The Irish Health Behaviour in School-aged Children (HBSC) Study 2022

April 2024

Aoife Gavin, András Költő, Louise Lunney, Rachael Maloney, Larri Walker, Saoirse Nic Gabhainn and Colette Kelly

Health Promotion Research Centre
University of Galway, Ireland
www.universityofgalway.ie/hbsc/
Health Behaviour in School-aged Children: a World Health Organization (WHO) collaborative cross-national study

© Copyright 2024
Department of Health, Government of Ireland, Dublin
Health Promotion Research Centre, University of Galway.

Published by the Department of Health and University of Galway.

ISBN: 978-1-911690-17-7
DOI: 10.13025/8whd-b114

The report is available online at:
www.universityofgalway.ie/hbsc/
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CONTENTS</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Executive Summary</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overview of Findings</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overview of Findings: Main Study</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overview of Findings: Middle Childhood Study</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methods</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth Engagement</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Main Study</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Health and Wellbeing</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mental Health</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smoking</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alcohol Consumption and Drunkenness</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cannabis Use</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food and Dietary Behaviours</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exercise and Physical Activity</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-Care</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sun Safety Behaviours</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Menstrual Health and Period Poverty</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Injuries</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical Fighting and Bullying</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COVID-19</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual Behaviours</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle Childhood Study</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Health and Wellbeing</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food and Dietary Behaviours</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exercise and Physical Activity</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-Care</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bullying</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendices</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical Notes and Additional Notes</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Team</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acknowledgements</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supplementary Data</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
List of Figures

Figure 1: Percentages of boys who report their health is excellent ............................................... 22
Figure 2: Percentages of girls who report their health is excellent .................................................. 22
Figure 3: Percentages of boys who report feeling very happy with their lives at present ............... 23
Figure 4: Percentages of girls who report feeling very happy with their lives at present ............... 23
Figure 5: Percentages of boys who report high life satisfaction ....................................................... 24
Figure 6: Percentages of girls who report high life satisfaction .......................................................... 24
Figure 7: Percentages of boys who report feeling lonely most of the time or always in the past 12 months ................................................................................................................. 25
Figure 8: Percentages of girls who report feeling lonely most of the time or always in the past 12 months ................................................................................................................. 25
Figure 9: Percentages of 10 to 14 year old boys who report they always love their family .......... 26
Figure 10: Percentages of 10 to 14 year old girls who report they always love their family ........... 26
Figure 11: Young people reporting different levels of mental wellbeing .............................................. 27
Figure 12: Percentages of boys classified as having low mood or at risk of depression ................. 28
Figure 13: Percentages of girls classified as having low mood or at risk of depression ................. 28
Figure 14: Percentages of boys who report ever smoking cigarettes ............................................... 29
Figure 15: Percentages of girls who report ever smoking cigarettes .................................................. 29
Figure 16: Percentages of boys who report they are current tobacco smokers ................................... 30
Figure 17: Percentages of girls who report they are current tobacco smokers ................................... 30
Figure 18: Percentages of boys who report they have ever used electronic cigarettes .................. 31
Figure 19: Percentages of girls who report they have ever used electronic cigarettes ..................... 31
Figure 20: Percentages of boys who report they have used electronic cigarettes in the last 30 days ............................................................................................................................... 32
Figure 21: Percentages of girls who report they have used electronic cigarettes in the last 30 days ............................................................................................................................... 32
Figure 22: Percentages of boys who report never having had an alcoholic drink ............................ 33
Figure 23: Percentages of girls who report never having had an alcoholic drink ............................ 33
Figure 24: Percentages of boys who report having had an alcoholic drink in the last 30 days ........ 34
Figure 25: Percentages of girls who report having had an alcoholic drink in the last 30 days ........ 34
Figure 26: Percentages of boys who report ever having been ‘really drunk’ ....................................... 35
Figure 27: Percentages of girls who report ever having been ‘really drunk’ ....................................... 35
Figure 28: Percentages of boys who report having been ‘really drunk’ in the last 30 days ............... 36
Figure 29: Percentages of girls who report having been ‘really drunk’ in the last 30 days ............... 36
Figure 30: Percentages of boys who report they have used cannabis in the last 12 months ........... 37
Figure 31: Percentages of girls who report they have used cannabis in the last 12 months ........... 37
Figure 32: Percentages of boys who report they have used cannabis in the last 30 days ............... 38
Figure 33: Percentages of girls who report they have used cannabis in the last 30 days ............... 38
Figure 34: Percentages of boys who report they consume fruit more than once a day ................. 39
Figure 35: Percentages of girls who report they consume fruit more than once a day ................. 39
Figure 36: Percentages of boys who report they consume vegetables more than once a day ......... 40
Figure 37: Percentages of girls who report they consume vegetables more than once a day ......... 40
Figure 38: Percentages of boys who report they eat sweets once a day or more ............................. 41
Figure 39: Percentages of girls who report they eat sweets once a day or more ............................. 41
Figure 40: Percentages of boys who report they drink soft drinks daily or more ............................. 42
Figure 41: Percentages of girls who report they drink soft drinks daily or more ............................. 42
Figure 42: Percentages of boys who report never having breakfast on weekdays ....................... 43
Figure 43: Percentages of girls who report never having breakfast on weekdays ....................... 43
Figure 44: Percentages of boys who report ever going to school or bed hungry .......................... 44
Figure 45: Percentages of girls who report ever going to school or bed hungry ........................... 44
Figure 46: Percentages of boys who report dieting or doing something else to lose weight ...... 45
Figure 47: Percentages of girls who report dieting or doing something else to lose weight ....... 45
Figure 48: Percentages of boys who report participating in vigorous exercise four or more times per week ......................................................................................................................... 46
Figure 49: Percentages of girls who report participating in vigorous exercise four or more times per week ........................................................................................................................................ 46
Figure 50: Percentages of boys who report participating in vigorous exercise less than weekly ....................................................................................................................................... 47
Figure 51: Percentages of girls who report participating in vigorous exercise less than weekly ....................................................................................................................................... 47
Figure 52: Percentages of boys who report being physically active on seven days in the last week ................................................................................................................................... 48
Figure 53: Percentages of girls who report being physically active on seven days in the last week ................................................................................................................................... 48
Figure 54: Percentages of boys who report brushing their teeth more than once a day ............. 49
Figure 55: Percentages of girls who report brushing their teeth more than once a day ............... 49
Figure 56: Percentages of boys who report always wearing a seatbelt when in a car ................... 50
Figure 57: Percentages of girls who report always wearing a seatbelt when in a car .................... 50
Figure 58: Percentages of boys who report always or sometimes using sunscreen on a sunny day ................................................................................................................................. 51
Figure 59: Percentages of girls who report always or sometimes using sunscreen on a sunny day ......................................................................................................................................... 51
Figure 60: Percentages of boys who report having been sunburnt last summer ....................... 52
Figure 61: Percentages of girls who report having been sunburnt last summer ......................... 52
Figure 62: Percentages of girls who report ever missing school as a result of period symptoms .................................................................................................................................................. 53
Figure 63: Percentages of girls who report being unable to afford period products on one or more occasion ........................................................................................................................................ 53
Figure 64: Percentages of boys who report being injured in the last 12 months ....................... 54
Figure 65: Percentages of girls who report being injured in the last 12 months ......................... 54
Figure 66: Percentages of boys who report having been in a physical fight in the last 12 months ........................................................................................................................................ 55
Figure 67: Percentages of girls who report having been in a physical fight in the last 12 months ........................................................................................................................................ 55
Figure 68: Percentages of boys who report bullying others at school once or more in the past couple of months ................................................................................................................ 56
Figure 69: Percentages of girls who report bullying others at school once or more in the past couple of months ................................................................................................................ 56
Figure 70: Percentages of boys who report being bullied at school once or more in the past couple of months ................................................................................................................ 57
Figure 71: Percentages of girls who report being bullied at school once or more in the past couple of months ................................................................................................................ 57
Figure 72: Percentages of boys who report cyberbullying others once or more in the past couple of months ................................................................................................................ 58
Figure 73: Percentages of girls who report cyberbullying others once or more in the past couple of months ................................................................................................................ 58
Figure 74: Percentages of boys who report being cyberbullied once or more than in the past couple of months ................................................................. 59
Figure 75: Percentages of girls who report being cyberbullied once or more than in the past couple of months ................................................................. 59
Figure 76: Distribution of positive, neutral and negative impact of COVID-19 pandemic measures across areas of children’s lives .................................................. 60
Figure 77: Percentages of boys and girls who report COVID-19 having a positive impact on their relationships with their family ................................................................. 61
Figure 78: Percentages of boys and girls who report COVID-19 having a positive impact on their physical activity ................................................................. 61
Figure 79: Percentages of boys and girls who report COVID-19 having a negative impact on their mental health ................................................................. 62
Figure 80: Percentages of boys and girls who report COVID-19 having a negative impact on their school performance ................................................................. 62
Figure 81: Percentages of 15 to 17 year olds who report they have ever had sexual intercourse, by gender ................................................................. 63
Figure 82: Percentages of 15 to 17 year olds who report method of contraception at last intercourse, by gender ................................................................. 64
Figure 83: Percentages of 3rd and 4th class boys and girls who report their health is excellent ........................................................................................................... 66
Figure 84: Percentages of 3rd and 4th class boys and girls who report feeling very happy with their lives at present ........................................................................................................... 66
Figure 85: Percentages of 3rd and 4th class boys and girls who report they always love their family ........................................................................................................... 67
Figure 86: Percentages of 3rd and 4th class boys and girls who report they consume fruit more than once a day ........................................................................................................... 68
Figure 87: Percentages of 3rd and 4th class boys and girls who report they consume vegetables more than once a day ........................................................................................................... 68
Figure 88: Percentages of 3rd and 4th class boys and girls who report they eat sweets once a day or more ........................................................................................................... 69
Figure 89: Percentages of 3rd and 4th class boys and girls who report they drink soft drinks daily or more ........................................................................................................... 69
Figure 90: Percentages of 3rd and 4th class boys and girls who report never having breakfast on any day of the week ........................................................................................................... 70
Figure 91: Percentages of 3rd and 4th class boys and girls who report ever going to school or bed hungry ........................................................................................................... 70
Figure 92: Percentages of 3rd and 4th class boys and girls who report participating in vigorous exercise four or more times per week ........................................................................................................... 71
Figure 93: Percentages of 3rd and 4th class boys and girls who report participating in vigorous exercise less than weekly ........................................................................................................... 71
Figure 94: Percentages of 3rd and 4th class boys and girls who report brushing their teeth more than once a day ........................................................................................................... 72
Figure 95: Percentages of 3rd and 4th class boys and girls who report always wearing a seatbelt when in a car ........................................................................................................... 72
Figure 96: Percentages of 3rd and 4th class boys and girls who report bullying others at school once or more in the past couple of months ........................................................................................................... 73
Figure 97: Percentages of 3rd and 4th class boys and girls who report being bullied at school once or more in the past couple of months ........................................................................................................... 73
List of Tables

