

HBSC IRELAND

The Health Behaviour in School-aged Children (HBSC) is a research study conducted by an international network of research teams¹ in collaboration with the World Health Organisation (Europe) and co-ordinated by Dr Joanna Inchley of the University of St Andrews. This factsheet is based on data collected in 2014 from 10,368 10-17 year olds in Ireland from randomly selected schools throughout the country.

Further information is available at:
<http://www.hbsc.org>
<http://www.nuigalway.ie/hbsc>



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Overall percentages for HBSC 2014 and HBSC 2010 in this factsheet have been weighted²

Summary

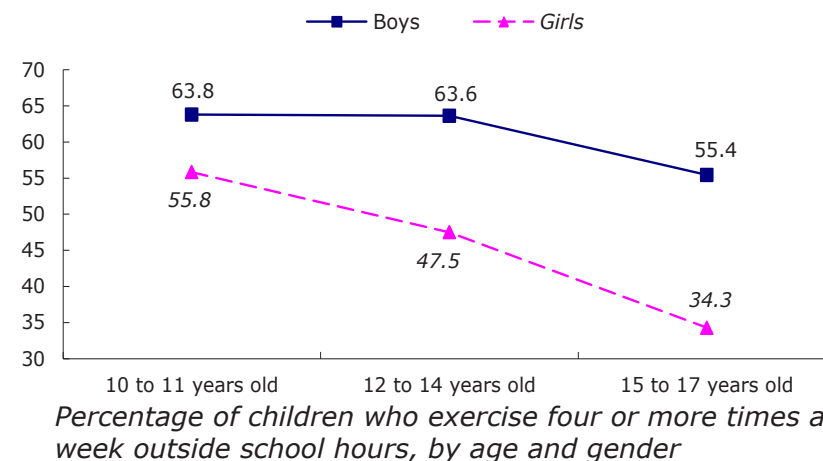
Exercising in this factsheet refers to children who report exercising four or more times a week outside school hours, to the point where they get out of breath or sweat. Overall, 51.6% of children report that they exercise four or more times a week. This figure remains stable from 2010 (49.7%). More boys (60.5%) than girls (43.6%) report exercising. The proportion of children exercising is higher among younger than older children (63.8% boys and 55.8% girls 10-11 years; 55.4% boys and 34.3% girls 15-17 years). Children who report living with both parents and those who find it easy to talk to their mother and father about things that really bother them are more likely to report exercising, as are those who report liking school and those who spend four or more evenings out with their friends per week. Children from higher social class groups are more likely to report exercising than those from lower social class groups.

Why this topic?

Physical activity can contribute to the physical³ and mental health⁴ of schoolchildren, and can have positive impacts on academic performance⁵. Conversely, physical inactivity is associated with adverse health outcomes such as obesity⁶ and low self-esteem⁷. However, many young people do not meet physical activity guidelines⁸ and participation in physical activity generally declines throughout childhood, especially among girls⁹.

