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Department of Health



# Trends in Health Behaviours, Health Outcomes, and Contextual Factors between 1998-2018:

*Findings from the Irish Health Behaviour in School-aged Children Study*

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# #HBSC Trends



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# Presentation Overview

1. HBSC Background
2. HBSC Methods
3. Findings
4. Dissemination

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HEALTH BEHAVIOUR IN  
SCHOOL-AGED CHILDREN  
ÉIREANN/IRELAND

## Trends in Health Behaviours, Health Outcomes and Contextual Factors between 1998-2018: findings from the Irish Health Behaviour in School-aged Children Study

The National Health & Lifestyle Surveys

The Irish Health Behaviour in School-aged Children (HBSC) Study 2006

The Irish Health Behaviour in School-aged Children (HBSC) Study 2010

The Irish Health Behaviour in School-aged Children (HBSC) Study 2014

The Irish Health Behaviour in School-aged Children (HBSC) Study 2018

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## HBSC Background

- Collaborative study with the WHO European Regional Office
- Ireland joined in 1994
- Irish data collected in 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014 and 2018
- 47 countries and regions collected data in 2018 (50 in 2022)
- Third trends report

**Figure 1: Conceptualising children's health and wellbeing**





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## HBSC objectives

- To contribute to theoretical and methodological developments
- To compare health of school-aged children in member countries
- **To monitor health of school-aged children over time**
- To develop partnerships with relevant external agencies
- To establish and strengthen a multi-disciplinary network
- To provide an international source of expertise and intelligence
- To disseminate findings, contribute to practice and policy



## Trends 1998 – 2018

- n=62,720
- 5<sup>th</sup> class to 5<sup>th</sup> year; 10-17 year olds
- Cross-sectional design
- Items that were used in each survey cycle 1998-2018 or used in 3 survey cycles



# Findings



# Methods - Background

What's included in the report?

- 31 indicators
- Overall, by gender, by gender and age group and gender and social class
- Statistical analyses – significant trends (reliable over time)
- Size of the change
- International comparisons (from 26 countries collected since 1998)
- Comparable data over the 6 survey rounds

## CURRENT SMOKER

Children were asked how often they smoke at present. The response ranged from 'I do not smoke' to 'every day'. Current smokers, defined as smoking monthly or more frequently, are presented here.

### Findings

Between 1998 and 2018 there was a very large decrease in the percentage of girls and boys who reported being current smokers. This decrease is evident across all age and social class groups.

### International ranking (15 year olds only)\*

	Ireland %	HBSC 26 AVG %	HBSC 26 Rank
2018	10.1	15.4	18
2014	10.8	17.1	25
2010	17.2	23.8	23
2006	24.2	24.5	13
2002	26.5	31.4	20
1998	32.9	32.9	12

\* See technical note 5

Figure 2: Percentage of 10-17 year olds who reported being a current smoker, overall and by gender from 1998-2018

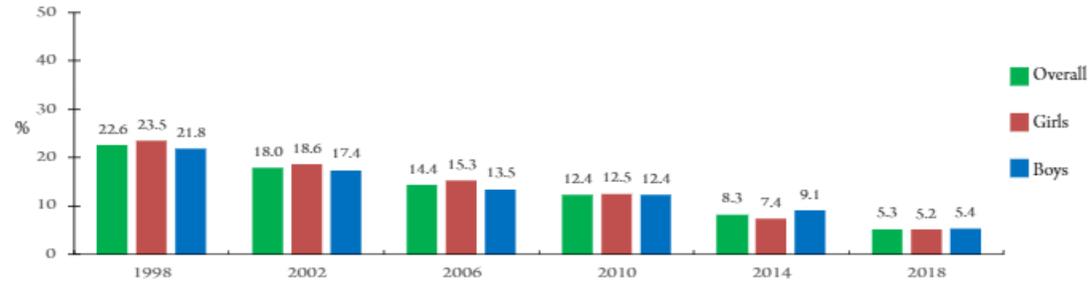


Table 2: Percentage of 10-17 year old girls and boys who reported being a current smoker, by age group and social class from 1998-2018

		1998	2002	2006	2010	2014	2018	Trend
Girls	10 to 11	4.4	2.6	1.4	1.7	0.9	0.0	↓↓↓↓
	12 to 14	18.7	13.9	11.0	6.5	3.7	2.5	↓↓↓↓
	15 to 17	38.3	33.1	27.8	22.5	13.4	11.6	↓↓↓
Boys	10 to 11	8.7	4.8	3.8	2.7	2.3	0.7	↓↓↓↓
	12 to 14	19.6	13.3	10.4	7.9	5.2	3.1	↓↓↓↓
	15 to 17	31.1	29.0	22.8	20.4	15.4	11.4	↓↓↓
Girls	SC 1-2	23.2	15.3	14.3	11.0	6.0	4.1	↓↓↓↓
	SC 3-4	22.6	21.5	15.5	13.0	6.9	5.4	↓↓↓↓
	SC 5-6	24.7	20.9	15.2	14.1	9.1	6.4	↓↓↓
Boys	SC 1-2	21.7	16.6	11.1	9.9	8.6	4.5	↓↓↓↓
	SC 3-4	21.1	17.3	13.7	12.2	7.7	5.4	↓↓↓
	SC 5-6	20.5	18.4	12.1	12.0	7.7	7.0	↓↓↓



