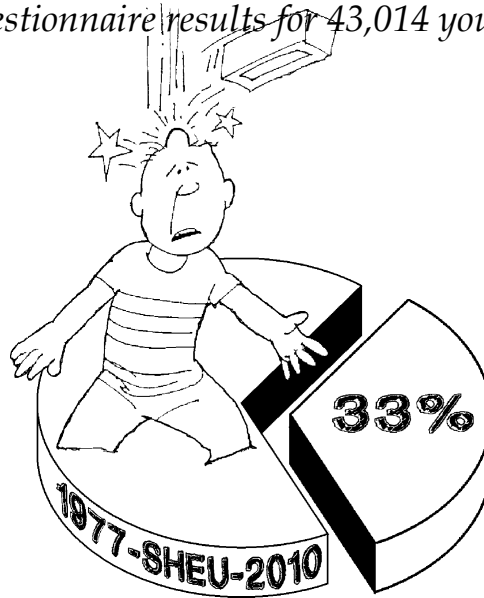


# Young People into 2010

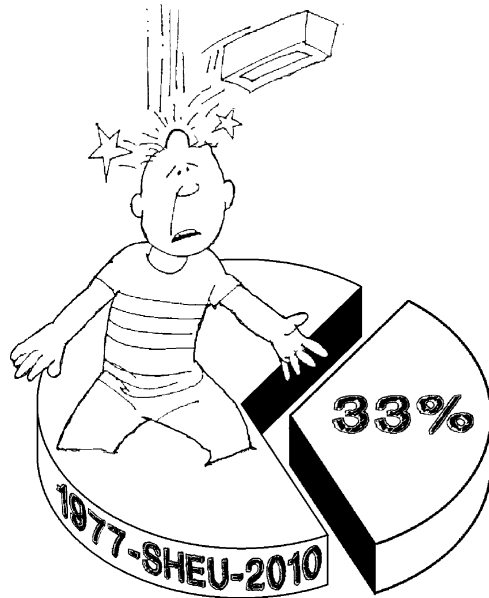
*The Health Related Behaviour Questionnaire results for 43,014 young people between the ages of 10 and 15*



## 3. Health and Safety

Angela Balding and David Regis

# 3 Health and Safety



Many of the questions in this group reflect a traditional view of health – physical cleanliness, use of medicines, and common ailments. We also have questions about accidents, and the vulnerability of young cyclists is also a major concern.

**Question**

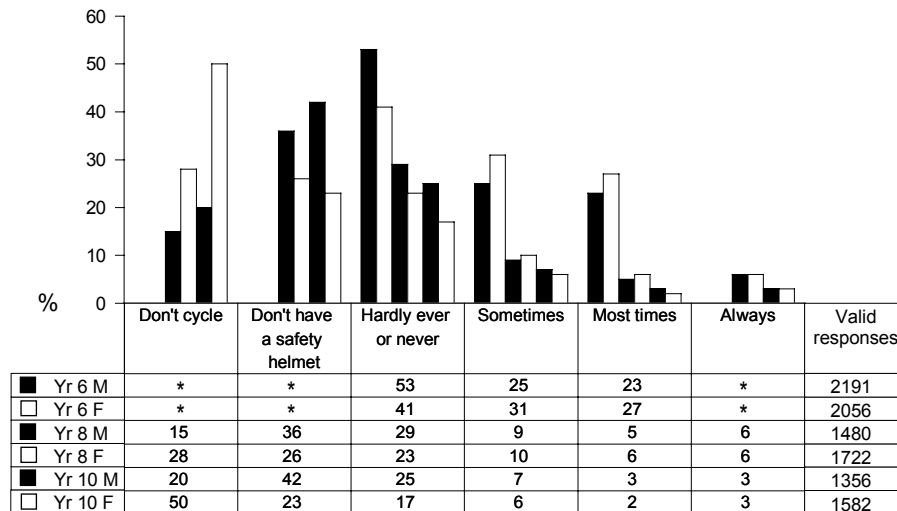
When you cycle, do you wear a safety helmet? .....	22
Do you have asthma? .....	23
How many hours sleep did you get last night? .....	24
Is the amount of sleep you normally get...enough for your health? .....	25
Is the amount of sleep you normally get...enough for your studies? .....	26
On how many days, in the last week, have you used remedies or medications? .....	27
How do you rate your safety when going out during the day, and after dark, in the area where you live? .....	28
Do you have friends who carry weapons for protection when going out? .....	29
Do you ever feel afraid of going to school because of bullying? .....	30
Do you think others may fear going to school because of you? .....	31
E-Safety? .....	32
In the past year, have you had any accidents that were treated by a doctor or at a hospital? .....	33
Do you try any of the following ways to avoid sunburn? .....	34

