

2025

Detailed Report - Gateshead Secondary School



Gateshead Council’s Public Health Team is proud to present this report, developed in collaboration with The Schools Health Education Unit (SHEU). This document contains the findings from the Health Related Behaviour Questionnaire, which offers valuable insights into the health beliefs, attitudes, and behaviours of children and young people across Gateshead.

Individual schools have already received their tailored results in tabular format, along with a comparative report that places their students’ responses within the broader context of the Gateshead-wide sample. This dual-level feedback enables schools to reflect on their own data while also understanding how their pupils’ experiences align with those of their peers across the borough.

The data and analysis presented in this report will be of significant value to a range of stakeholders, including individual schools, Gateshead’s Public Health Team, Children’s Services, and partners across the wider system. It provides an evidence base to help identify and understand some of the most pressing issues currently affecting the lives of young people in Gateshead. Furthermore, it will support strategic planning and targeted interventions aimed at improving health and wellbeing outcomes both now and in the future.

We would like to take this opportunity to sincerely thank all participating schools, staff, and students for their support and cooperation in contributing to this important research initiative. Your involvement has been instrumental in helping us build a clearer picture of the challenges and opportunities facing our young people today.

Pupils surveyed	
Boys	763
Girls	756
Other	74
Total	1593

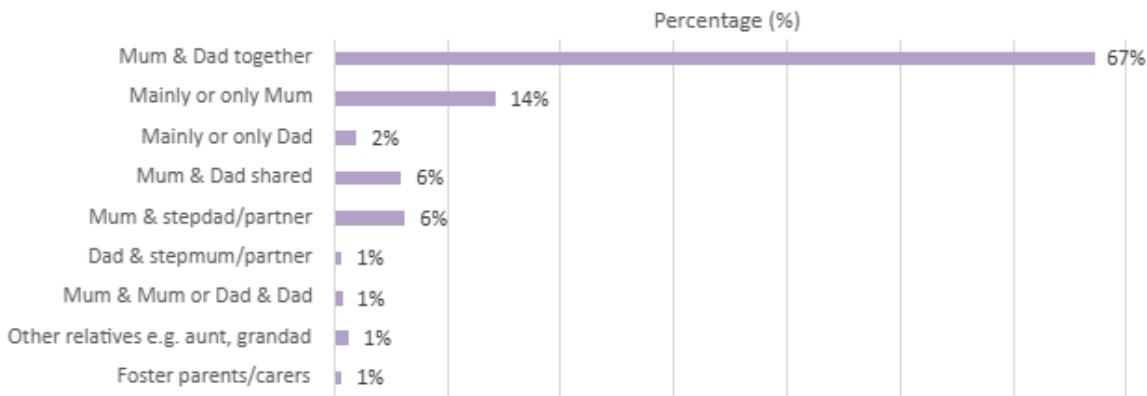
School year	
Year 8	819
Year 10	774
Total	1593

Ethnicity					
White British	White other	Black	Asian	Mixed	Other
72%	5%	6%	8%	6%	3%

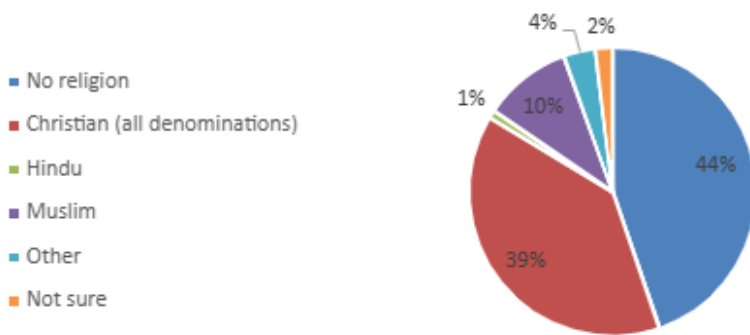
Home Life

The home a child grows up in provides the foundations for their life. A stable and supportive home can help enable a child to thrive emotionally and socially. If a child grows up in an unstable environment, or an environment that has additional pressures, it could impact their general and mental well-being. ²

Which adults do you live with?



What is your religion?

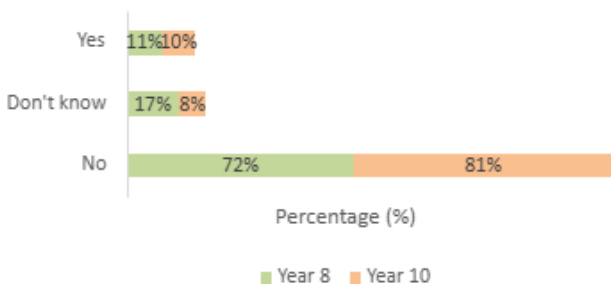


88% of secondary school respondents stated that English is their main language. Children who have English as a second language potentially need to try harder to have the same level of educational attainment as their classmates, and it can impact their ability to participate fully in activities. These children can face various challenges, such as adverse socioeconomic factors. ²

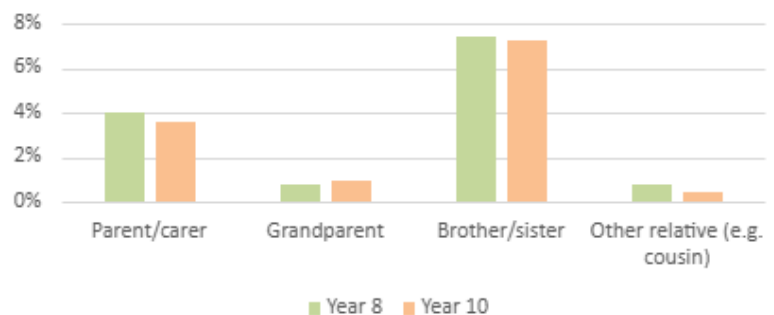
Young Carers

A 'young carer' is a person under the age of 18 who provides care to someone, usually a family member, who has a physical or mental health condition or disability. This care role could involve physically caring for a person (e.g. bathing them or helping them eat), or more practical tasks (e.g. doing the food shop). This responsibility can often impact the persons childhood and opportunities. ²

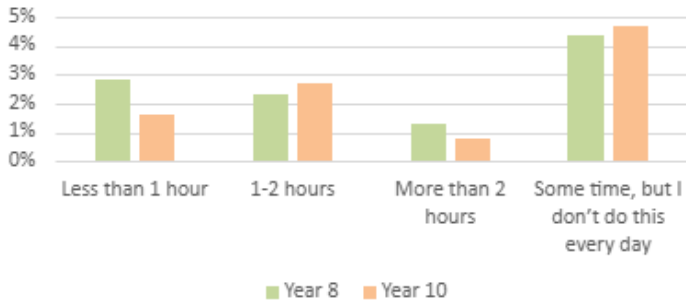
Are you a 'young carer'?



If yes, who do you look after?



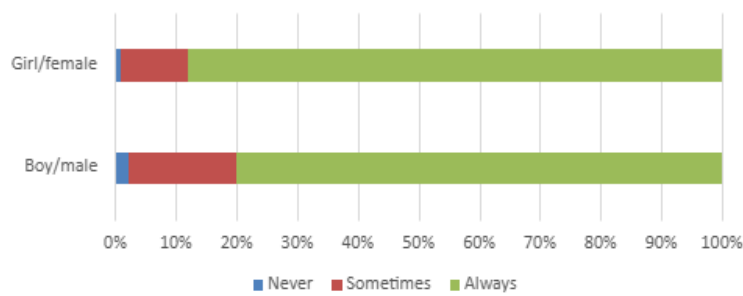
If yes, how much of your time does it take up each day?



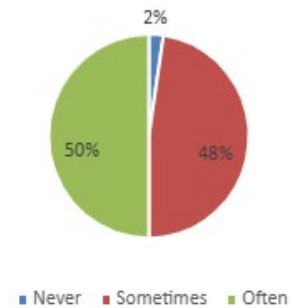
5% of Year 8 'young carers' and 4% of Year 10 'young carers' said their school **does not know** they are a 'young carer.'

General Health

Do you wash your hands after visiting the toilet?



Do you often feel tired at school?

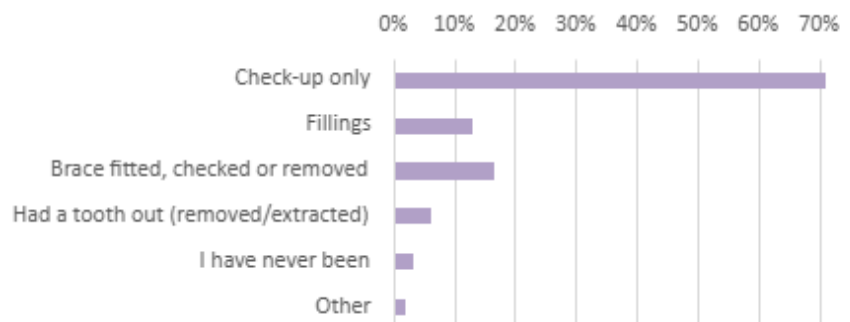


Oral Health

99% of students use a toothbrush to clean their teeth. 84% of students had brushed their teeth two or more times the day before taking the survey. Oral health affects a child's ability to eat, speak, and socialize, and can even influence self-esteem and school readiness. Poor oral health, particularly tooth decay, can cause pain, infection, and difficulties with daily activities, leading to school absences and impacting families.

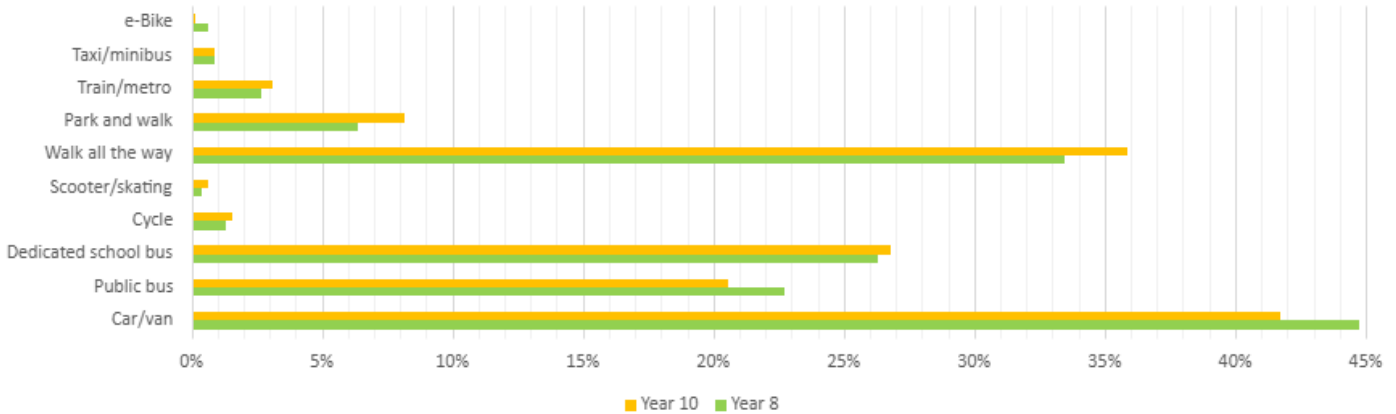
What treatment did the dentist give you on your last visit?

74% of Year 8 students and 80% of Year 10 students said they have been to the dentist in the last year. 'Young carers' and those who do not have English as a first language had higher rates of getting a filling at the dentist compared to others.

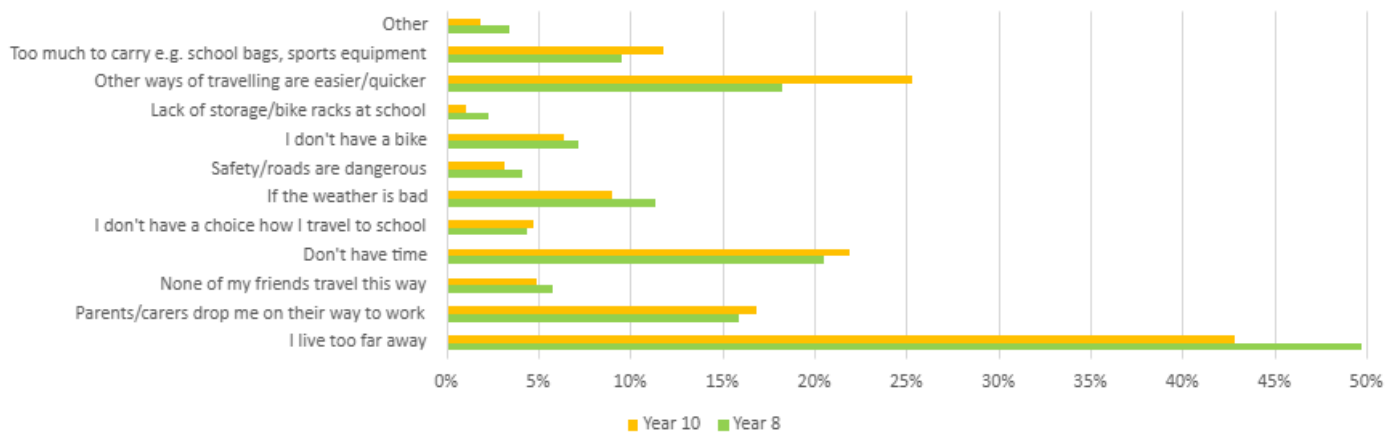


Lifestyle

How do you usually travel to school?



If you don't walk or cycle to school, why is this?



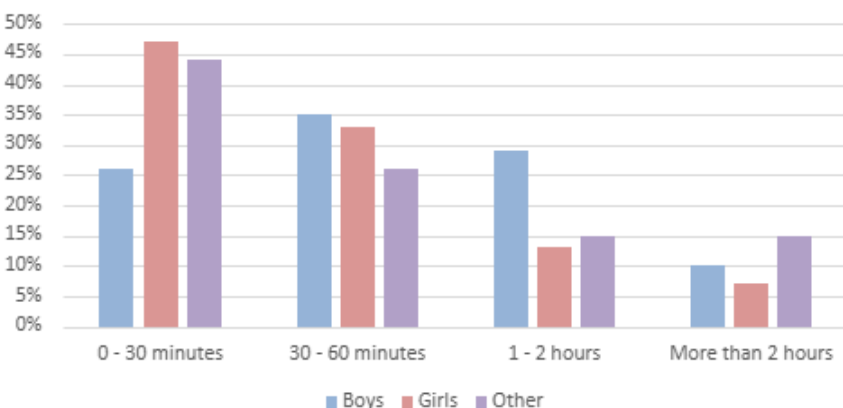
It's important to encourage active travel where possible for our young people. It has a positive impact on physical and mental wellbeing, as well as reducing harm to the environment.

Physical Activity

Physical activity is important for children to help them maintain a health weight, increase self-esteem and mental health, improve concentration, and build stronger bones and muscles.

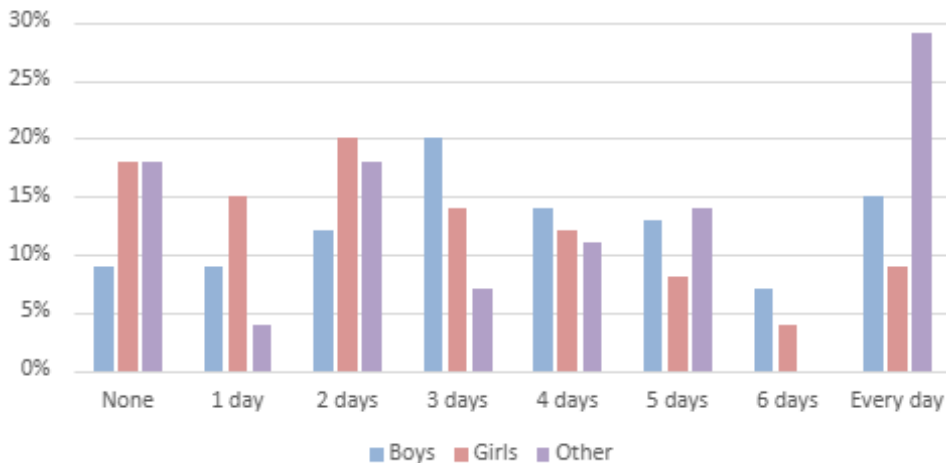
12% of pupils cannot, or have never tried, to ride a bike.

How much moderate to vigorous intensity physical activity do you typically do per day?



