

HEALTHY LIFESTYLES SURVEY 2017/18 RESULTS

Thank you to all the 6,340 pupils aged 9-16 from 24 Darlington schools who took part in this year's survey. Below are some of the key findings about the health of Darlington's young people.

EMOTIONAL WELLBEING

The majority of pupils reported that they are generally happy in their lives, have someone they can talk to, and feel supported by their families. **75%** of primary pupils reported feeling stressed, this increases to **78%** of secondary pupils. **Schoolwork** was the most frequently chosen cause of stress.

SMOKING

96% of primary pupils and **73%** of secondary pupils have never tried smoking. **Over 9 in 10 pupils** say smoking is not a good idea for someone their age. **Over 4 in 10 pupils** report being exposed to second hand smoke, most commonly in their own home.

THE INTERNET

Pupils have very active online lives with primary and secondary pupils having multiple social media accounts. **Two thirds of pupils** know everyone they are friends with online in person, and most pupils could identify online risks. **36%** of primary pupils play games that are age-rated 16 or 18.

PUBERTY AND SEXUAL HEALTH

Nearly 9 in 10 pupils in school years 9-11 (aged 13 to 16) are not sexually active.

A third of primary age pupils are not aware of what changes to expect during puberty.

DENTAL HEALTH

99% of primary pupils and **98%** of secondary pupils have a toothbrush and toothpaste at home. **Over 9 in 10 pupils** brush their teeth daily or twice a day. **Over a quarter** of primary pupils have had a tooth removed by the dentist and **over 4 in 10** have had a tooth filling.

EXERCISE AND DIET

Primary pupils report being more active than secondary pupils and encouragingly, most say they exercise because they enjoy it.

8 in 10 primary pupils believe they have a balanced diet, this reduces to **66%** of secondary pupils. **67%** of primary pupils and **82%** of secondary pupils have had an energy drink, despite **8 in 10 pupils** agreeing they are bad for your health.

BULLYING

62% of primary pupils and **just over two thirds** of secondary pupils have not been bullied in the last year. Verbal bullying in school was the most common form of bullying. **96%** of primary and secondary pupils agree that young people should never bully others.

Healthy Lifestyles Survey 2017/18 Executive Summary for the Borough

Methodology

The Healthy Lifestyles Survey (HLS) is undertaken every year with children and young people who are attending primary and secondary schools in Darlington. Each year schools “sign up” to take part in the survey. The survey consists of an anonymous online survey containing questions about experiences, attitudes and behaviours across a range of topics related to health and wellbeing today.

Schools are encouraged to schedule time for pupils to complete the surveys as part of normal lessons during the school day to ensure maximum participation and reduce chances of technical issues. However, for this year one secondary school chose to disseminate the survey to pupils as their homework; this has had an impact on number of completed surveys for that school and therefore may skew some of the data.

The results are used to create several reports:

- Each school receives their own bespoke report related to their school’s results
- Data from each Primary school is combined to create a Darlington combined Primary school data report
- Data from each Secondary school is combined to create a Darlington combined Secondary data report
- Key messages and themes from the year are used to create an executive summary for the borough (this summary) and an accompanying powerpoint presentation

The aim of the range of reports above is to provide an insight into the common themes and issues that are affecting children and young people living in Darlington. The Primary combined data report and Secondary combined data report are both published online on the DBC website every year (once sign off has been given) so that the data and findings can be used by others to inform work with young people in Darlington.

The HLS results are also fed back to young people, aiming to inform them about the ‘social norms’ of their peers and other young people, with respect to the attitudes and behaviours around specific lifestyle choices and risk taking behaviours.

In 2017/18 the Healthy Lifestyles Survey was undertaken by:

- 1,468 Primary aged pupils (9-11 years old) from 16 Primary schools in Darlington
- 4,872 Secondary aged pupils (11-16 years old) from 8 Secondary schools in Darlington

Feedback of Results

The responses by young people to each of the questions in the survey will be different across age groups and between different schools. The responses for each year group in

each individual school are analysed and reported to each school as part of the Team Around the School (TAS) meeting. This enables each school and the multi-agency team of professionals that attend the TAS understand the specific issues that are affecting their pupils, and develop their own action plan for the coming academic year to will prioritise action required to tackle or mitigate the issues that have been identified. It enables staff and teams to plan their work plans in response to the needs of the school population. The individual reports also enable the school to engage with parents, using the evidence from the responses for their year groups to work with parents in addressing any specific issues or problems.