Table 1: General Health and Wellbeing ................................................................. 7
Table 2: Mental Health ............................................................................................ 7
Table 3: Smoking ...................................................................................................... 8
Table 4: Alcohol Consumption and Drunkenness .................................................. 8
Table 5: Cannabis Use ............................................................................................ 9
Table 6: Food and Dietary Behaviours ................................................................... 9
Table 7: Exercise and Physical Activity ................................................................. 10
Table 8: Self-Care .................................................................................................. 10
Table 9: Sun Safety Behaviours ............................................................................. 10
Table 10: Menstrual Health and Period Poverty ......................................................... 11
Table 11: Injuries .................................................................................................... 11
Table 12: Physical Fighting and Bullying ............................................................... 12
Table 13a: Impact of Covid 19 ............................................................................... 12
Table 13b: Covid-19: Positive and Negative Impacts .............................................. 13
Table 14: Sexual Behaviours ................................................................................ 13
Table 15: Middle Childhood Study: General Health and Wellbeing ....................... 14
Table 16: Middle Childhood Study: Smoking ........................................................ 14
Table 17: Middle Childhood Study: Food and Dietary Behaviours ......................... 15
Table 18: Middle Childhood Study: Exercise and Physical Activity ....................... 15
Table 19: Middle Childhood Study: Self Care ....................................................... 16
Table 20: Middle Childhood Study: Bullying ........................................................ 16
Table 21: Summary of Methods for the HBSC Survey ........................................... 18
Table 22: Comparison of the regional distribution of 2018 and 2022 HBSC Main Study respondents and the 2022 Census .............................................. 74
Table 23: Comparison of the social class distribution of 2018 and 2022 HBSC Main Study respondents and the 2022 Census .............................................. 74
Table 24: Distribution of 2018 and 2022 HBSC Main Study respondents by gender, age group and social class .............................................................. 75
Table 25: Comparison of the regional distribution of 2018 and 2022 HBSC Middle Childhood Study respondents and the 2022 Census .......................... 76
Table 26: Comparison of the social class distribution of 2018 and 2022 HBSC Middle Childhood Study respondents and the 2022 Census .......................... 76
Table 27: Distribution of 2018 and 2022 HBSC Middle Childhood Study respondents by gender and social class ............................................................. 77
Introduction

This report presents data from the Health Behaviour in School-aged Children (HBSC) survey carried out in the Republic of Ireland in 2022. This is the seventh time that these data have been collected from young people across the Republic of Ireland; previous surveys were conducted in 2018, 2014, 2010, 2006, 2002 and 1998 (www.universityofgalway.ie/hbsc).

HBSC is a cross-sectional research study conducted in collaboration with the World Health Organization (WHO) Regional Office for Europe. The HBSC international survey runs on a four year academic cycle and in 2021/2022 there were 51 participating countries and regions (www.hbsc.org). The overall study aims to gain new insight into and increase our understanding of young people's health and wellbeing, health behaviours and their social context. As well as serving a monitoring and a knowledge-generating function, one of the key objectives of HBSC has been to inform policy and practice.

Cross-nationally, HBSC collects information on key indicators of health behaviours and outcomes as well as the context of health for young people. HBSC is a school-based survey with data collected through self-completion questionnaires administered by teachers in the classroom. The international HBSC survey instrument is a standard questionnaire developed by the international research network.

The areas of interest are chosen in collaboration with the WHO and are designed to help assist developments at a national and international level in relation to youth health. The topics identified for inclusion in this first report from the 2022 Irish survey are similar to those included in the 2018 national HBSC report. They were identified by the HBSC Advisory Board and are drawn from key national strategy documents including the Healthy Ireland Framework¹ and the Healthy Ireland Strategic Action Plan². Young people were also involved in prioritising topics for inclusion in the report. Topics include general health, smoking, use of alcohol and other substances, food and dietary behaviours, exercise and physical activity, self-care, injuries, bullying (including traditional and cyberbullying), and sexual health behaviours. New topics included in this report are loneliness, sun safety behaviours, menstrual health and period poverty, and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic measures. All results are presented by gender, age and social class groups. Statistically significant differences across these groups are highlighted in this report.

The HBSC Ireland Study was funded by the Department of Health. The survey and analyses were carried out by the HBSC Ireland team at the Health Promotion Research Centre, University of Galway.

Executive Summary

The Irish Health Behaviour in School-aged Children (HBSC) Study 2022 is a survey of school children in Ireland and is part of an international collaboration with countries across Europe and North America. In the 2022 survey, a total of 9,071 children aged from 9 to 18 years old from a representative sample of 191 primary and post-primary schools across the country participated. Children filled in a self-completion questionnaire on a wide range of issues including health behaviours, health outcomes and the contexts of health. The HBSC Study takes place every four years, and this is the seventh time that Ireland has taken part. This report is the first of a series of research outputs to present the findings from the Health Promotion Research Centre, University of Galway.

This report presents data on general health and wellbeing, substance use, food and dietary behaviours, physical activity, self-care, injuries, fighting and bullying, and sexual behaviour. New items in this report include loneliness, sun safety behaviours, menstrual health and period poverty, and the impact of COVID-19 and its associated measures. We have divided the participating children into sub-groups, by gender, age group and social class. Patterns in the findings across these sub-groups are described, and we compare the 2022 results with those collected from children in 2018. The report is divided into two sections, the Main HBSC Study that includes children from 5th class in primary schools up to 5th year in post-primary schools and the Middle Childhood Study that includes children in 3rd and 4th class in primary schools.

It is noteworthy that the findings presented in this report are from the first HBSC Ireland Study conducted since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. The data were collected during a time when schools had recently reopened and young people were readjusting following long periods of school closures and remote learning. The findings presented in this report should be interpreted with this specific historical timeframe in mind, considering the impacts of recent COVID-19 pandemic measures on young people's lives.

The Main HBSC Study
The good news is that there are decreases in both tobacco and cannabis use in the past 12 months, improvements across fruit and vegetable consumption and fewer children report being in a physical fight than in 2018. However, the number of children who report not having breakfast has increased. In addition, there is an increase in the percentage of 12 to 17 year olds who report using electronic cigarettes in the last 30 days. There is an overall decrease in general health and wellbeing, and this is particularly evident among older girls. There is also an increase in the percentage of children who report being cyberbullied, as well as an increase among those who report cyberbullying others since 2018. Overall, 10% of girls who have begun to menstruate report experiencing period poverty and 60% of girls report missing school as a result of period symptoms. There is a decrease among 15 to 17 year olds who report using a condom and an increase in those who report using no contraception at last sexual intercourse.

The Middle Childhood Study
The good news is that there is a decrease in the percentage of 3rd and 4th class children who report physical inactivity, soft drink consumption and bullying others compared to 2018. Smoking rates remain very low and are unchanged from 2018. There is an increase in the number of children reporting sweet consumption and going to school or bed hungry. Compared to 2018, there are no changes in the percentage who report always wearing a seatbelt and brushing their teeth more than once a day.
Overview of Findings
Overview of Findings: Main Study

The findings below are based on children aged 10 to 17, except where stated.

Table 1: General Health and Wellbeing

Children were asked a number of questions concerning their lives and perceived health.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Excellent health</th>
<th>Overall, 25% of children report that their health is excellent (29% in 2018). Boys, younger children and children from the highest social class group are more likely to report that their health is excellent.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Happiness</td>
<td>Overall, 28% of children report feeling very happy with their life at present (42% in 2018). Boys, younger children and children from the highest social class group are more likely to report feeling very happy with their lives.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life satisfaction</td>
<td>Overall, 62% of children report high life satisfaction (73% in 2018). Boys, younger children and children from the highest social class group are more likely to report high life satisfaction.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loneliness (New in 2022)</td>
<td>Overall, 20% of children report feeling lonely most of the time or always in the past 12 months. Girls, older children and children from lower social class groups are more likely to report feeling lonely most of the time or always in the past 12 months.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Love of family</td>
<td>Overall, 82% of 10 to 14 year old children report that they always love their family (84% in 2018). Younger children are more likely to report that they always love their family. There are no significant differences across gender or social class groups.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2: Mental Health

Young people completed the WHO-5 Well-Being Index.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WHO-5 Well-Being Index</th>
<th>The WHO-5 Well-Being Index is a five item positively worded scale which provides a measure of emotional functioning. Scores are summed and transformed to create a scale ranging from 0 to 100. Scores of 50 and below on the WHO-5 indicate low mood and those with a score of 28 and below are classified as at risk of depression. Overall, 36% of children are classified as having low mood or at risk of depression (38% in 2018). Girls and older children are more likely to be classified as having low mood or at risk of depression. There is no significant difference across social class groups.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

### Table 3: Smoking

Children were asked about their smoking behaviours, including use of electronic cigarettes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>metric</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ever smoked cigarettes</td>
<td>Overall, 9% of children report that they have ever smoked cigarettes (12% in 2018). Girls and older children are more likely to report that they have ever smoked cigarettes. There is no significant difference across social class groups.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current tobacco smoking status</td>
<td>Overall, 5% of children report that they are current tobacco smokers (6% in 2018). Older children are more likely to report that they are current tobacco smokers. There are no significant differences across gender or social class groups.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ever used electronic cigarettes*</td>
<td>Overall, 18% of 10 to 17 year old children report that they have ever used electronic cigarettes. In 2022, 19% of 12 to 17 year olds report that they have ever used electronic cigarettes (22% in 2018). Girls and older children are more likely to report that they have ever used electronic cigarettes. There is no significant difference across social class groups.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Used electronic cigarettes in the last 30 days*</td>
<td>Overall, 13% of 10 to 17 year old children report that they have used electronic cigarettes in the last 30 days. In 2022, 13% of 12 to 17 year olds report that they have used electronic cigarettes in the last 30 days (9% in 2018). Girls and older children are more likely to report that they have used electronic cigarettes in the last 30 days. There is no significant difference across social class groups.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Data only collected for 12 to 17 year olds in 2018.