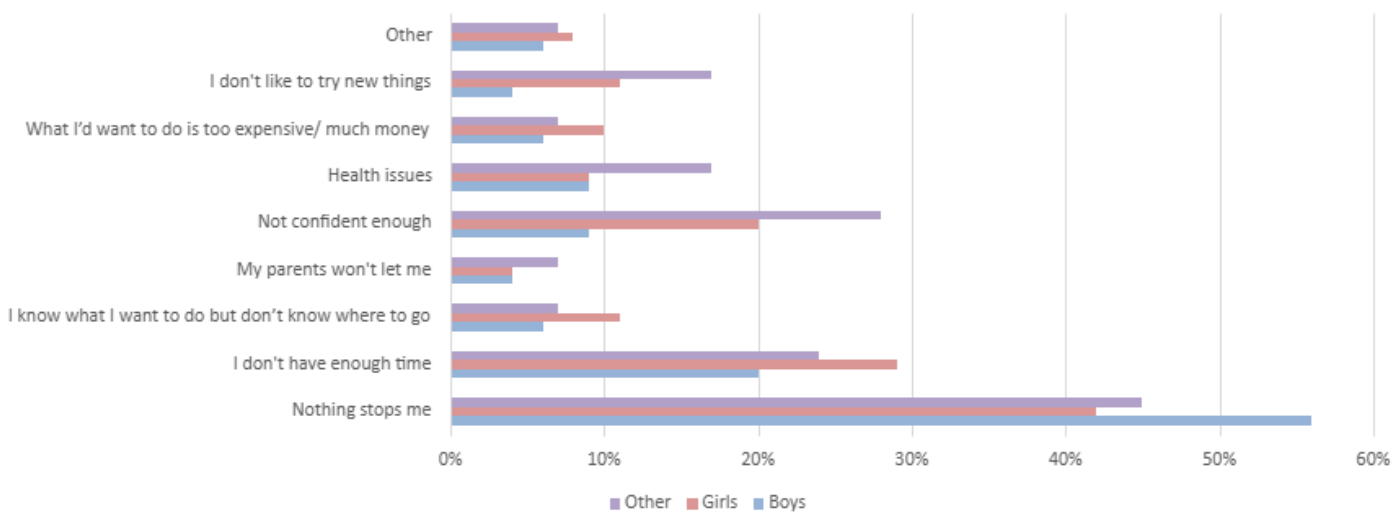
Pupils in ethnic minority groups were more likely to say they don't have enough time to do as much sport or exercise as they would like.

How many days a week do you do any physical activity outside of school?



72% of pupils said they would like to do more sport/exercise. When asked what new sport students would like to try if given the opportunity, *football* and *basketball* were the most common for boys, *football*, *gymnastics*, *netball* and *swimming* were the favourites amongst the girls, and other students would like to try *swimming*, *tennis*, *badminton* or *basketball* the most.

Does anything stop you from doing as much exercise as you would like?

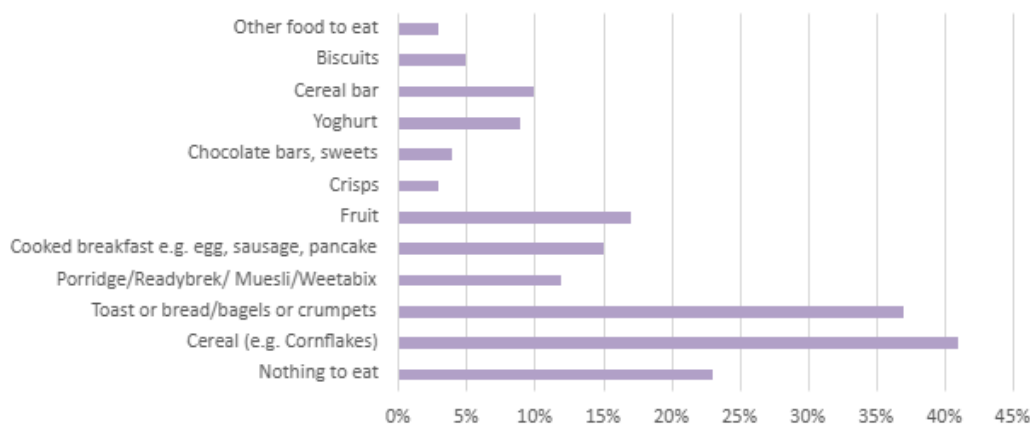


Healthy Eating

Obesity rates in Gateshead, are significantly higher than the regional and national average. Healthy eating is important for children to get the necessary nutrients for growth and development, better energy levels and improved concentration.

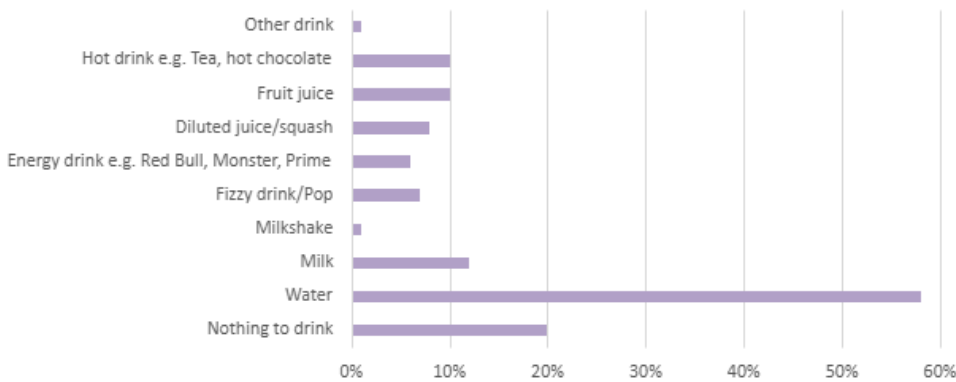
*Please note this questionnaire was carried out over Ramadan

What do you usually eat for breakfast?



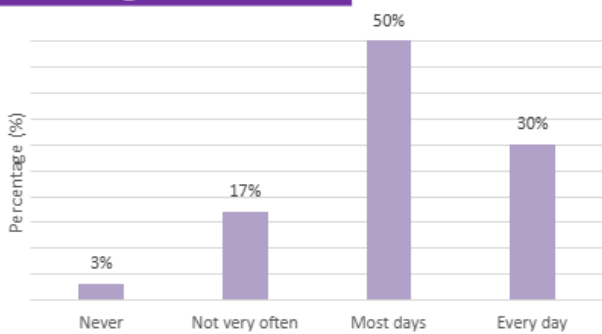
Single parent families and 'young carers' were more likely to have nothing for breakfast than other groups.

What have you had to drink before lessons this morning?



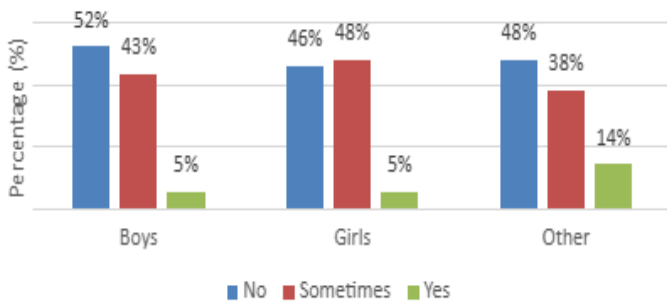
The recommended daily intake of fluid is between 2 to 2.5 litres a day. 77% of pupils answered that they drink one, or less than one, litre of water a day. Water helps improve digestion, prevent headaches, and support brain function.

How often do you eat fruit and vegetables?

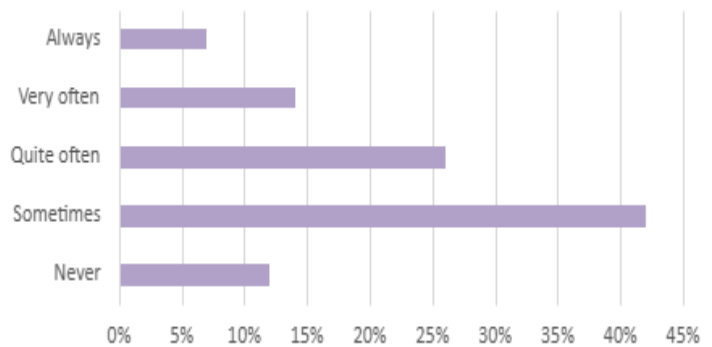


14% of pupils said they eat a takeaway or fast food most days or every day. Of those pupils, those who have a minority religion, don't have English as a first language, or are in an ethnic minority group had the higher rates.

Do you think what you eat and drink is influenced by adverts, marketing and promotions you see online, on TV, or in public spaces?



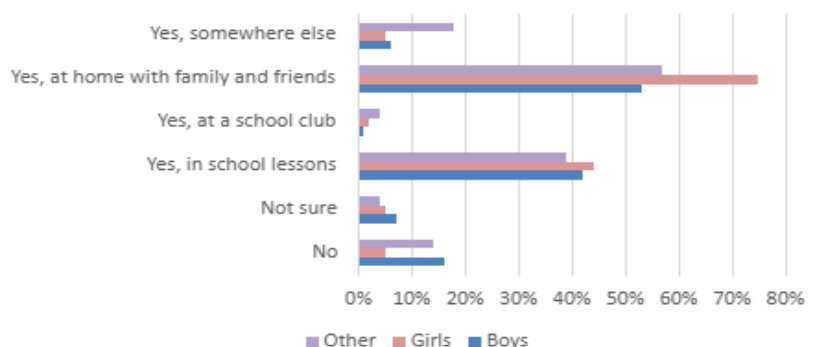
When choosing what to eat, do you consider your health?



There are several studies showing that the advertising of junk food contributes to an obesogenic environment and influences higher levels of junk food consumption. Whilst pupil responses appear to dismiss this evidence, there is a high chance that due to the normalised levels of this type of advertisement, they are unaware of its psychological impact on their choices.

Do you learn how to cook?

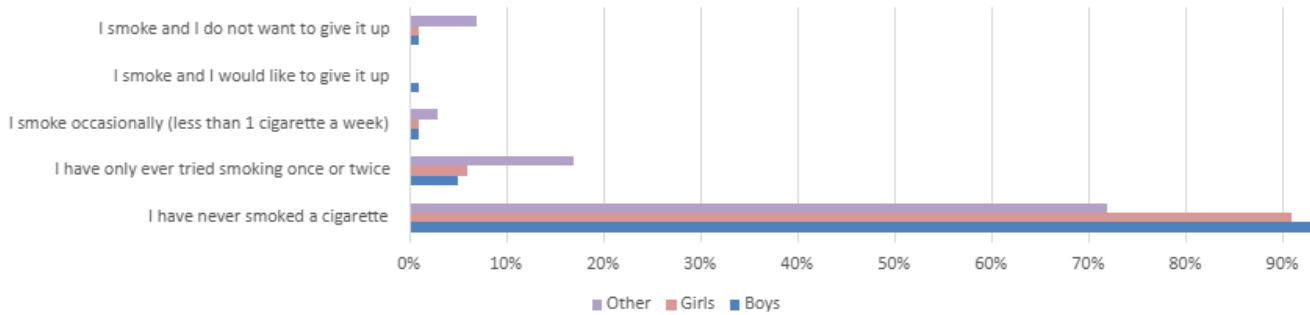
Cooking is a life skill that should be taught to all young people as they grow and develop into adults. It can encourage healthier eating habits and contributes to the ability to be independent in young adult life.



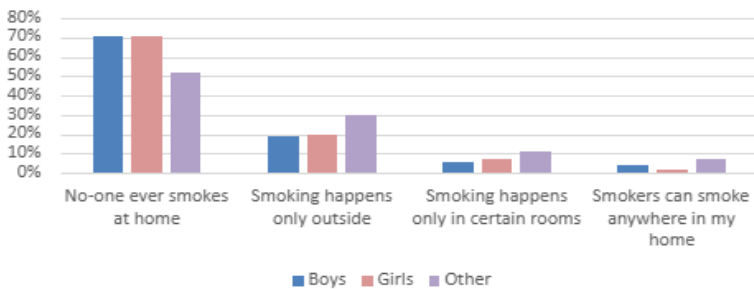
Smoking and Vaping

Most UK smokers start before 18, with 90% beginning between 10 and 20. Cutting youth smoking protects future health. Secondhand smoke also harms children, causing breathing issues, ear infections, and worsening asthma.

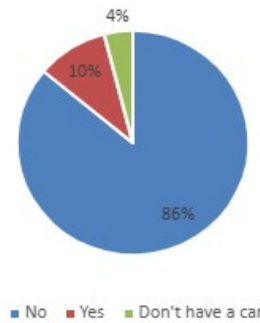
Smoking: which sentence describes you best?



Thinking about people who smoke around you, what best describes what happens in your home?

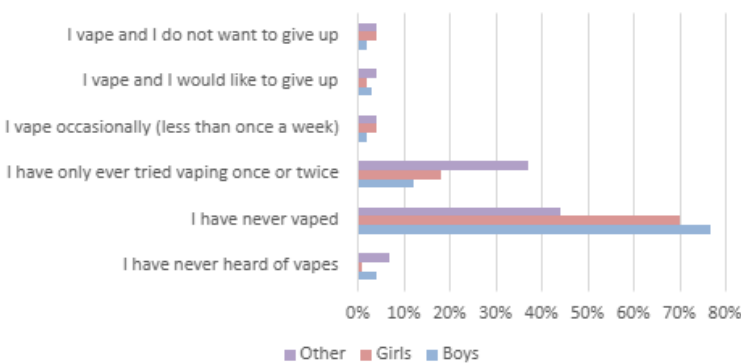


Does anyone smoke inside a car when you are in it?

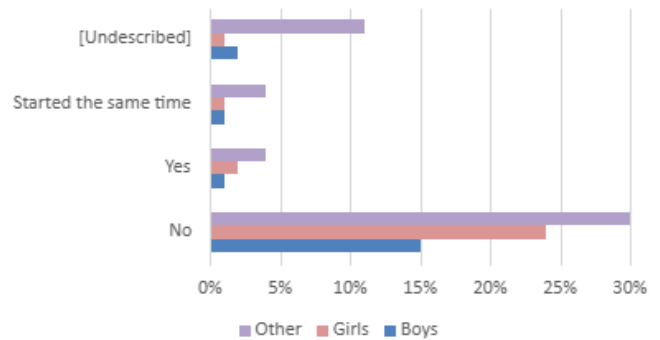


In England, nearly 1 in 10 (9%) 11 to 15-year-olds are regular or occasional vapers. Vaping use has the potential for lung and brain damage, as well as the risk of nicotine addiction and a potential gateway to smoking tobacco.

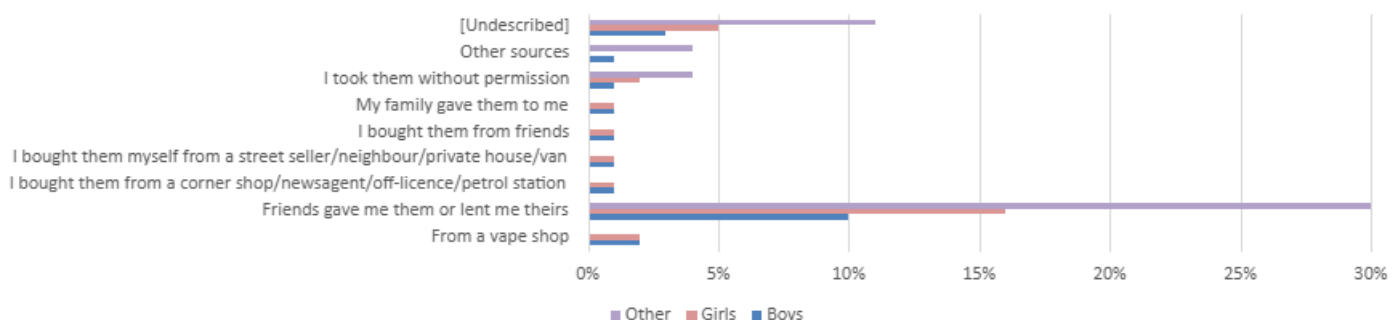
Vaping: which sentence describes you best?



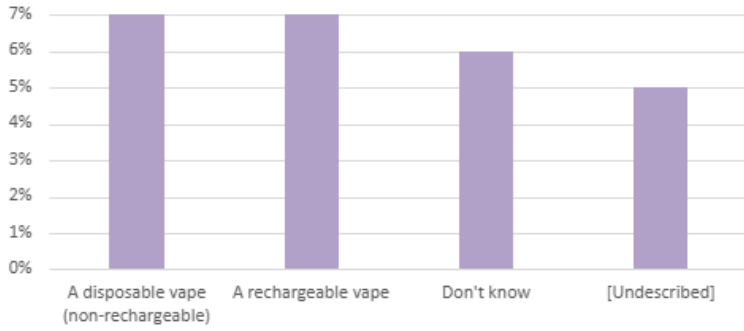
If you vape, did you smoke cigarettes before vaping?



