



Insight Report

The Boys' Brigade

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Summary

Health and wellbeing

Most young people consider their physical health to be good, and this hasn't changed over the last decade although there have been increases in the rates of disability and obesity. However young people today report being less satisfied with life overall. The last decade has seen rising rates of probable mental health disorders, but much smaller increases in rates of diagnosis – possibly the result of services being unable to cope with the number of referrals they receive. Rates of self-harm have also increased (both self-reported and hospitalisation rates) as have the number of counselling sessions/referrals by Childline related to suicidal feelings, thoughts, or concerns. Despite this, suicide rates remain stable, suggesting that community support and talking therapies may be helping young people with their mental health.

Identity, values and beliefs

Fewer young people identify as Christian now than a decade ago, but there is still openness to the idea of God and to prayer. In contrast almost all young people now believe climate change will impact the UK, while remaining uninterested in general politics. However, they are democratically active to a degree, taking part in protests, signing petitions and often using digital spaces to claim agency they might not get elsewhere. 16–24-year-olds are the most likely age-group to identify with a gender that is different to the sex assigned at birth, and there has been a steep rise in referrals to the NHS Gender Identity Service in recent years. There is also greater diversity in young people's sexual orientation with more saying they feel attraction to both sexes. Surveys suggest young people are pro-trans, but despite this, there has also been a rise in reported bullying related to ethnicity, gender, disability, and sexual orientation, suggesting this generation is not always accepting of this diversity.

Behaviour and lifestyle

Nicknamed 'Generation Sensible', today's teenagers are much less likely to engage in 'risky behaviours' such as smoking, drinking alcohol, or taking illegal drugs, and there has been a steady decline in the rate of under-18 conceptions. They are also less likely to perceive these behaviours as risky. Rates of youth offending have decreased in the last decade as have numbers of first-time offenders and reoffenders, and most young people aren't worried about being a victim of crime. There has been no overall rise in sexting by young people, but younger people are now receiving sexts at similar rates to older young people. However, knife crime rates are up, young people are 'vaping' more regularly, accessing online pornography at a younger age than previously and are more likely to have seen content or had experiences online that make them feel uncomfortable.

Relationships

Similar numbers of young people have been living with two married parents over the last ten years. They are now more likely to talk to their parents about things that matter to them most days, but fewer are eating a family meal together each day. Satisfaction with friendships has dropped, and young people are more likely to report feeling lonely sometimes. They spend less time in-person socialising, less time engaged in play and more time with friends online. Young people are less likely to have a steady boyfriend/girlfriend

and less likely to be sexually active than in previous years. The number of young people in care has increased and 1 in 10 experience high instability of placements.

Education, work and transition to adulthood

More young people are receiving SEN support and attending out-of school- tutoring. Most continue to think it's important to do well in their GCSEs, and greater numbers are staying in school post-16 and continuing to apply to university. Nevertheless, young people are less satisfied with school and schoolwork than in previous years. They are more likely to delay moving out of home and getting married, though just as likely to want to learn to drive or have a part-time job.

What do they need from us, and what might this mean for The Boys Brigade?

As a Christian organisation that has faith in young people and confidence in the power of the God who calls us to boldly step forward and advance his Kingdom, some key opportunities for The Boys Brigade could be around the following areas.

Faith

Adolescence can be a key time in a young person's faith journey as they begin to question, search and ultimately 'own' their faith. Youth groups can be important places of connection and safety as young people question and wrestle with the beliefs and values they may have grown up with. Young people these days are much less likely to consider themselves 'Christian' and less likely to have grown up in environments where they have gained knowledge or experience of the Christian faith. However, this doesn't necessarily mean they are all actively rejecting faith, and they may be more open to belief in God than we expect. Faith in action such as that demonstrated by volunteers at Boys Brigade groups can be a powerful experience for young people with little or no experience of Christianity. Young people in disadvantaged areas are less likely to have access to faith-based youth groups than those living in affluent areas. There is a real opportunity for Boys Brigade to target their new funding to provide access to young people in areas without existing access to faith-based provision.

Key Opportunity: Providing access to Christian-based youth work in disadvantaged areas where young people currently have less opportunity than their more affluent peers to experience faith and spirituality in a youth setting.

Inspiring

Young people are spending more time online consuming content that is influencing their values, and views of the world and themselves. Higher rates of mental health disorders and overwhelmed services mean young people need community-based support more than ever. The dynamics of young people's friendships are also changing, as relationships are conducted more and more online. This may be related to a drop in satisfaction with friendships, and feelings of isolation as they spend more time on their own. Volunteer youth workers at Boys Brigade can be role models and provide safe spaces to build trusted relationships with young people, as well as helping them to build healthy relationships with each other. In our increasingly polarised world where cancel culture seems rife, demonstrating the Christian model of relationship that values difference and overcomes conflict can help to inspire young people to experience all the fullness of life found in Christ.

Key Opportunity: Modelling the inclusive nature of the Kingdom of God, helping to equip young people to reach across the divisions in our society and to experience the hope, freedom, and community that life in Christ brings.

Caring

Discovering and owning their identity is a major focus for young people in adolescence. But while there is greater diversity in identity expression, young people are also more likely to be bullied because of their gender, sexuality, or ethnicity. Boys Brigade youth groups can be spaces where young people are accepted, supported to work through conflict with peers, and where inclusivity and compassion can be modelled. We know that many struggle with their mental health and that statutory services are overwhelmed. By being present with young people at a significant time in their life, volunteers can offer the care, support, and space to talk that can make a real difference.

Key Opportunity: Providing safe and inclusive spaces within local communities where young people can be encouraged and supported to build authentic relationships with trusted adults who provide a non-judgemental and compassionate ear.

Trusting

The evidence suggests that young people are taking fewer risks and moving into independent adult life at a later age than previous generations. School is often very academically focused and structured, young people are spending less time outside the home socialising and they may be lacking opportunities for informal education and personal development. Organisations like Boys Brigade provide young people with a chance to become a role model themselves through taking on the responsibilities of leadership. By giving them a platform to be heard, young people can feel empowered and able to influence. Helping them to have the confidence in their own skills, abilities and ideas is preparing them to lead in a world that needs their contribution, demonstrating the value Christ places on them as intentionally created individuals who are lovingly called and equipped to live for him.

Key Opportunity: Empowering young people to believe in themselves and their God-given potential, providing opportunities for them to develop leadership skills and supporting them to encourage and build up each other

Methodology

Overview

There are many aspects of young people's lives that have not changed over the last 30-40 years. However, there have been significant shifts in culture, technology, and wider society, all of which shape young people's experiences and worldview. By identifying these trends and pressures, this report aims to help The Boys' Brigade volunteers 'see' young people and the worlds they inhabit with clarity and compassion. In this document we aim to answer the following questions.

1. What shifts in culture and society define the experience of being a young person in 2023?
2. What are the primary ways that young people's lives have changed over the last 10 years?

Review of key trend data

This report is the summary of an extensive review of published data relating to young people's lives. It focuses almost exclusively on studies with a 'time-series' or 'longitudinal' design. This means that the same questions were asked of young people in a particular age-bracket every year, or every few years.¹ This allows us to see trends and visualize the ways young people's lives stay the same or change over time.²

Wherever possible we have collected, synthesized, and summarized the best quality studies produced over the last 10 years or so, which help us understand shifts in young people's experience. We have prioritised evidence collected from government departments, longitudinal studies and research projects with large sample sizes and robust methodologies.

Who the report covers

This report is a summary of key research studies exploring the lives of 10-18 year across the UK.³ For ease of communication, we refer to 'young people' throughout the document.⁴ It has not always been possible to identify studies that are UK wide, and so we sometimes report on data that is solely from England.

¹ In some studies the same young people are surveyed every year (e.g. 10-15 year olds whose households answer the same questions each year as part of the 'Understanding Society' research) and in other studies different young people are asked the same question every year or few years (e.g.

² In exploring how life has changed for young people over 10 years we obviously needed to avoid simply picking up the ways that young people's views or experiences change simply by virtue of them growing older. The Millennium Cohort Study tracked the same young people over three time points, and we make clear when we use this data.

³ While The Boys Brigade also works in the Republic of Ireland, the terms of this report only cover the United Kingdom.

⁴ The term 'children and young people' is frequently used

Limitations and challenges

Each study is limited in the questions it covers, the age range it includes, the years data was collected and by geographical reach. There are some areas where we just don't have trend data. In these cases, we have looked for cross-sectional or 'snap-shot' surveys that tell us something about one or more moments in time, even if the questions are not completely comparable.

We have collected far more data than we include in the report but prioritise that which is most relevant in helping volunteers understand how life has changed for young people, and which is most robust due to the design of the study.

There are many large-scale studies where the most recent published wave is a couple of years old, because it takes a long time to analyse and publish results. In these cases, we don't yet know what effect, if any, COVID-19 may have on these trends. Our second report will focus exclusively on the impact of the pandemic and help to address these gaps.

Finally, we have looked at data for young people as a group, rather than breaking it down by variables such as gender, ethnicity, location, disability, mental health diagnosis, specific age, or religion. This is primarily to make sure the report is manageable but is also a reflection on the data available. It will be important to recognise that each young person is unique, and that their context and experience won't necessarily be reflected in this report.

Given the short timeframe for the work, this summary is not exhaustive or comprehensive. Despite these limitations we are confident that, taken together, this data gives a strong sense of the ways life has changed for 10–18-year-olds.

Longitudinal research

This report draws heavily on the following data sources

Understanding Society	UK wide household panel survey 40,000 households each year. 10-15 year olds
Longitudinal Survey of Young People in England	Cohort 1: Next Steps - 2004 to 2010 Cohort 2: Our Future – 2013 – current
Health Behaviour of School-aged Children (HBSC)	Cross-national research study across Europe and North America, every four years
Millennium Cohort Study	Following 19,000 young people born in 2000/01
The Census 2021	Survey of households in England and Wales. Collected every 10 years

PART 1: Health and well-being

Summary

Adolescence is a key period for brain development, and we have learned a lot more in the last decade about the changes occurring in young people's brains. Adolescence is an opportunity for young people to be supported to create positive neurological pathways that will help them build social connections and maintain relationships into adult life.

The number of young people receiving special educational needs support in schools is steadily increasing but parents aren't always happy with the support their child receives.