# Safety helmets

50% of 14-15 year old females *don't cycle*

## When you cycle do you wear a safety helmet?

1. Most of the respondents cycle, although by Year 10 this figure is down to 50% for the females.
2. With age the percentage of cyclists who at *most times* wear a safety helmet is seen to fall, e.g. from 27% of females in Year 6 to 2% of females in Year 10.



\* Year 6 not given this option

## Comments

1. Head injuries are the commonest cause of accidental death among young people.
2. Cycling seems to be currently fashionable, but does this extend to wearing a helmet? Over the years we have seen changes between years large enough to suggest that helmet-wearing may be a 'volatile' behaviour, sensitive to publicity campaigns and the opinions of others.
3. Cycling is environmentally friendly and promotes fitness, but it presents dangers to young people and is a cause of anxiety to their parents. Efforts to promote the wearing of cycle helmets have shown mixed results. The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accident's website refer to research papers about cycle safety helmets: [http://www.rosipa.com/roadsafety/info/cycle\\_helmets.pdf](http://www.rosipa.com/roadsafety/info/cycle_helmets.pdf)



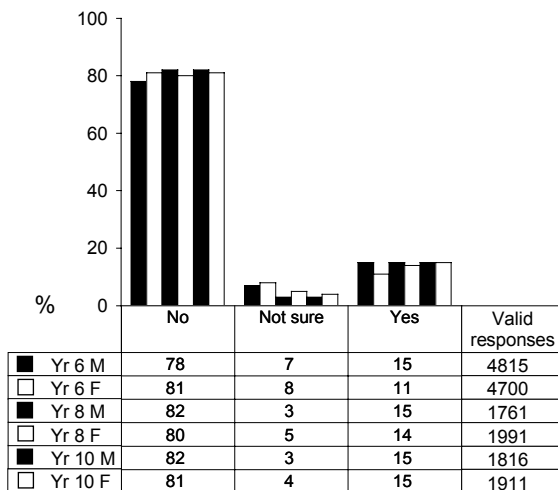
In an earlier book in this series we showed that young people who reported having been on a cycle training course were more likely to report wearing a cycle helmet at least most of the time.

# Asthma

Up to 15% of pupils say yes

## Do you have asthma?

1. Up to 15% of the year-gender groups report *yes*.
2. Slightly more males than females report that they have asthma.



## Comments

1. The young people may 'have asthma' but be free from symptoms.
2. There are several stages from the presence of symptoms to confirmation of asthma (e.g. *have symptoms* → *notice symptoms* → *report to parents* → *see GP for diagnosis* → *child reports this in survey*). It is not clear if the observed differences relate mainly or only to having asthma symptoms, as the young people's own reports are all we have to go on.
3. The frequency records of asthma medication taken in the previous week are shown on page 27.
4. An early report on young people and mental health (*No Worries?* Balding, 1998), describes a connection between general levels of worry and asthma and its symptoms. Figures for 2008 are shown below.

Asthma medication	Count	Percentage who worry about 5 or more topics
Males: No	1949	18%
Yes	282	22%
Females: No	2039	18%
Yes	260	21%