### Table 4: Alcohol Consumption and Drunkenness

Young people were asked questions about their alcohol consumption as well as having so much alcohol that they were ‘really drunk’.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>metric</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Never drinking</td>
<td>Overall, 69% of children report that they have never had an alcoholic drink (66% in 2018). Boys and younger children are more likely to report that they have never had an alcoholic drink. There is no significant difference across social class groups.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Had an alcoholic drink in the last 30 days</td>
<td>Overall, 19% of children report that they have had an alcoholic drink in the last 30 days (19% in 2018). Girls and older children are more likely to report that they have had an alcoholic drink in the last 30 days. There is no significant difference across social class groups.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ever been ‘really drunk’</td>
<td>Overall, 18% of children report ever having been ‘really drunk’ (19% in 2018). Girls and older children are more likely to report ever having been ‘really drunk’. There is no significant difference across social class groups.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Been ‘really drunk’ in the last 30 days</td>
<td>Overall, 9% of children report having been ‘really drunk’ in the last 30 days (8% in 2018). Girls and older children are more likely to report having been ‘really drunk’ in the last 30 days. There is no significant difference across social class groups.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 5: Cannabis Use
Young people were asked questions about their use of cannabis.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cannabis use in the last 12 months</th>
<th>Overall, 6% of children report using cannabis in the last 12 months (8% in 2018). Older children are more likely to report using cannabis in the last 12 months. There are no significant differences across gender or social class groups.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cannabis use in the last 30 days</td>
<td>Overall, 4% of children report using cannabis in the last 30 days (4% in 2018). Boys and older children are more likely to report using cannabis in the last 30 days. There is no significant difference across social class groups.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6: Food and Dietary Behaviours
Children were asked a number of questions regarding their dietary habits.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fruit</th>
<th>Overall, 25% of children report that they consume fruit more than once a day (22% in 2018). Children from the highest social class group are more likely to report that they consume fruit more than once a day. There are no significant differences across gender or age groups.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vegetables</td>
<td>Overall, 23% of children report that they consume vegetables more than once a day (21% in 2018). Children from the highest social class group are more likely to report that they consume vegetables more than once a day. There are no significant differences across gender or age groups.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweets</td>
<td>Overall, 24% of children report eating sweets once a day or more (22% in 2018). Girls and older children are more likely to report eating sweets once a day or more. There is no significant difference across social class groups.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soft drinks</td>
<td>Overall, 7% of children report drinking soft drinks daily or more (7% in 2018). Older children and children from lower social class groups are more likely to report drinking soft drinks daily or more. There is no significant difference by gender.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not having breakfast</td>
<td>Overall, 19% of children report never having breakfast on weekdays (13% in 2018). Girls, older children and children from lower social class groups are more likely to report never having breakfast on weekdays.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Going to school or bed hungry</td>
<td>Overall, 18% of children report ever going to school or bed hungry because there was not enough food at home (19% in 2018). Boys, younger children and children from lower social class groups are more likely to report ever going to school or bed hungry because there was not enough food at home.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dieting or other weight loss methods</td>
<td>Overall, 13% of children report dieting or doing something else to lose weight (14% in 2018). Girls and older children are more likely to report trying to lose weight. There is no significant difference across social class groups.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 7: Exercise and Physical Activity

Children were asked about their participation in exercise and physical activity.

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Vigorous exercise</strong></td>
<td>Overall, 50% of children report participating in vigorous exercise four or more times per week (49% in 2018). Boys, younger children and children from higher social class groups are more likely to report participating in vigorous exercise four or more times per week.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Physical inactivity</strong></td>
<td>Overall, 10% of children report participating in vigorous exercise less than weekly (11% in 2018). Girls, older children and children from lower social class groups are more likely to report participating in vigorous exercise less than weekly.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Physically active on</strong></td>
<td>Overall, 24% of children report being physically active on seven days in the last week (22% in 2018). Boys and younger children are more likely to report being physically active on seven days in the last week. There is no significant difference across social class groups.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>seven days in the</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>last week</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 8: Self-Care

Children were asked questions regarding toothbrushing and seatbelt use.

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Toothbrushing</strong></td>
<td>Overall, 73% of children report brushing their teeth more than once a day (70% in 2018). Girls, older children and children from higher social class groups are more likely to report brushing their teeth more than once a day.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Seatbelt use</strong></td>
<td>Overall, 81% of children report always wearing a seatbelt when in a car (80% in 2018). Younger children and children from higher social class groups are more likely to report always wearing a seatbelt when in a car. There is no significant difference by gender.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 9: Sun Safety Behaviours

Children were asked questions about sunscreen use and experience of sunburn last summer.

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sunscreen use</strong></td>
<td>Overall, 85% of children report always or sometimes using sunscreen on a sunny day (80% in 2018). Girls, younger children and children from higher social class groups are more likely to report always or sometimes using sunscreen on a sunny day.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sunburn last summer</strong></td>
<td>Overall, 75% of children report having been sunburnt at least once last summer (73% in 2018). Girls and older children are more likely to report having been sunburnt at least once last summer. There is no significant difference across social class groups.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 10: Menstrual Health and Period Poverty
For the first time in 2022, girls were asked about their menstrual health and period poverty (ever been unable to afford period products).

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Missed school as a result of period symptoms</td>
<td>Overall, 60% of girls who have begun to menstruate report ever missing school as a result of period symptoms (including pain, stomach cramps, or mood changes). Older girls and girls from the middle social class group are more likely to report ever missing school as a result of period symptoms.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Period poverty</td>
<td>Overall, 10% of girls who have begun to menstruate report being unable to afford period products on one or more occasion. Girls from lower social class groups are more likely to report being unable to afford period products on one or more occasion. There is no significant difference across age groups.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 11: Injuries
Children were asked to report on being injured in the last 12 months.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ever injured</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Overall, 43% of children report being injured once or more and requiring medical attention in the last 12 months (43% in 2018). Boys are more likely to report being injured once or more and requiring medical attention in the last 12 months. There are no significant differences across age groups or social class groups.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Table 12: Physical Fighting and Bullying**

Children were asked questions about being in a physical fight, and about bullying perpetration and victimisation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Physical Fighting</th>
<th>Overall, 27% of children report having been in a physical fight during the last 12 months (32% in 2018). Boys, younger children and children from the highest social class group are less likely to report having been in a physical fight during the last 12 months.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bullied Others</td>
<td>Overall, 13% of children report bullying others at school once or more in the past couple of months (14% in 2018). Boys and children from the middle social class group are more likely to report bullying others at school once or more in the past couple of months. There is no significant difference across age groups.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being Bullied</td>
<td>Overall, 29% of children report being bullied at school once or more in the past couple of months (30% in 2018). Younger children and children from the middle social class group are more likely to report being bullied at school once or more in the past couple of months. There is no significant difference by gender.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cyberbullying Others</td>
<td>Overall, 9% of children report taking part in cyberbullying others once or more in the past couple of months (8% in 2018). Boys and children from lower social class groups are more likely to report taking part in cyberbullying others once or more in the past couple of months. There is no significant difference across age groups.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being Cyberbullied</td>
<td>Overall, 18% of children report being cyberbullied once or more in the past couple of months (15% in 2018). Girls, younger children and children from lower social class groups are more likely to report being cyberbullied once or more in the past couple of months.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 13a: Impact of COVID-19 measures**

For the first time in 2022, young people were asked about the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and its associated social and public health measures on their lives (e.g. lockdowns, school closures, home schooling and social distancing).

| Impact of COVID-19 measures | Overall, children report that the two most positively affected aspects of life were family relationships and physical activity. The two most negatively affected aspects of life were mental health and school performance. |
Table 13b: COVID-19: Positive and Negative Impacts

Young people were asked about the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and its associated measures.

| Positive impact of measures on relationships with family | Overall, 54% of children report that the COVID-19 pandemic measures had a positive impact on their relationships with their family. Boys and younger children are more likely to report that the measures had a positive impact on their relationships with their family. There is no significant difference across social class groups. |
| Positive impact of measures on physical activity | Overall, 46% of children report that the COVID-19 pandemic measures had a positive impact on their physical activity. Younger children are more likely to report that the measures had a positive impact on their physical activity. There are no significant differences across gender or social class groups. |
| Negative impact of measures on mental health | Overall, 40% of children report that the COVID-19 pandemic measures had a negative impact on their mental health. Girls and older children are more likely to report that the measures had a negative impact on their mental health. There is no significant difference across social class groups. |
| Negative impact of measures on school performance | Overall, 40% of children report that the COVID-19 pandemic measures had a negative impact on their school performance. Girls and older children are more likely to report that the measures had a negative impact on their school performance. There is no significant difference across social class groups. |

Table 14: Sexual Behaviours

Young people aged 15 to 17 years old were asked about engaging in sexual intercourse, and their use of contraception at last sexual intercourse.

| Ever had sexual intercourse | Overall, 25% of 15 to 17 year olds report that they have ever had sexual intercourse (25% in 2018). There are no significant differences across gender or social class groups. |
| Condom use* | Of those who report having had sexual intercourse, 48% report that they or their partner used a condom at last sexual intercourse (62% in 2018). Girls are more likely to report that they or their partner used a condom at last sexual intercourse. |
| Use of birth control pill* | Of those who report ever having had sexual intercourse, 29% report that they or their partner used the birth control pill at last sexual intercourse (28% in 2018). Girls are more likely to report that they or their partner used the birth control pill at last sexual intercourse. |
| Other method(s) of contraception* | Of those who report having had sexual intercourse, 18% report that they or their partner used other method(s) of contraception at last sexual intercourse (18% in 2018). There is no significant difference by gender. |
| No contraception* | Of those who report having had sexual intercourse, 34% report that they or their partner used no contraception at last sexual intercourse (22% in 2018). Boys are more likely to report that they or their partner used no contraception at last sexual intercourse. |

*Social class significance comparisons are not reported due to low sample size.
Overview of Findings: Middle Childhood Study (3rd and 4th Class)

Table 15: Middle Childhood Study: General Health and Wellbeing
Children were asked a number of questions concerning their lives and perceived health.

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Excellent health</strong></td>
<td>Overall, 44% of 3rd and 4th class children report that their health is excellent (46% in 2018). Girls are more likely to report that their health is excellent. There is no significant difference across social class groups.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Happiness</strong></td>
<td>Overall, 63% of 3rd and 4th class children report feeling very happy with their life at present (68% in 2018). There are no significant differences across gender or social class groups.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Love of family</strong></td>
<td>Overall, 90% of 3rd and 4th class children report that they always love their family (88% in 2018). There are no significant differences across gender or social class groups.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 16: Middle Childhood Study: Smoking
Children were asked about their smoking behaviours.

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ever smoked tobacco</strong></td>
<td>Overall, 1% of 3rd and 4th class children report that they have ever smoked tobacco (1% in 2018).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Current tobacco smoking status</strong></td>
<td>Overall, less than 1% of 3rd and 4th class children report that they are current tobacco smokers (&lt;1% in 2018).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Gender and social class comparisons are not reported due to low sample size.
**Table 17: Middle Childhood Study: Food and Dietary Behaviours**

Children were asked a number of questions regarding their dietary habits.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fruit</td>
<td>Overall, 34% of 3rd and 4th class children report that they consume fruit more than once a day (34% in 2018). There are no significant differences across gender or social class groups.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vegetables</td>
<td>Overall, 25% of 3rd and 4th class children report that they consume vegetables more than once a day (27% in 2018). There are no significant differences across gender or social class groups.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweets</td>
<td>Overall, 25% of 3rd and 4th class children report eating sweets once a day or more (21% in 2018). There are no significant differences across gender or social class groups.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soft drinks</td>
<td>Overall, 7% of 3rd and 4th class children report drinking soft drinks daily or more (8% in 2018). Children from lower social class groups are more likely to report drinking soft drinks daily or more. There is no significant difference by gender.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not having breakfast*</td>
<td>Overall, 3% of 3rd and 4th class children report never having breakfast on any day of the week (3% in 2018). There is no significant difference by gender.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Going to school or bed hungry</td>
<td>Overall, 32% of 3rd and 4th class children report ever going to school or bed hungry because there was not enough food at home (28% in 2018). Boys are more likely to report ever going to school or bed hungry because there was not enough food at home. There is no significant difference across social class groups.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Social class significance comparisons are not reported due to low sample size.*

**Table 18: Middle Childhood Study: Exercise and Physical Activity**

Children were asked about their participation in exercise and physical activity.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vigorous exercise four or more times per week</td>
<td>Overall, 68% of 3rd and 4th class children report participating in vigorous exercise four or more times per week (69% in 2018). Boys are more likely to report participating in vigorous exercise four or more times per week. There is no significant difference across social class groups.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical inactivity*</td>
<td>Overall, 5% of 3rd and 4th class children report participating in vigorous exercise less than weekly (6% in 2018). There is no significant difference by gender.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Social class significance comparisons are not reported due to low sample size.*
Table 19: Middle Childhood Study: Self-Care

Children were asked questions regarding toothbrushing and seatbelt use.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Toothbrushing</th>
<th>Overall, 71% of 3rd and 4th class children report brushing their teeth more than once a day (71% in 2018). Girls are more likely to report brushing their teeth more than once a day. There is no significant difference across social class groups.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Seatbelt use</td>
<td>Overall, 89% of 3rd and 4th class children report always wearing a seatbelt when in a car (89% in 2018). Girls are more likely to report always wearing a seatbelt when in a car. There is no significant difference across social class groups.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 20: Middle Childhood Study: Bullying

Children were asked questions about bullying behaviours.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bullied others</th>
<th>Overall, 14% of 3rd and 4th class children report bullying others at school once or more in the past couple of months (17% in 2018). Boys are more likely to report bullying others at school once or more in the past couple of months. There is no significant difference across social class groups.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Being bullied</td>
<td>Overall, 33% of 3rd and 4th class children report being bullied at school once or more in the past couple of months (36% in 2018). There are no significant differences across gender or social class groups.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Methods

HBSC 2022: Main & Middle Childhood Survey

The HBSC survey is conducted in collaboration with the European Regional Office of the World Health Organization (WHO). Research teams from all countries and regions co-operate in relation to survey content, methodology and timing, and an international protocol is developed. Strict adherence to the protocol is required for inclusion in the international database and this has been achieved with the current study.