If you have vaped before, where did you get/buy the vapes from?

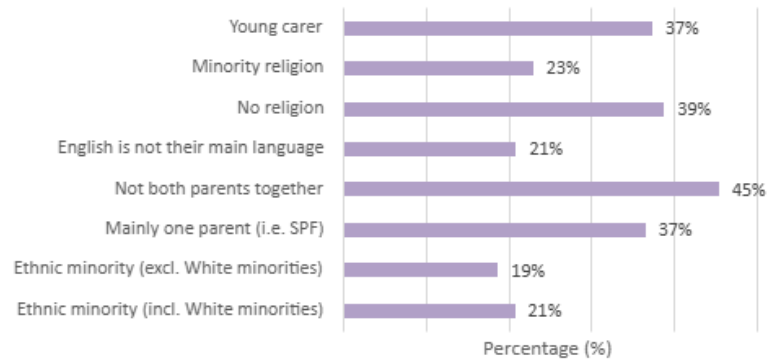


Which of the following do you use most often?



31% of pupils said they live with someone who vapes. The graph to the right shows a data breakdown of this response. Vaping is generally more prevalent in deprived households.

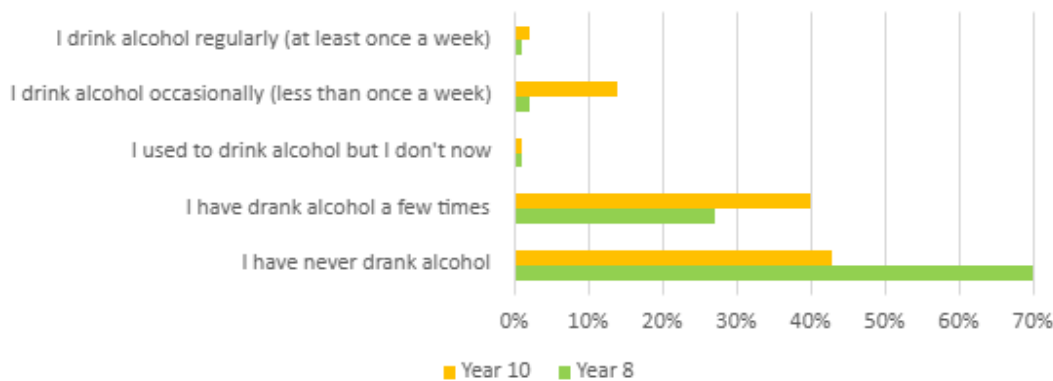
Pupils who said people they live with vape.



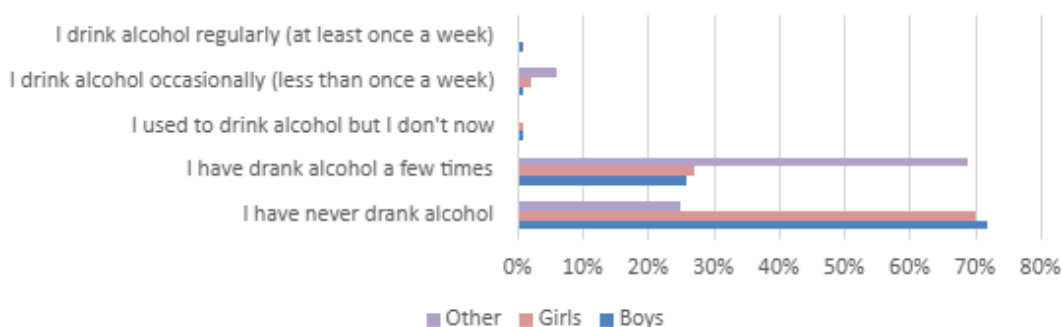
Alcohol and Drugs

Drinking at a young age can affect brain development, mental health, educational performance, and increase risky behaviours. It also raises the risk of alcohol dependence later in life.

Which statement describes you best?



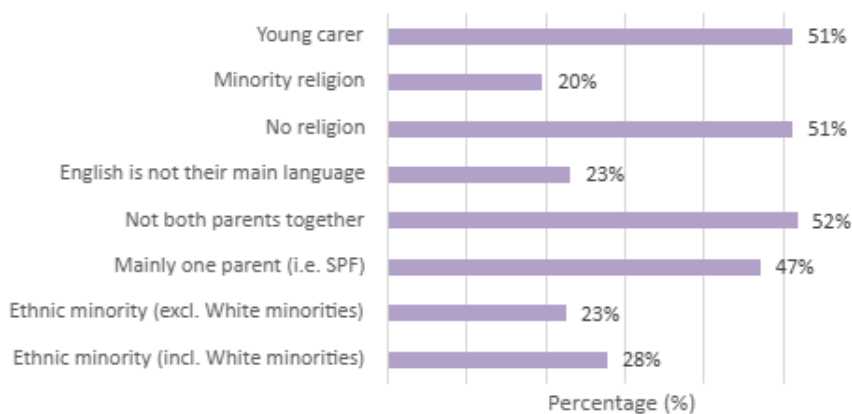
YEAR 8 - Which statement describes you best?



Year 10 - Which statement describes you best?



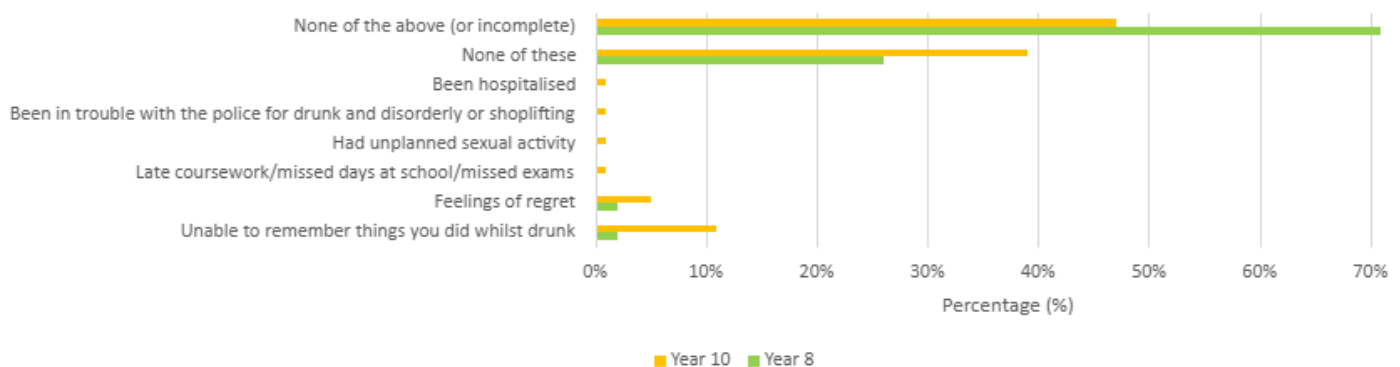
Pupils who have at least tried drinking alcohol.



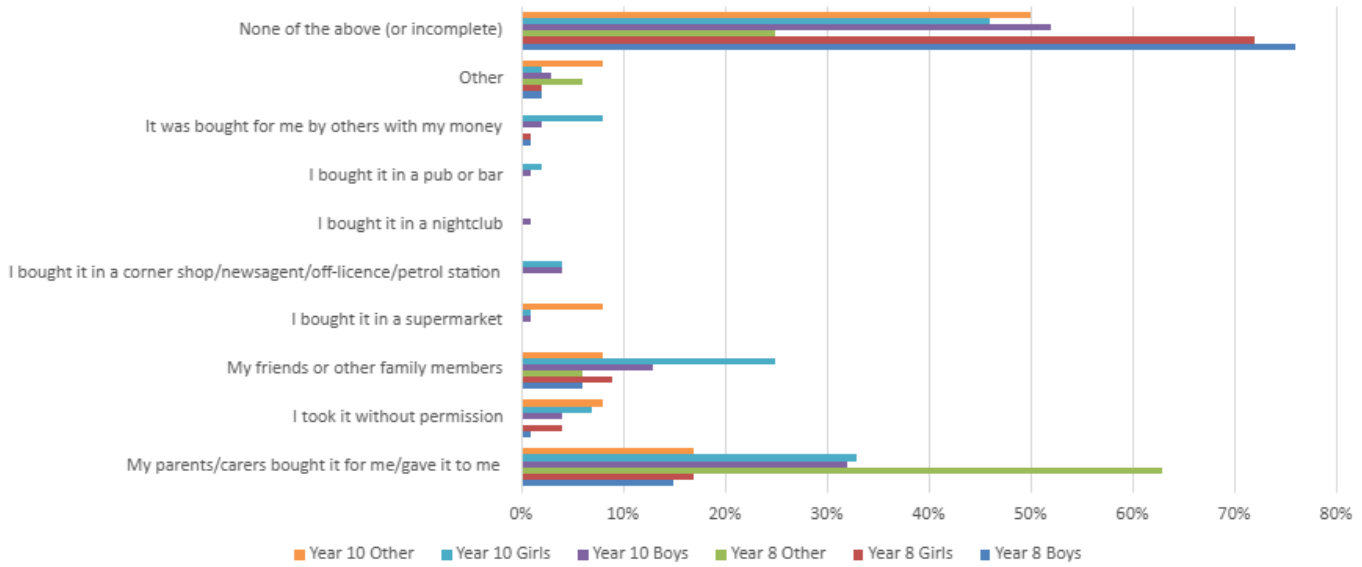
If you have drunk alcohol, which of the following have you drunk?



Have you experienced or been involved in any of the following as a result of drinking alcohol?

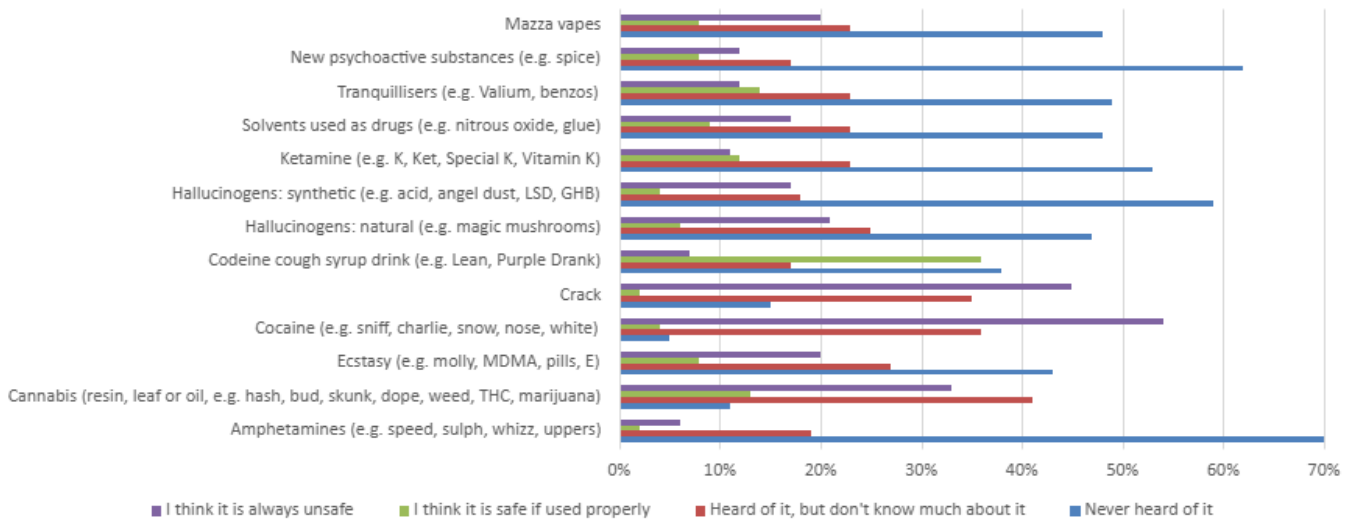


If you have drunk alcohol- where did you get it from?

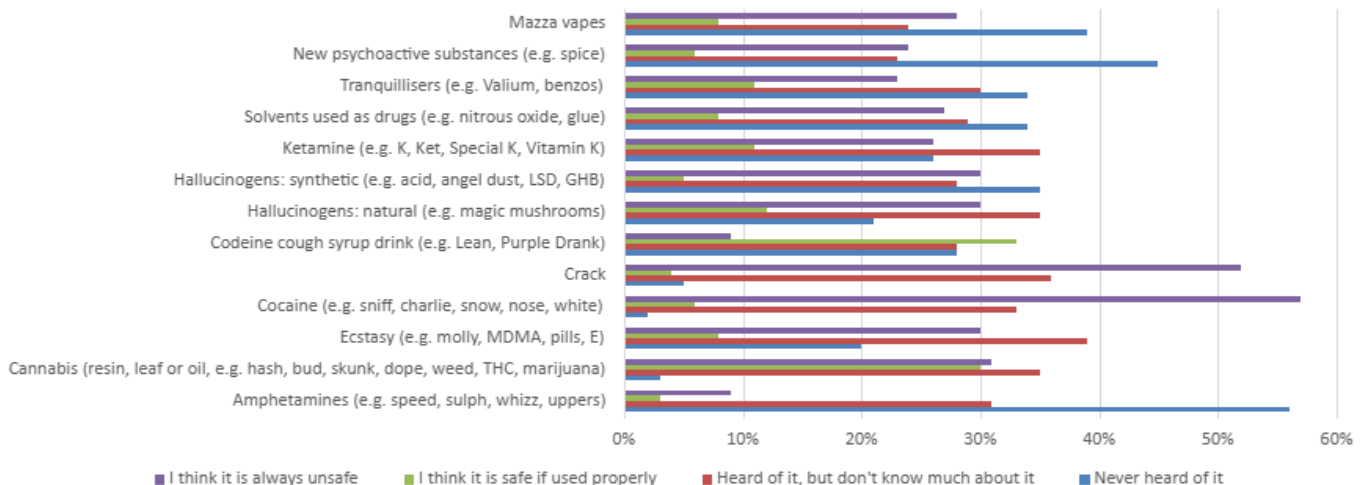


Young people who use substances are at risk of an array of problems, including academic difficulties, health problems (including mental health), poor peer relationships, and involvement with the justice system. We must educate our young people so they are aware of the risks.

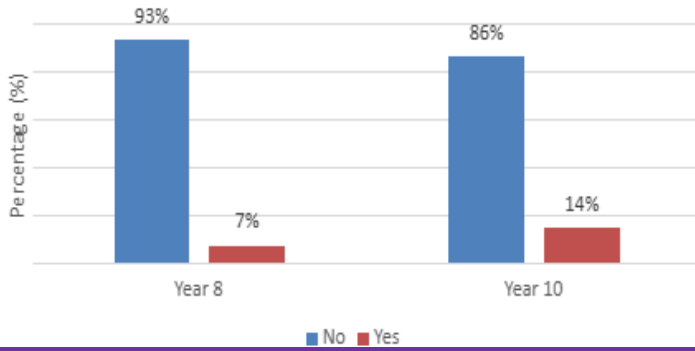
YEAR 8 - This question is about your knowledge of these drugs.



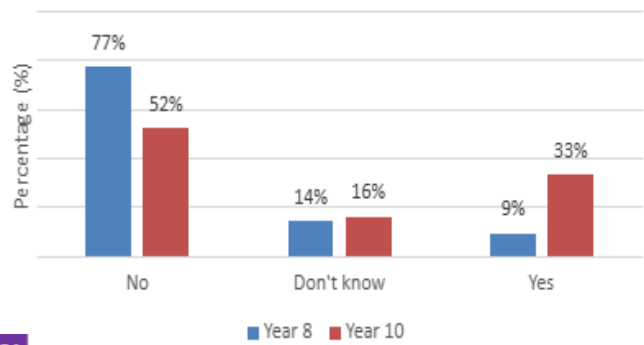
YEAR 10 - This question is about your knowledge of these drugs.