# Sleep

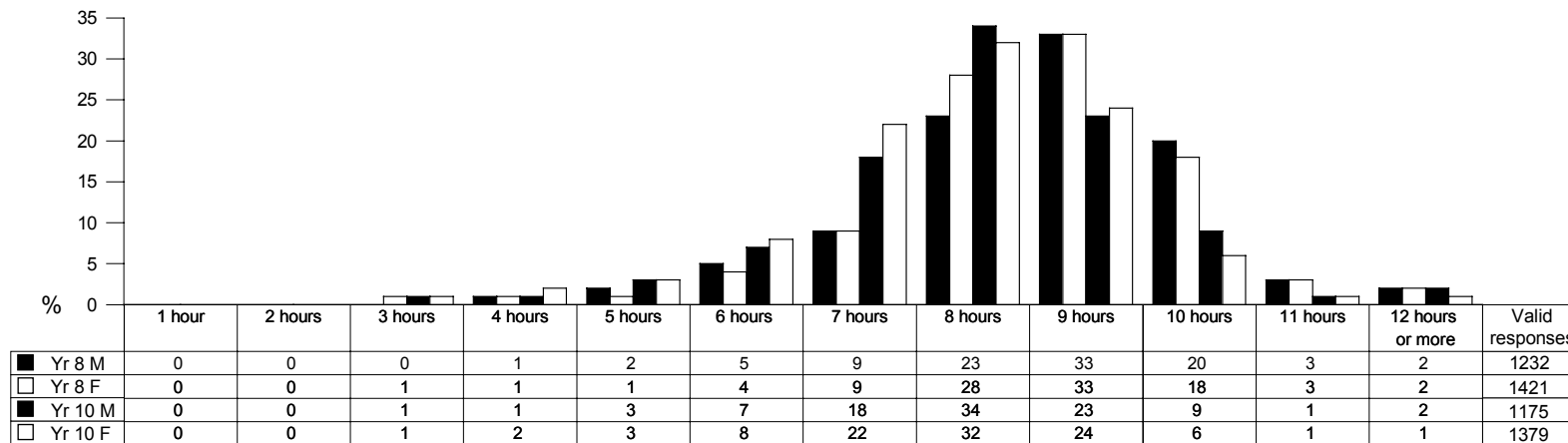
Most report sleeping between 8-9 hours *last night*

## How many hours sleep did you get last night?

### Comments

1. Between 8-9 hours sleep is reported by the majority of this sample.
2. 33% of Year 8s reported having 9 hours sleep and 33% of Year 10s reported having 8 hours sleep 'last night'. This number drops to around 23% of 14-15 year old males report having 9 hours sleep.
3. There are no clear age/gender differences although older females report higher percentages for sleeping between 6-7 hours.

1. This question, and the next two questions, were new editions in 2006 to the 'Young People' reports. Pupils are asked to write down the number of hours sleep they had 'last night'.



# Sleep - health

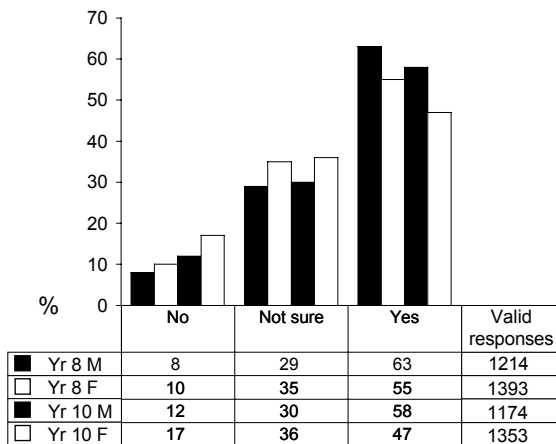
At least 47% of pupils say yes

## Is the amount of sleep you normally get...enough for your health?

### Comments

1. At least 47% of this sample say they get enough sleep for their health and up to 36% are *not sure*.
2. There are age and gender differences. As they get older, more pupils (and females more than males) are likely to report needing more sleep for their health (55% - Year 8 females and 47% - Year 10 females).
3. There is a difference between younger and older pupils who are *not sure* if they are getting enough sleep for their health and there is little change in response between genders/age.

1. We have seen that most have between 8-9 hours sleep on the previous night. This question follows the question on the previous page.
2. As pupils get older, and in particular females, we see a difference of 8% (from 55%-47%) in those females reporting getting enough sleep for their health.



# Sleep - studies

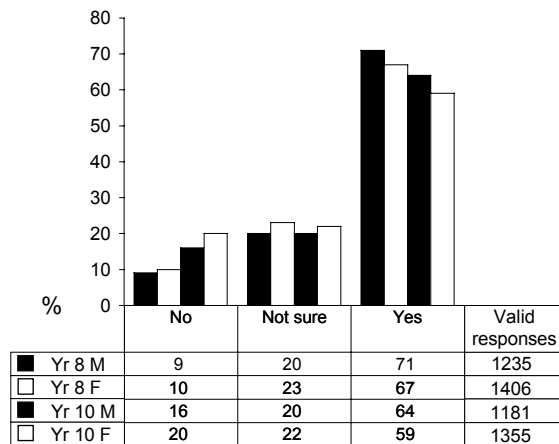
Up to 71% of pupils say yes

## Is the amount of sleep you normally get...enough for you to stay alert and concentrate on your school work?

### Comments

1. Up to 71% of this sample say they get enough sleep for their studies.
2. There are age and gender differences. As they get older, more pupils (and males more than females) are less likely to report getting enough sleep for their studies.
3. 20% of 14-15 year old females say they don't get enough sleep to stay alert and concentrate.