Young people's overall satisfaction with life has decreased but satisfaction with family remains relatively high. This decline is more evident in younger teenagers (age 10-15) with less significant changes in 16-24 yr olds. The decline seems to be mostly related to satisfaction with appearance, friendships, and school. Young people who are classified as disabled under the equality act have lower wellbeing scores (State of the Nation DfE report Feb 2022).

Young people seem to be more divided on how they rate their physical health than ten years ago, but generally more think their health is better now. However there has been a rise in the number of children who are classified as disabled and obesity rates have increased. In 2019 one in three seventeen-year-olds were either obese or overweight. Young people from the poorest backgrounds were twice as likely to be obese than those from the least deprived areas.

There has been an increase in young people with psychological distress in the last 15 years and an increase in probable mental health disorders from 1 in 9 young people in 2017 to 1 in 6 in 2021. Despite this there have only been slight increases in mental health diagnoses across the last two decades, possibly due to service capacity and the difficulties for young people in accessing clinical diagnostic services.

There has been an increase in both self-reported self-harm and hospitalisations for self-harm, the latter being driven by higher numbers for older teenage girls.

Hospital admissions for young people with eating disorders has increased by 90% from 2015/16 to 2020/21 with a rise of 35% in the last year alone.

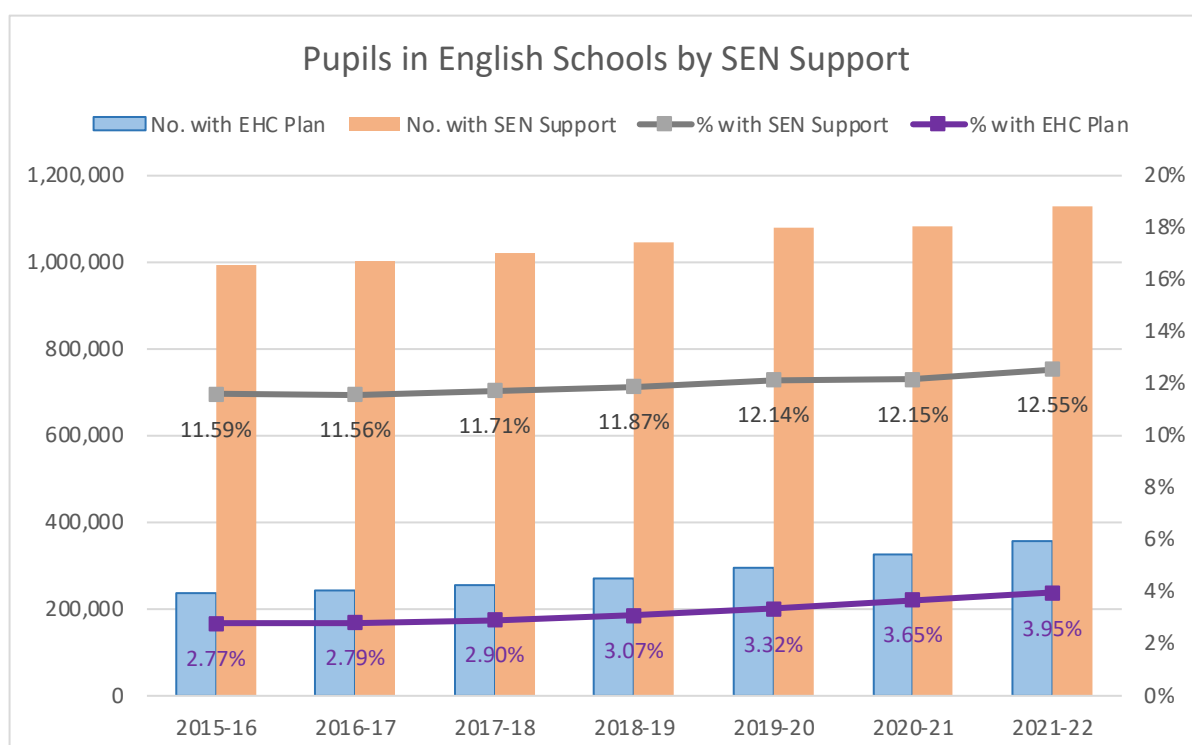
Much higher numbers of Childline's counselling sessions refer to suicidal thoughts or feelings than in previous years and Childline are making more referrals for further support. Suicide rates themselves have remained relatively stable, but there is an ongoing gender disparity, with higher rates for boys than girls.

1.1 Neurological development in adolescence

Whilst most of our brain’s physical growth occurs in early childhood, recent research has shown that adolescence is a period when our brains undergo extensive remodelling and rewiring. The remodelling that goes on involves a couple of key areas: the pre-frontal cortex (the “sensible” bit of our brains where we think around decisions) and the limbic system (where we process emotions). The limbic system develops first and fastest, and the gap in the rate of development between these two systems explains why teenagers are so often driven by their emotions, respond to incentives and will take risks without being able to fully rationally consider them, or the consequences.

Neurodiversity

Up to 15% of the population are thought to be neurodiverse and the remaining majority are referred to as neurotypical. Government data shows a small but steady increase from 2016 to 2022 in both the number of young people being provided with Special Educational Need (SEN) support at school (11.6% to 12.6%) and those with an Educational Health Care (EHC) Plan (2.8% to 4%). The most common type of need for those young people with an EHC Plan is autism. Latest Government prevalence surveys estimate that around 1 in 100 people are autistic (National Autism Society) but actual numbers are likely to be higher. Diagnosis data from routinely collected GP data between 1998 and 2018 reported the largest increases in rates were seen in 6–11-year-olds, adults over 19 and females.⁵



⁵ This is data referring to diagnosis, not prevalence and increases may well be due to increased awareness and opportunities for diagnosis rather than increase in the numbers of cases

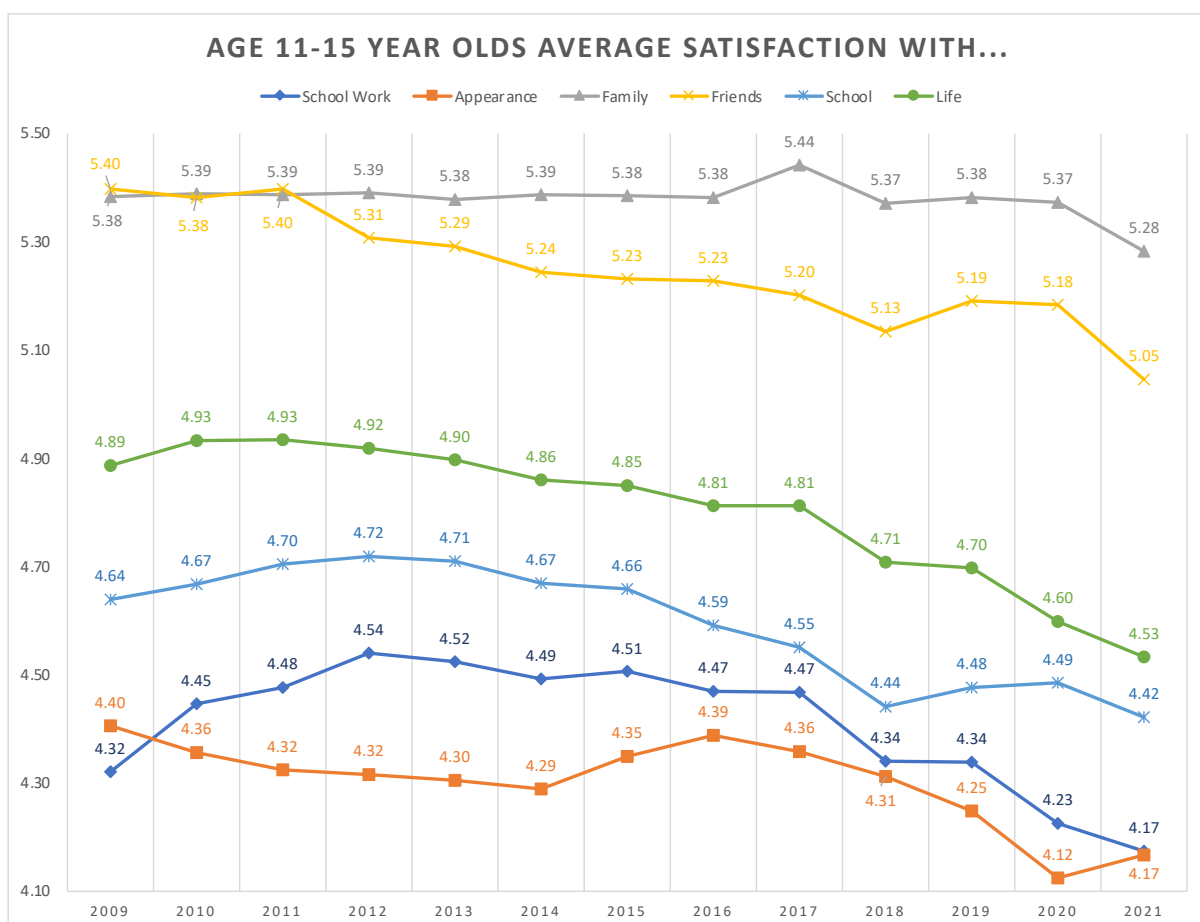
Data from The Lancet and NICE estimate that 5% of children in the UK have Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) with three times as many boys diagnosed as girls. There has been an increase in the number of young people being prescribed medication for ADHD from just 1 in 6637 young people in 1995, to 1 in 200 in 2008 and 2013.