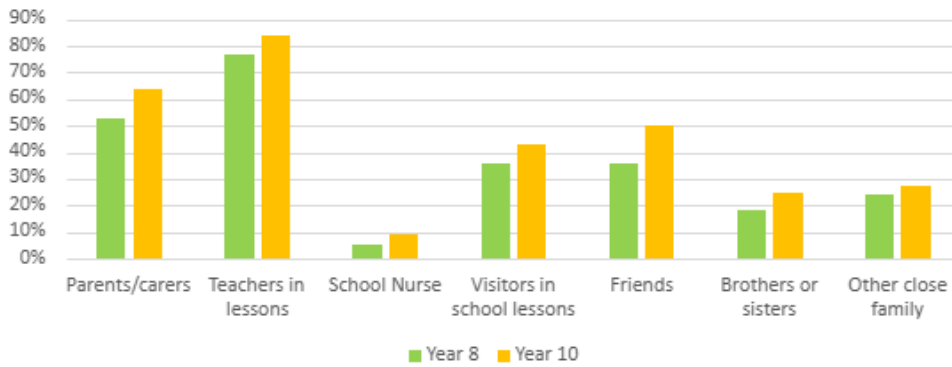
Have you taken any of the drugs mentioned above?



Do you know anybody who uses illegal drugs?

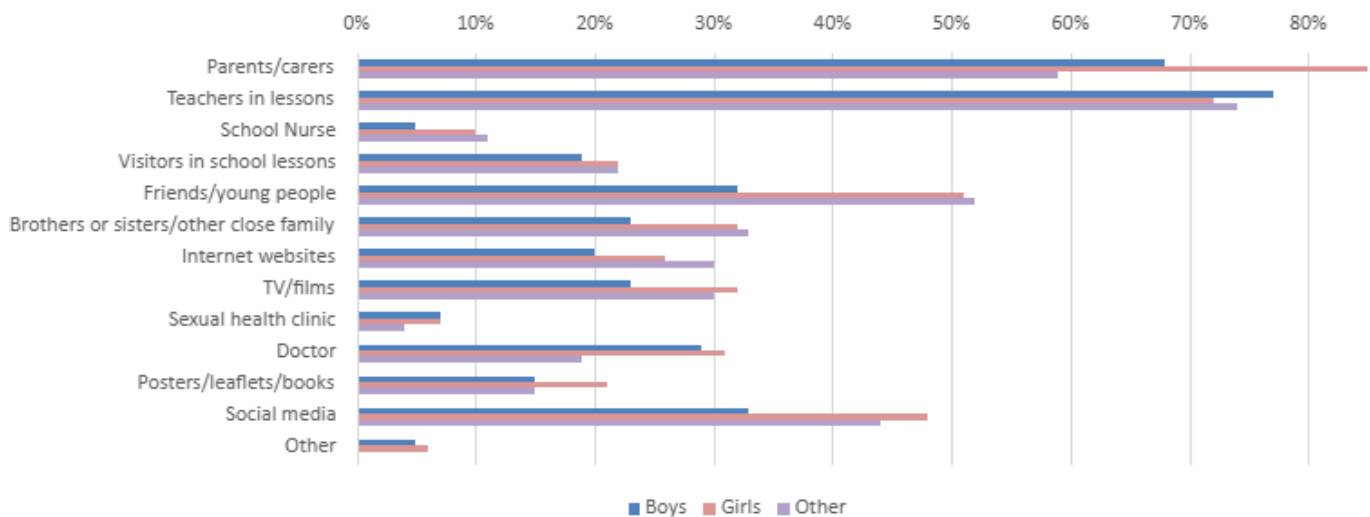


Have any of the following talked with you about illegal drugs? (% responding 'yes')

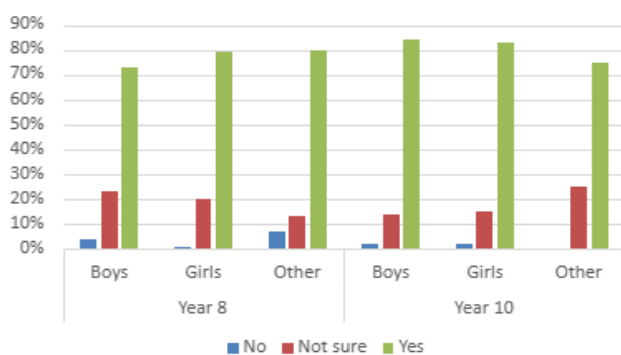


Growing Up

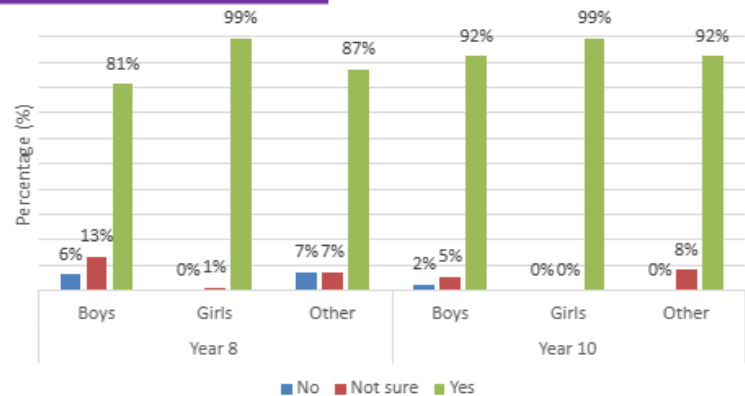
Which of these are your main sources of information about puberty and growing up?



Do you feel that you know enough about how your body changes as you get older?



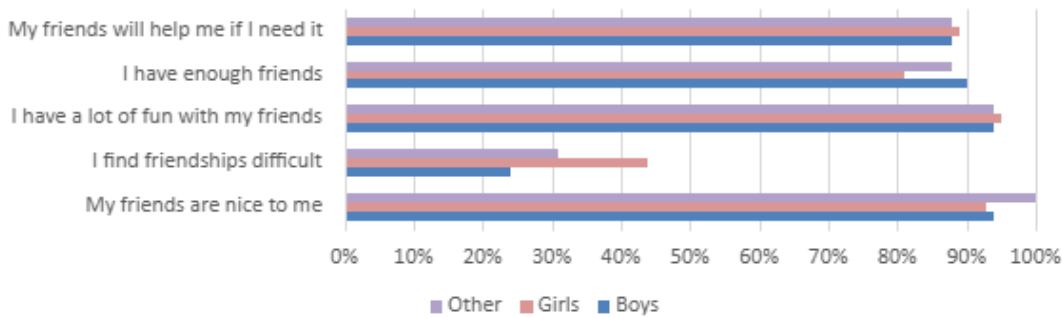
Do you know what a period is?



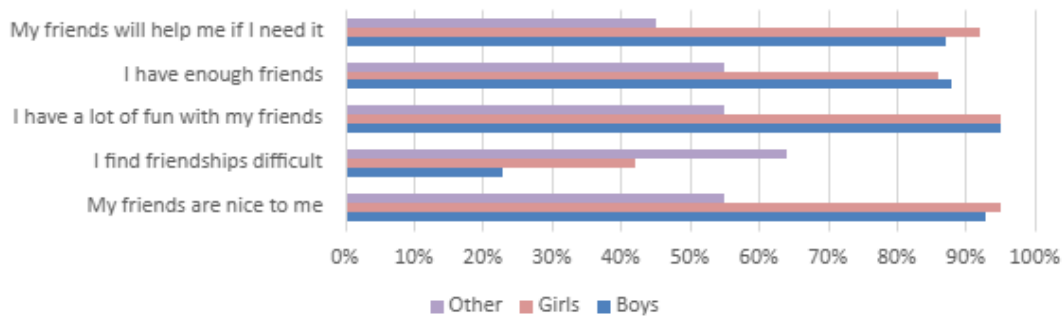
Friendships and Relationships

Healthy relationships are key to young people's well-being, supporting their emotional, social, and physical development, while unhealthy ones can harm mental and physical health.

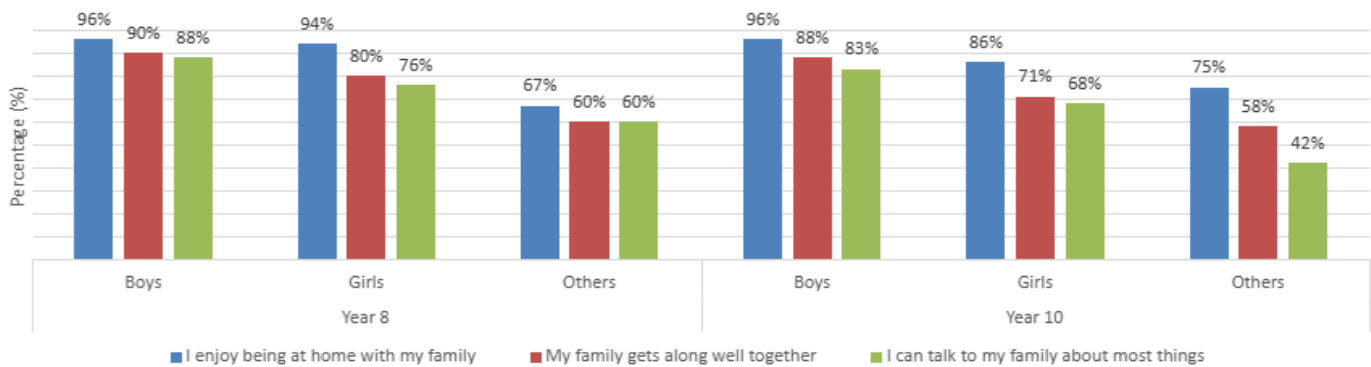
YEAR 8 - 'Strongly Agree' to these statements about friends.



YEAR 10 - 'Strongly Agree' to these statements about friends.

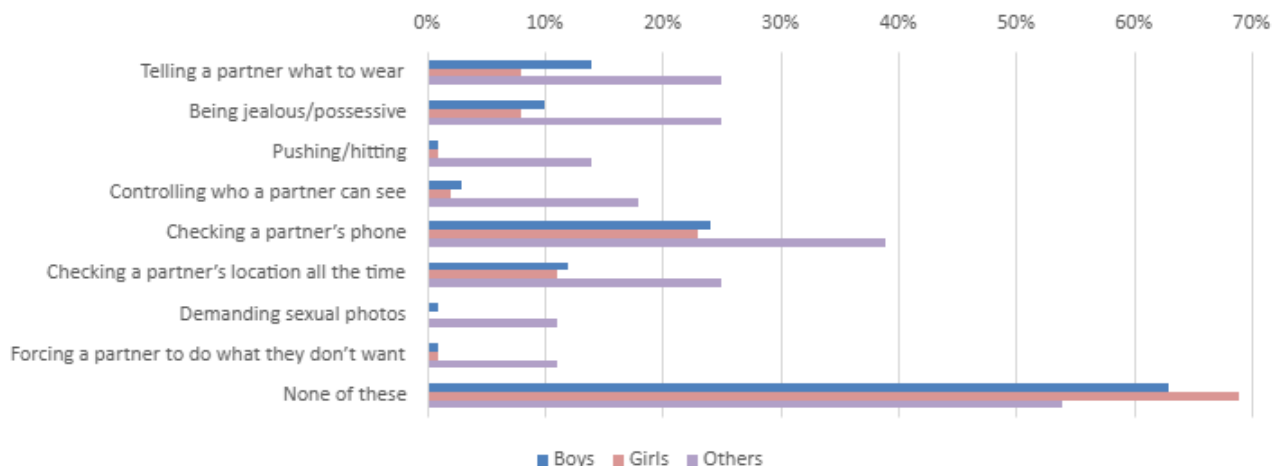


'Strongly agree' or 'agree' to these statements about family.

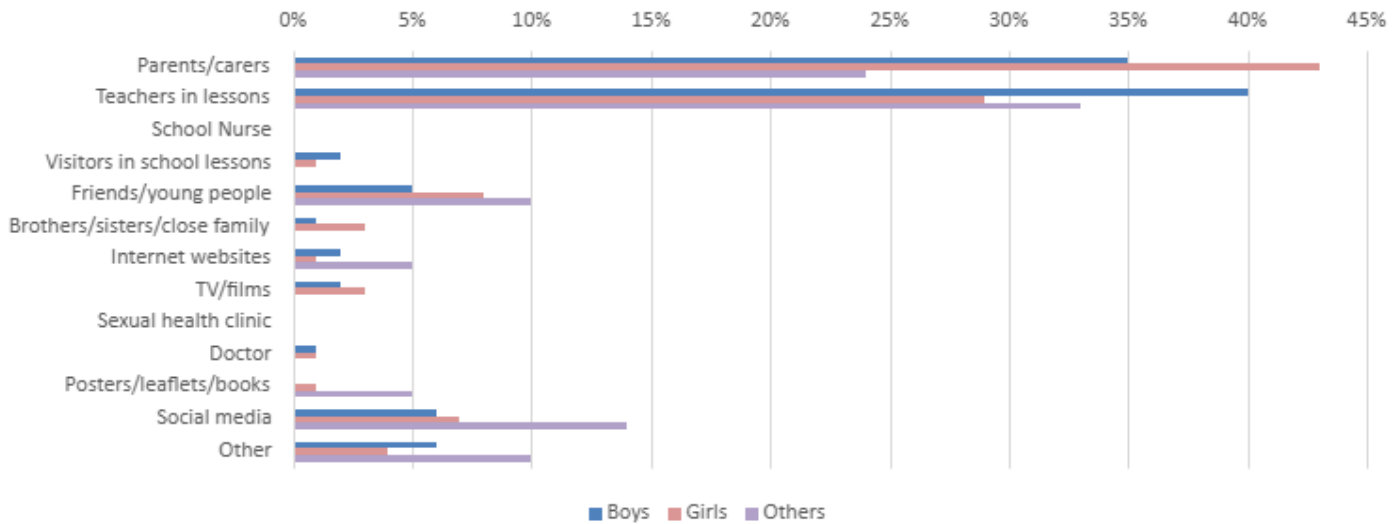


RSE has been compulsory in schools since September 2020, equipping children and young people with essential information, skills and values needed for safe, respectful, and happy relationships.

Do you think any of the below are acceptable in a relationship?



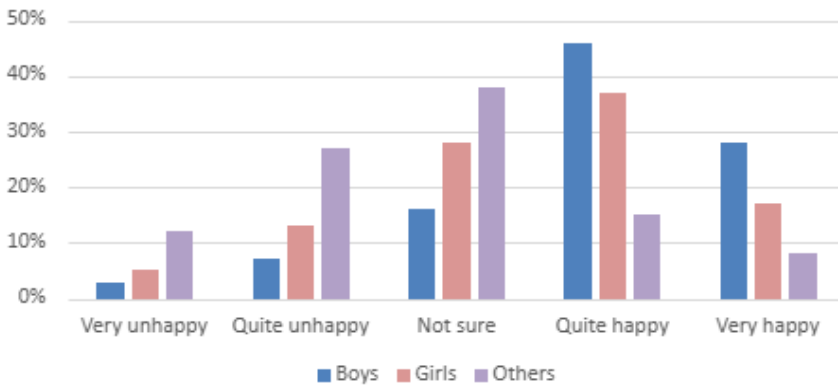
Which is your main source about relationships and sexual health?



By providing relationships and sex education, we are enabling young people to make informed decisions about their sexual well-being. This will help reduce risky sexual behaviors, promote safe sex and reduce the stigma around sex - providing a safe space for open conversations.

Emotional Wellbeing

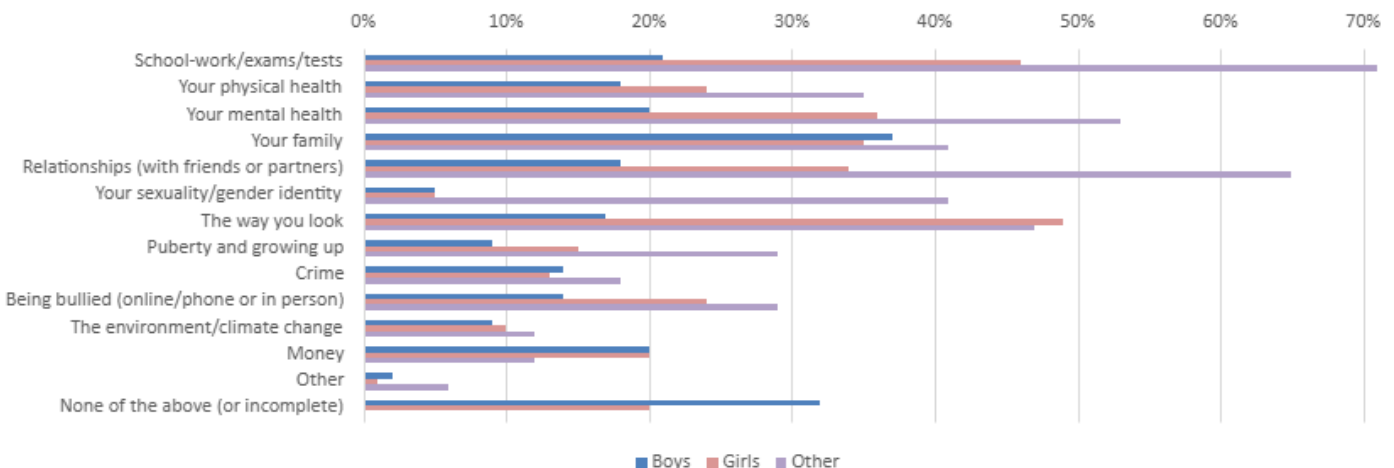
In general, how happy are you with your life at the moment?