Summary of results-Primary pupils

The results indicate that young people of this age in Darlington largely understand the health information and messages in relation to their health and report that they act on this information and messages through exhibiting positive attitudes and health seeking behaviours. They report negative attitudes to behaviours that have a detrimental effect on their health or the health of others. They report that they understand what positive relationships should look like and the effects of negative behaviours of others such as bullying, on relationships as well as their own health and wellbeing.

The growing influence of social media even in the lives of the younger primary aged children is becoming more apparent from the survey results, with young children having largely unrestricted access to the internet and social media. The responses from these young people indicate that they are using social media as part of developing and maintaining their friendships and relationships, however their responses also show the potential for harm, with many reporting bullying via the internet and others reporting making friends on social media with people that they have never met. The increase in the playing of online games by the majority of pupils in this age group, presents significant new challenges in keeping young people safe.

The survey also shows that on the whole these young people feel happy in their lives and relationships and feel supported by their family and other significant adults; however they report an increasing impact of stress on their lives, largely from activities and pressures relating to school, their studies and their emotions.

Specific responses indicate that young people of this age in Darlington seem to understand the information about health and wellbeing that they receive and are receptive to the health messages around risk taking behaviours such as smoking and consuming alcohol and have negative attitudes towards risk taking behaviours and those in their peer group.

Key Messages-Primary Pupils

- Nearly half of all pupils report that they have been exposed to second hand smoke and the most common location is their own home.
- Around four in ten of pupils have reporting visiting the dentist to have a filling with around a quarter reporting having tooth extracted in the last year.

- A significant proportion of pupils are reporting that they are accessing online games which are not age appropriate.
- The majority of pupils report positive wellbeing, reporting that they feel happy, are supported by family and have someone they can talk to
- A third of pupils are not aware of what changes to expect during puberty or that they are worried or frightened about puberty.
- 97% have not had more than a sip of an alcoholic drink
- 96% have never smoked

Summary of results-Secondary pupils

Overall the responses to the survey indicate that young people attending secondary schools understand the information about health and lifestyles that they receive and are receptive to the health messages, particularly around risk taking behaviours such as smoking, consuming alcohol and engaging in sexual activity. They report negative attitudes towards certain risk taking behaviours that they perceive to be harmful to themselves or others in their peer group as well as negative attitudes towards those who engage in certain perceived risk behaviours. These attitudes do change between different year groups particularly in comparison to younger pupils surveyed. The survey shows that young people of this age in Darlington often overestimate the prevalence of some risk taking behaviours in their peer group.

The results indicate that across the year groups (Y7 to Y11) young people report positive attitudes towards relationships and on the whole report that they are happy and supported in their lives at this time. A majority reported that they have experienced bullying in secondary school with a significant minority reporting on-going bullying. The majority of bullying is reported to occur in and around school however cyber bullying is the next most common area. As a group they report significantly negative attitudes towards those who may be bullying others and bullying behaviours.

Young people naturally use the internet and social media as part of their lives with (91%) of those responded reporting using the internet everyday using a range of devices. They report high levels of awareness of the risks and the majority report some protective behaviours online. However, nearly all of those who responded reported having been upset by something they had seen online.

The majority of this age group reported negative attitudes towards smoking, alcohol consumption and taking illegal drugs. Most young people had never or rarely smoked, consumed alcohol, taken drugs or had sex and their responses showed high levels of knowledge and awareness of the information and health messages related to these behaviours.

A minority of this age group reported that they are sexually active, there was evidence that they had low levels of understanding about safe sex and avoiding risk. From the behaviours reported in this group it is likely that they and their peers are greater risk of unintended pregnancy and avoidable sexually transmitted infections.

The large proportion of this age group demonstrated an understanding about a healthy diet and health benefits of physical activity with many reporting positive behaviours in relation to maintaining their own health and wellbeing such as eating a healthy diet and brushing their teeth regularly.

Key Messages-Secondary Pupils

- Nearly 9 out of 10 of those surveyed are not sexually active (in Y9,Y10 and Y11) , only 1 in 8 smoke regularly, only 1 in 10 have tried illegal drugs (in Y9,Y10 and Y11), and around half have ever had a drink of alcohol.
- Over 9 out of 10 of all pupils surveyed, access the internet at least daily, with over 1 in 3 reporting that they do not know all their online friends in person.
- Over a quarter of the young people reported that they had been bullied in the last year.
- More than half report that the media (TV, film, Magazines and reality TV) has had an influence on the choices they make in their relationships.
- Nearly 6 in 10 pupils reported being physically active for 60 minutes a day for four days or more in a week.

The Primary combined data report and Secondary combined data report for 2017/18 and previous years' reports are available on the Darlington Borough Council website; search "Healthy Lifestyles Survey".