Change 2010-2014

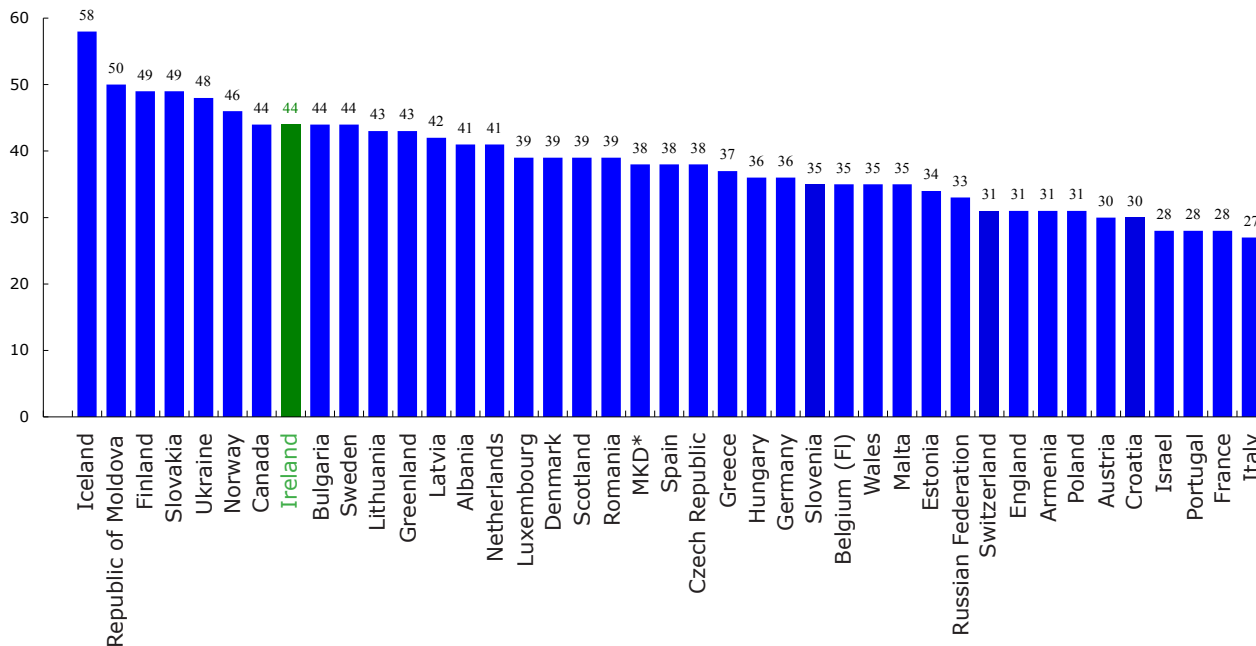
The proportion of children who report exercising four times or more a week has remained stable from 49.7% in 2010 to 51.6% in 2014. The proportion of boys (60.1% 2010; 60.5% 2014) who report exercising remains stable since 2010, while there has been a slight increase in the proportion of girls who exercise since 2010 (40.4% 2010; 43.6% 2014).



Exercise in context

- Children from higher social class groups are more likely to report exercising than those from lower social class groups (53.1% in social classes 1-2; 50.2% in social classes 3-4; 44.2% in social classes 5-6).
- Children who report living with both parents are more likely to report exercising than those who do not (78.2% vs 74.6%), as are those who report finding it easy to talk to their mother (84.7% vs 80.0%) and father (73.6% vs 63.4%) about things that really bother them, compared to those who do not find it easy.
- Children who report spending four or more evenings with their friends are more likely to report exercising than those who do not (39.2% vs 25.7%).
- Children who report that they like school are more likely to report exercising (76.5% vs 70.9%) while those who report feeling pressured by their schoolwork are less likely to report exercising than those who do not feel so pressured (38.7% vs 46.7%).

...Exercise among schoolchildren in Ireland



Percentage of 15 year old children reporting exercise four or more times a week outside school hours, by country

*MKD - The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

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All factsheets and other HBSC publications and reports can be downloaded from our website: <http://www.nuigalway.ie/hbsc>

Contact us at: hbcs@nuigalway.ie

International

Fifteen year old schoolchildren in Ireland (boys and girls together) are ranked 8th among 42 countries in Europe and North America with 44.2% reporting that they exercise four or more times per week. Overall, 60.6% of 11 year olds (rank 4th) and 53.4% of 13 year olds (rank 4th) report exercising four or more times per week¹.

Implications

The proportion of schoolchildren who report exercising has remained stable since 2010. The findings presented in this factsheet suggest that having a good relationship with parent(s) and spending time with friends in the evening may increase the likelihood of schoolchildren reporting exercising. Given that exercise has positive impacts on health and well-being, it is important to facilitate schoolchildren to exercise, especially those who are less active including older children, girls and those from lower social class groups.

References

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