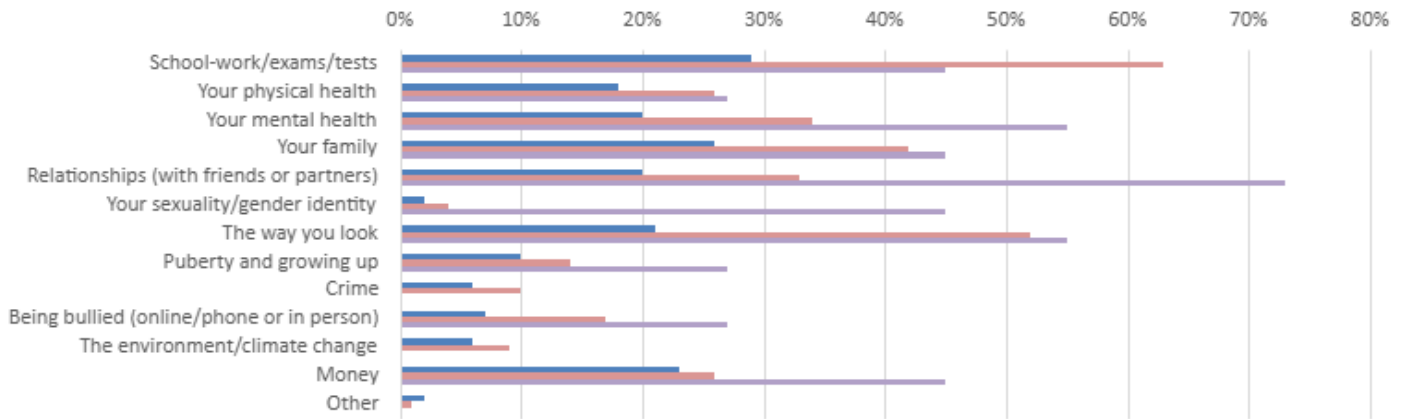
Worry can impact a child's mental and emotional well-being, social interactions, and even academic performance.

There are a multitude of things that can cause worry in day to day life, and while a little bit of worry is normal, it's important to recognise when this emotion becomes more relentless.

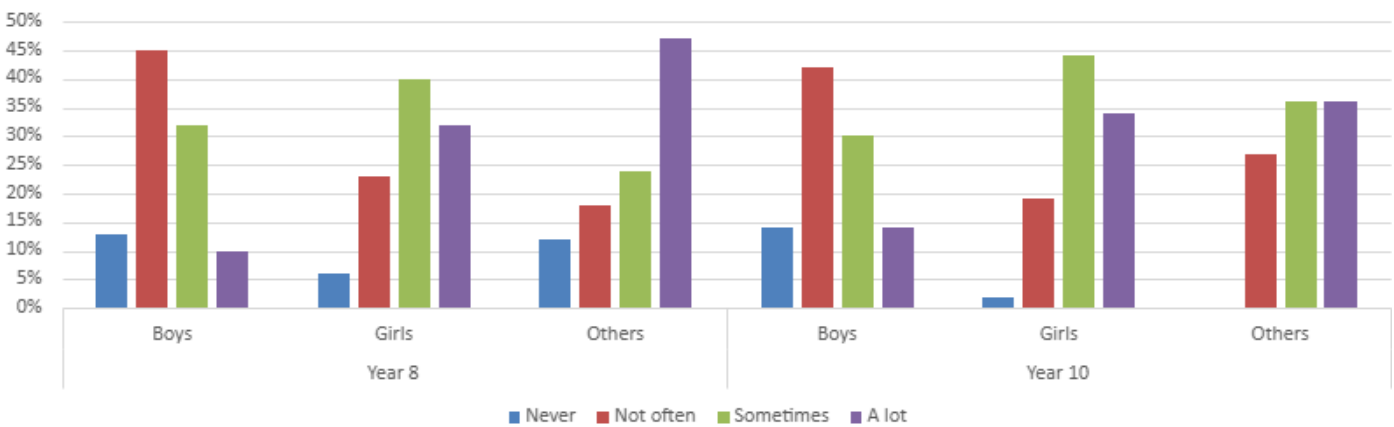
YEAR 8 - How much do you worry about any of the following list? (% responding 'a lot')



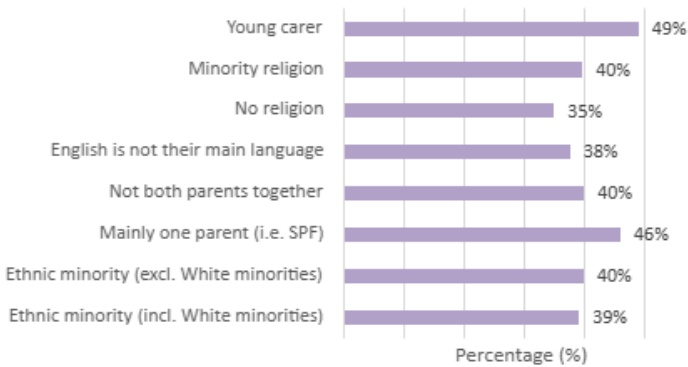
YEAR 10 - How much do you worry about any of the following list? (% responding 'a lot')



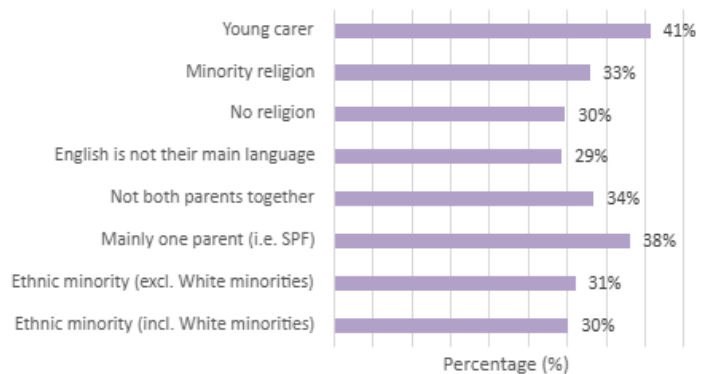
How much does worry affect your life?



Pupils who worry about their family 'a lot'.

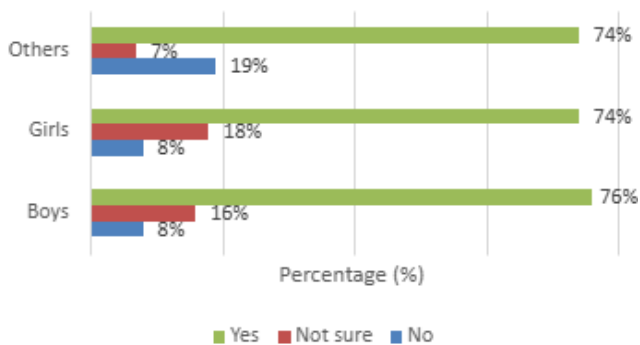


Pupils who worry about their mental health 'a lot'.



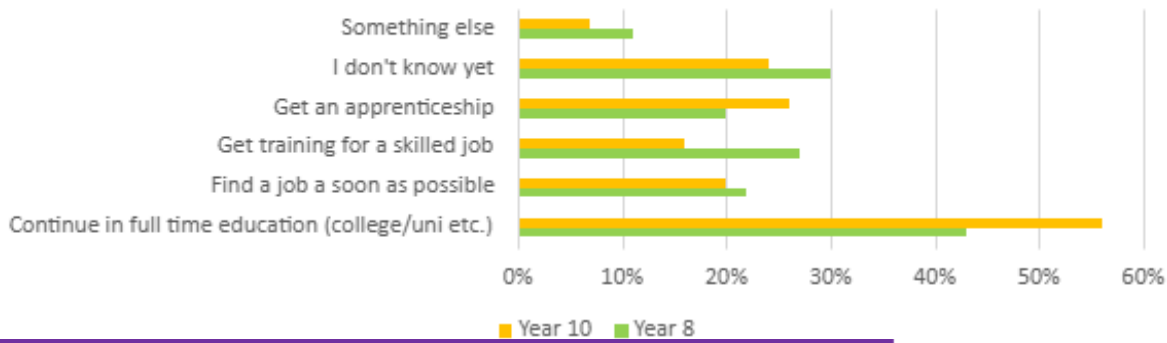
Enjoying and Achieving

Do you think it is important to go to school regularly?

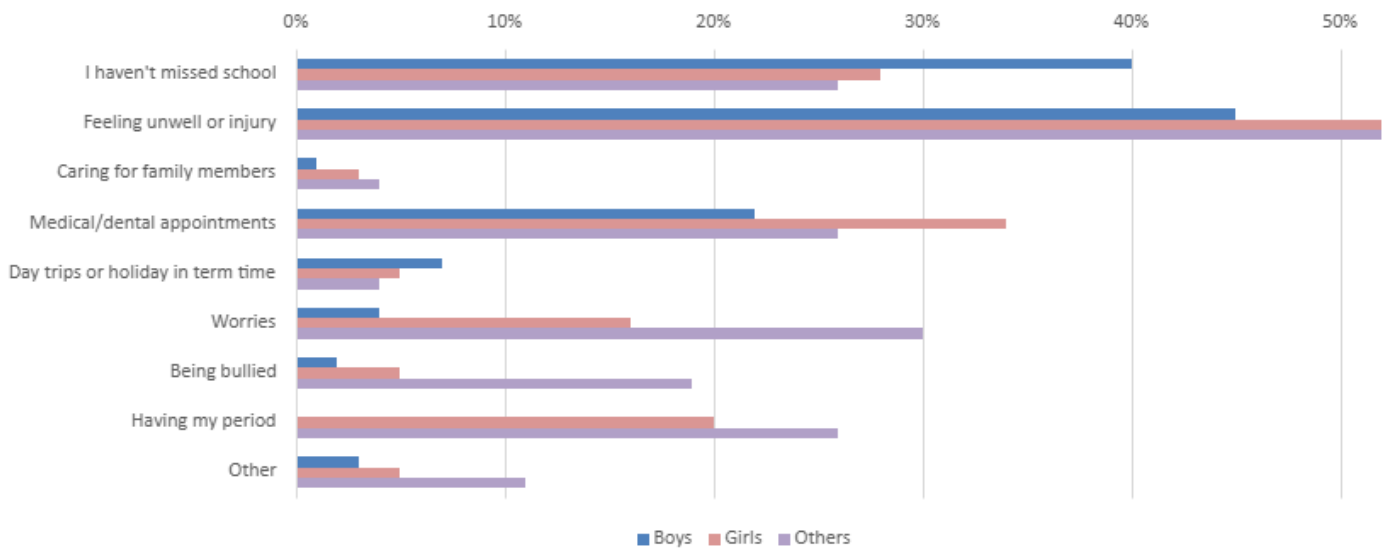


Regular school attendance supports children's learning, wellbeing, and future success. It helps build friendships, boosts mental health, and prepares them for adulthood. It builds a foundation for routine and day-to-day disciplines you need in adult life.

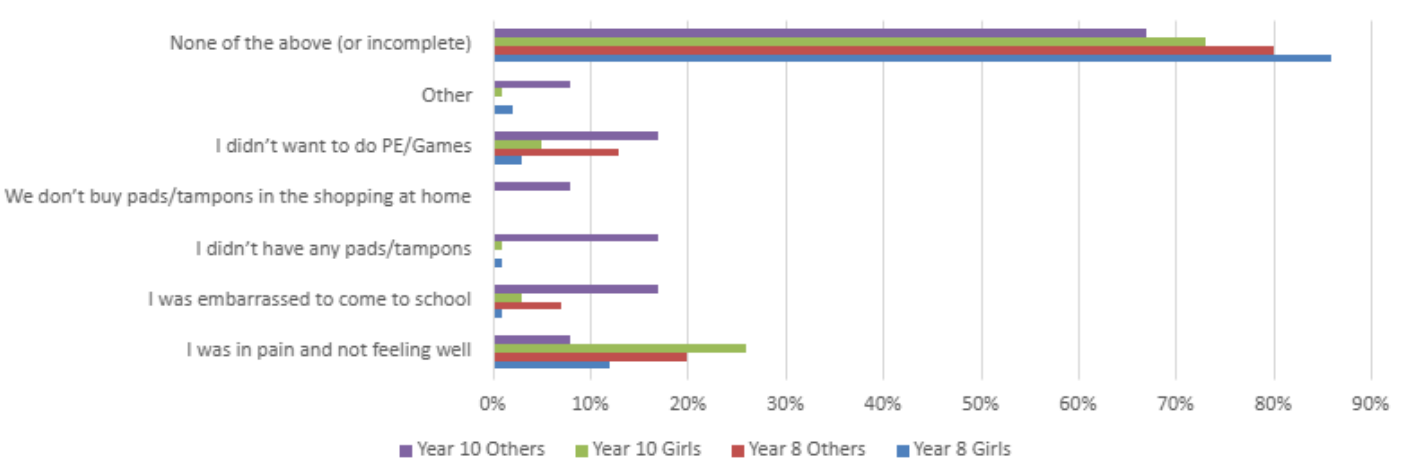
At the end of Year 11, what do you want to do?



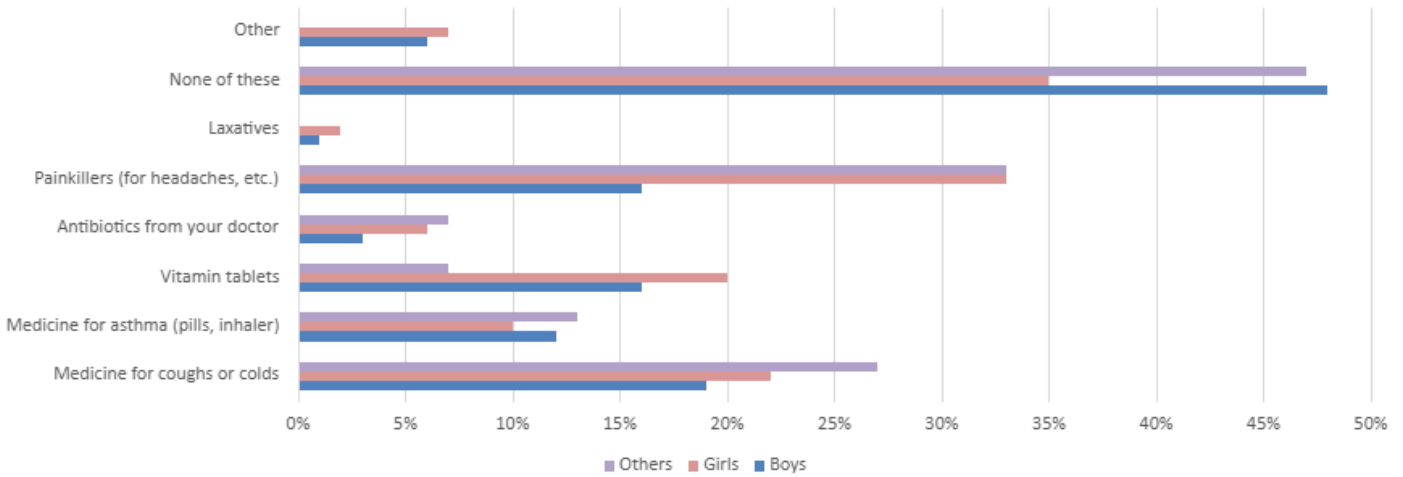
In the last month, have any of the following stopped you from going to school?