Sampling: In Ireland, sampling was conducted in order to be representative of the proportion of children in each of the eight geographical regions (see Tables 22 and 25). The objective was to achieve a nationally representative sample of school-aged children, and the procedures employed were the same as those for the 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014 and 2018 HBSC Ireland surveys. Data from the 2016 Census (www.cso.ie) were employed to provide a picture of the population distribution across geographical regions. The sampling frame consisted of primary and post-primary schools, lists of which were sourced from the Department of Education. A two-stage process was used to identify study participants. Individual schools within regions were randomly selected and subsequently, class groups within schools were randomly selected for participation. In primary schools, 3rd to 6th class groups were included, while in post-primary schools all classes, with the exception of Leaving Certificate groups (i.e., final year examination classes), were sampled.

Procedure: School principals were first approached by post and a follow up e-mail. For the first time, schools were given the choice to administer the questionnaire, either using paper or online versions and in either English or Irish. Qualtrics software (Qualtrics, Provo, UT) was used to facilitate the online questionnaires. Schools who agreed to participate were sent parental consent forms, teacher and pupil information sheets, and classroom feedback forms. Those who chose paper questionnaires were also sent blank envelopes to facilitate anonymity and FREEPOST envelopes for returning materials. For schools who chose online administration, anonymised links were e-mailed to each teacher to share with pupils in the classroom. In order to maximise response rates, e-mail reminders were sent to schools, followed by telephone calls from research staff at the Health Promotion Research Centre, University of Galway. Data entry was conducted according to the International HBSC protocol for both online and paper questionnaires. Paper questionnaires were entered into Qualtrics software (Qualtrics, Provo, UT) by research staff; double entry was completed for 10% of the paper questionnaires to test data entry quality. A summary of the methods employed can be found in Table 21. The HBSC ‘Main Study’ includes children from 5th class to 5th year who were aged 10 to 17 years. The ‘Middle Childhood Study’ includes children in 3rd and 4th classes who were aged 8.5 to 10.5 years. An abbreviated version of the HBSC questionnaire was used in the Middle Childhood Study.

Survey Instrument: Different versions of the standard HBSC questionnaire were used with different class groups. Therefore, there is some variation in the results presented for the various age groups. For example, children from 5th class to 1st year were given a slightly shorter version of the questionnaire than those in 2nd to 5th year. Data on sexual behaviours were only collected from the older age group (15 to 17 year olds), while some of the child-developed questions were asked only of the younger (10 to 14 year olds) or older (15 to 17 year olds) children. Four new topics are presented in this report. These comprise questions on sun safety behaviours (also asked in 2018), the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic measures, menstrual health and period poverty and loneliness.
These new items were piloted in advance\(^3\). The survey was available in both paper and online versions. There was no deviation in the content or layout of the two versions.

**Table 21: Summary of Methods for the HBSC Survey**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population</th>
<th>School going children aged 8 to 18 years</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sampling Frame</td>
<td>Department of Education schools list</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sample</td>
<td>Cluster sample of students in a given classroom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stratification</td>
<td>Proportionate to the distribution of pupils across geographical regions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Survey Instrument</td>
<td>Self-completion questionnaire (paper or online) administered in a classroom setting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delivery/Reminders</td>
<td>Postal and e-mail delivery via principals and teachers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reminders via telephone and e-mail</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Return</td>
<td>Paper: FREEPOST addressed envelopes provided</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Online: data downloaded automatically via Qualtrics software (Qualtrics, Provo, UT)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Survey Mode</td>
<td>Overall: 58% paper; 42% online</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Main Study: 50% paper; 50% online</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Middle Childhood Study: 84% paper; 16% online</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Response Rate</td>
<td>51% of invited schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obtained Sample</td>
<td>191 schools / 9,071 pupils</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7,619 Main Study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1,452 Middle Childhood Study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data Quality</td>
<td>Data were entered according to the HBSC international protocol</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethics</td>
<td>Full ethical approval was granted by the University of Galway (formally NUI Galway) Research Ethics Committee. HBSC Ireland is fully GDPR compliant.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Data Processing:** Findings in the results section are presented for the HBSC Main Study and the Middle Childhood Study separately. Overall percentages for 2018 and 2022 have been weighted (see Technical Note 1) so figures may differ from the 2018 published report. Unweighted data are presented by gender, age groups and social class (SC) groups (see Technical Note 2). Social class is represented by SC 1-2, SC 3-4 and SC 5-6 corresponding to high, middle and low social class groups. The categories used for social class are standard and were determined by the highest reported parental occupation. Social class 1 includes professional occupations (i.e., solicitor, doctor), social class 2 includes managerial occupations (i.e., nurse, teacher), social class 3 includes non-manual occupations (i.e., salesperson, office clerk), social class 4 includes skilled-manual occupations (i.e., hairdresser, carpenter), social class 5 includes semi-skilled occupations (i.e., postal worker, carer), social class 6 includes unskilled occupations (i.e., cleaner, labourer). Details of the demographic representativeness of the sample can be found in the Appendices (see Tables 22-27).

**Statistical analysis:** Statistical analyses were carried out to determine if the differences observed by gender, age groups and social class groups were statistically significant. Differences at \( p < 0.05 \) are described in the report. The vertical axes of the charts are adjusted to the scale of the findings.

---

Youth Engagement

Youth engagement is a fundamental aspect of the HBSC Study. As outlined in Article 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, young people are entitled to have their voices heard on issues that affect their lives. By meaningfully involving young people in research, HBSC aims to capture data that is relevant to young people and reflective of their lifestyles and experiences.

HBSC Ireland have involved young people throughout the HBSC survey cycle.

To gain the perspectives of young people on the content of this report, a series of youth engagement workshops were carried out in primary and post-primary schools between April and May 2023. Students worked both individually and collectively to agree on priority health topics for this report. The ideas generated by the young people during the workshops helped to shape the report. Due to the age of participants, the sexual health topic was not included in the workshops.

These are their priorities and words:

<p>| | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Mental Health</td>
<td>“Mental health affects your everyday life and actions”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Self-Care</td>
<td>“For healthy teeth and a beautiful smile”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>General Health and Wellbeing</td>
<td>“We need to be happy to live a good life”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Exercise and Physical Activity</td>
<td>“To keep fit and healthy”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Period Poverty</td>
<td>“Period products are expensive and many girls can not afford it”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Substance Use</td>
<td>“Smoking is really bad for your health and even affects other people’s health”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Food and Dietary Behaviours</td>
<td>“If you have a good diet you will have a better physical and mental health”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Injuries</td>
<td>“Bullying can destroy their life and how they feel about themselves”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Physical Fighting and Bullying</td>
<td>“COVID-19 can affect your immune system and affect your family and other people and the elderly”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>COVID-19</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Youth Engagement: Spotlight on Mental Health

Across our youth engagement workshops, mental health was the top priority. Children described why mental health is an important issue, what impacts their mental health, how they look after their own mental health and potential wider solutions to improve youth mental health.

These are their words:

**Why it Matters**

- “Mental health is important because it affects people of all ages in their everyday life”
- “It affects how we think, feel and act”
- “If your mental health is struggling many aspects of your everyday life will also struggle like your self esteem”

**Coping Strategies**

- “To help your mental health you can talk to your family and friends”
- “Write or journal your problems”
- “Make sure to get sleep”
- “Breathing exercises and meditation”

**Policy Solutions**

- “I hope mental health services could be improved in the future”
- “Therapists that are free”
- “The school workload should be spread out more and I think tests should be spread out more as well”

---

“Mental health affects your everyday life and your actions. It can also affect your work and the people around you.”

- 5th Class pupil, Co. Westmeath

“Mobile phones can cause stress, worry and fear. People can be mean online and then act different online and in real life. It can affect you, how people treat you. It can make you sad, mad, depressed and angry.”

- 2nd Year pupil, Co. Galway
Findings from the Main Study

The results of the Main HBSC Study are presented in this section, stratified by gender, age groups and social class groups. The findings represent children aged 10 to 17 years, except where stated.
General Health and Wellbeing

Excellent health

There are statistically significant differences by gender, age group and social class. Overall, 30% of boys and 21% of girls report excellent health. Younger children are more likely to report excellent health than older children. Children from the highest social class group are more likely to report excellent health than those from other social class groups.

Figure 1: Percentages of boys who report their health is excellent

Figure 2: Percentages of girls who report their health is excellent
Life at present (happiness)

There are statistically significant differences by gender, age group and social class. Overall, 33% of boys and 22% of girls report feeling very happy with their life at present. Younger children are more likely to report feeling very happy with their lives than older children. Children from the highest social class group are more likely to report feeling very happy with their lives than those from other social class groups.

Figure 3: Percentages of boys who report feeling very happy with their lives at present

Figure 4: Percentages of girls who report feeling very happy with their lives at present
Life satisfaction

There are statistically significant differences by gender, age group and social class. Overall, 69% of boys and 54% of girls report high life satisfaction. Younger children are more likely to report high life satisfaction than older children. Children from the highest social class group are more likely to report high life satisfaction than those from other social class groups.

Figure 5: Percentages of boys who report high life satisfaction

Figure 6: Percentages of girls who report high life satisfaction
Loneliness*

There are statistically significant differences by gender, age group and social class. Overall, 15% of boys and 26% of girls report feeling lonely most of the time or always in the past 12 months. Older children are more likely to report feeling lonely most of the time or always in the past 12 months than younger children. Children from lower social class groups are more likely to report feeling lonely most of the time or always in the past 12 months than those from other social class groups.