1. Once again we see a decline between age groups and in particular females (67%-59%) who report enough sleep for studies.



# Remedies and medication

58% of 14–15 year old females report taking painkillers in the past week

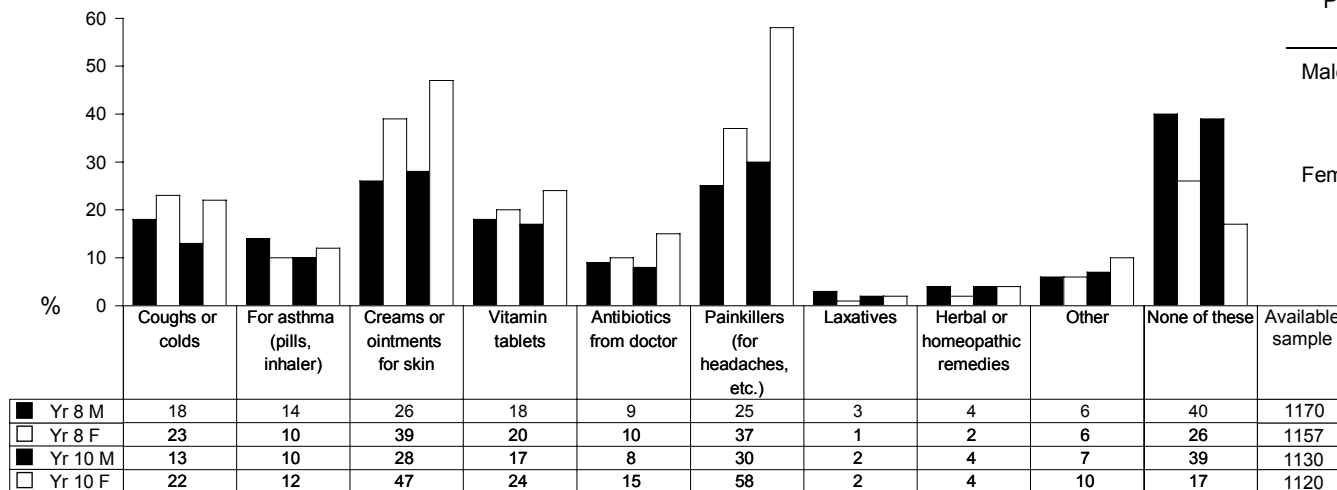
## On how many days, in the last week, have you used remedies or medications?

1. The 'remedies and medication' options show *Painkillers* and medications for *Skin problems* to be taken and up to 24% report taking *Vitamin tablets* 'at least one day in the last week'.
2. In almost all cases, more females than males report having used these remedies and medications, the exceptions being 'Laxatives and 'Herbal'.

### Comments

1. This question has been asked using the options shown below which were previously covered by two questions.
2. 58% of the 14-15 year old females are taking *Painkillers*, but they cannot all be suffering from period pains during the week before the survey. Assuming that up to a quarter are, the remainder must be taking them for other reasons, compared with 30% of older males.
3. Worries may literally prove to be a headache: when we look at the number of significant worries against painkiller use, there is an association:

Remedies/medications taken at least one day



Painkillers		Count	% who worry about 5 or more topics
Males:	No	1572	18%
	Yes	620	21%
Females:	No	1189	26%
	Yes	1006	35%