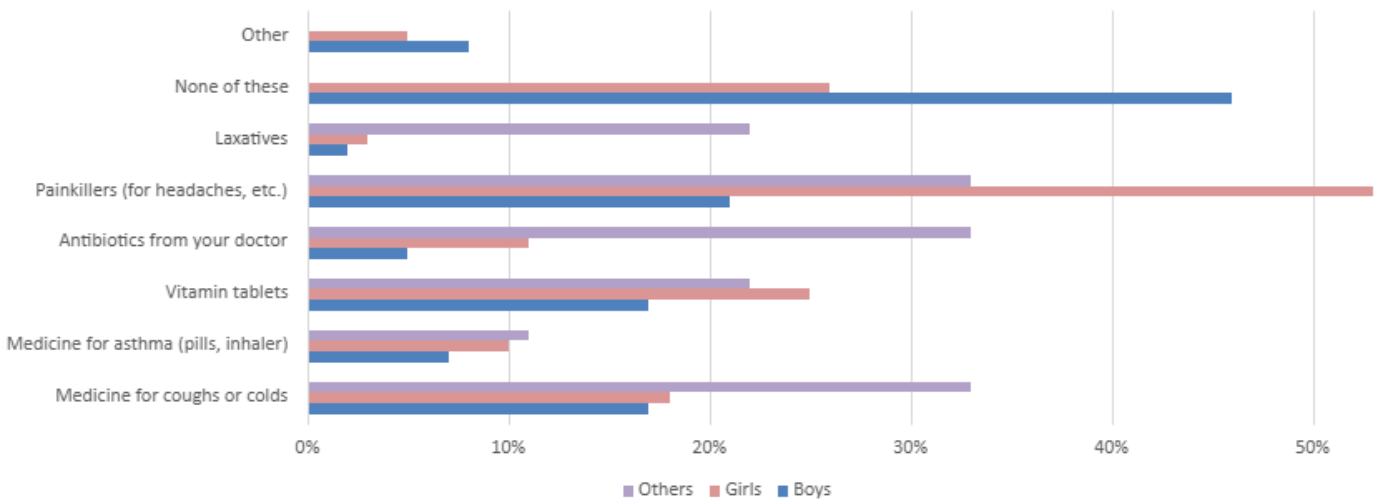
If you missed school because of having a period, why was this?



YEAR 8 - During the last week, have you used any of the following remedies or medications?



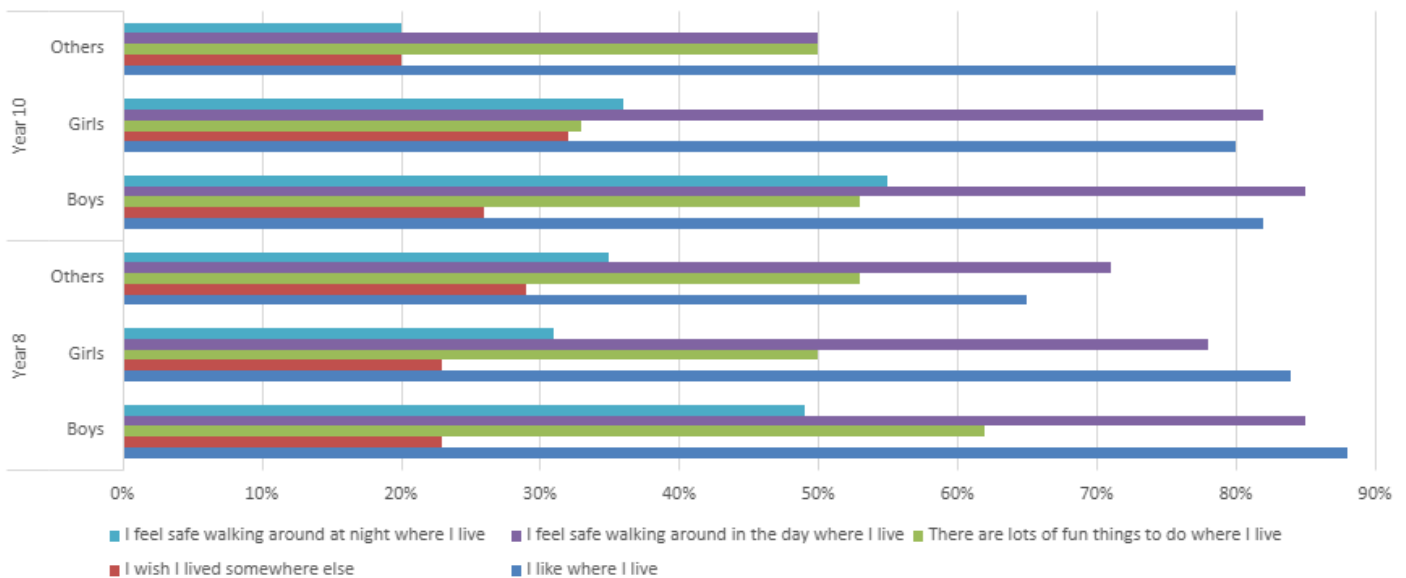
YEAR 10 - During the last week, have you used any of the following remedies or medications?



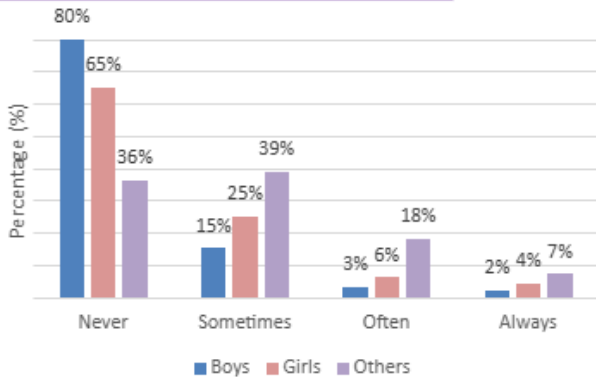
Feeling Safe

Young people are more likely to thrive in all aspects of life in environments that they feel safe in.

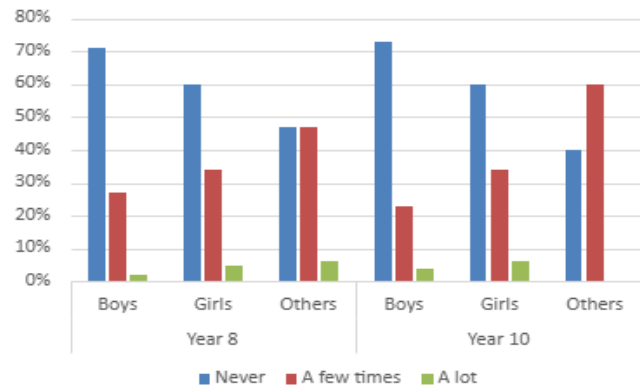
% Responding 'agree' to the below statements.



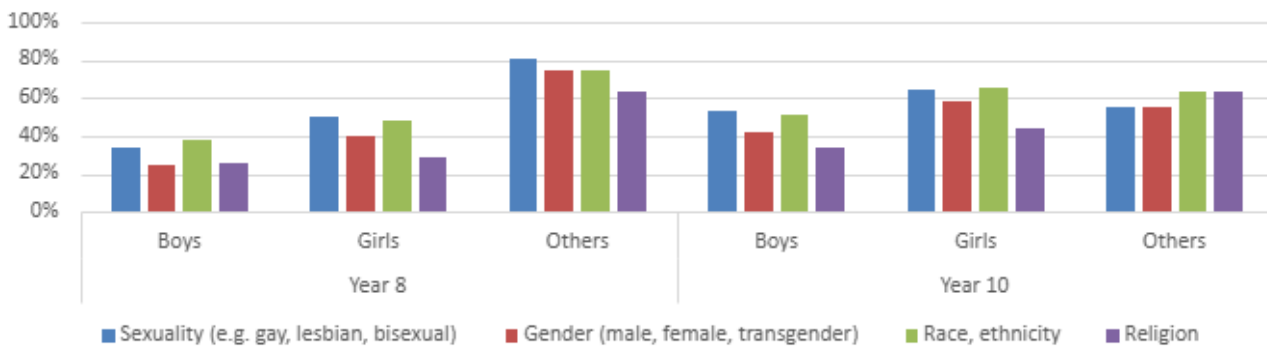
Do you ever feel afraid of going to school because of bullying?



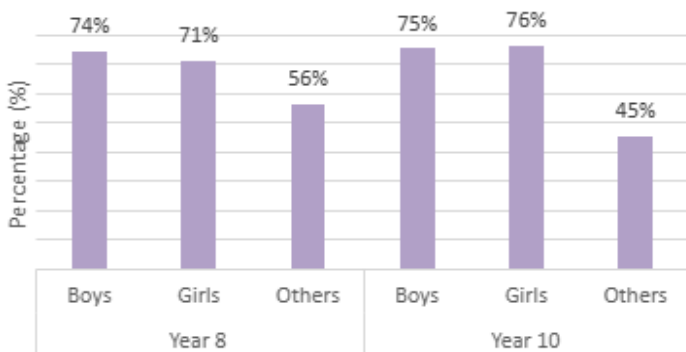
Have you ever been bullied online, on your phone/tablet etc.?



Do you ever hear negative comments at school about...? (% responding 'yes')

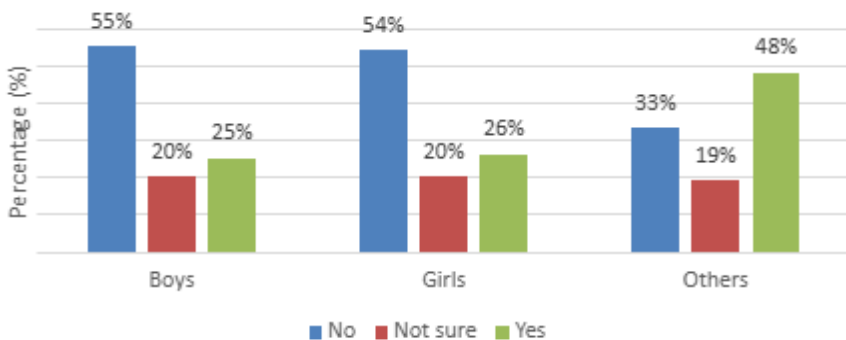


Do you know who to go to in school if you are being bullied? (% responding 'yes')

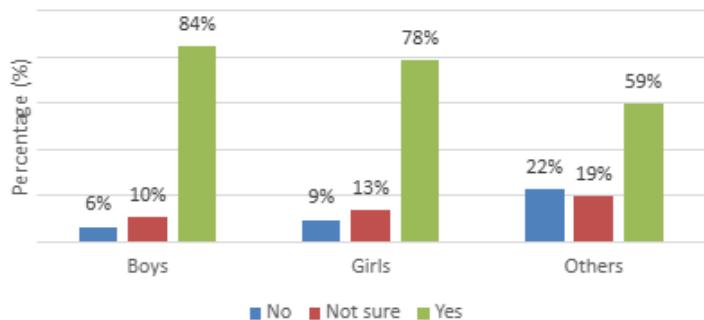


The impact of bullying on young people can vary, it can cause emotional distress, and for some individuals this could lead to physically harming themselves. It's an issue that must be addressed with the highest priority.

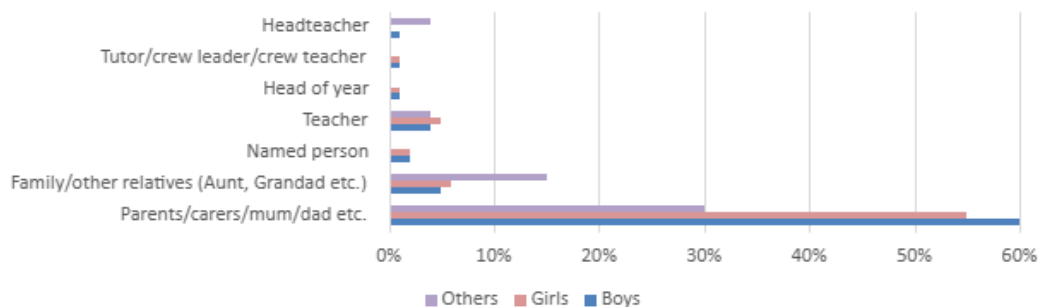
Has a friend or another person tried to make you do something you didn't want to do?



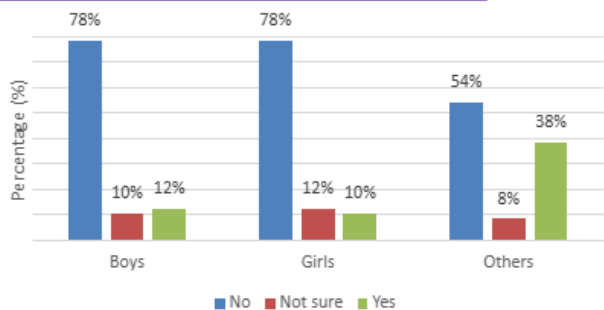
Is there an adult you feel you could trust?



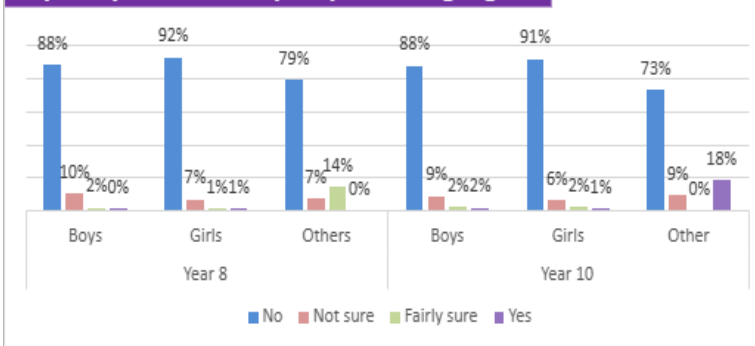
If yes, who is the trusted adult?



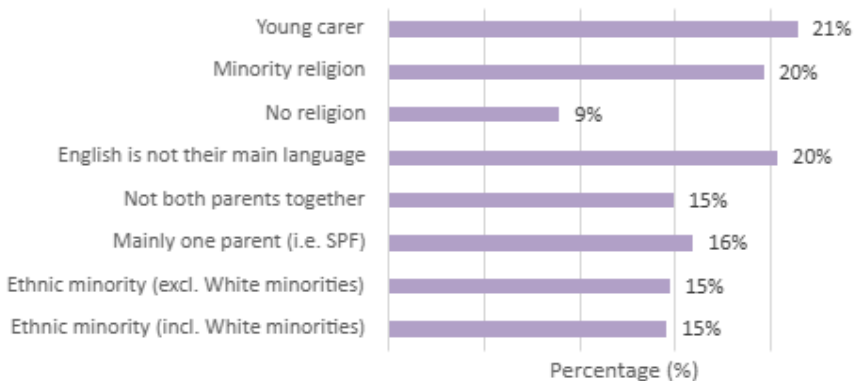
Have you ever been involved in a violent incident where a weapon was used/threatened?



Do you or your friends carry weapons when going out?



Pupils who have been involved in a violent incident where a weapon was used/threatened.

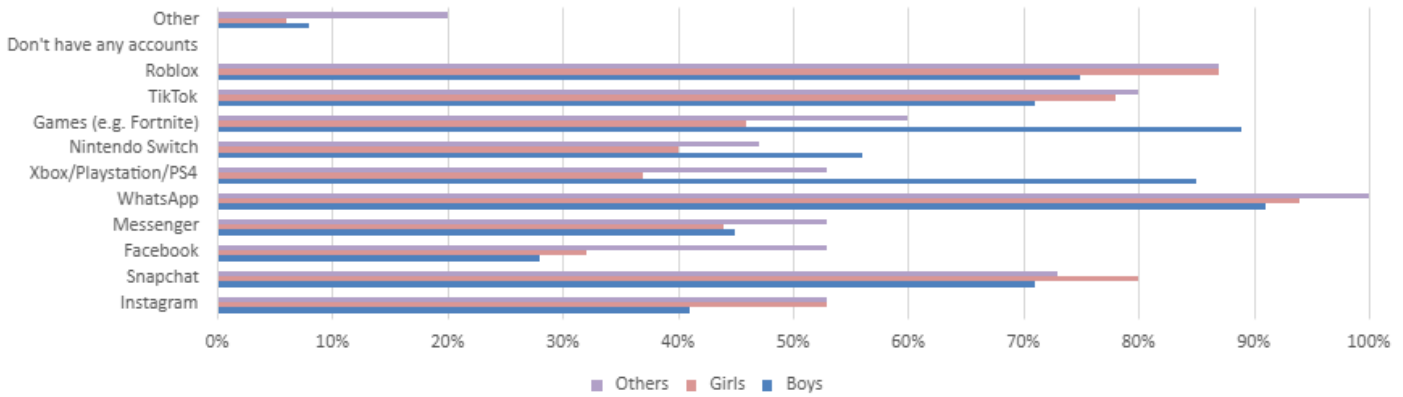


For the small percentage of pupils who answered 'yes' to the above question, the response to 'what weapons' was mainly 'a knife or something else with a blade or point.' When asked why, 'self-defence/protection/safety' was the response.