### Health Risk Behaviours

- Current smoker
- **Age of first cigarette**
- Ever been drunk
- Age of first alcoholic drink
- Cannabis use last 12 months
- **Bullying others**
- **Trying to lose weight**

### Positive Health Behaviours

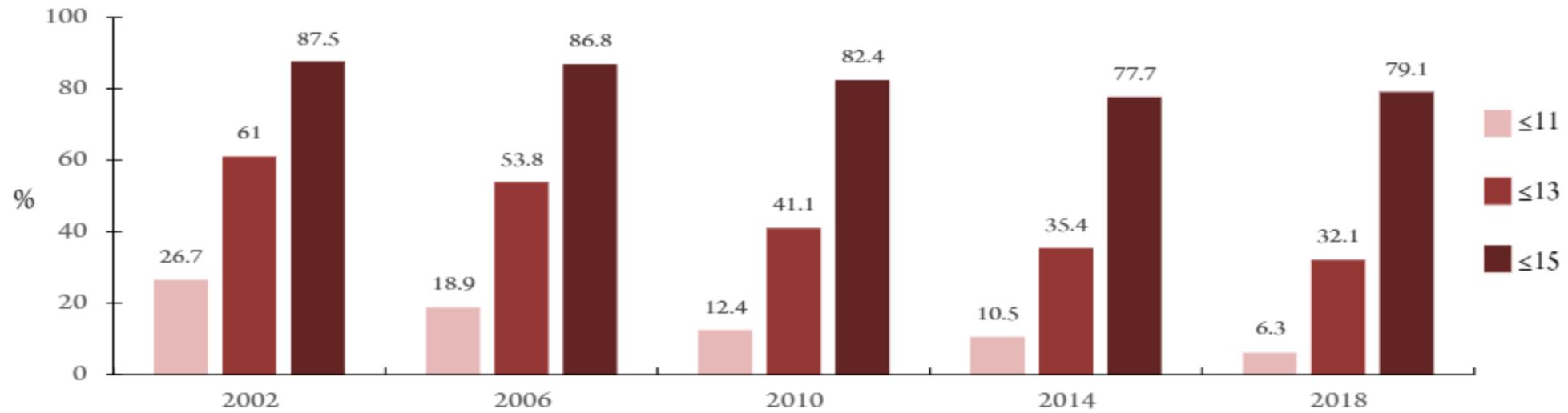
- Fruit consumption
- **Tooth brushing**
- Seatbelt use
- Vigorous exercise

### Sexual Health Behaviours

- **Having had sex**
- **Condom use at last sex**

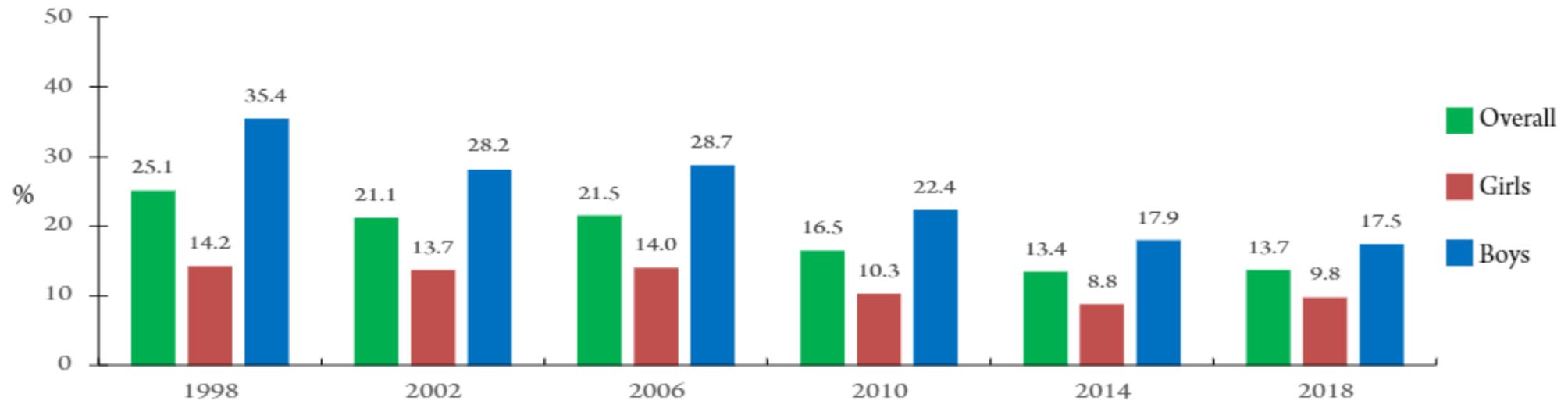
# Age of first cigarette

Figure 3: Age of first cigarette in 15-17 year olds who reported ever smoking, from 2002-2018