# Community safety

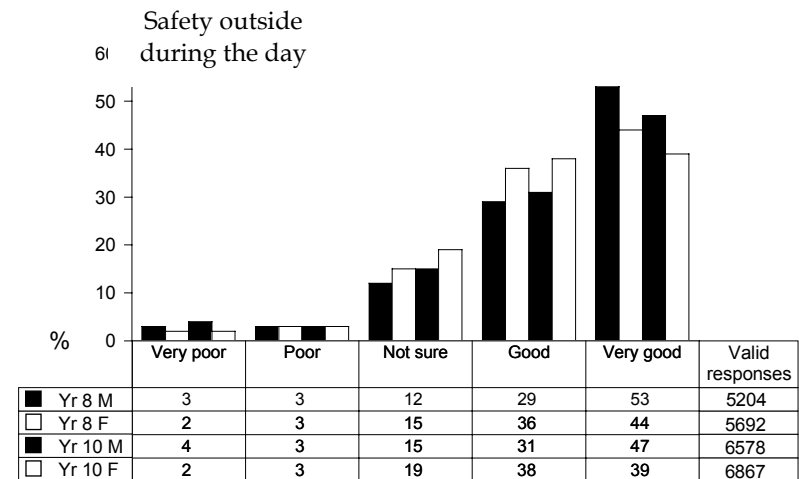
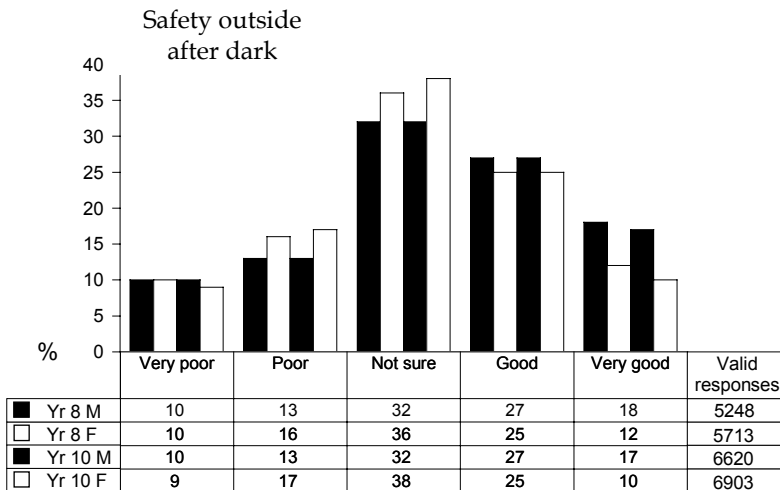
Around 25% of young people say that safety after dark is *poor* or *very poor*

## How do you rate your safety when going out during the day, and after dark, in the area where you live?

1. Males are more likely to feel safe than females, and in general there is little difference in the perception of safety between the two age groups. Females report consistently for the 'Not sure'.
2. The perception of safety after dark is far lower than during the day for both age and gender groups.

### Comments

1. Whether perceived safety is related to actual safety, we do not know, but it is likely that perceived safety has an effect on young people's quality of life.
2. Are individual differences in perceived safety related to other attitudes and anxieties? We might expect those more anxious about safety to worry more about other matters.

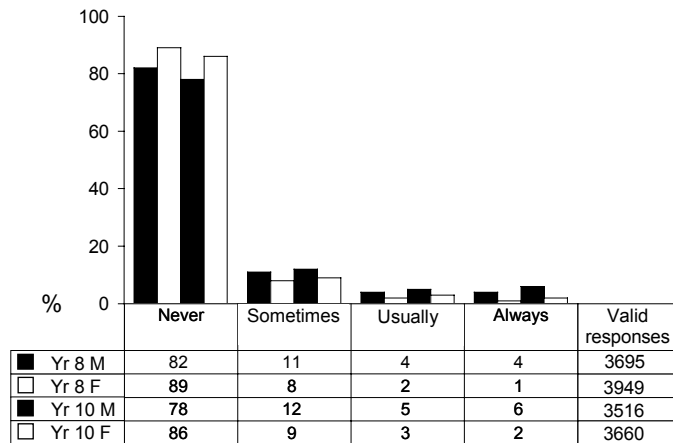


# Carrying weapons

22% of 14-15 year old males may carry a weapon, and 13% have been a victim of violence in their area

