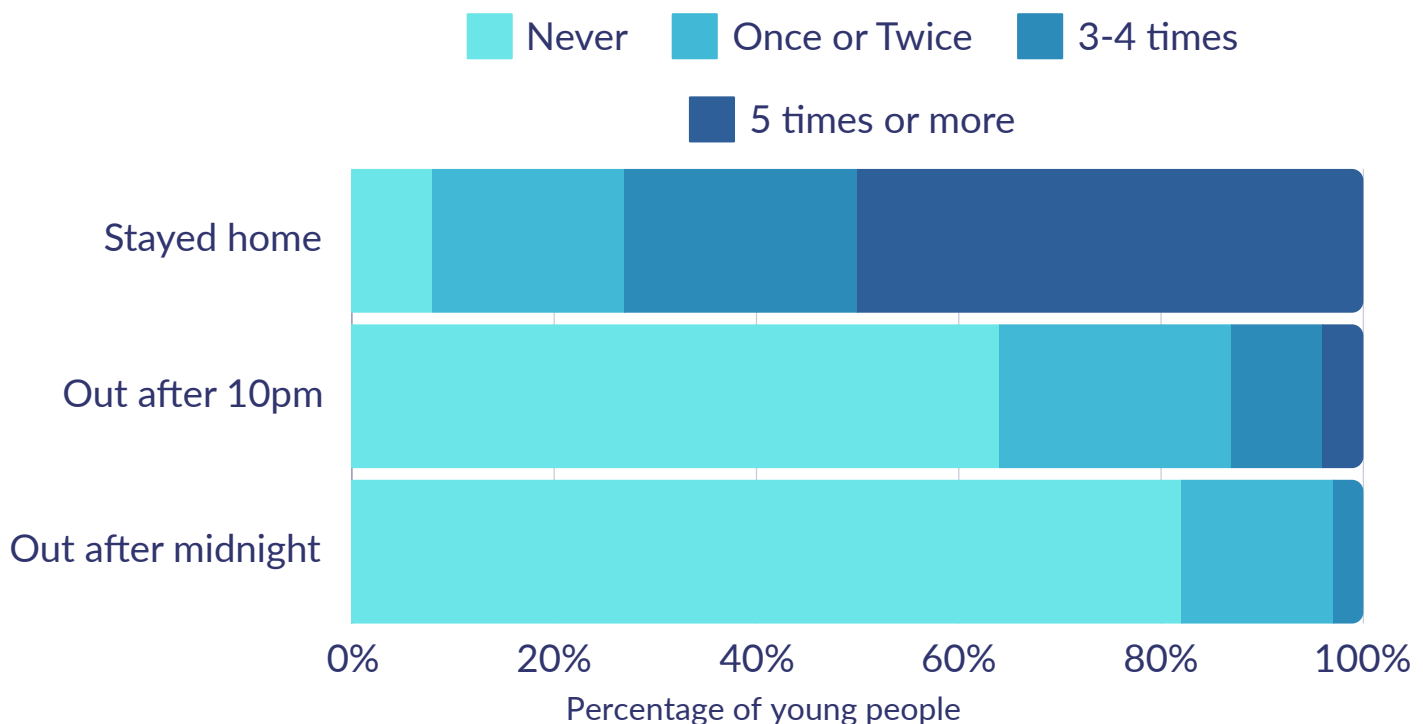
**72% often or almost always feel safe in their community.**

## Late outside hours

Young people were asked about their evening activities during the last 7 days:

- **92%** stayed at home all evening at least once a week
- **36%** were away from home after ten o'clock in the evening at least once a week
- **18%** were outside home and returned after midnight at least once a week.

### Frequency of being out late in the last 7 days by time out until:



Late outside hours are a risk factor, and so reducing the amount of time spent in this way is important for reducing risk. Highland young people were more likely to smoke daily, get drunk in the last 30 days, and use cannabis in their lifetime if they were outside after midnight.



#### TAKEAWAY

**18% were outside after midnight at least once in the last week**

2023

DATA BASED ON ICSRA DATA

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# Next Steps



## Challenges & Opportunities

Establishing a new approach often brings challenges, and establishing the Planet Youth approach in Highland has been no different. However, there are a variety of stakeholders who are in support of the model. Working in collaboration and in line with the Guiding Principles is key. In addition, drawing on public health approaches and knowledge of effectively addressing health inequalities has also been essential.

Change is possible, and together we aim to increase protective factors, and decrease risk factors, for young people in Highland. We want to move towards a Highland where safer communities, early years support, good mental health, equality of opportunity and access to physical activity and other recreational activities, all contribute to reducing the harm from risk taking behaviours including substance use, antisocial behaviour and bullying.

## Conclusion

A successful survey response rate of over 80% of the young people's year group was achieved overall in Highland and for all bar one school. The honest responses from the young people provide us with insight into their lives and growing up in Highland. While there are many areas to celebrate, there are still some areas that are very challenging for our young people. The Planet Youth approach has achieved successful health improvement outcomes for young people in Iceland. The same can be achieved in Highland for our young people through increasing protective factors, and reducing risk factors, and enabling communities to see the impact they can have when they come together to make positive changes.

## Recommendations

The Planet Youth in Highland Local Action Groups (LAGs) have been established in each of the 5 communities and consist of a variety of community members, key stakeholders and partner agencies. In collaboration, and informed by the survey results, the LAGs have chosen the following goals as part of their Local Area Action Plans:

- 1. Reduce the incidence of young people using substances.** This will include accessing appropriate training on substance use, designing resources for parents, young people and youth workers, collaborating with health professionals working in this area and focussing on prevention and early intervention through increasing protective factors in the local communities.
- 2. Improve the mental health of our young people.** Focus on building resilience whilst ensuring that young people know how to access help when needed. Supporting children to find ways to improve their mental health and build their self esteem and awareness of what they are truly capable of.
- 3. Reduce bullying and promote healthier relationships.** The data shows us that bullying is common place both in and out of schools. The community will work alongside the school teams with health and education professionals to build positive relationships in young people.
- 4. Improve communication and awareness** around activities within the communities, so that more families can benefit from these protective factors.
- 5. Improve access to facilities and activities.** Collaborate with leisure providers and communities to improve access to resources already present within their areas.

## Useful links:

Highland Substance Awareness Toolkit: [www.h-sat.co.uk](http://www.h-sat.co.uk)

H-SAT Planet Youth model: [www.highlandsubstanceawareness.scot.nhs.uk/planet-youth-model/](http://www.highlandsubstanceawareness.scot.nhs.uk/planet-youth-model/)

Parent's Guide: <https://bit.ly/3K1aGs0>

Winning Scotland: [www.winningscotland.org/planetyouth.html](http://www.winningscotland.org/planetyouth.html)

Planet Youth: [planetyouth.org](http://planetyouth.org)

Ash Scotland: <https://ashscotland.org.uk/>

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