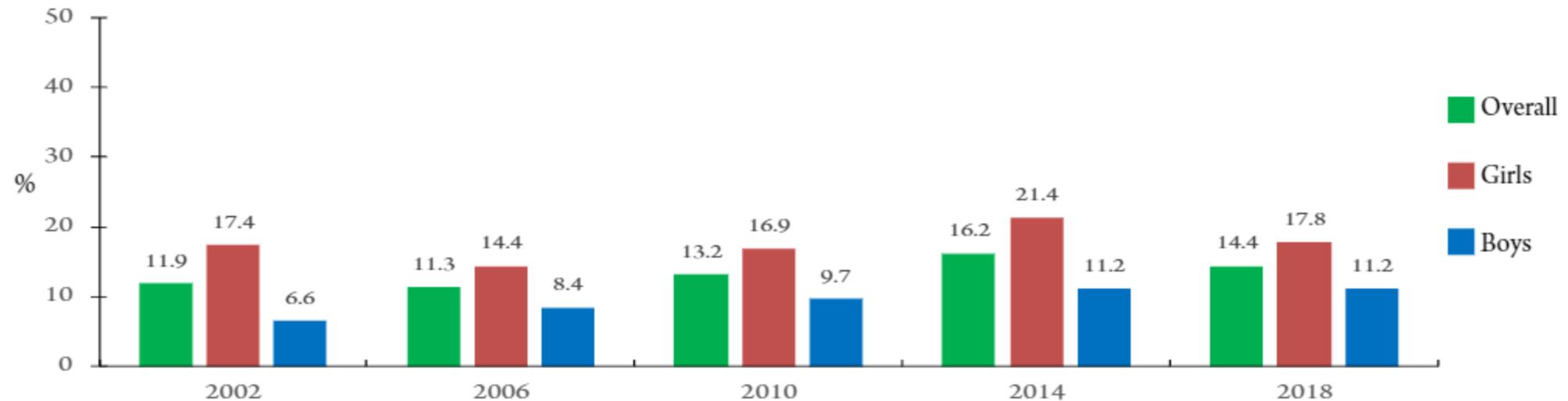
# Bullying others

**Figure 7: Percentage of 10-17 year olds who reported bullying others (once or more) in the past couple of months, overall and by gender from 1998-2018**



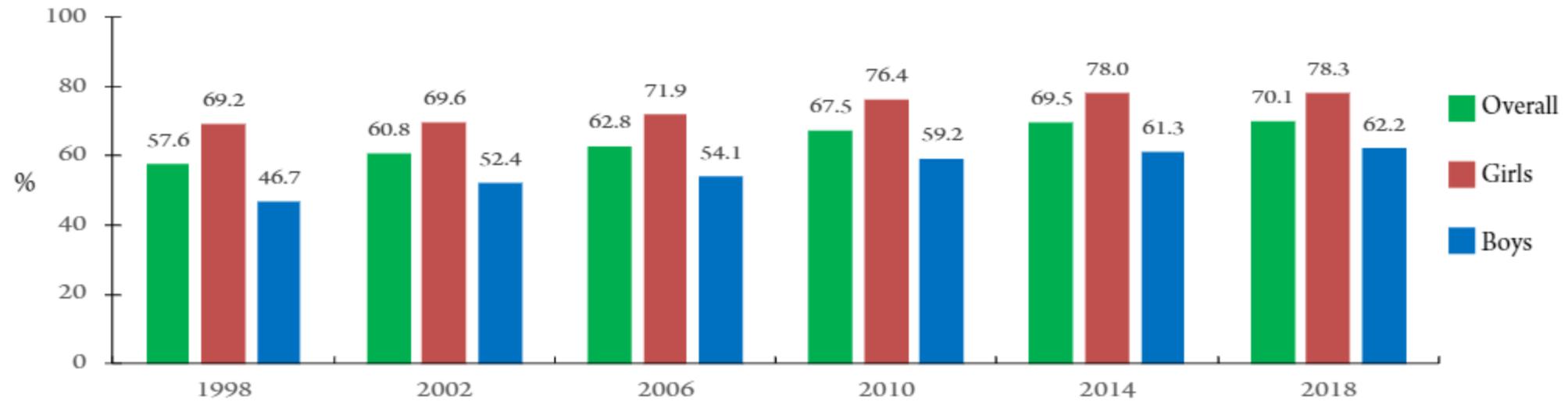
# Trying to lose weight

**Figure 8: Percentage of 10-17 year olds who reported being on a diet or doing something else to lose weight, overall and by gender from 2002-2014**