Figure 7: Percentages of boys who report feeling lonely most of the time or always in the past 12 months

Figure 8: Percentages of girls who report feeling lonely most of the time or always in the past 12 months

*New item for 2022, therefore no 2018 data comparison.
Love of family

There is no statistically significant difference by gender. Overall, 83% of boys and 82% of girls report that they always love their family. There is a statistically significant difference by age group, with younger children more likely to report that they always love their family than older children. There is no statistically significant difference across social class groups.

Figure 9: Percentages of 10 to 14 year old boys who report they always love their family

Figure 10: Percentages of 10 to 14 year old girls who report they always love their family
Mental Health

**WHO-5 Well-Being Index**

The WHO-5 Well-Being Index is a positively worded scale consisting of five items, which ask children how frequently the following were experienced in the previous two weeks: feeling cheerful and in good spirits; feeling calm and relaxed; feeling active and vigorous; waking up feeling fresh and rested; and feeling that their daily life had been filled with things that interest them. Scores are summed and transformed to create a scale ranging from 0 to 100. Scores of 50 and below on the WHO-5 indicate low mood, and those with a score of 28 and below are classified as at risk of depression. It should be noted that, at the time of data collection, schools had recently reopened and young people were readjusting from a long period of social distancing, school closures and remote learning.

Figure 11: Young people reporting different levels of mental wellbeing

---

Low mood or at risk of depression

There are statistically significant differences by gender and age group. Overall, 26% of boys and 46% of girls are classified as having low mood or at risk of depression. Older children are more likely to be classified as having low mood or at risk of depression than younger children. There is no statistically significant difference across social class groups.

Figure 12: Percentages of boys classified as having low mood or at risk of depression

Figure 13: Percentages of girls classified as having low mood or at risk of depression
**Smoking**

**Ever smoked cigarettes**

There are statistically significant differences by gender and age group. Overall, 8% of boys and 10% of girls report that they have ever smoked cigarettes. Older children are more likely to report that they have ever smoked cigarettes than younger children. There is no statistically significant difference across social class groups.

**Figure 14: Percentages of boys who report ever smoking cigarettes**

**Figure 15: Percentages of girls who report ever smoking cigarettes**
Current tobacco smoking status

There is no statistically significant difference by gender, with 4% of boys and 5% of girls reporting that they are current tobacco smokers. There is a statistically significant difference by age group, with older children more likely to report that they are current tobacco smokers than younger children. There is no statistically significant difference across social class groups.

Figure 16: Percentages of boys who report they are current tobacco smokers

Figure 17: Percentages of girls who report they are current tobacco smokers
Ever used electronic cigarettes

There are statistically significant differences by gender and age group. Overall, 15% of boys and 21% of girls report that they have ever used electronic cigarettes. Older children are more likely to report that they have ever used electronic cigarettes than younger children. There is no statistically significant difference across social class groups.

Figure 18: Percentages of boys who report they have ever used electronic cigarettes

Figure 19: Percentages of girls who report they have ever used electronic cigarettes
Used electronic cigarettes in the last 30 days

There are statistically significant differences by gender and age group. Overall, 10% of boys and 16% of girls report that they have used electronic cigarettes in the last 30 days. Older children are more likely to report using electronic cigarettes in the last 30 days than younger children. There is no statistically significant difference across social class groups.

Figure 20: Percentages of boys who report they have used electronic cigarettes in the last 30 days

Figure 21: Percentages of girls who report they have used electronic cigarettes in the last 30 days
Main Study: Alcohol Consumption and Drunkenness

Alcohol Consumption and Drunkenness

Never drinking

There are statistically significant differences by gender and age group. Overall, 71% of boys and 67% of girls report never having had an alcoholic drink. Younger children are more likely to report never having had an alcoholic drink than older children. There is no statistically significant difference across social class groups.

Figure 22: Percentages of boys who report never having had an alcoholic drink

![Figure 22](image1)

Figure 23: Percentages of girls who report never having had an alcoholic drink

![Figure 23](image2)
Had an alcoholic drink in the last 30 days

There are statistically significant differences by gender and age group. Overall, 16% of boys and 21% of girls report having had an alcoholic drink in the last 30 days. Older children are more likely to report having had an alcoholic drink in the last 30 days than younger children. There is no statistically significant difference across social class groups.

Figure 24: Percentages of boys who report having had an alcoholic drink in the last 30 days

Figure 25: Percentages of girls who report having had an alcoholic drink in the last 30 days
Ever been 'really drunk'

There are statistically significant differences by gender and age group. Overall, 16% of boys and 20% of girls report ever having been ‘really drunk’. Older children are more likely to report ever having been ‘really drunk’ than younger children. There is no statistically significant difference across social class groups.

Figure 26: Percentages of boys who report ever having been ‘really drunk’

Figure 27: Percentages of girls who report ever having been ‘really drunk’
**Been ‘really drunk’ in the last 30 days**

There are statistically significant differences by gender and age group. Overall, 7% of boys and 10% of girls report having been ‘really drunk’ in the last 30 days. Older children are more likely to report having been ‘really drunk’ in the last 30 days than younger children. There is no statistically significant difference across social class groups.

*Figure 28: Percentages of boys who report having been ‘really drunk’ in the last 30 days*  

*Figure 29: Percentages of girls who report having been ‘really drunk’ in the last 30 days*
Cannabis Use

Cannabis use in the last 12 months

There is no statistically significant difference by gender, with 6% of boys and 6% of girls reporting that they have used cannabis in the last 12 months. There is a statistically significant difference by age group, with older children more likely to report that they have used cannabis in the last 12 months than younger children. There is no statistically significant difference across social class groups.

Figure 30: Percentages of boys who report they have used cannabis in the last 12 months

Figure 31: Percentages of girls who report they have used cannabis in the last 12 months
Cannabis use in the last 30 days

There are statistically significant differences by gender and age group. Overall, 4% of boys and 3% of girls report that they have used cannabis in the last 30 days. Older children are more likely to report that they have used cannabis in the last 30 days than younger children. There is no statistically significant difference across social class groups.

Figure 32: Percentages of boys who report they have used cannabis in the last 30 days

Figure 33: Percentages of girls who report they have used cannabis in the last 30 days
Food and Dietary Behaviours

Fruit

There are no statistically significant differences by gender or age group. Overall, 24% of boys and 25% of girls report that they consume fruit more than once a day. There is a statistically significant difference across social class groups, with children from the highest social class group more likely to report that they consume fruit more than once a day than those from other social class groups.

Figure 34: Percentages of boys who report they consume fruit more than once a day

Figure 35: Percentages of girls who report they consume fruit more than once a day
Vegetables

There are no statistically significant differences by gender or age group. Overall, 22% of boys and 23% of girls report that they consume vegetables more than once a day. There is a statistically significant difference across social class groups, with children from the highest social class group more likely to report that they consume vegetables more than once a day than those from other social class groups.

Figure 36: Percentages of boys who report they consume vegetables more than once a day

Figure 37: Percentages of girls who report they consume vegetables more than once a day
Sweets

There are statistically significant differences by gender and age group. Overall, 22% of boys and 26% of girls report that they eat sweets once a day or more. Older children are more likely than younger children to report eating sweets once a day or more. There is no statistically significant difference across social class groups.

**Figure 38: Percentages of boys who report they eat sweets once a day or more**

**Figure 39: Percentages of girls who report they eat sweets once a day or more**
Soft drinks

There is no statistically significant difference by gender. Overall, 7% of boys and 6% of girls report that they drink soft drinks daily or more. There are statistically significant differences across age groups and social class groups. Older children are more likely to report that they drink soft drinks daily or more than younger children. Children from lower social class groups are more likely to report that they drink soft drinks daily or more than those from other social class groups.

**Figure 40:** Percentages of boys who report they drink soft drinks daily or more

**Figure 41:** Percentages of girls who report they drink soft drinks daily or more
Not having breakfast

There are statistically significant differences by gender, age group and social class. Overall, 14% of boys and 24% of girls report never having breakfast on weekdays. Older children are more likely to report never having breakfast on weekdays than younger children. Children from lower social class groups are more likely to report never having breakfast on weekdays than those from other social class groups.

Figure 42: Percentages of boys who report never having breakfast on weekdays

Figure 43: Percentages of girls who report never having breakfast on weekdays
Going to school or bed hungry

There are statistically significant differences by gender, age group and social class. Overall, 19% of boys and 17% of girls report ever going to school or bed hungry because there was not enough food at home. Younger children are more likely to report ever going to school or bed hungry than older children. Children from lower social class groups are more likely to report ever going to school or bed hungry than those from other social class groups.

Figure 44: Percentages of boys who report ever going to school or bed hungry

Figure 45: Percentages of girls who report ever going to school or bed hungry
Dieting or other weight loss methods

There are statistically significant differences by gender and age group. Overall, 11% of boys and 14% of girls report dieting or doing something else to lose weight. Older children are more likely to report trying to lose weight than younger children. There is no statistically significant difference across social class groups.

Figure 46: Percentages of boys who report dieting or doing something else to lose weight

Figure 47: Percentages of girls who report dieting or doing something else to lose weight
Exercise and Physical Activity

Vigorous exercise four or more times per week

There are statistically significant differences by gender, age group and social class. Overall, 59% of boys and 42% of girls report participating in vigorous exercise four or more times per week. Younger children are more likely to report that they vigorously exercise four or more times a week than older children. Children from higher social class groups are more likely to report that they vigorously exercise four or more times a week than those from other social class groups.

Figure 48: Percentages of boys who report participating in vigorous exercise four or more times per week

Figure 49: Percentages of girls who report participating in vigorous exercise four or more times per week
Physical inactivity

There are statistically significant differences by gender, age group and social class. Overall, 8% of boys and 11% of girls report participating in vigorous exercise less than weekly. Older children are more likely to report participating in vigorous exercise less than weekly than younger children. Children from lower social class groups are more likely to report participating in vigorous exercise less than weekly than those from other social class groups.

Figure 50: Percentages of boys who report participating in vigorous exercise less than weekly

Figure 51: Percentages of girls who report participating in vigorous exercise less than weekly
Physically active on seven days in the last week

There are statistically significant differences by gender and age group. Overall, 30% of boys and 18% of girls report being physically active on seven days in the last week. Younger children are more likely to report being physically active on seven days in the last week than older children. There is no statistically significant difference across social class groups.

Figure 52: Percentages of boys who report being physically active on seven days in the last week

Figure 53: Percentages of girls who report being physically active on seven days in the last week
Self-Care

Toothbrushing

There are statistically significant differences by gender, age group and social class. Overall, 66% of boys and 79% of girls report brushing their teeth more than once a day. Older children are more likely to report brushing their teeth more than once a day than younger children. Children from higher social class groups are more likely to report brushing their teeth more than once a day than those from other social class groups.

Figure 54: Percentages of boys who report brushing their teeth more than once a day

Figure 55: Percentages of girls who report brushing their teeth more than once a day
**Seatbelt use**

There is no statistically significant difference by gender. Overall, 81% of boys and 82% of girls report always wearing a seatbelt when in a car. There are statistically significant differences across age groups and social class groups. Younger children are more likely to report always wearing a seatbelt when in a car than older children. Children from higher social class groups are more likely to report always wearing a seatbelt when in a car than those from other social class groups.