Snapshot:

In a recent survey of 500 parents of young people with SEN a third said their child was not getting what they were entitled to in their EHC Plan and a quarter described the SEN support in their area as poor or very poor.⁶

1.2 Health and wellbeing

Life Satisfaction

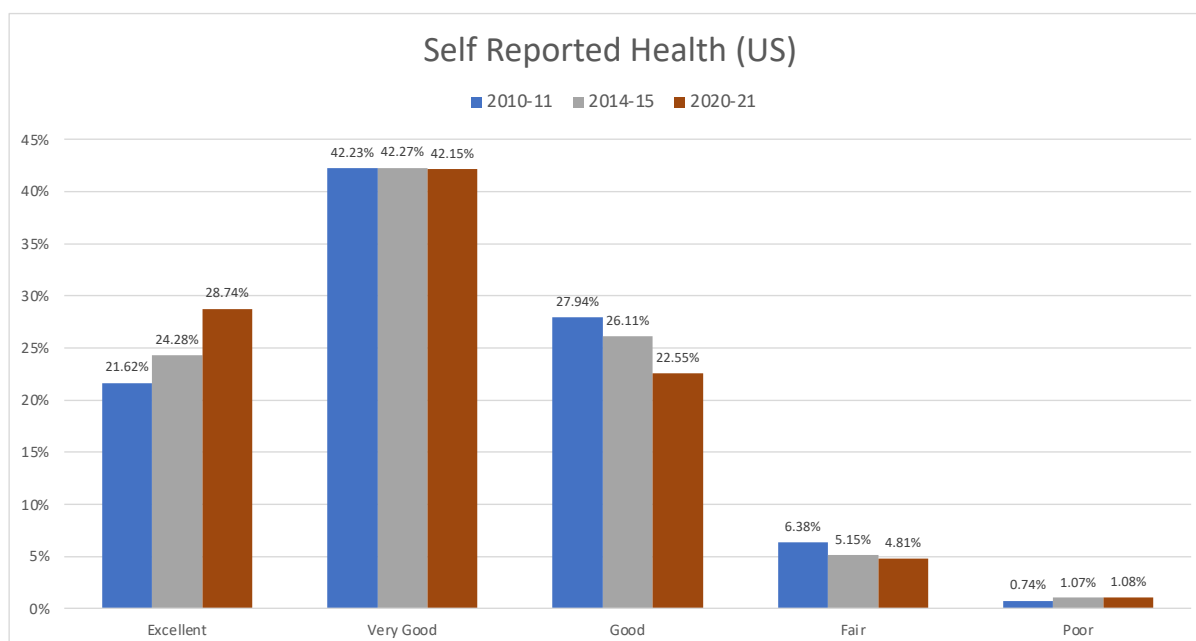
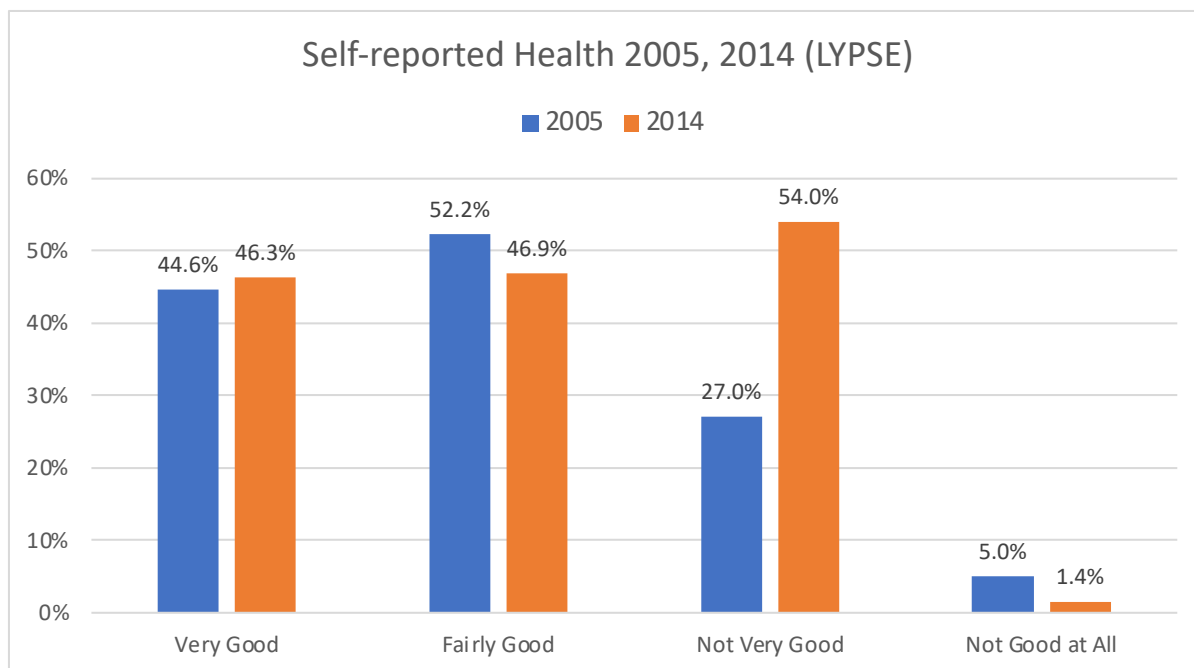


Overall young people’s satisfaction with life decreased between 2009-2021. Satisfaction with family has remained fairly high and stable, whereas satisfaction with friends, life, school, schoolwork and appearance seems to show a slight decline across the decade.

⁶ ‘Thousands of Parents and Children Failed by SEND System, ITV News Research Shows’, *ITV News*, 2023 <<https://www.itv.com/news/anglia/2023-03-01/thousands-of-parents-and-children-failed-by-send-system-itv-news-research-shows>> [accessed 17 April 2023].

Physical Health

Most young people report their physical health to be good or excellent, and this has not significantly changed since 2005.



Rates of obesity in reception age children remained stable from 2006 to prior to the pandemic, whilst rates for children in Year 6 increased slowly but steadily and both age groups saw a sharp increase in 2020/21 (the spike may be due to a different data collection method but continued steadily increasing in 2021/22). The link between deprivation and obesity also increased over this period. Data from the Millennium Cohort study in 2019 reported that 1 in 3 seventeen year olds were either obese or overweight and that young

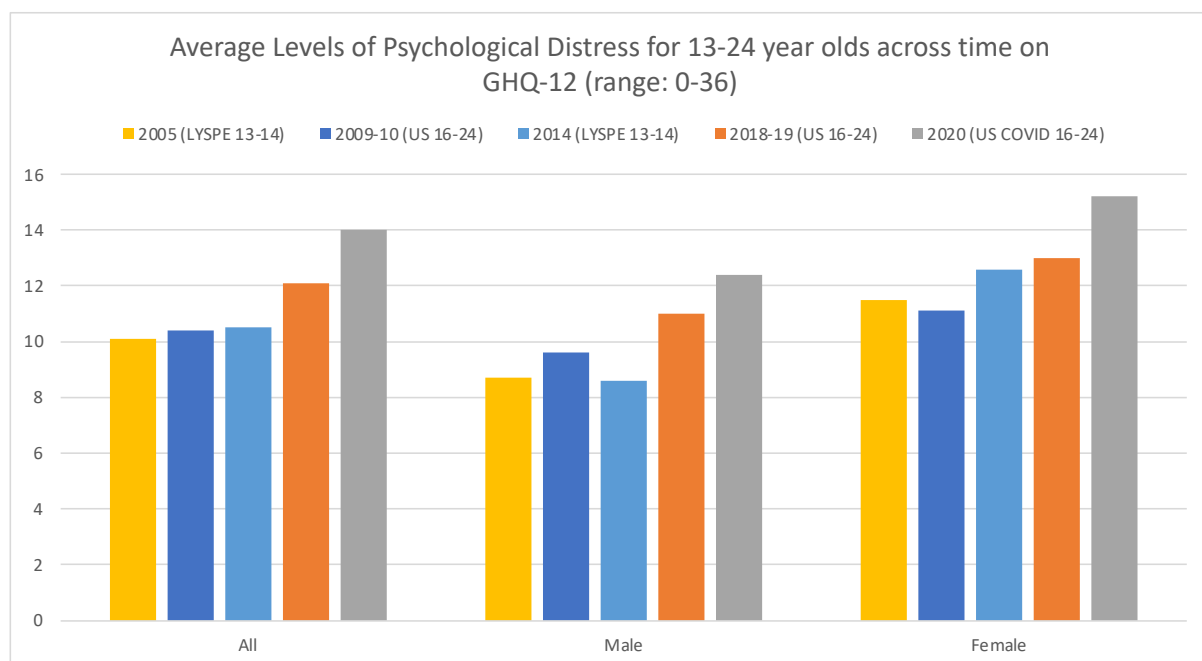
people from the poorest backgrounds were twice as likely to be obese than those from the least deprived areas.

Disability

Data from the UK Government Family Resources Survey shows a steady increase from 6% of young people classified as disabled in 2010/11 to 9% in 2020/21. This is supported by 2021 Census data that shows an increase from 2001/2011 in the percentage of young people reported as disabled. This increase may be due to the inclusion of mental health as a disability since the 2011 census. Rates increase with age, with higher rates in boys under 15 years old and older rates in girls age 16-24.

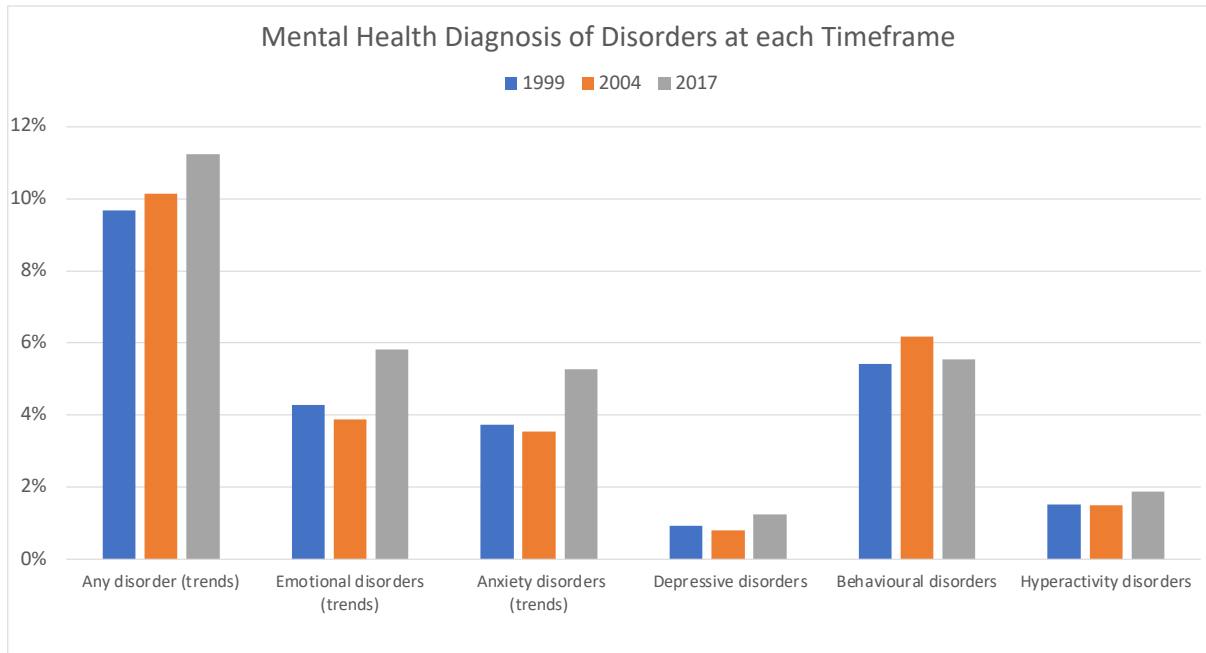
Mental Health

Similar data on psychological distress from different UK surveys highlights a steady, slow increase from 2005 to 2020 in young people, indicating that young people were becoming more distressed over this time. The increase seems to be driven by changes in levels for both boys and girls in the older age group (16-24 year olds) and mostly girls in the younger group (13-14 year olds).