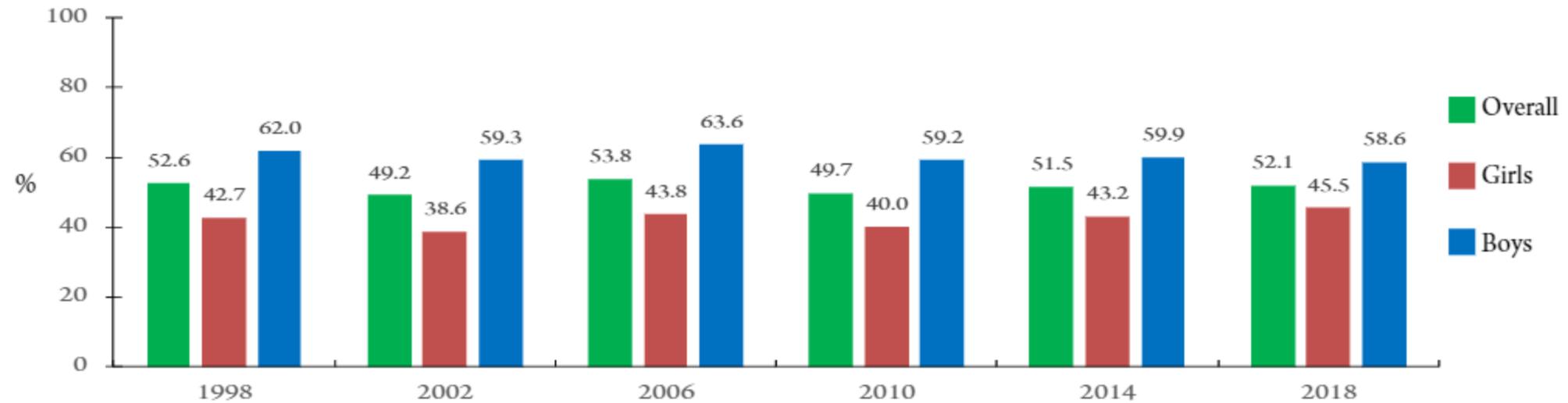
# Tooth brushing

**Figure 10: Percentage of 10-17 year olds who reported they brush their teeth more than once a day, overall and by gender from 1998-2018**



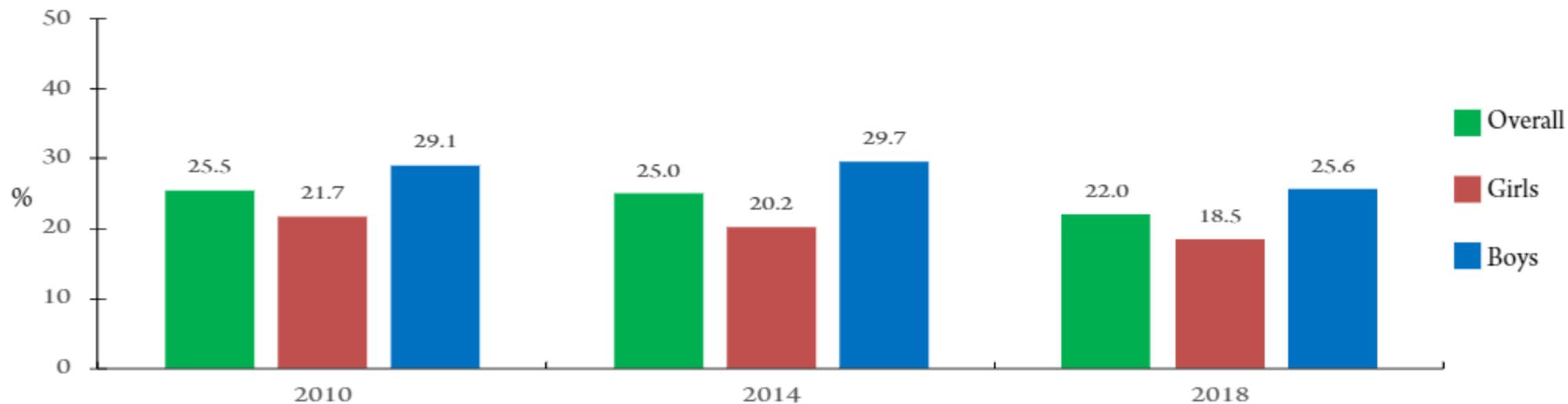
# Vigorous exercise

**Figure 12: Percentage of 10-17 year olds who reported participating in vigorous exercise four or more times per week, overall and by gender from 1998-2018**