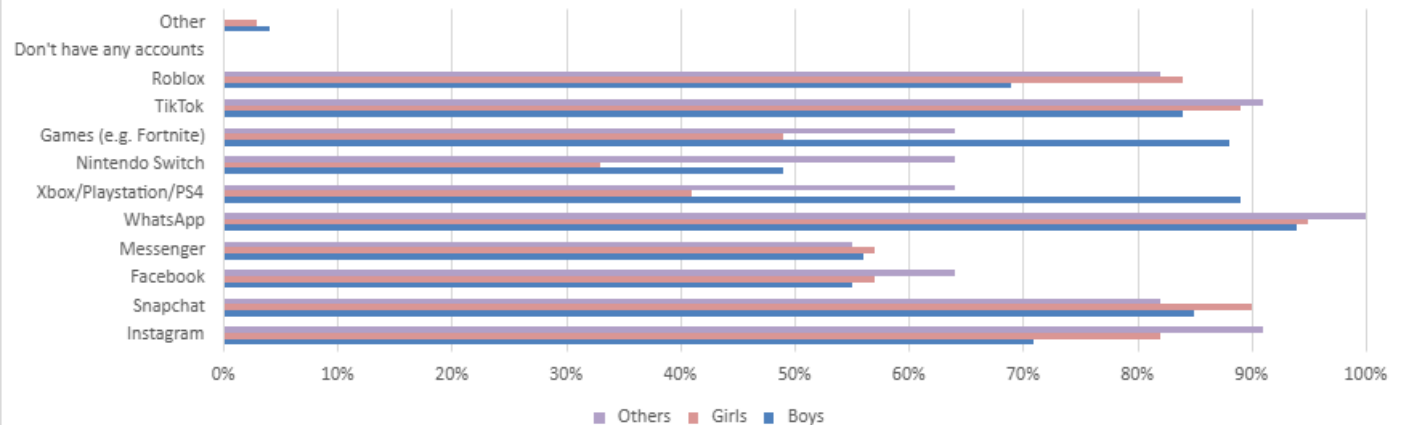
Online Safety

Online safety is an evergrowing concern in the current technological climate. The Online Safety Act 2023 aims to protect children and young people from the potential harms and risks of social media and search engines by placing a duty on the sites to remove harmful content.

YEAR 8 - Do you have your own accounts for any of the following?

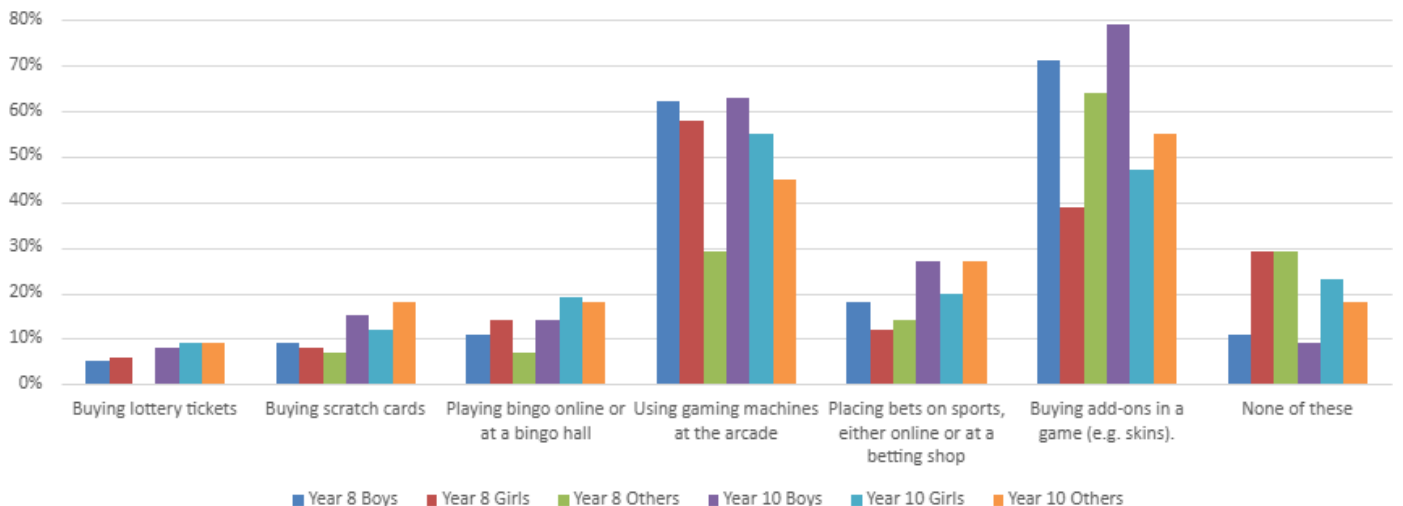


YEAR 10 - Do you have your own accounts for any of the following?

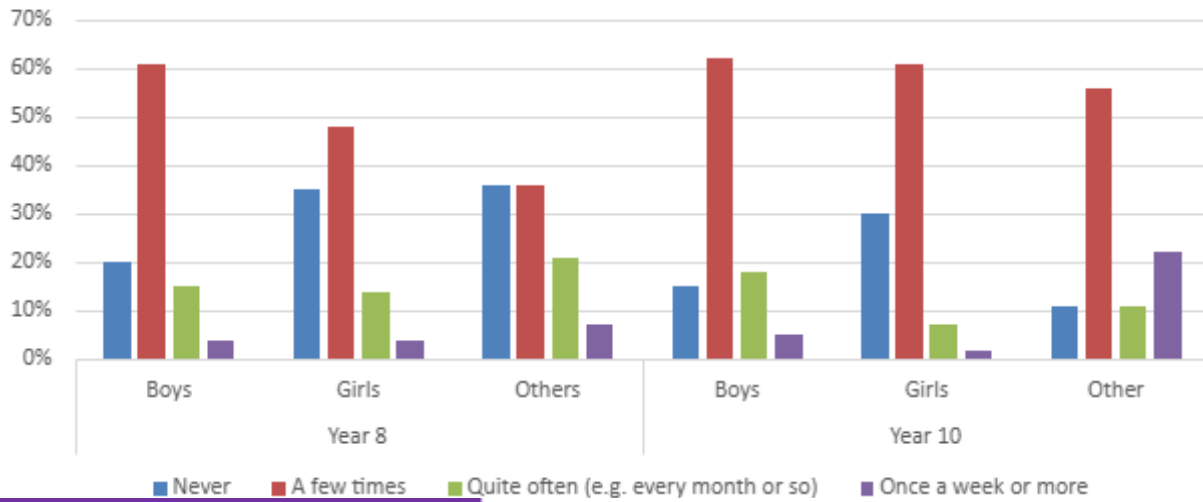


Individuals who gamble from a young age are more likely to have a gambling disorder in later life. Gambling dependence is a serious addiction that can ruin lives.

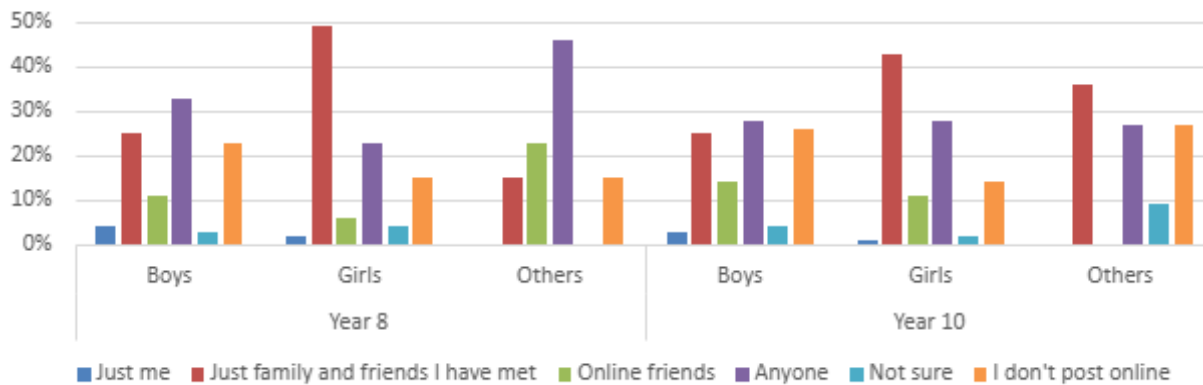
Have you ever taken part in any of the following activities?



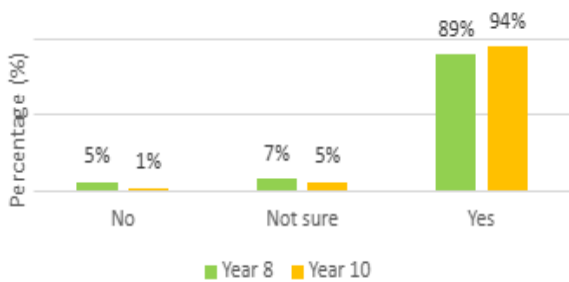
How often have you taken part in the above activities?



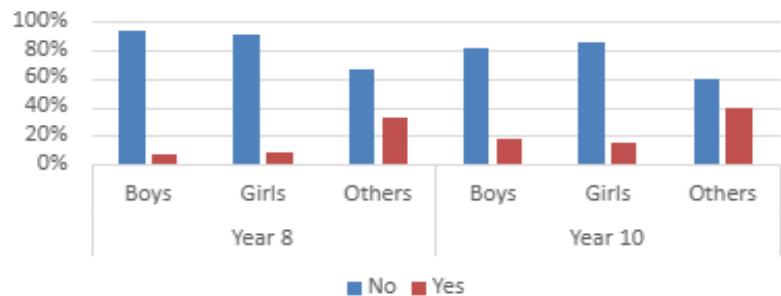
Who can see what you post online?



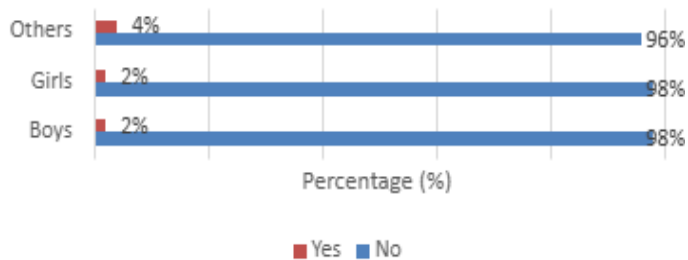
Do you know how to change the privacy settings for your accounts?



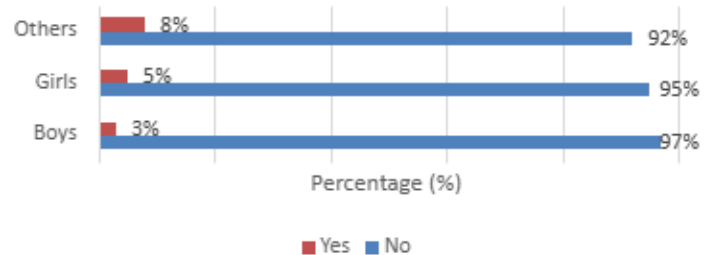
Have you ever given personal information to someone online who you didn't know in real life?



Have you sent sexual pictures of yourself to someone you don't know?



Have you sent sexual pictures of yourself to someone you do know?

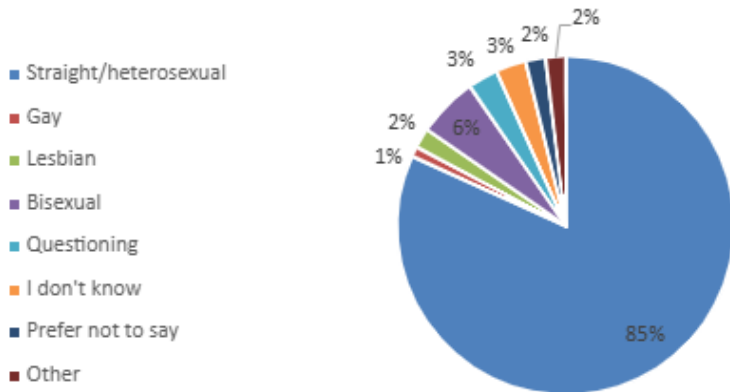


It's important for young people to know that once an image has been sent and is 'out there,' there is a high chance it will be 'out there' somewhere forever. There is also a potential it could lead to blackmail.

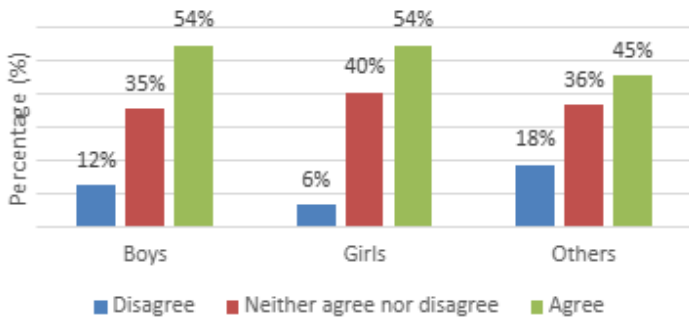
Year 10

The questions below were asked to Year 10 only.

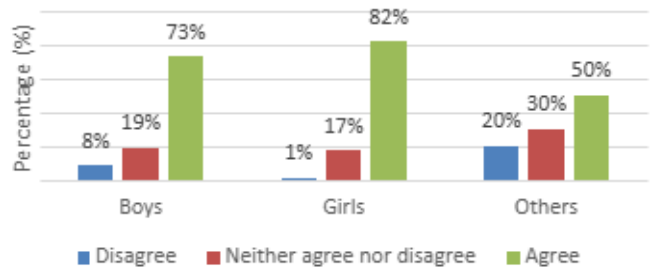
Which of the following best describes how you think about yourself?



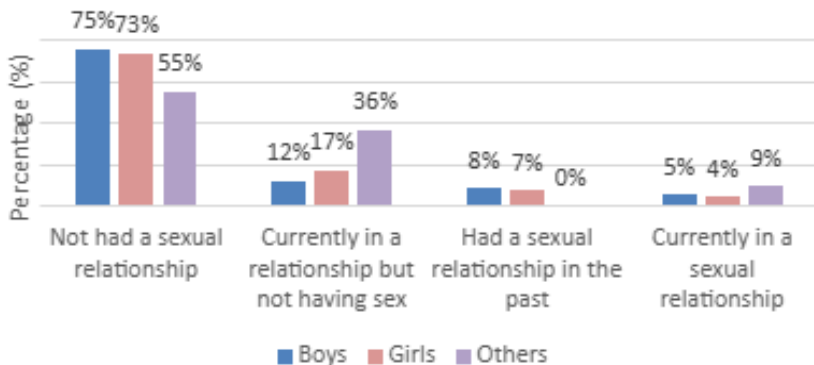
"Young people should wait until they are over 16 before they have sexual intercourse"



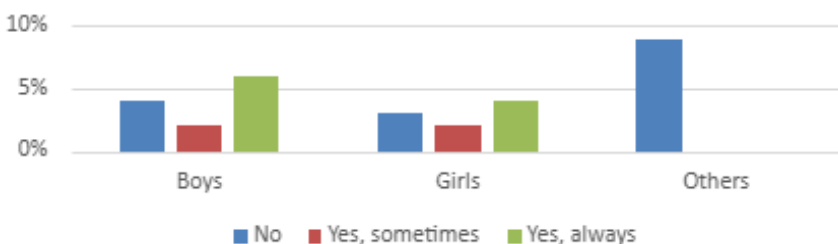
"Young people should wait until they are in a trusting relationship before having sexual intercourse."



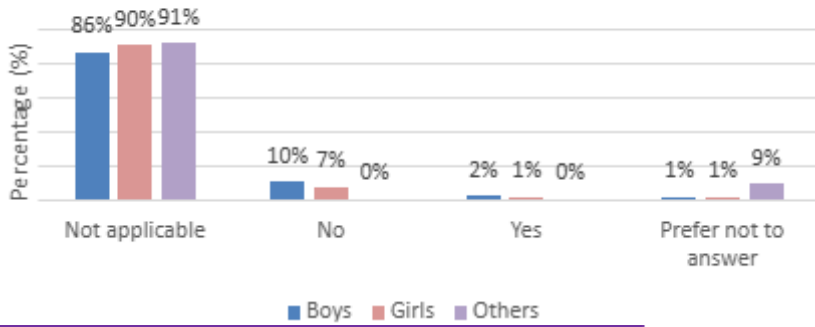
Which of the following best describes you?