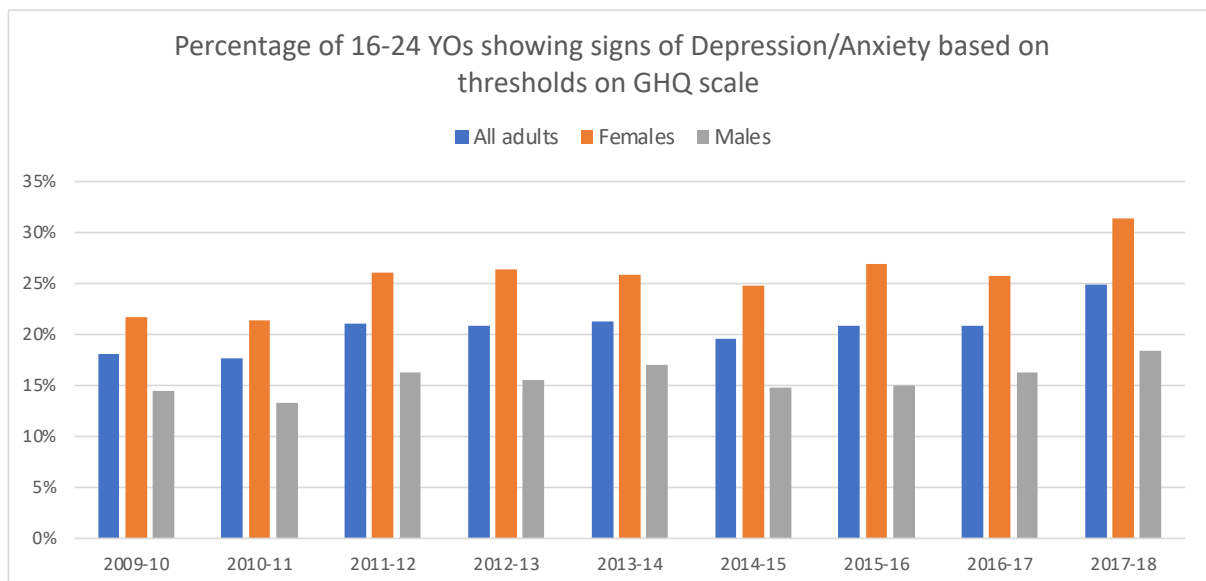


Data on rates of probable mental health disorder from the Mental Health in Children and Young People (MHCYP) survey shows an increase from 1 in 9 young people aged 6-16 in 2017 to 1 in 6 in 2021. There was no difference between 2020 and 2021. This indicates a much steeper rise in the years just prior to the pandemic than diagnosis data from 1999-2017 which showed only a 2% increase over almost two decades for 11–15-year-olds.⁷

⁷ The data reported by the MHCYP survey is an assessment of young people’s mental health based on their responses to the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) rather than diagnostic data as in the graphs above.

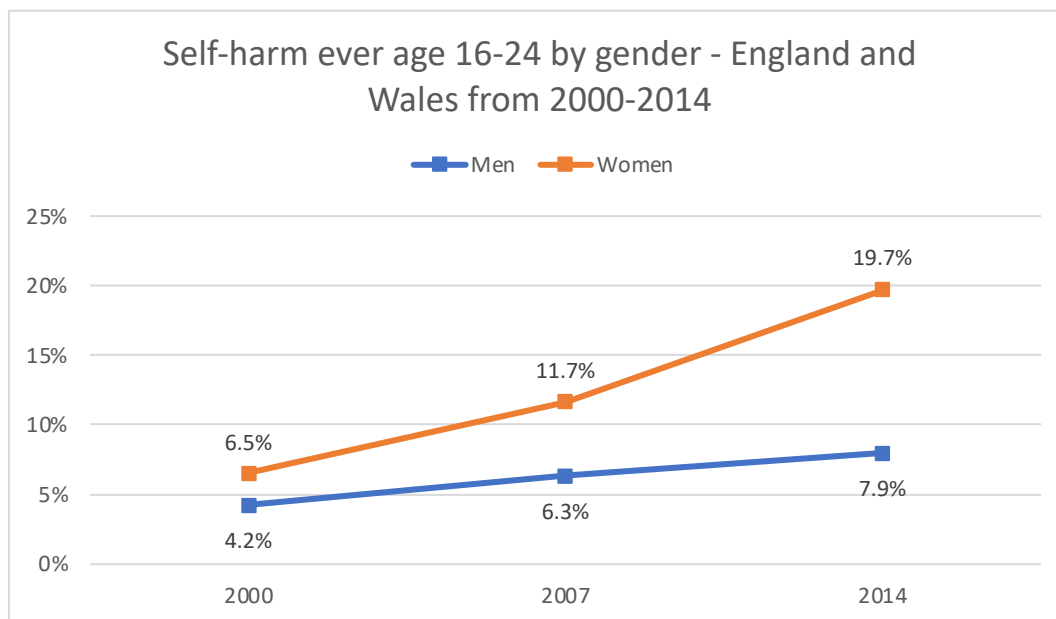


The increase in diagnoses seems to be primarily caused by increases in anxiety disorders.

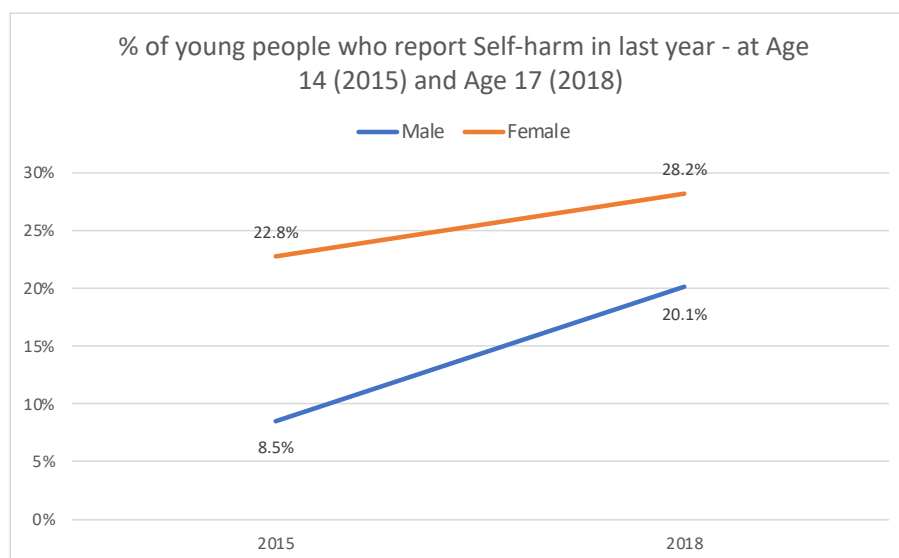


From April 2016 to October 2022 there was a large but steady 323% rise in the number of young people referred but only a 12% increase in the number of doctors working in child and adolescent services, suggesting a significant gap between likely prevalence and diagnosis rates. It's also recognised that community levels of mental health disorders are higher because they occur without diagnosis. Data for 16-24 year olds for 2009 to 2018 based on thresholds for signs of Depression/Anxiety shows much higher levels than the diagnosis rates with significantly higher rates in females than males.

Self-Harm



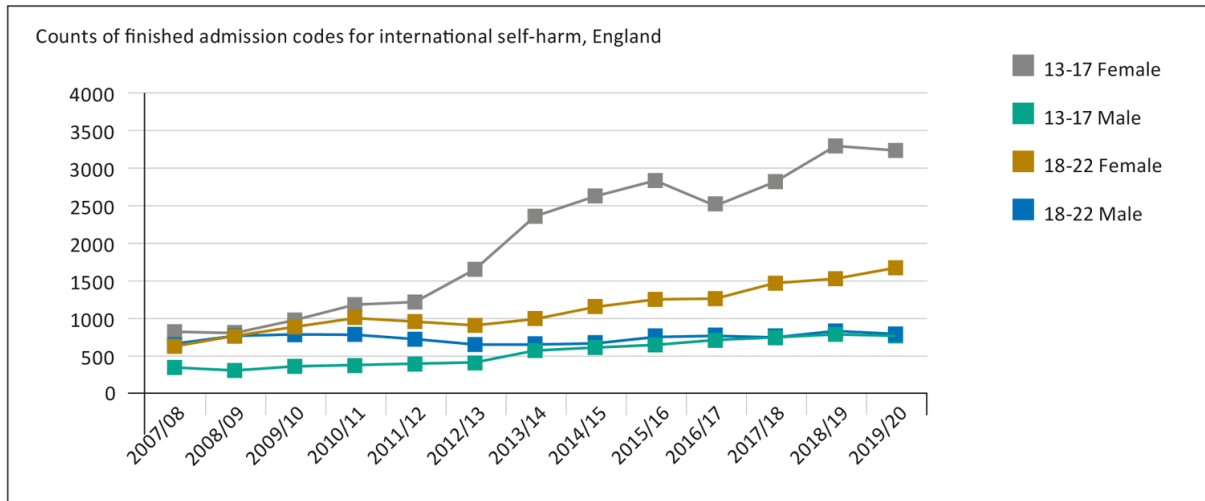
Between 2000 and 2014 the number of 16–24-year-olds who reported ever having self-harmed increased. Among women aged 16 to 24 years in 2000, one in fifteen reported having ever self-harmed (6.5%); this increased to one in nine in 2007 (11.7%) and to one in five in 2014 (19.7%). In 2000, rates of self-harm were similar in young men and women. By 2014, young women were more than twice as likely to report it as their male counterparts (19.7%, compared with 7.9% of 16- to 24-year-old men). Data from the millennium cohort study also shows higher rates for females but a sharper increase in males between ages 14 to 17, slightly closing the gap. It's not clear if this increase is due to a later onset of self-harm in males than females or whether there is just a general increase in self harm in boys in 2018 compared with 2014.