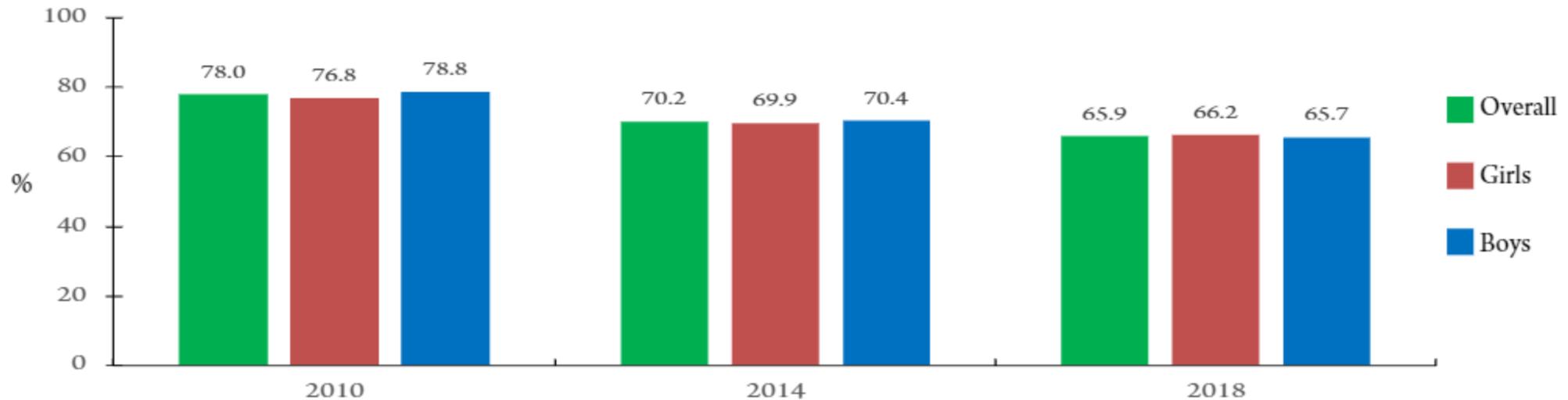
# Having had sexual intercourse

**Figure 13: Percentage of 15-17 year olds who reported having ever had sexual intercourse, overall and by gender from 2010-2018**



# Condom use at last sexual intercourse

**Figure 14: Percentage of 15-17 year olds who reported using a condom at last sexual intercourse, overall and by gender from 2010-2018 (of those who have ever had sexual intercourse)**



## Health Outcomes



### Physical Health Outcomes

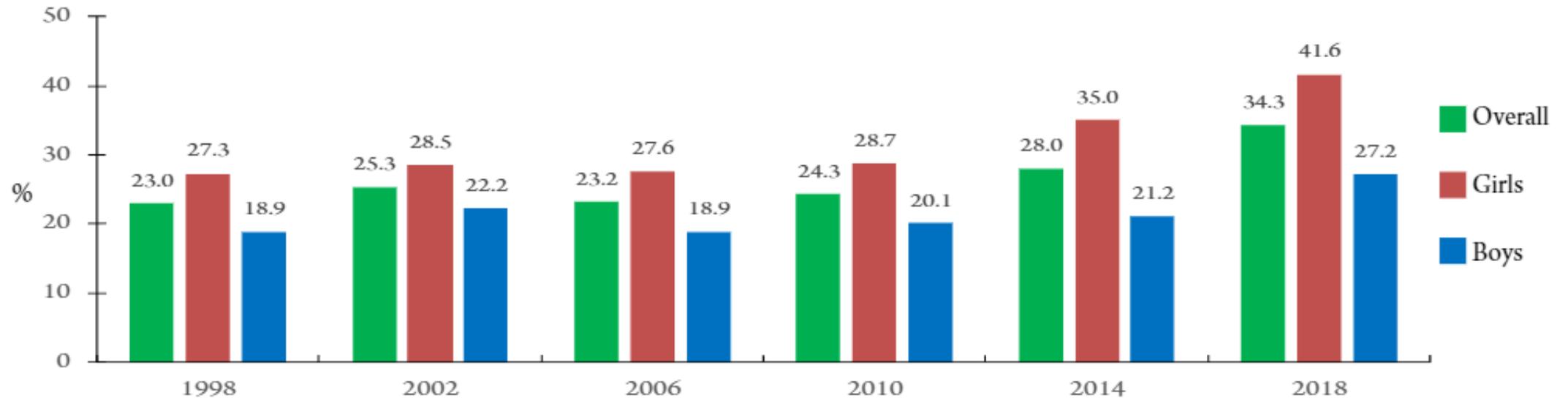
- Headache
- **Feeling low**
- Medically attended injury