**Figure 56:** Percentages of boys who report always wearing a seatbelt when in a car

**Figure 57:** Percentages of girls who report always wearing a seatbelt when in a car
Sun Safety Behaviours

Sunscreen use

There are statistically significant differences by gender, age group and social class. Overall, 80% of boys and 91% of girls report always or sometimes using sunscreen on a sunny day. Younger children are more likely to report always or sometimes using sunscreen on a sunny day than older children. Children from higher social class groups are more likely to report always or sometimes using sunscreen on a sunny day than those from other social class groups.

Figure 58: Percentages of boys who report always or sometimes using sunscreen on a sunny day

Figure 59: Percentages of girls who report always or sometimes using sunscreen on a sunny day
Sunburn last summer

There are statistically significant differences by gender and age group. Overall, 72% of boys and 79% of girls report having been sunburnt at least once last summer. Older children are more likely to report having been sunburnt at least once last summer than younger children. There is no statistically significant difference across social class groups.

Figure 60: Percentages of boys who report having been sunburnt last summer

Figure 61: Percentages of girls who report having been sunburnt last summer
Menstrual Health and Period Poverty*

Missed school as a result of period symptoms

Overall, 60% of girls who have begun to menstruate report ever missing school as a result of period symptoms. There are statistically significant differences by age group and social class. Older girls are more likely to report ever missing school as a result of period symptoms than younger girls. Girls from the middle social class group are more likely to report ever missing school as a result of period symptoms than girls from other social class groups.

**Figure 62: Percentages of girls who report ever missing school as a result of period symptoms**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age group (years)</th>
<th>SC1-2 2022</th>
<th>SC3-4 2022</th>
<th>SC5-6 2022</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10-11</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12-14</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15-17</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Period poverty

Overall, 10% of girls who have begun to menstruate report being unable to afford period products on one or more occasion. There is no statistically significant difference by age group. There is a statistically significant difference by social class, with girls from lower social class groups more likely to report being unable to afford period products on one or more occasion than girls from other social class groups.

**Figure 63: Percentages of girls who report being unable to afford period products on one or more occasion**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age group (years)</th>
<th>SC1-2 2022</th>
<th>SC3-4 2022</th>
<th>SC5-6 2022</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10-11</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12-14</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15-17</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*New items for 2022, therefore no 2018 data comparison.
Injuries

Ever injured

There is a statistically significant difference by gender. Overall, 47% of boys and 39% of girls report being injured once or more and requiring medical attention in the last 12 months. There are no statistically significant differences across age groups or social class groups.

Figure 64: Percentages of boys who report being injured in the last 12 months

Figure 65: Percentages of girls who report being injured in the last 12 months
Physical Fighting and Bullying

Physical fight

There are statistically significant differences by gender, age group and social class. Overall, 37% of boys and 18% of girls report having been in a physical fight in the last 12 months. Younger children are more likely to report having been in a physical fight in the last twelve months than older children. Children from the highest social class group are less likely to report having been in a physical fight in the last twelve months than other social class groups.

Figure 66: Percentages of boys who report having been in a physical fight in the last 12 months

Figure 67: Percentages of girls who report having been in a physical fight in the last 12 months
Bullied others

There are statistically significant differences by gender and social class groups. Overall, 16% of boys and 10% of girls report bullying others at school once or more in the past couple of months. Children from the middle social class group are more likely to report bullying others at school once or more in the past couple of months than those from other social class groups. There is no statistically significant difference across age groups.

Figure 68: Percentages of boys who report bullying others at school once or more in the past couple of months

Figure 69: Percentages of girls who report bullying others at school once or more in the past couple of months
Being bullied

There is no statistically significant difference by gender, with 28% of boys and 30% of girls reporting being bullied at school once or more in the past couple of months. There are statistically significant differences across age groups and social class. Younger children are more likely to report being bullied at school once or more in the past couple of months than older children. Children from the middle social class group are more likely to report being bullied at school once or more in the past couple of months than those from other social class groups.

Figure 70: Percentages of boys who report being bullied at school once or more in the past couple of months

Figure 71: Percentages of girls who report being bullied at school once or more in the past couple of months
Cyberbullying others

There are statistically significant differences by gender and social class groups. Overall, 11% of boys and 8% of girls report taking part in cyberbullying others once or more in the past couple of months. Children from lower social class groups are more likely to report ever taking part in cyberbullying others once or more in the past couple of months than those from other social class groups. There is no statistically significant difference across age groups.

Figure 72: Percentages of boys who report cyberbullying others once or more in the past couple of months

Figure 73: Percentages of girls who report cyberbullying others once or more in the past couple of months
**Being cyberbullied**

There are statistically significant differences by gender, age group and social class. Overall, 15% of boys and 21% of girls report being cyberbullied once or more in the past couple of months. Younger children are more likely to report being cyberbullied once or more in the past couple of months than older children. Children from lower social class groups are more likely to report being cyberbullied once or more in the past couple of months than those from other social class groups.

**Figure 74: Percentages of boys who report being cyberbullied once or more in the past couple of months**

**Figure 75: Percentages of girls who report being cyberbullied once or more in the past couple of months**
COVID-19

Impact of COVID-19 measures

Young people were asked about their experiences of the COVID-19 pandemic and its associated measures. They were asked to say how they felt various aspects of their lives had been impacted by social and public health measures, with response options: very negative / quite negative, neither negative nor positive (neutral), quite positive / very positive. Figure 76 below illustrates overall figures for all children aged 10-17. The two most positively affected (quite or very positive) aspects of life were family relationships (54%) and physical activity (46%). The two most negatively affected (quite or very negative) aspects of life were mental health (40%) and school performance (40%).

Figure 76: Distribution of positive, neutral and negative impact of COVID-19 pandemic measures across areas of children's lives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Quite/very positive impact</th>
<th>Neutral impact</th>
<th>Quite/very negative impact</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Relationships with your family</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical activity</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationships with your friends</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your health</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your family's financial situation</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What you ate or drank</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your future expectations</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your mental health</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your life as a whole</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your school performance</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Percentage (%)
Positive impact of the COVID-19 pandemic measures on relationships with family

There are statistically significant differences by gender and age group. Overall, 57% of boys and 52% of girls report that the COVID-19 pandemic measures had a positive impact on their relationships with their family. Younger children are more likely to report that the COVID-19 pandemic measures had a positive impact on their relationships with their family than older children. There is no statistically significant difference across social class groups.

Figure 77: Percentages of boys and girls who report COVID-19 having a positive impact on their relationships with their family

Positive impact of the COVID-19 pandemic measures on physical activity

There is no statistically significant difference by gender. Overall, 47% of boys and 44% of girls report that the COVID-19 pandemic measures had a positive impact on their physical activity. There are statistically significant differences across age groups, with younger children more likely to report that the COVID-19 pandemic measures had a positive impact on their physical activity than older children. There is no statistically significant difference across social class groups.

Figure 78: Percentages of boys and girls who report COVID-19 having a positive impact on their physical activity
Negative impact of the COVID-19 pandemic measures on mental health

There are statistically significant differences by gender and age group. Overall, 30% of boys and 50% of girls report that the COVID-19 pandemic measures had a negative impact on their mental health. Older children are more likely to report that the COVID-19 pandemic measures had a negative impact on their mental health than younger children. There is no statistically significant difference across social class groups.

Figure 79: Percentages of boys and girls who report COVID-19 having a negative impact on their mental health

Negative impact of the COVID-19 pandemic measures on school performance

There are statistically significant differences by gender and age group. Overall, 37% of boys and 43% of girls report that the COVID-19 pandemic measures had a negative impact on their school performance. Older children are more likely to report that the COVID-19 pandemic measures had a negative impact on their school performance than younger children. There is no statistically significant difference across social class groups.

Figure 80: Percentages of boys and girls who report COVID-19 having a negative impact on their school performance
Sexual Behaviours

Ever had sexual intercourse

There is no statistically significant difference by gender. Overall, 26% of 15 to 17 year old boys and 24% of 15 to 17 year old girls report that they have ever had sexual intercourse. There is no statistically significant difference across social class groups.

Figure 81: Percentages of 15 to 17 year olds who report they have ever had sexual intercourse, by gender
Contraceptive use*

Overall, of those who report ever having had sexual intercourse, there is a statistically significant difference by gender in reporting condom use and in reporting birth control pill use, with girls more likely than boys to report that they or their partner used either a condom or the birth control pill at last sexual intercourse. There is no statistically significant difference by gender in reporting the use of any other method(s) of contraception at last sexual intercourse.

Figure 82: Percentages of 15 to 17 year olds who report the method of contraception at last intercourse, by gender

There is a statistically significant difference by gender in reporting the use of no contraception (condom, birth control pill, or any other method(s)) at last sexual intercourse. Overall, 40% of boys and 27% of girls report that they or their partner used no contraception at last sexual intercourse.

*Social class significance comparisons are not reported due to low sample size.
Findings from the Middle Childhood Study

The findings from the Middle Childhood HBSC Study presented in this section are stratified by gender and social class. The findings presented in this section are based on children from 3rd and 4th class.
General Health and Wellbeing

Excellent health

There is a statistically significant difference by gender. Overall, 40% of boys and 48% of girls report that their health is excellent. There is no statistically significant difference across social class groups.

Figure 83: Percentages of 3rd and 4th class boys and girls who report their health is excellent

Life at present (happiness)

There is no statistically significant difference by gender. Overall, 65% of boys and 62% of girls report feeling very happy with their life at present. There is no statistically significant difference across social class groups.

Figure 84: Percentages of 3rd and 4th class boys and girls who report feeling very happy with their lives at present
Love of family

There is no statistically significant difference by gender. Overall, 88% of boys and 92% of girls report that they always love their family. There is no statistically significant difference across social class groups.

Figure 85: Percentages of 3rd and 4th class boys and girls who report they always love their family

![Chart showing percentages of love of family by gender and social class for 3rd and 4th classes in 2018 and 2022.]
Food and Dietary Behaviours

Fruit

There is no statistically significant difference by gender. Overall, 32% of boys and 35% of girls report that they consume fruit more than once a day. There is no statistically significant difference across social class groups.

Figure 86: Percentages of 3rd and 4th class boys and girls who report they consume fruit more than once a day

Vegetables

There is no statistically significant difference by gender. Overall, 24% of boys and 27% of girls report that they consume vegetables more than once a day. There is no statistically significant difference across social class groups.

Figure 87: Percentages of 3rd and 4th class boys and girls who report they consume vegetables more than once a day
**Sweets**

There is no statistically significance difference by gender. Overall, 25% of boys and 25% of girls report that they eat sweets once a day or more. There is no statistically significant difference across social class groups.

**Figure 88:** Percentages of 3rd and 4th class boys and girls who report they eat sweets once a day or more

**Soft drinks**

There is no statistically significant difference by gender. Overall, 8% of boys and 7% of girls report that they drink soft drinks daily or more. There is a statistically significant difference across social class groups, with children from lower social class groups more likely to report drinking soft drinks daily or more.

**Figure 89:** Percentages of 3rd and 4th class boys and girls who report they drink soft drinks daily or more
Not having breakfast*

There is no statistically significant difference by gender. Overall, 2% of boys and 3% of girls report never having breakfast on any day of the week.