When compared to hospitalisations which have also increased, there are similarities with the gender and age profile to self-reported rates. Females and older teenagers show the

highest rates of admissions and hospitalisations whilst rates in young adults (age 18-24) have remained relatively stable.

Chart 6.13: Hospital admissions for self-harm have increased, particularly for girls aged 13-17

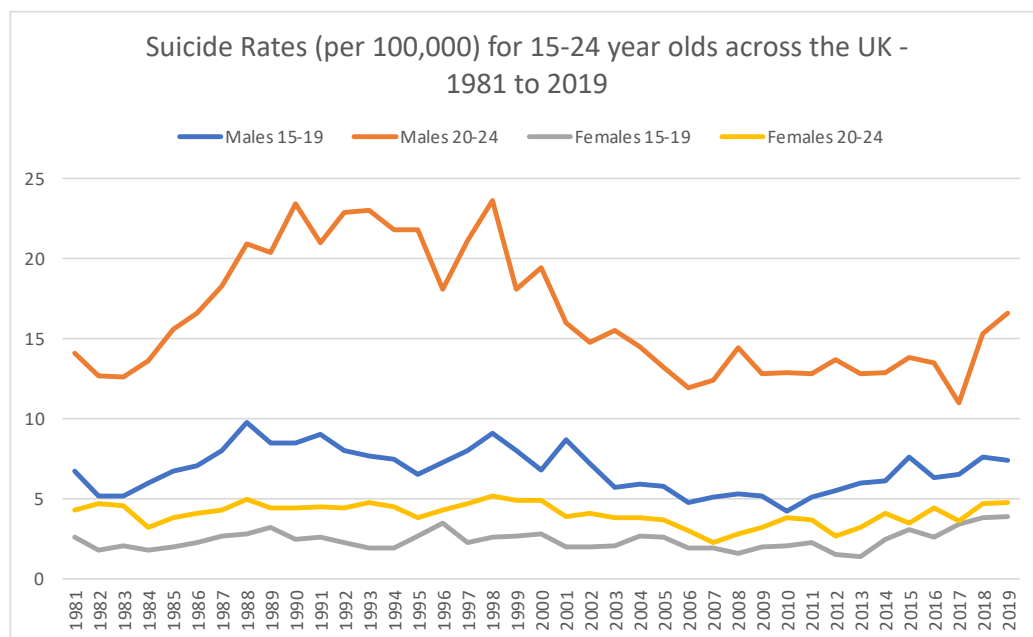


Source: Hospital Episode Statistics (HES), NHS Digital 2020

Eating Disorders

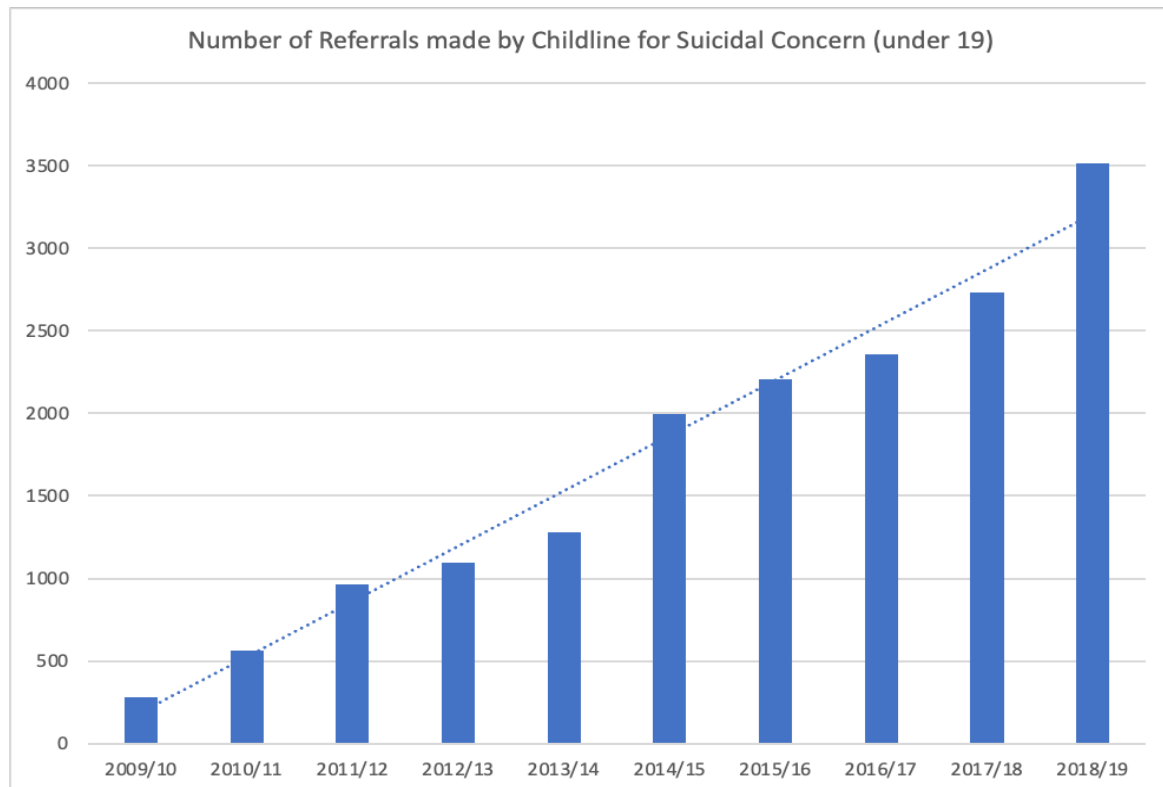
There has been a rise of 90% in the numbers of children and young people with eating disorders admitted to hospital between 2015/16 to 2020/21 from 3,541 to 6,713 episodes, and a 35.4% increase in the last year alone. A stark rise of 128% is seen in boys and young men — from 280 hospital admissions in 2015/16 to 637 in 2020/21.⁸

Suicide



⁸ 'Hospital Admissions for Eating Disorders Increased by 84% in the Last Five Years', *Www.Rcpsych.Ac.Uk* <<https://www.rcpsych.ac.uk/news-and-features/latest-news/detail/2022/05/18/hospital-admissions-for-eating-disorders-increased-by-84-in-the-last-five-years>> [accessed 17 April 2023].

Males aged 20-24 have a consistently higher suicide rate than other age groups, however this has reduced over the 20 years of this millennium compared to a spike in the 80/90s. However, we can notice a potential trend towards this spike again in 2018-19, which could be further influenced by COVID impacts – as yet unseen in data.⁹



These increases in numbers of referrals made by Childline to external support for a young person due to suicide concern correlate with the increase in the number of counselling sessions related to suicidal thoughts – in 2007/8 just 2% of the 176,185 counselling sessions provided were about suicidal thoughts or feelings whilst in 2018/19 it was 10% of 251,481. Girls are much more likely to contact Childline for support with 11,719 of their counselling sessions for suicidal thoughts in 2020/21 being with girls compared with just 1,592 sessions with boys. In contrast of the 212 recorded suicides in young people aged 10-19 in 2021, twice as many were boys (141) compared to girls (71).

The positive from this data is that the increase in the number of referrals made by Childline and counselling sessions given is not matched by a rise in rates suggesting that seeking support really does help prevent suicide.

Snapshot:

Young people are spending more time in AandE because of mental health crises and being unable to access earlier support. CAHMS waiting lists are still high as are thresholds for help. However by April 2023 there will be 400 NHS Mental Health Support Teams in

⁹ The Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health do highlight there has always been a likelihood of underreporting but that a lowering of the standard of proof used by coroners from “beyond all reasonable doubt” to “balance of probabilities” in 2018 is likely to result in increased numbers of deaths classified as suicide in subsequent years.

schools across the country providing support for those with mild to moderate mental health issues and early research has suggested they are having a positive impact on the young people and in the schools in which they are based.¹⁰

¹⁰ Denis Campbell and Denis Campbell Health policy editor, 'Children in Mental Health Crisis Spent More than 900,000 Hours in AandE in England', *The Guardian*, 9 February 2023, section Society <<https://www.theguardian.com/society/2023/feb/09/children-mental-health-crisis-a-and-e-england>> [accessed 17 April 2023].

PART 2: Identity, values, and beliefs

Summary

Young adults today are the most likely age group to refer to themselves as a different gender to the sex they were assigned at birth. Recent surveys suggest that most young people are pro-trans and over half of young people know someone who is transgender.

There has been an increase in the number of young people reporting that they are attracted to both sexes in the last five years. Young people who are LGBT+ are less likely to have strong relationships with their family.