## Do you/your friends carry weapons for protection when going out?

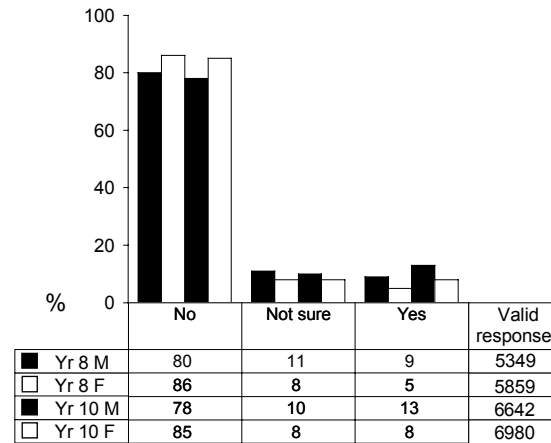
1. Around 20% of the males in this sample can go out knowing that there is a weapon being carried by them/friends
2. 5% of the males 'always' go out alone/with friends carrying a weapon
3. Around 12% of 12-15 year old females, in this sample, go out with them/friends carrying a weapon.



## Comments

1. In previous years this question only referred to "friends" and had different categories eg. 'fairly sure' or 'certain' that friends carried weapons.
2. Another new question asks if the pupil has been, "...a victim of violence or aggression in the area where you live". 13% of 14-15 year old males say 'Yes'.

Have you been a victim of violence or aggression in the area where you live?



# Fear of being bullied

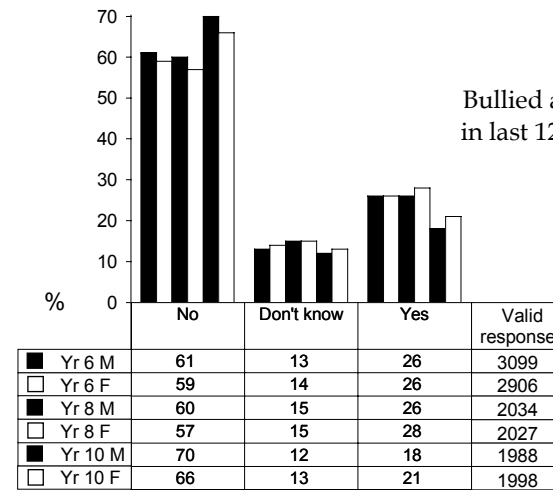
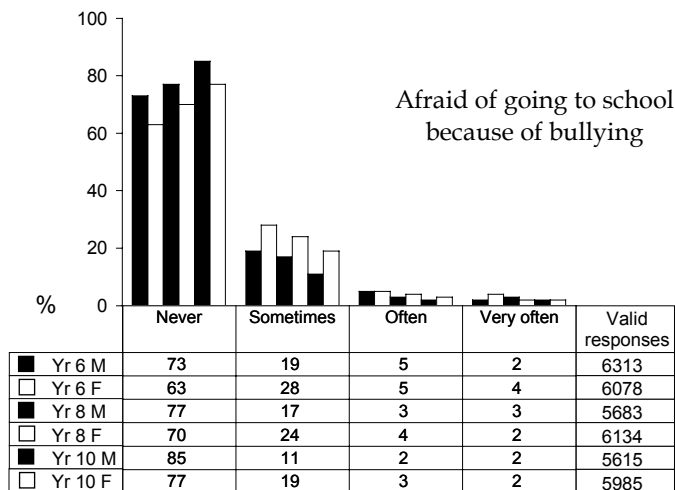
37% of the 10-11 year old females fear bullying at least *sometimes*

## Afraid of going to school because of bullying...and bullied at school

1. 37% of the Year 6 females and 30% of the Year 8 females fear bullying at least *sometimes*.
2. The females are more fearful than the males, and the older they get the less afraid they become.
3. Up to 26% report being bullied in the last 12 months.

### Comments

1. The proportion of pupils fearing bullying in different schools varies widely. Items in the survey have been linked with fear of bullying: low self-esteem and poor perceived control, and also asthma, eczema and birth order (*Bully Off*, Balding 1996).
2. Since 1999, the figures for fear of being bullied, at least *sometimes*, show females remaining higher than males. For the Year 6 females (10-11 year olds), around 10% more females than males have reported feeling afraid of going to school because of bullying. (see also pages 32, 120-122.)
3. Around 26% of 10-12 year olds experience some form of bullying (see chart below).