Figure 90: Percentages of 3\textsuperscript{rd} and 4\textsuperscript{th} class boys and girls who report never having breakfast on any day of the week

Going to school or bed hungry

There is a statistically significant difference by gender. Overall, 37% of boys and 27% of girls report ever going to school or bed hungry because there was not enough food at home. There is no statistically significant difference across social class groups.

Figure 91: Percentages of 3\textsuperscript{rd} and 4\textsuperscript{th} class boys and girls who report ever going to school or bed hungry

*Social class significance comparisons are not reported due to low sample size.
Exercise and Physical Activity

Vigorous exercise four or more times per week

There is a statistically significant difference by gender. Overall, 72% of boys and 65% of girls report participating in vigorous exercise four or more times per week. There is no statistically significant difference across social class groups.

Figure 92: Percentages of 3rd and 4th class boys and girls who report participating in vigorous exercise four or more times per week

Physical inactivity*

There is no statistically significant difference by gender. Overall, 5% of boys and 4% of girls report participating in vigorous exercise less than weekly.

Figure 93: Percentages of 3rd and 4th class boys and girls who report participating in vigorous exercise less than weekly

*Social class significance comparisons are not reported due to low sample size.
Self-Care

Toothbrushing

There is a statistically significant difference by gender. Overall, 66% of boys and 75% of girls report brushing their teeth more than once a day. There is no statistically significant difference across social class groups.

Figure 94: Percentages of 3rd and 4th class boys and girls who report brushing their teeth more than once a day

Seatbelt use

There is a statistically significant difference by gender. Overall, 87% of boys and 90% of girls report always wearing a seatbelt when in a car. There is no statistically significant difference across social class groups.

Figure 95: Percentages of 3rd and 4th class boys and girls who report always wearing a seatbelt when in a car
Bullying

Bullied others

There is a statistically significant difference by gender. Overall, 19% of boys and 9% of girls report bullying others at school once or more in the past couple of months. There is no statistically significant difference across social class groups.

Figure 96: Percentages of 3rd and 4th class boys and girls who report bullying others at school once or more in the past couple of months

Being bullied

There is no statistically significant difference by gender. Overall, 34% of boys and 32% of girls report being bullied at school once or more in the past couple of months. There is no statistically significant difference across social class groups.

Figure 97: Percentages of 3rd and 4th class boys and girls who report being bullied at school once or more in the past couple of months
Appendices

Demographic Representativeness of Respondents: HBSC 2022 Main Study

The gender breakdown of the HBSC 2022 Main Study participants reveals that 45% are boys and 55% are girls. Those who participated were compared to data from the 2022 Census for region and social class. Table 22 presents the final numbers for each geographical region and the percentage (unweighted) of the total sample that this represents. The sixth column presents the percentages of 10 to 17 year olds recorded in the regions during the 2022 Census. The data are representative of the population distribution across regions, with slight variations from the 2022 Census.

Table 22: Comparison of the regional distribution of 2018 and 2022 HBSC Main Study respondents and the 2022 Census

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>HBSC 2018 n</th>
<th>HBSC 2022 n</th>
<th>HBSC 2018 %</th>
<th>HBSC 2022 %</th>
<th>Census 2022 %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>East</td>
<td>4,153</td>
<td>2,156</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midlands</td>
<td>856</td>
<td>676</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid West</td>
<td>1,297</td>
<td>747</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North East</td>
<td>1,625</td>
<td>1,029</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North West</td>
<td>656</td>
<td>491</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South East</td>
<td>825</td>
<td>1,547</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South</td>
<td>1,075</td>
<td>1,624</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West</td>
<td>1,270</td>
<td>969</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In addition, social class was compared with those presented in the 2022 Census, as shown in Table 23. It should be noted that slight variations would be expected here because the census reports all persons by social class, not all of whom would be parents or guardians of children in these age groups.

Table 23: Comparison of the social class distribution of 2018 and 2022 HBSC Main Study respondents and the 2022 Census

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social Class</th>
<th>HBSC 2018 (%)</th>
<th>HBSC 2022 (%)</th>
<th>Census 2022 (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Professional</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Managerial</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-manual</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skilled manual</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semi-skilled</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unskilled</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 24 below presents the percentages of HBSC Main Study respondents across gender, age group and social class groups.

**Table 24: Distribution of 2018 and 2022 HBSC Main Study respondents by gender, age group and social class**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>SC 1-2 (%)</th>
<th>SC 3-4 (%)</th>
<th>SC 5-6 (%)</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>HBSC 2018</td>
<td>HBSC 2022</td>
<td>HBSC 2018</td>
<td>HBSC 2022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boys</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 to 11 years</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 to 14 years</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 to 17 years</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girls</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 to 11 years</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 to 14 years</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 to 17 years</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Demographic Representativeness of Respondents: HBSC 2022 Middle Childhood Study

The gender breakdown of the HBSC 2022 Middle Childhood Study participants reveals that 50% are boys and 50% are girls. Those who participated were compared to data from the 2022 Census for region and social class. Table 25 presents the final numbers for each geographical region and the percentage (unweighted) of the total sample that this represents. The sixth column presents the percentages of 8 and 9 year olds recorded in the regions during the 2022 Census. The data are representative of the population distribution across regions, with slight variations from the 2022 Census.

Table 25: Comparison of the regional distribution of 2018 and 2022 HBSC Middle Childhood Study respondents and the 2022 Census

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Middle Childhood 2018 n</th>
<th>Middle Childhood 2022 n</th>
<th>Middle Childhood 2018 %</th>
<th>Middle Childhood 2022 %</th>
<th>Census 2022 %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>East</td>
<td>826</td>
<td>455</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midlands</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid West</td>
<td>322</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North East</td>
<td>352</td>
<td>147</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North West</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South East</td>
<td>162</td>
<td>290</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South</td>
<td>222</td>
<td>228</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West</td>
<td>391</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In addition, social class was compared with those presented in the 2022 Census, as shown in Table 26. It should be noted that slight variations would be expected here because the census reports all persons by social class, not all of whom would be parents or guardians of children in these age groups.

Table 26: Comparison of the social class distribution of 2018 and 2022 HBSC Middle Childhood Study respondents and the 2022 Census

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social Class</th>
<th>HBSC 2018(%)</th>
<th>HBSC 2022 (%)</th>
<th>Census 2022(%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Professional</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Managerial</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-manual</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skilled manual</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semi-skilled</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unskilled</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 27 below presents the percentages of HBSC Middle Childhood Study respondents across gender and social class.

**Table 27: Distribution of 2018 and 2022 HBSC Middle Childhood Study respondents by gender and social class**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>SC 1-2 (%)</th>
<th>SC 3-4 (%)</th>
<th>SC 5-6 (%)</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>HBSC 2018</td>
<td>HBSC 2022</td>
<td>HBSC 2018</td>
<td>HBSC 2022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boys</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.5 to 10.5 years</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girls</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.5 to 10.5 years</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Technical Notes

1. The overall percentages (for HBSC 2018 and HBSC 2022) presented in this report have been weighted. The data was probability weighted prior to analysis to account for a gender and regional imbalance which arose due to response variations during data collection in 2022. The sample weights were constructed using census data and accounted for using gender, age group and region. The weights were constructed as W=1/P, where W can be interpreted as the inverse selection probability. Sample weights for HBSC 2018 used the 2016 Census data, HBSC 2022 used the 2022 Census data.

2. Due to missing data for social class, there was a lower case base for analysis of results stratified by social class compared to results stratified by gender or age group.

Additional Notes

1. Research Translation Helpdesk - For further specific analyses of HBSC Ireland data, contact the HBSC Ireland team hbsc@universityofgalway.ie.

2. The HBSC website 'Useful Links' page (https://www.universityofgalway.ie/hbsc/usefullinks/) has contact information for various helplines and websites relating to the health topics in this report.
Project Team

Health Promotion Research Centre, University of Galway

Professor Saoirse Nic Gabhainn  Co-Principal Investigator, HBSC Ireland
Professor Colette Kelly  Co-Principal Investigator, HBSC Ireland
Dr. András Költö  Senior Postdoctoral Researcher
Dr. Elena Vaughan  Research Fellow
Ms. Aoife Gavin  Senior Researcher
Ms. Eimer Brown  Research Assistant
Ms. Laura Farrell  Research Assistant
Ms. Mari Olivia Nealon Lennox  Research Assistant
Ms. Louise Lunney  Research Assistant
Ms. Rachael Maloney  Research Assistant
Ms. Katie Monahan  Research Assistant
Ms. Larri Walker  Research Assistant
Ms. Ruchika Tara Mathur  Research Assistant / PhD Candidate

Department of Health, Healthy Ireland HBSC Management Team

Dr. Fiona Mansergh
Ms. Jenna Scott
Ms. Lisa Delaney
Ms. Mary Ryan
Ms. Siobhain Crean
Mr. Paul Brosnan

Advisory Input

With many thanks to our colleagues in the following policy and service areas in the Department of Health for their help and advice, which was invaluable in progressing this HBSC project and report: Healthy Ireland, Tobacco and Alcohol Control, Drugs Policy, Mental Health Services, Women’s Health Taskforce, Dental Policy, Procurement, Finance, Research Services and Policy and Statistics and Analytics. We would also like to thank colleagues in various sections of the Department of Education for their input.
Acknowledgements

We would like to thank:

All of the children who gave consent and participated in the study.

The parents who gave permission for their children to participate in the study.

The Management Authorities, Principals and Teachers in all schools who participated.

Children who participated in the national Youth Engagement workshops and young people involved in Youth Engagement for the International network.

HBSC International Co-ordinator: Dr. Jo Inchley, University of Glasgow, Scotland.

HBSC International Databank Manager: Professor Oddrun Samdal, University of Bergen, Norway.

Staff of the Department of Health, the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth, the Department of Education, HSE Health and Wellbeing Division, HSE Public Health, Health Research Board Evidence Centre, the Institute of Public Health, Mental Health Ireland, National Cancer Control Programme and the Central Statistics Office.

Dr. Viv Batt, Ms. Sarah Bergin, Ms. Ailish Brick, Ms. Róisín Cannon, Ms. Colleen Cicci, Ms. Megan Curran, Ms. Roisin D'Arcy, Ms. Marley Denierio, Ms. Aisling Harrington, Ms. Patricia Harte, Ms. Tania Jahir, Ms. Sarah Keenan, Ms. Julia MacAulay, Ms. Laura Mannix, Ms. Geraldine Martyn, Ms. Onyenankeya Nnenna, Ms. Lilly O’Toole, Ms. Dawn Ritzwoller, Ms. Laura Ronayne, Ms. Ciana Staunton, Ms. Ummu A Tunis-Paasewe, the staff in the Health Promotion Research Centre, the staff in the Mail Room and all other University of Galway staff and services.

Data entry and data checks: HBSC Ireland team members.

Drawings: Ms. Divya Ravikumar.

Translations: Ms. Caoimhe Ní Mhathúna.

Design and layout: Ms. Larri Walker, Ms. Eimer Brown and the HBSC Ireland Team.
Supplementary Data: Impact of COVID-19 Pandemic Measures

The findings presented in this section are stratified by gender, age groups and social class groups.
Impact of COVID-19 pandemic measures

The following pages present data on the positive and negative impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic measures on various aspects of children’s lives (see page 60 for more information and overall figures).