### Positive Health Outcomes

- Self-rated health
- **Happy with life at present**
- Life satisfaction

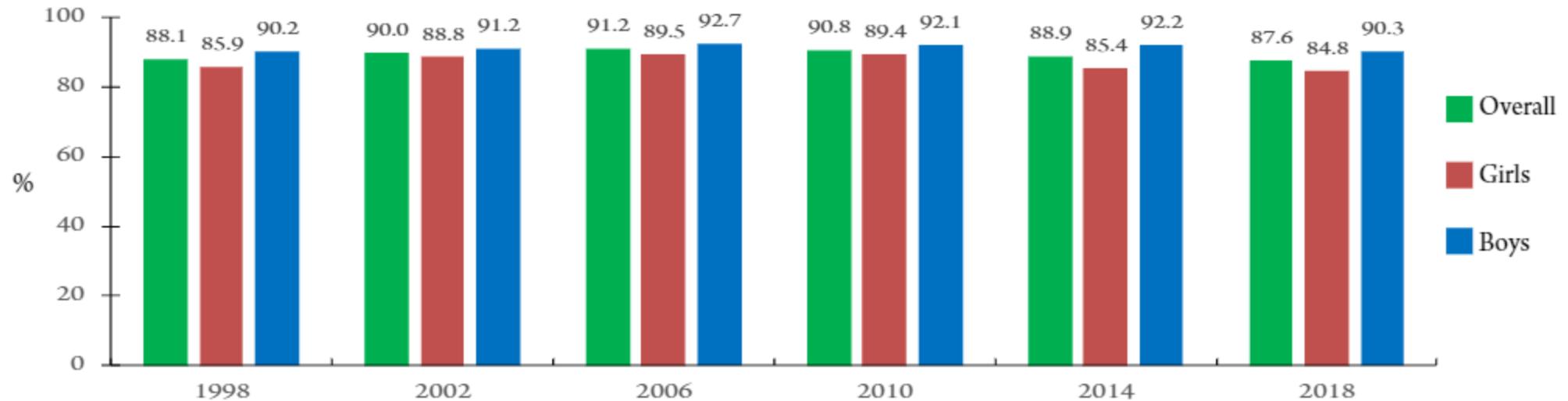
# Feeling low

**Figure 16: Percentage of 10-17 year olds who reported feeling low about every week or more frequently over the last six months, overall and by gender from 1998-2018**

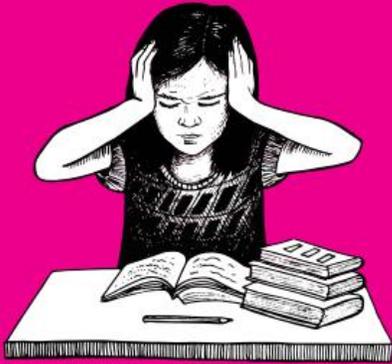
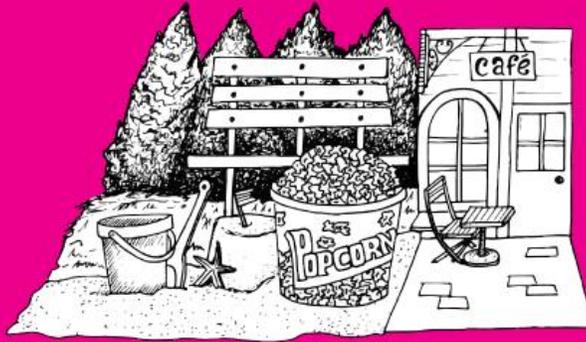


# Happy with life

**Figure 19: Percentage of 10-17 year olds who reported feeling happy about their lives at present, overall and by gender from 1998-2018**



## Social Contexts of Children's Lives



### Family

- Talk to mother
- **Talk to father**
- Live with both parents

### School

- Liking school
- Organising school events
- **Pressured by school work**

### Peers

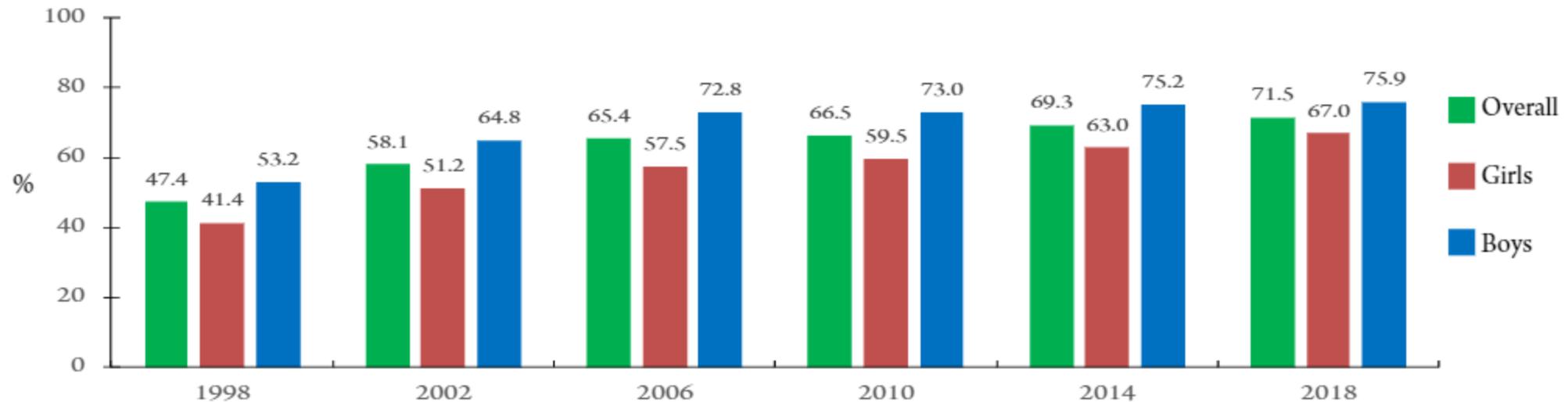
- **Close friends of same sex**
- Evenings out with friends
- Talk to same sex friends

### Locality

- Feel safe in local area
- **Good places to spend free time**
- Help or favours from neighbours