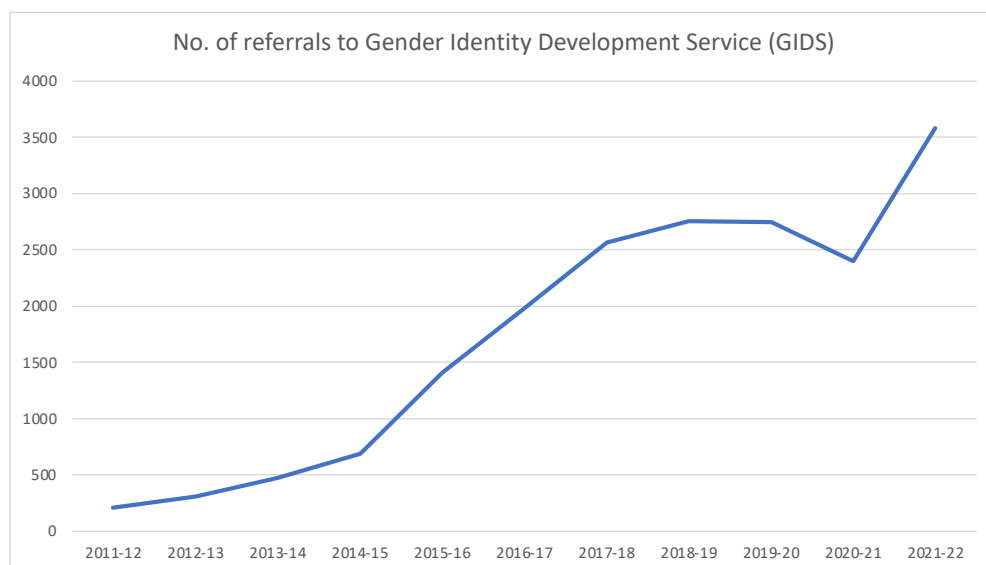
Young people are much less likely to consider themselves 'Christian' and less likely to have grown up in environments where they have gained knowledge or experience of the Christian faith. In general, they don't see church particularly positively. However, this doesn't necessarily mean they are all actively rejecting faith. Many pray, believe in a power greater than themselves and are open to hearing more about Christian faith.

Many young people in the UK believe their generation have the power to make a meaningful impact on the world but have lower confidence and commitment when it comes to acting. Most are concerned that climate change will affect the UK and over a quarter of young people report that this anxiety impacts on their daily lives. Despite this there are only marginal changes in some of their environmental behaviours.

Labour remains the most popular political party for young people to say they would vote for; however, a significant number still say they wouldn't vote for any party and there is a relatively high level of disinterest in politics. However young people do use digital spaces to claim agency they might not get in more traditional civic spaces, and other generations do believe that young people can influence how we all create change.

Despite greater diversity regarding gender and sexual identity and increases in young people's confidence in publicly owning these identities, there seems to be a rise in reported bullying related to ethnicity, gender, disability and sexual orientation. Whether this is due to more young people feeling able to report it, increased awareness of what bullying is, or a genuine rise in incidents is not clear.

2.1 Gender and sexuality



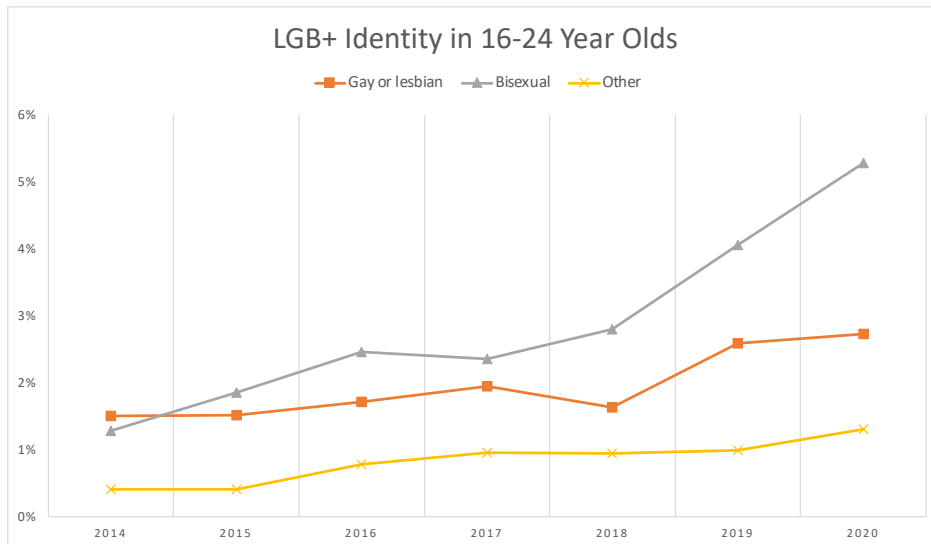
There has been a steep rise in referrals to the NHS Gender Identity Development Service (GIDS) since 2015.¹¹ Within this data is a shift from predominantly birth-registered males presenting with gender dysphoria at an earlier age to birth-registered females presenting in their early teenage years (Interim Cass Report).

In the 2021 census young people aged 16-24 were the most likely age group to have said that their gender identity was different to the sex they were assigned at birth.¹² It was a voluntary question answered by 94% of the population over 16.

Despite increases in the percentages of all age groups identifying as LGB+, young people aged 16-24 are the most likely to identify as LGB+ than any other age group. The data suggests this is driven mostly by an increase in the percentage of young people identifying as bisexual. This is supported by an increase in young people in the Millennium Cohort study reporting sexual attraction to both sexes from 5% in 2015 when they were 14 to 20% in 2018 when they were 17 years old.

¹¹ GIDS is a highly specialised clinic for young people presenting with difficulties with their gender identity and was established in 1989. It is commissioned by NHS England and the data in the graph includes referrals that were not accepted by the service.

¹² There is no comparative data for previous years as this was the first census to include a question on gender identity.



Snapshot:

The majority of young people are pro-transgender. Research published by LGBT+ charity Just Like Us in 2021 reports that almost all young people (84%) say they would support a friend if they came out as transgender. 96% of LGBT+ respondents and 76% of non- LGBT+ respondents say they would be supportive of their friend. Over half (54%) of young people already know someone who is transgender.¹³ This compares with a YouGov Survey in 2022 that shows 55% of adults in the UK think people should be able to socially identify as a different gender to the one assigned at birth and 1 in 3 adults saying they know someone who is transgender.¹⁴

Young people who identify as LGTB+ are more likely to self-harm, have depression or anxiety, be lonely and are less likely to have strong relationships with family or hope for their future.¹⁵

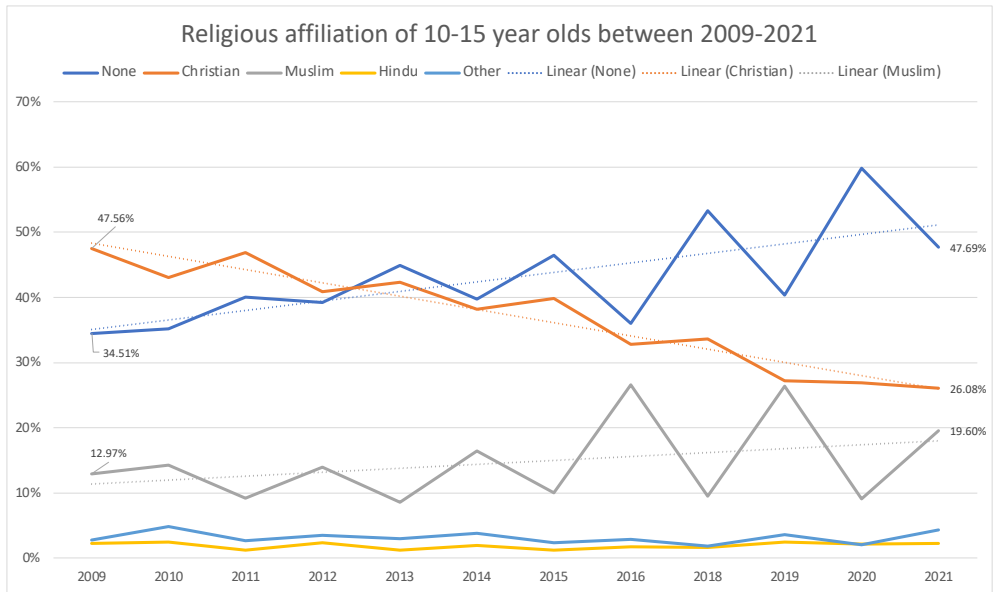
2.2 Faith and spirituality

Whilst the number of young people identifying with other faiths has remained relatively static or even increased (e.g. Islam) the percentage of those who would call themselves 'Christian' has dropped from 48% in 2009 to 26% in 2021. Parents completing the Census on behalf of their children reported a slightly smaller reduction in Christian faith, from 53.7% in 2011 to 36.9% in 2021. These changes reflect the growing number of people identifying as having no religion. The changes may also be reflective of young people not having grown up in Christian homes, rather than actively turning away from it.

¹³ 'Just-Like-Us-2021-Report-Growing-Up-LGBT.Pdf' <<https://www.justlikeus.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/Just-Like-Us-2021-report-Growing-Up-LGBT.pdf>> [accessed 3 May 2023].

¹⁴ 'Where Does the British Public Stand on Transgender Rights in 2022? | YouGov' <<https://yougov.co.uk/topics/society/articles-reports/2022/07/20/where-does-british-public-stand-transgender-rights>> [accessed 3 May 2023].

¹⁵ 'Just-Like-Us-2021-Report-Growing-Up-LGBT.Pdf'.



Snapshot:

While the percentage of young people describing themselves as Christian is falling, beliefs, openness and practice are more complex and research suggests there are still plenty of young people who are open to faith and spirituality.

Half (51%) of 11–18-year-olds in a Youth for Christ survey in January 2020 said they believed in a form of supernatural being or power greater than themselves, and of these, 63% said that being/power was God. Just under a third (31%) said they prayed, and of those who pray, 49% said they pray at least once a day. When asked ‘if you were invited to find out more, would you be interested?’ 36% said ‘yes’.