List of Figures

Figure S1: Percentages of boys and girls who report COVID-19 having a positive impact on their relationships with their family ................................................................. 83
Figure S2: Percentages of boys and girls who report COVID-19 having a negative impact on their relationships with their family ................................................................. 83
Figure S3: Percentages of boys and girls who report COVID-19 having a positive impact on their physical activity .............................................................................................. 84
Figure S4: Percentages of boys and girls who report COVID-19 having a negative impact on their physical activity .............................................................................................. 84
Figure S5: Percentages of boys and girls who report COVID-19 having a positive impact on their relationships with their friends ................................................................. 85
Figure S6: Percentages of boys and girls who report COVID-19 having a negative impact on their relationships with their friends ................................................................. 85
Figure S7: Percentages of boys and girls who report COVID-19 having a positive impact on their health ................................................................................................................ 86
Figure S8: Percentages of boys and girls who report COVID-19 having a negative impact on their health ................................................................................................................ 86
Figure S9: Percentages of boys and girls who report COVID-19 having a positive impact on their family’s financial situation .............................................................................. 87
Figure S10: Percentages of boys and girls who report COVID-19 having a negative impact on their family’s financial situation .............................................................................. 87
Figure S11: Percentages of boys and girls who report COVID-19 having a positive impact on what they ate or drank ........................................................................................ 88
Figure S12: Percentages of boys and girls who report COVID-19 having a negative impact on what they ate or drank ........................................................................................ 88
Figure S13: Percentages of boys and girls who report COVID-19 having a positive impact on their future expectations ...................................................................................... 89
Figure S14: Percentages of boys and girls who report COVID-19 having a negative impact on their future expectations ...................................................................................... 89
Figure S15: Percentages of boys and girls who report COVID-19 having a positive impact on their mental health ............................................................................................... 90
Figure S16: Percentages of boys and girls who report COVID-19 having a negative impact on their mental health ............................................................................................... 90
Figure S17: Percentages of boys and girls who report COVID-19 having a positive impact on their life as a whole .............................................................................................. 91
Figure S18: Percentages of boys and girls who report COVID-19 having a negative impact on their life as a whole .............................................................................................. 91
Figure S19: Percentages of boys and girls who report COVID-19 having a positive impact on their school performance ...................................................................................... 92
Figure S20: Percentages of boys and girls who report COVID-19 having a negative impact on their school performance .................................................................
Impact of COVID-19 pandemic measures on relationships with family

Positive impact
There are statistically significant differences by gender and age group. Overall, 57% of boys and 52% of girls report that the COVID-19 pandemic measures had a positive impact on their relationships with their family. Younger children are more likely to report that the COVID-19 pandemic measures had a positive impact on their relationships with their family than older children. There is no statistically significant difference across social class groups.

Figure S1: Percentages of boys and girls who report COVID-19 having a positive impact on their relationships with their family

Negative impact
There are statistically significant differences by gender and social class groups. Overall, 10% of boys and 15% of girls report that the COVID-19 pandemic measures had a negative impact on their relationships with their family. Children from lower social class groups are more likely to report that the COVID-19 pandemic measures had a negative impact on their relationships with their family than those from other social class groups. There is no statistically significant difference across age groups.

Figure S2: Percentages of boys and girls who report COVID-19 having a negative impact on their relationships with their family
Impact of COVID-19 pandemic measures on physical activity

Positive impact
There is no statistically significant difference by gender. Overall, 47% of boys and 44% of girls report that the COVID-19 pandemic measures had a positive impact on their physical activity. There are statistically significant differences across age groups, with younger children more likely to report that the COVID-19 pandemic measures had a positive impact on their physical activity than older children. There is no statistically significant difference across social class groups.

Figure S3: Percentages of boys and girls who report COVID-19 having a positive impact on their physical activity

Negative impact
There is no statistically significant difference by gender. Overall, 28% of boys and 30% of girls report that the COVID-19 pandemic measures had a negative impact on their physical activity. There are statistically significant differences across age groups, with older children more likely to report that the COVID-19 pandemic measures had a negative impact on their physical activity than younger children. There is no statistically significant difference across social class groups.

Figure S4: Percentages of boys and girls who report COVID-19 having a negative impact on their physical activity

The Irish Health Behaviour in School-aged Children (HBSC) Study 2022
Impact of COVID-19 pandemic measures on relationships with friends

Positive impact
There are statistically significant differences by gender and age group. Overall, 45% of boys and 41% of girls report that the COVID-19 pandemic measures had a positive impact on their relationships with their friends. Younger children are more likely to report that the COVID-19 pandemic measures had a positive impact on their relationships with their friends than older children. There is no statistically significant difference across social class groups.

Figure S5: Percentages of boys and girls who report COVID-19 having a positive impact on their relationships with their friends

Negative impact
There is a statistically significant difference by gender. Overall, 20% of boys and 23% of girls report that the COVID-19 pandemic measures had a negative impact on their relationships with their friends. There are no statistically significant differences across age groups or social class groups.

Figure S6: Percentages of boys and girls who report COVID-19 having a negative impact on their relationships with their friends
Impact of COVID-19 pandemic measures on health

Positive impact
There are statistically significant differences by gender and age group. Overall, 35% of boys and 29% of girls report that the COVID-19 pandemic measures had a positive impact on their health. Younger children are more likely to report that the COVID-19 pandemic measures had a positive impact on their health than older children. There is no statistically significant difference across social class groups.

Figure S7: Percentages of boys and girls who report COVID-19 having a positive impact on their health

Negative impact
There are statistically significant differences by gender and age group. Overall, 20% of boys and 24% of girls report that the COVID-19 pandemic measures had a negative impact on their health. Older children are more likely to report that the COVID-19 pandemic measures had a negative impact on their health than younger children. There is no statistically significant difference across social class groups.

Figure S8: Percentages of boys and girls who report COVID-19 having a negative impact on their health
Impact of COVID-19 pandemic measures on family's financial situation

Positive impact
There are statistically significant differences by gender, age group and social class. Overall, 32% of boys and 28% of girls report that the COVID-19 pandemic measures had a positive impact on their family’s financial situation. Younger children are more likely to report that the COVID-19 pandemic measures had a positive impact on their family’s financial situation than older children. Children from the lowest social class group are more likely to report that the COVID-19 pandemic measures had a positive impact on their family’s financial situation than those from other social class groups.

Figure S9: Percentages of boys and girls who report COVID-19 having a positive impact on their family's financial situation

Negative impact
There are statistically significant differences by gender and social class groups. Overall, 12% of boys and 15% of girls report that the COVID-19 pandemic measures had a negative impact on their family’s financial situation. Children from lower social class groups are more likely to report that the COVID-19 pandemic measures had a negative impact on their family’s financial situation than those from other social class groups. There is no statistically significant difference across age groups.

Figure S10: Percentages of boys and girls who report COVID-19 having a negative impact on their family's financial situation
Impact of COVID-19 pandemic measures on food and dietary behaviours

Positive impact
There are statistically significant differences by gender and age group. Overall, 32% of boys and 27% of girls report that the COVID-19 pandemic measures had a positive impact on what they ate or drank. Younger children are more likely to report that the COVID-19 pandemic measures had a positive impact on what they ate or drank than older children. There is no statistically significant difference across social class groups.

Figure S11: Percentages of boys and girls who report COVID-19 having a positive impact on what they ate or drank

Negative impact
There are statistically significant differences by gender and age group. Overall, 24% of boys and 32% of girls report that the COVID-19 pandemic measures had a negative impact on what they ate or drank. Older children are more likely to report that the COVID-19 pandemic measures had a negative impact on what they ate or drank than younger children. There is no statistically significant difference across social class groups.

Figure S12: Percentages of boys and girls who report COVID-19 having a negative impact on what they ate or drank
Impact of COVID-19 pandemic measures on future expectations

Positive impact
There are statistically significant differences by gender and age group. Overall, 30% of boys and 24% of girls report that the COVID-19 pandemic measures had a positive impact on their future expectations. Younger children are more likely to report that the COVID-19 pandemic measures had a positive impact on their future expectations than older children. There is no statistically significant difference across social class groups.

Figure S13: Percentages of boys and girls who report COVID-19 having a positive impact on their future expectations

Negative impact
There are statistically significant differences by gender, age group and social class. Overall, 17% of boys and 25% of girls report that the COVID-19 pandemic measures had a negative impact on their future expectations. Older children are more likely to report that the COVID-19 pandemic measures had a negative impact on their future expectations than younger children. Children from the middle social class group are more likely to report that the COVID-19 pandemic measures had a negative impact on their future expectations than those from other social class groups.

Figure S14: Percentages of boys and girls who report COVID-19 having a negative impact on their future expectations
Impact of COVID-19 pandemic measures on mental health

Positive impact
There are statistically significant differences by gender and age group. Overall, 30% of boys and 20% of girls report that the COVID-19 pandemic measures had a positive impact on their mental health. Younger children are more likely to report that the COVID-19 pandemic measures had a positive impact on their mental health than older children. There is no statistically significant difference across social class groups.

Figure S15: Percentages of boys and girls who report COVID-19 having a positive impact on their mental health

Negative impact
There are statistically significant differences by gender and age group. Overall, 30% of boys and 50% of girls report that the COVID-19 pandemic measures had a negative impact on their mental health. Older children are more likely to report that the COVID-19 pandemic measures had a negative impact on their mental health than younger children. There is no statistically significant difference across social class groups.

Figure S16: Percentages of boys and girls who report COVID-19 having a negative impact on their mental health
Impact of COVID-19 pandemic measures on life as a whole

Positive impact

There are statistically significant differences by gender and age group. Overall, 28% of boys and 20% of girls report that the COVID-19 pandemic measures had a positive impact on their life as a whole. Younger children are more likely to report that the COVID-19 pandemic measures had a positive impact on their life as a whole than older children. There is no statistically significant difference across social class groups.

Figure S17: Percentages of boys and girls who report COVID-19 having a positive impact on their life as a whole

Negative impact

There are statistically significant differences by gender and age group. Overall, 26% of boys and 33% of girls report that the COVID-19 pandemic measures had a negative impact on their life as a whole. Children in the oldest age group are more likely to report that the COVID-19 pandemic measures had a negative impact on their life as a whole than other age groups. There is no statistically significant difference across social class groups.

Figure S18: Percentages of boys and girls who report COVID-19 having a negative impact on their life as a whole
Impact of COVID-19 pandemic measures on school performance

Positive impact
There is no statistically significant difference by gender. Overall, 24% of boys and 22% of girls report that the COVID-19 pandemic measures had a positive impact on their school performance. There are statistically significant differences across age groups, with younger children more likely to report that the COVID-19 pandemic measures had a positive impact on their school performance than older children. There is no statistically significant difference across social class groups.

Figure S19: Percentages of boys and girls who report COVID-19 having a positive impact on their school performance

Negative impact
There are statistically significant differences by gender and age group. Overall, 37% of boys and 43% of girls report that the COVID-19 pandemic measures had a negative impact on their school performance. Older children are more likely to report that the COVID-19 pandemic measures had a negative impact on their school performance than younger children. There is no statistically significant difference across social class groups.

Figure S20: Percentages of boys and girls who report COVID-19 having a negative impact on their school performance