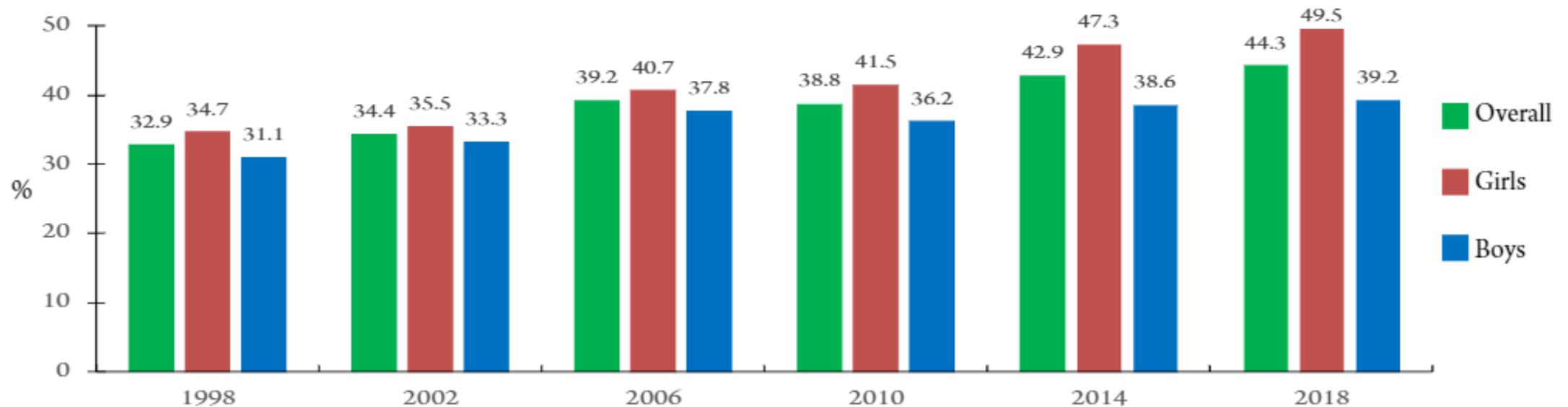
# Easy communication with father

**Figure 21: Percentage of 10-17 year olds who reported finding it easy to talk to their father about things that really bother them, overall and by gender from 1998-2018**



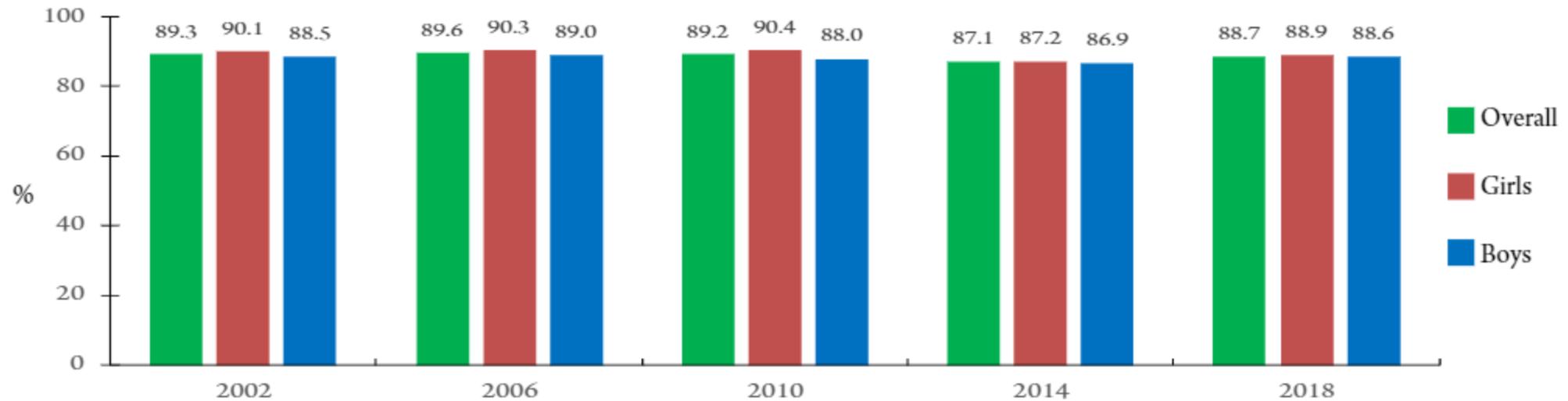
# Pressured by school work

**Figure 26: Percentage of 10-17 year olds who reported feeling pressured by school work, overall and by gender from 1998-2018**