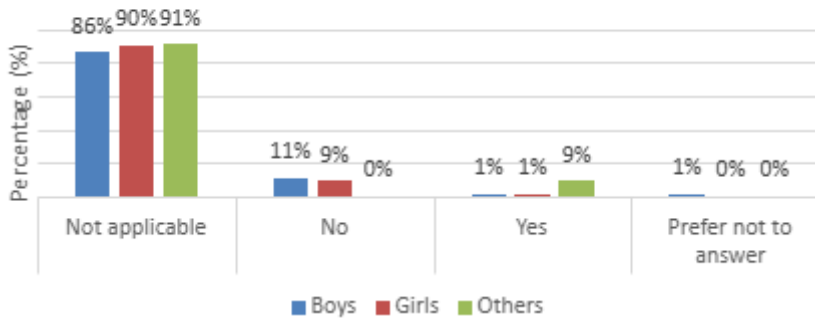
If you have had, or are having sex, do you always use contraception/barriers against sexually transmitted infections?



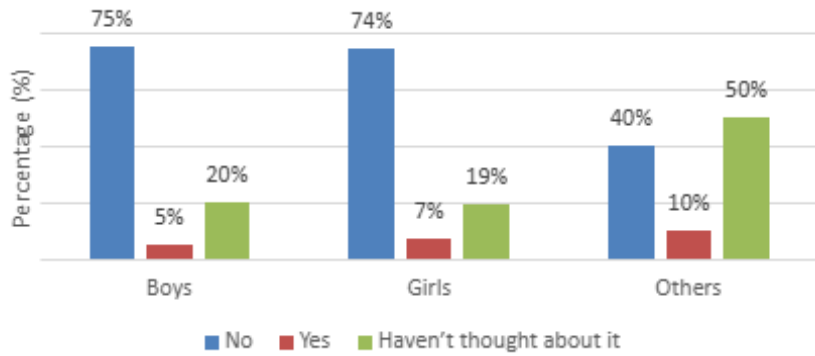
Have you ever had sexual intercourse after you've been drinking alcohol?



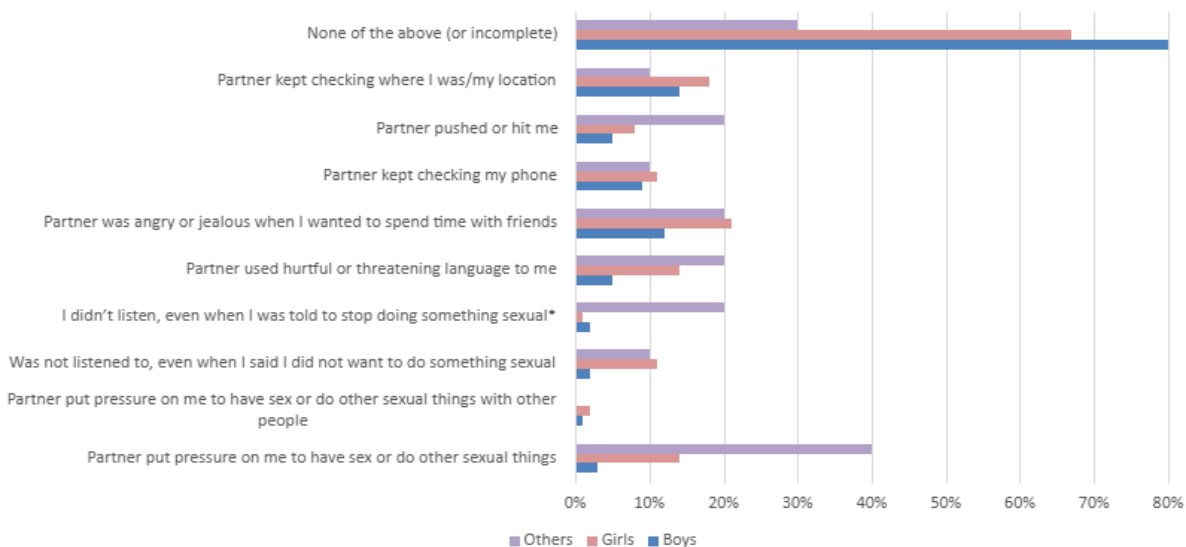
Have you ever had sexual intercourse after you've taken drugs?



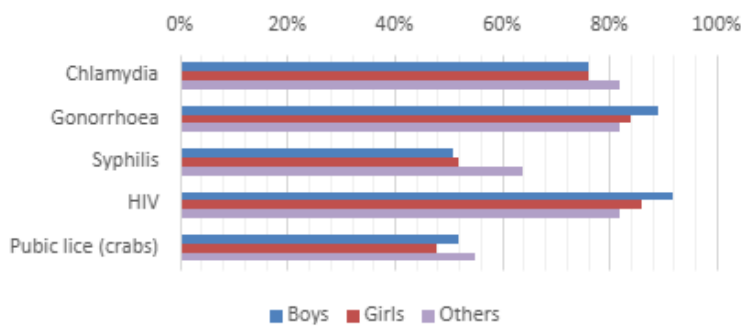
Do you feel a pressure to have sex because other people in your year group might be having sex?



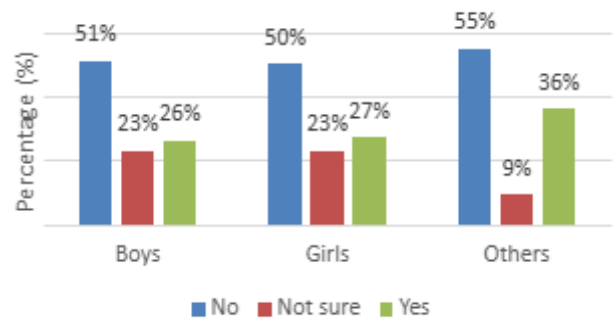
Have you ever experienced any of these things? (% responding 'yes, recently' or 'yes, in the past')



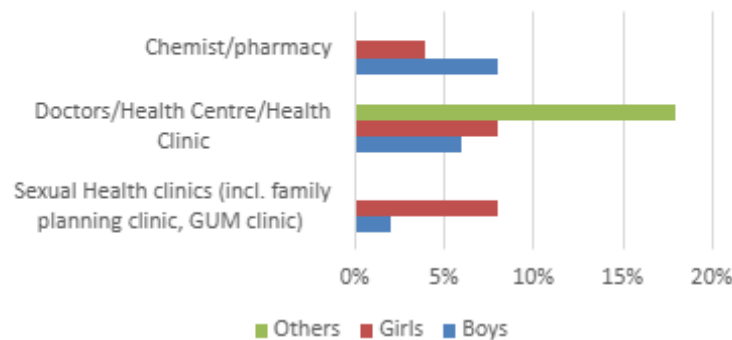
Have you heard of the following sexually transmitted infections? (% responding 'yes')



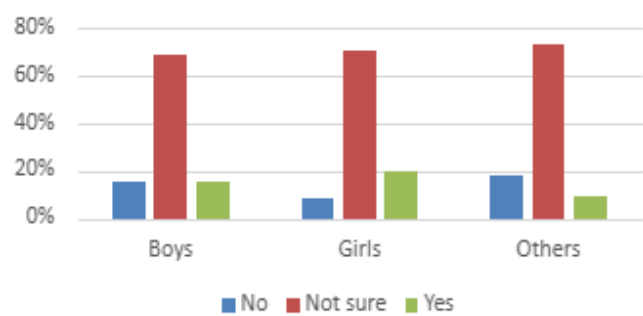
Do you know where you can get condoms free of charge?



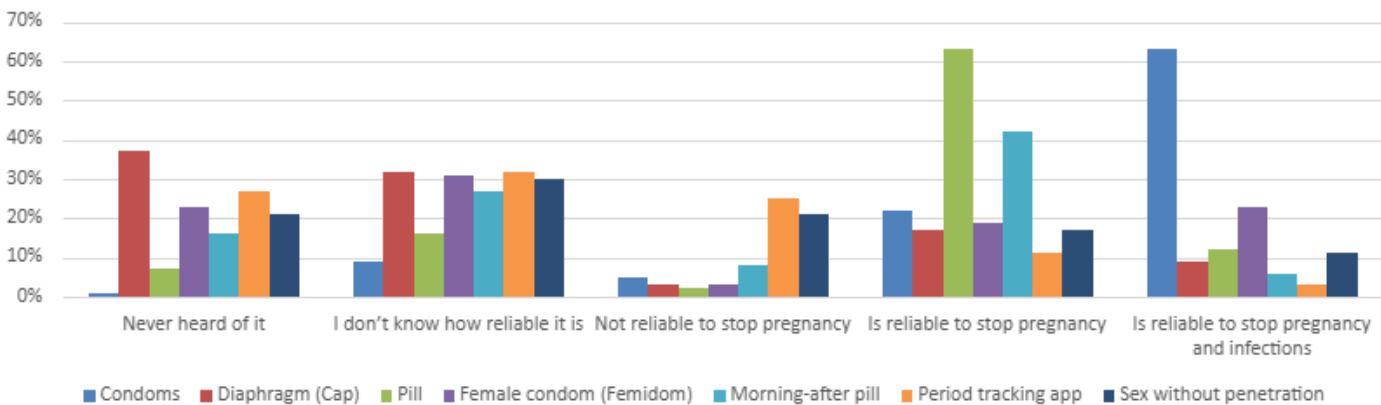
Do you know where you can get condoms free of charge?



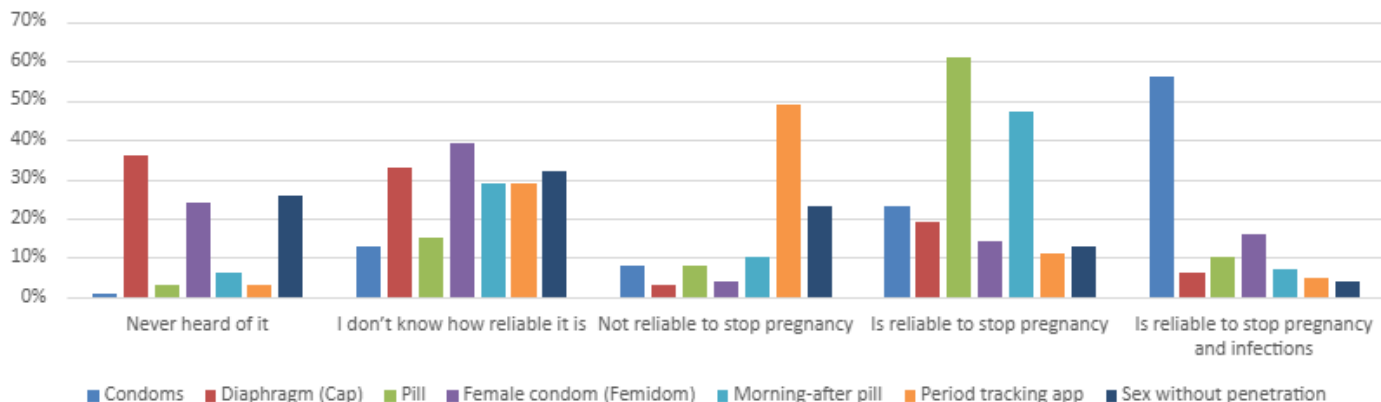
Is there a special contraception and advice service for young people available locally?



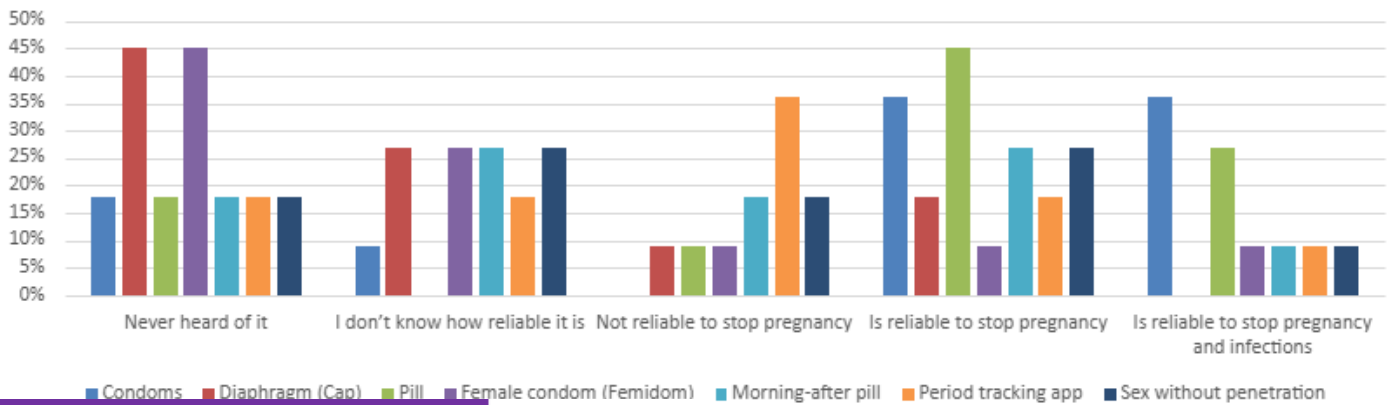
BOYS - For each contraception (birth control) method below, please choose the answer that describes best what you know about them:



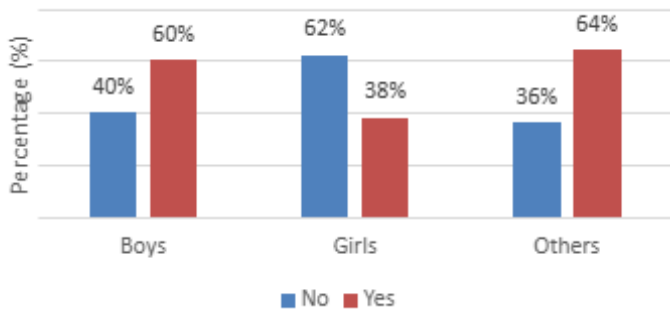
GIRLS - For each contraception (birth control) method below, please choose the answer that describes best what you know about them:



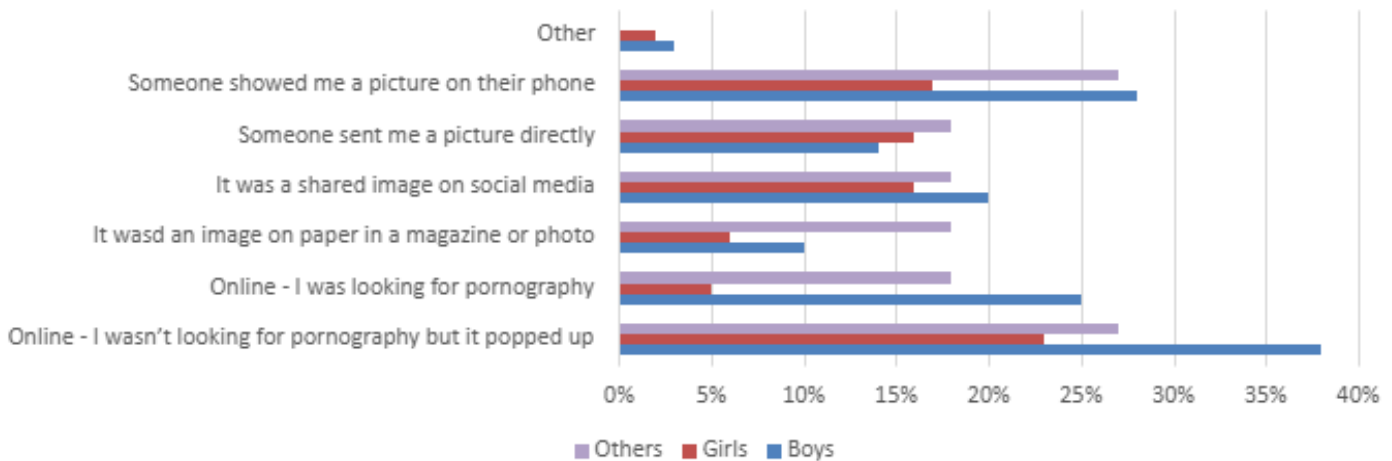
OTHERS - For each contraception (birth control) method below, please choose the answer that describes best what you know about them:



Have you ever viewed pornographic images (videos or pictures)?



If yes, how did you view the images?



Thank you to those who supported this work. It has provided a wealth of information that can be used to inform work system wide. Gateshead look forward to repeating this questionnaire in two years, and beginning to get trend data from this exercise.