# Bullying

10% of older males bullied *last year* and as pupils get older fewer say *schools take bullying seriously*

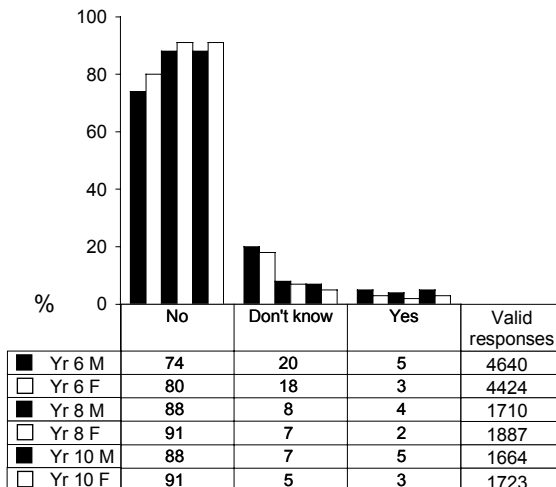
## Fear going to school due to you ...bullying...taking bullying seriously

### Comments

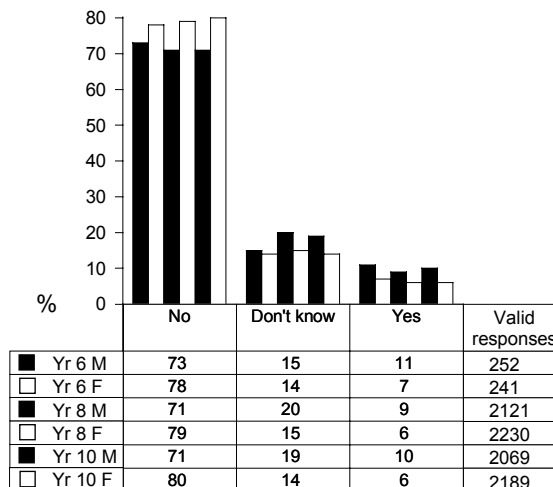
- Up to 5% report they are the cause of why others may fear going to school.
- Up to 11% (more males than females) report bullying someone *last year*.
- Up to 21% (slightly more males than females) think the school does not take bullying seriously.

- Figures for pupils bullying, from previous years, show males reporting higher percentages in the 'Yes' option but the differences between the genders is not great.
- The 'school takes bullying seriously' question is included this year and positive responses fall as pupils get older, 'Don't know' is as common a response as 'No'.

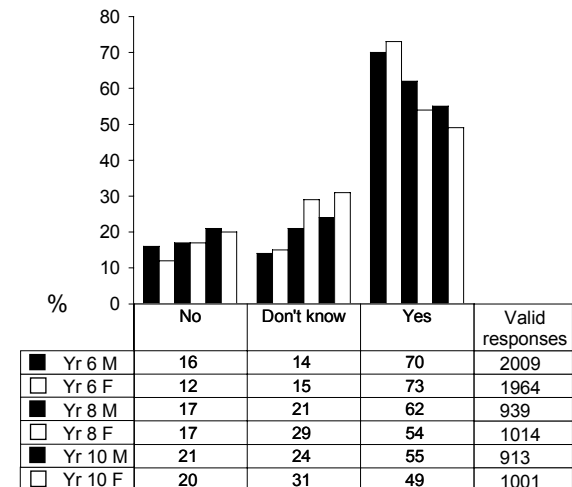
Others may fear going to school because of you



"I bullied someone last year"



Do you think your school takes bullying seriously?



# E-Safety

Around 20% of older females report being upset or scared by chat messages or pictures seen online

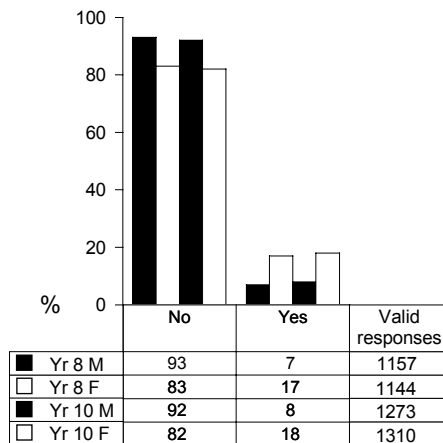
## Chat messages...online pictures...chatting online

### Comments

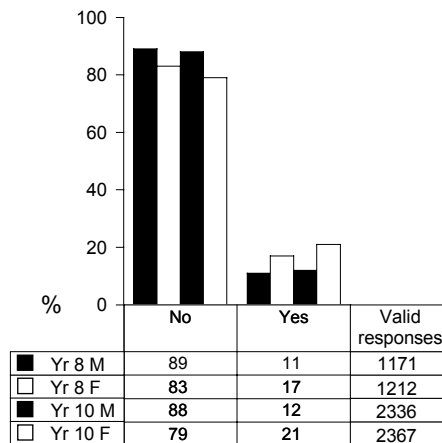
- Up to 18% of females report receiving a chat message that scared or made them upset.
- Up to 21% of females report seeing upsetting pictures online.
- 39% of year 10 males have not been told how to stay safe while chatting online.