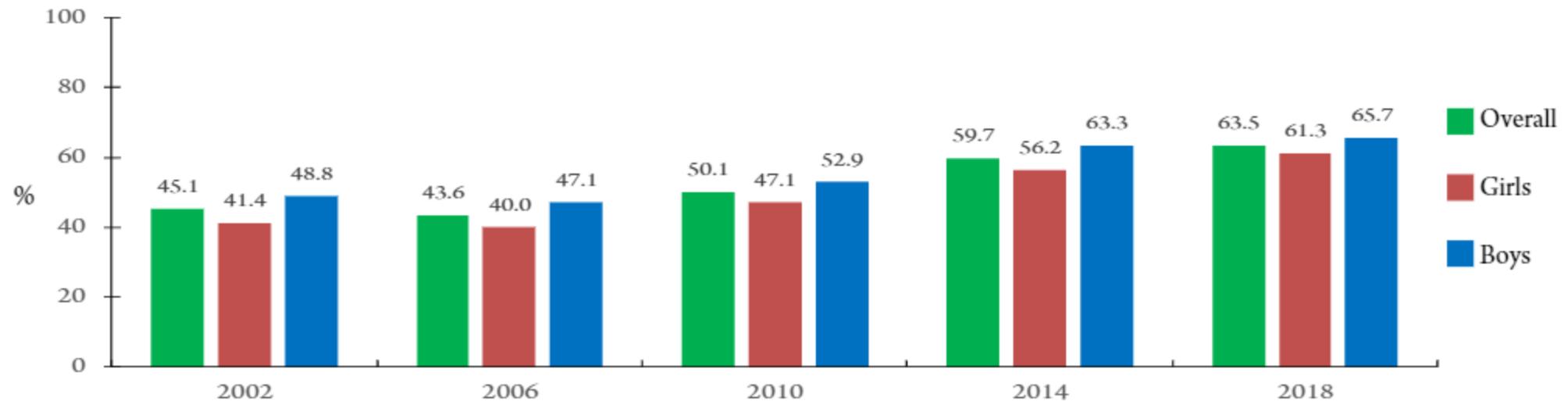
# Close friends of the same sex

**Figure 27: Percentage of 10-17 year olds who reported having three or more friends of the same sex at present, overall and by gender from 2002-2018**



# Good places to spend free time

**Figure 31: Percentage of 10-17 year olds who reported that there are good places in the local area to spend their free time, overall and by gender from 2002-2018**





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## The good news and the ‘not so good news’

- Decrease in risk behaviours
- Increase in parental communication
- Increase in good places to spend free time

But also...

- Increase in school pressure
- Increase in feeling low

And

- Not enough improvement in diet and physical activity

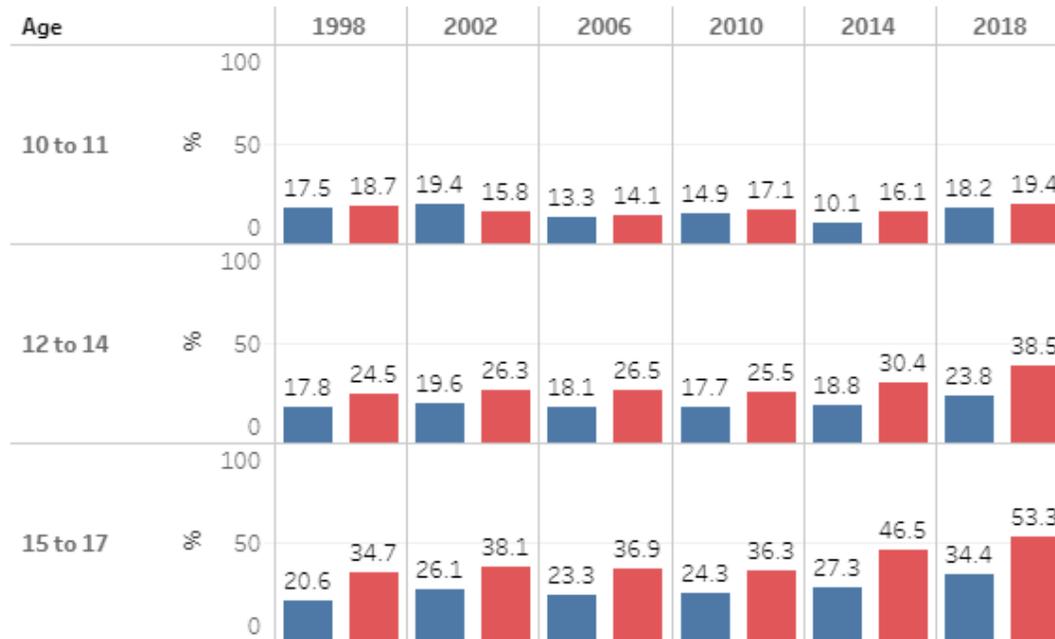
Age Group

Social Class

## Trends in Health Outcomes 1998-2018

Findings from the Irish Health Behaviour in School-aged Children Study

### Feeling low by Gender and Age Group



Indicator

- Feeling low
- Happy with life at pre...
- Headache
- Life satisfaction
- Self-rated health
- Times injured

Age Group

- 10 to 11
- 12 to 14
- 15 to 17

Gender

- Boys
- Girls

Source: Trends in Health Behaviours, Health Outcomes and contextual Factors between 1998-2018: findings from the Irish Health Behaviour in School-aged Children Study.

<http://www.nuigalway.ie/hbsc/hbsctrends/>



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## HBSC Ireland Dissemination since 1998

- 226 national and 68 international reports
- 225 peer-reviewed journal articles
- 235 conference presentations
- 28 theses short reports
- 57 factsheets
- 54 requested short reports
- 31 book chapters, other journal articles, bulletins
- Plus blogs, interactive visuals, broadcast and print media



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