- These three questions have been included for the first time although variations of the questions have been asked before.
- Overall the females, and older females slightly more than the younger ones, are more likely to report being upset and scared when online. The percentages, for staying safe while chatting online, suggest there is work to be done to reinforce the stay-safe message.

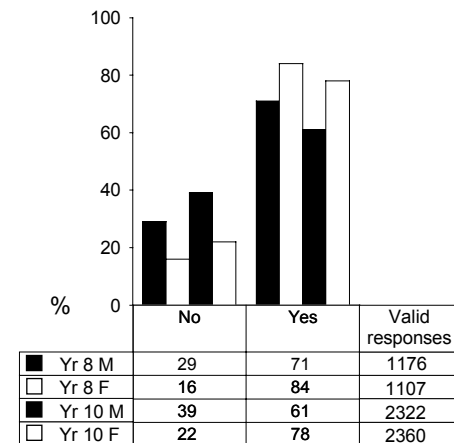
Have you ever received a chat message that scared you or made you upset?



Have you ever seen pictures online that upset you?



Have you ever been told how to stay safe while chatting online?

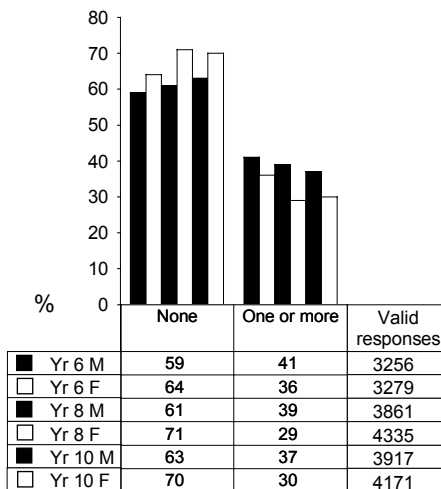


# Accidents

Up to 41% of the males had accidents

## In the past 12 months, how many accidents have you had which were treated by a doctor or at a hospital?

1. Up to 41% of the respondents reported having an accident that needed some sort of treatment by a doctor or at a hospital.
2. Consistently more males than females report involvement in an accident.



### Comments

1. Over half the fatal accidents in very young people occur at home, but once children reach school age there is an increase in deaths through road accidents, particularly head injuries. Road traffic crashes are the leading cause of death in young Europeans - in the 15-24-year age group, road deaths occur primarily among car occupants (59%) or motorcycle riders (19%) - [www.euro.who.int/mediacentre/PR/2007/20070420\\_1](http://www.euro.who.int/mediacentre/PR/2007/20070420_1)
2. Males may well pursue activities with a higher risk of injury. Are older girls generally more risk-averse? Perhaps, but the picture is complex. Some health-risky behaviours, like smoking, are actually most frequent among older girls.
3. We can support other research (Thom et al, 1999) and show links between reported accidents and health-risky behaviours relating to substance use: for example, pupils reporting a recent accident are more likely to report smoking and drinking in the last week, or ever having used illegal drugs, and these difference apply in all age groups. The figures in the table below are for the year 10 males:

Accident in last year?	Smoked last week	Drank last week	Ever used drugs
No	10%	26%	10%
Yes	18%	46%	21%

# Sunburn

Up to 26% *never* try to avoid sunburn

## Do you try any of the following ways to avoid sunburn?

1. Up to 26% *never* try to avoid sunburn and more males than females
2. More younger than older males and females try to avoid sunburn 'whenever possible'.
3. As they get older more pupils try to avoid sunburn 'sometimes'.

## Comments

1. This is an old question that has been rephrased.
2. In previous years pupils favoured *putting on sun screen* and males more than females preferred to *wear a hat* and *wear long sleeves*.
3. Despite the warnings, up to 26% of older pupils are choosing to risk exposure to the sun that may result in sunburn.