Many of these young people struggled to believe in God because of the suffering, death and illness they saw in the world, and yet when asked which words might describe God’s character the top five were: powerful, kind, loving, caring and good. However, they are less positive about church. While 62% said they’d had contact with a church, only 8% viewed this contact positively. Contact was mostly through school visits and formal events, which were not seen as very engaging.¹⁶

Some additional insight comes from a 2021 survey by Barna, in which the percentage of 13–17-year-olds in the UK who self-identify as Christian *and* say they have made a personal commitment to follow Jesus Christ was a little over one in 10 (12%), with nearly one-third being ‘nominal’ Christians (30%). Still, this survey found that teenagers in the UK were more likely to hold positive beliefs about Jesus than negative ones, with top beliefs being ‘He offers hope to people’ (34%) and ‘He cares about people’ (34%).¹⁷

¹⁶ Z-A of Faith and Spirituality, Youth for Christ (2020)

¹⁷ The Open Generation: UK Report, Barna (2023)

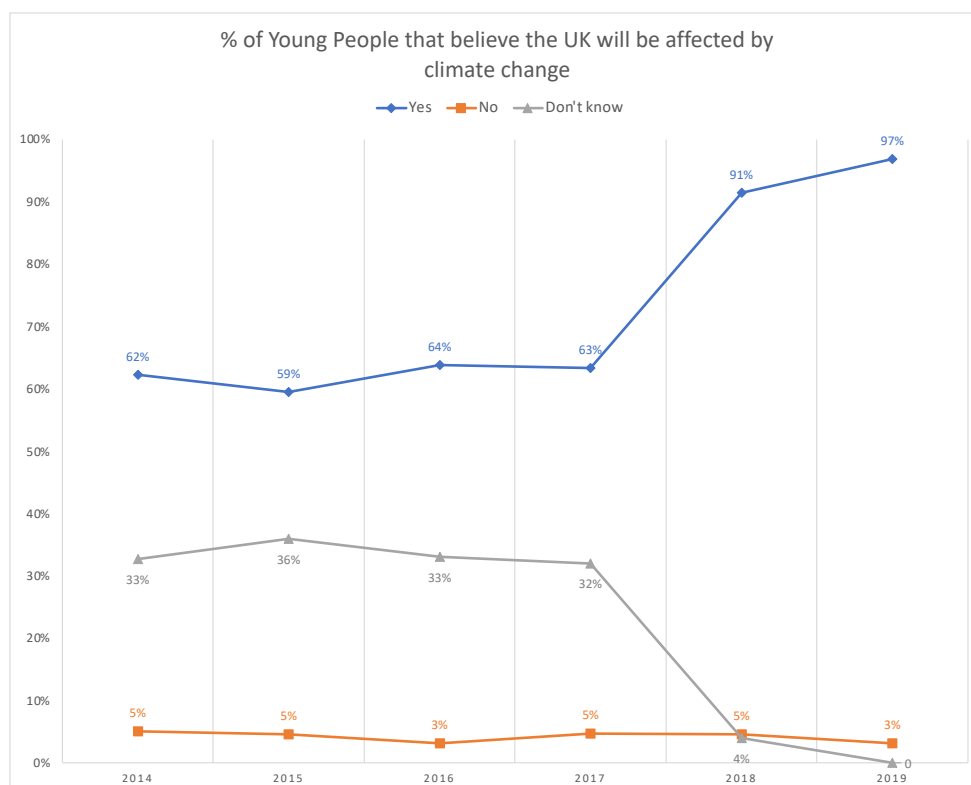
2.3 Politics, justice and social equality

Snapshot:

Barna's 2021 survey of 1000 13–17-year-olds in the UK found that 44% agreed strongly that 'My generation has the ability to make a positive and meaningful impact on the world.' The five greatest concerns for these young people were global climate change (44%), mental health issues (42%), extreme poverty (34%), pollution (33%) and racial injustice (29%).

The research differentiated between those who were 'justice motivated' (displayed conviction, confidence, and commitment), 'justice-oriented' (two of the three) or 'justice neutral' (none of these). Teens in the UK were less likely to be justice motivated than their global peers. They were also much more likely to express the conviction that action is important, than they were to feel confident, or have the commitment, to follow through and take that action.¹⁸

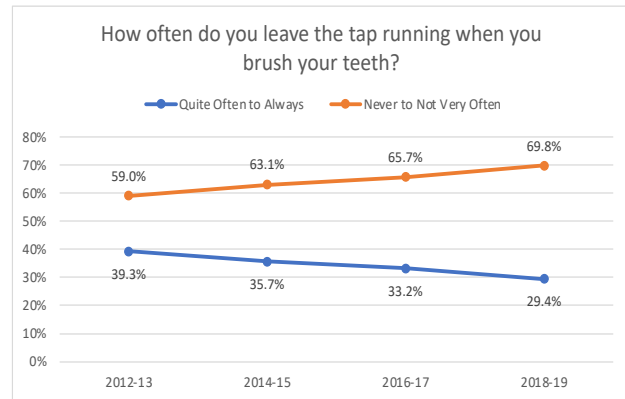
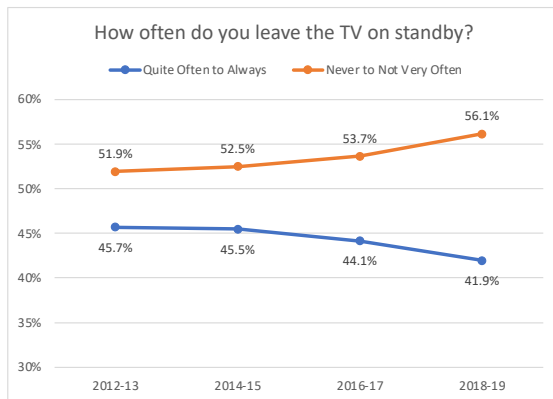
Environmental Attitudes



Young people might be more convinced than ever that the UK will be affected by climate change but this doesn't necessarily translate into significant changes in their environmental behaviours. Three other questions within the Understanding Society youth survey asked

¹⁸ The Open Generation: UK Report, Barna (2023)

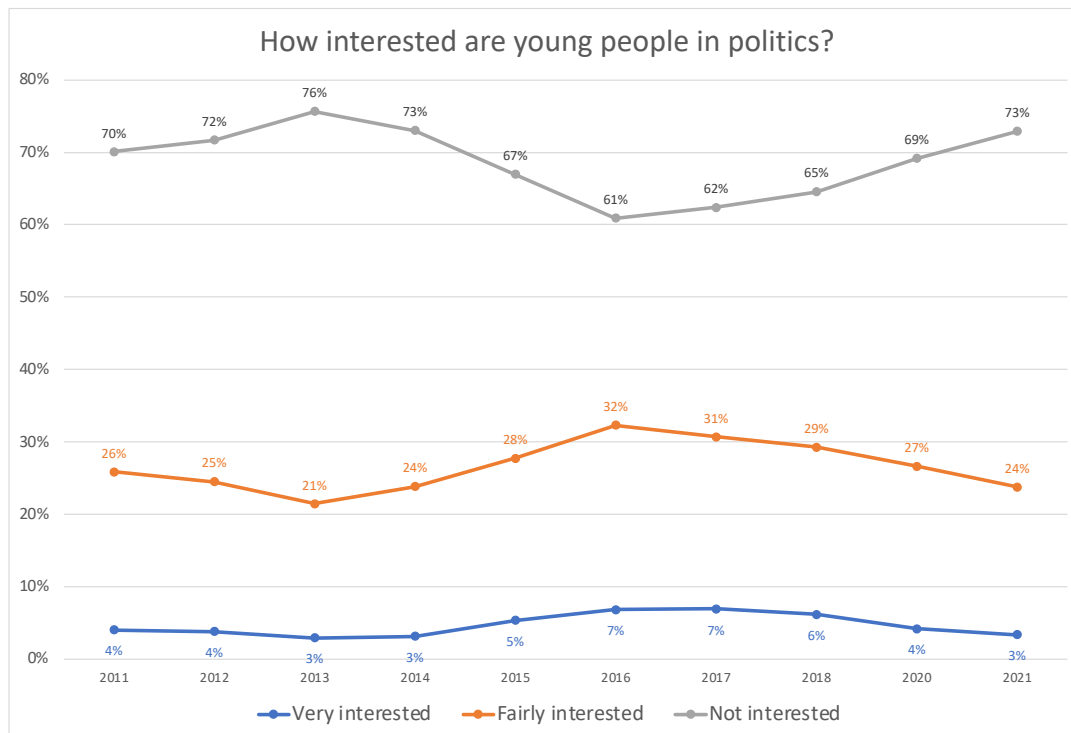
specifically how often young people leave the TV on standby, turn off lights in unused rooms and leave the tap running when brushing their teeth. Young people in 2018-19 were more likely to turn the tap and TV off with steady changes in these behaviours over time but there was little change in turning off lights and significant numbers were still leaving the TV or taps on.



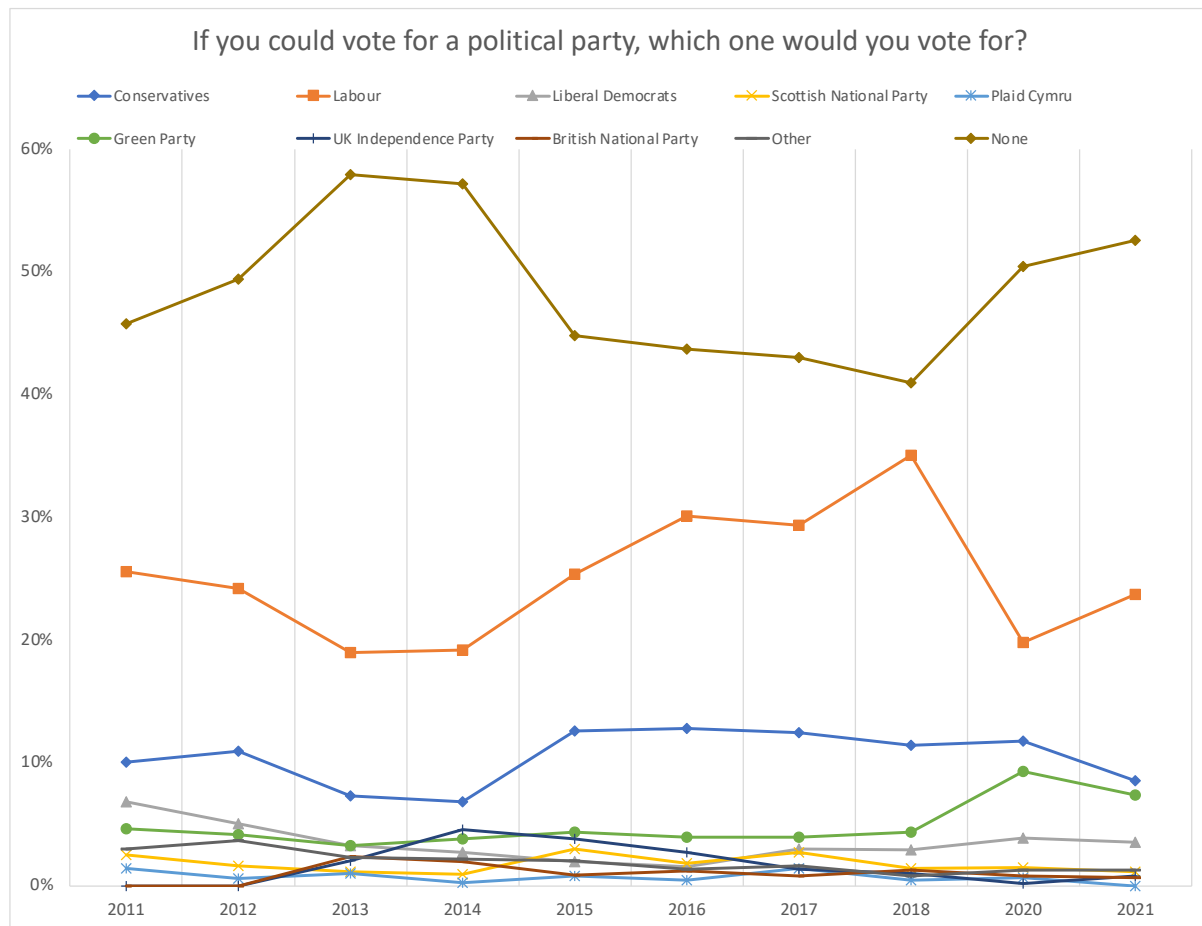
Snapshot:

Research from 2021 suggests that whilst young people feel guilt and individual responsibility for tackling climate change they also feel a lack of agency which is leading to anxiety. 49% of young people in the UK were very or extremely worried about climate change with 28% reporting their anxiety negatively impacts on their daily life and functioning. (Lancet study)

Political views



10–15-year-olds remain most likely to vote Labour out of all the political parties although the majority say they wouldn't vote for anyone and general interest in politics remains low. There are some fluctuations, mostly notably 2013–2016 where interest and likelihood to vote Labour both increased. This coincided with the rise of UKIP in British Politics and the Brexit vote in 2016.¹⁹



Snapshot:

Despite a lack of interest in party politics young people are exercising their democratic rights in other ways such as attending demonstrations or protests or signing petitions. One global marketing survey reporting that 70 % of Gen Z are involved in a social or political cause. They are more likely to boycott a product, company or country due to their political, social or environmental stance and only 1 in 5 would work for a company that fails to share their values.²⁰ Their comfortableness with digital spaces has enabled them to claim agency they might not get in more traditional civic spaces.²¹ A 2020 study

¹⁹ 73% of 18-24 year olds voted remain compared with 40% of over 65s which may account for a peak and subsequent decrease in young people's interest in politics either side of the Brexit vote

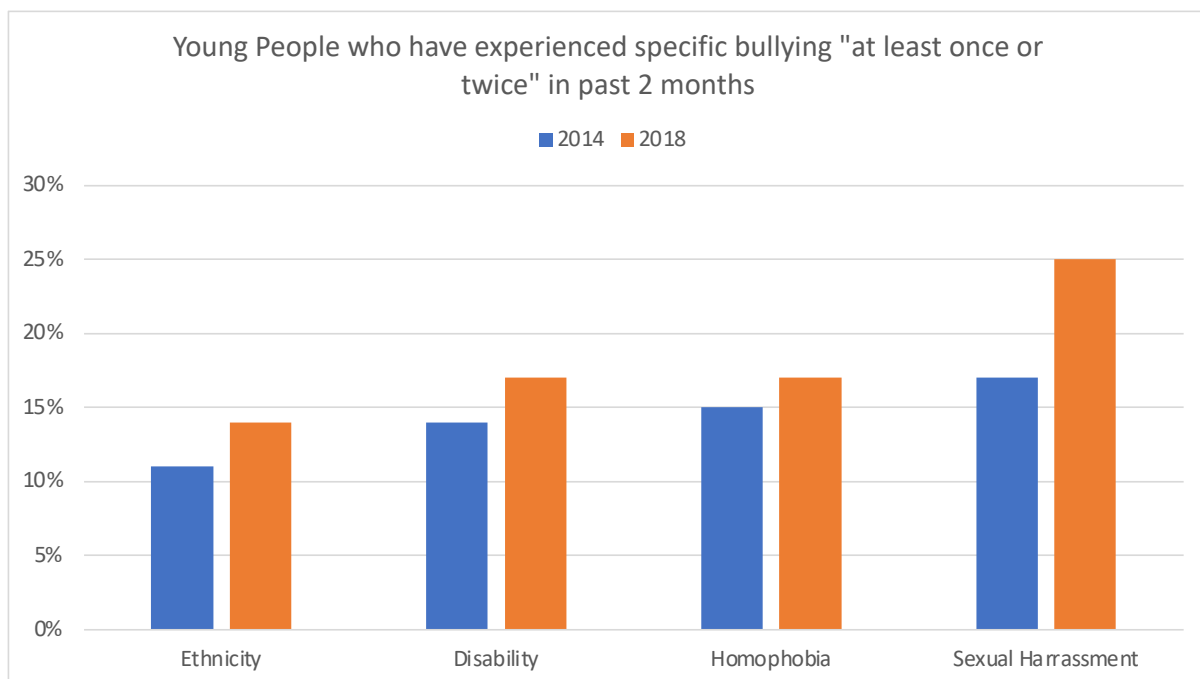
²⁰ '2022 Edelman Trust Barometer Special Report The New Cascade of Influence FINAL.Pdf' <<https://www.edelman.com/sites/g/files/aatuss191/files/2022-06/2022%20Edelman%20Trust%20Barometer%20Special%20Report%20The%20New%20Cascade%20of%20Influence%20FINAL.pdf>> [accessed 17 April 2023].

²¹ Megan Carnegie, 'Gen Z: How Young People Are Changing Activism' <<https://www.bbc.com/worklife/article/20220803-gen-z-how-young-people-are-changing-activism>> [accessed 17 April 2023].

from the UK Safer Internet Centre showed 34% of 8-to-17-year-olds say the internet has inspired them to take action about a cause and 43% say it makes them feel their voices matter.²² Recent protests have occurred in UK schools for various reasons and have been organised and shared on social media, widening their impact and spread.²³ There is evidence of a trickle up effect of this passion to support a cause, with 52% of all generations globally believing that college age students and teenagers influence how we create change.²⁴ Globally youth satisfaction with democracy is declining; results from global surveys during the period 1973 to 2020 suggest that a major contributing factor to this disillusionment is economic exclusion.²⁵

A more tolerant society?

Data from the Millennium Cohort study on bullying based on individual characteristics highlights that there has been an increase in all forms of specific bullying from 2014 to 2018.



This includes a notable rise in bullying that involves making comments or gestures of a sexual nature. This could be explained by increased awareness of this as a form of bullying

²² 'Free-to-Be-Me-Piecing-Together-Identity-Online-Safer-Internet-Day-2020.Pdf'

<<https://d1xsi6mgo67kia.cloudfront.net/uploads/2021/10/Free-to-be-me-Piecing-together-identity-online-Safer-Internet-Day-2020.pdf>> [accessed 11 May 2023].

²³ Sally Weale and Sally Weale Education correspondent, 'Pupil Protests across England and Wales Spread by Social Media, Experts Say', *The Guardian*, 3 March 2023, section Education

<<https://www.theguardian.com/education/2023/mar/03/pupil-protests-across-england-and-wales-spread-by-social-media-experts-say>> [accessed 17 April 2023].

²⁴ '2022 Edelman Trust Barometer Special Report The New Cascade of Influence FINAL.Pdf'.

²⁵ 'Youth_and_satisfaction_with_democracy.Pdf'

<https://www.cam.ac.uk/system/files/youth_and_satisfaction_with_democracy.pdf> [accessed 14 April 2023].

and increased calling out of this behaviour or alternatively due to actual increased rates being experienced? The MeToo movement in particular gained momentum in 2017 following the revelations about Harvey Weinstein raising the possibility that the observed increase may be in part related to greater awareness of what constitutes sexual harassment.²⁶

There has been a decrease in the reported numbers of Youth Racist assaults in the UK, however as a percentage of youth crime there has been no real change. This suggests the decline may be due to a reduction in overall youth crime, something that has been attributed to changes in policing and approaches to youth offending.

Snapshot:

The rise of the YIPs (Young Illiberal Progressives) – on the one hand young people appear to have fully grasped the baton of ‘progressivism’ that’s been handed down to them by previous generations but on the other hand some young people display a curiously ‘illiberal’ towards those who might not share their views. Just under half (46%) of 1500 young people surveyed by Channel 4 in 2022 agree that some people deserve to be cancelled and 27% say they have little tolerance for people with beliefs they disagree with.²⁷

An Ofsted Rapid Review into Sexual Harassment in Schools in 2021 reported that harmful sexual behaviours such as sending unsolicited sexually explicit material or sexist name calling are happening so frequently that some young people consider them normal. They also found that despite schools encouraging young people to speak out about sexual harassment, many don’t want to for fear of not being believed, being blamed or ostracised by peers.²⁸

²⁶ This may relate to wider intolerance and/or greater awareness and reporting in society as there are also increases in the number of hate crimes recorded in the UK between 2017-18 and 2012-22

²⁷ Robert Booth and Robert Booth Social affairs correspondent, “‘It’s out of Order’: Gen Z Speak up for Cancel Culture and ‘Young Illiberal Progressives’”, *The Guardian*, 1 November 2022, section Society <<https://www.theguardian.com/society/2022/nov/01/its-out-of-order-gen-z-speak-up-on-cancel-culture-and-young-illiberal-progressives>> [accessed 17 April 2023].

²⁸ ‘Review of Sexual Abuse in Schools and Colleges’, *GOV.UK* <<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/review-of-sexual-abuse-in-schools-and-colleges/review-of-sexual-abuse-in-schools-and-colleges>> [accessed 11 April 2023].

PART 3: Behaviours and lifestyle

Summary

Young people are less likely to be sexually active than in previous years and there has been a steady decline in the rate of under-18 conceptions.

The average age of first exposure to online pornography has lowered and the limited data we have suggests those young people view it more frequently than in previous years. Young people aren't satisfied that current relationships and sex education is tackling topics they need it to.

They are drinking less alcohol and less frequently, rates of illegal drug use have declined (although rates began to rise again before the pandemic) and only 2% of 11–15-year-olds are regular smokers in 2018 data compared with 13% in 1984. However, vaping or use of e-cigarettes is on the rise although this is an increase in regular use rather than numbers using.

Overall young people's participation in most risky behaviours has decreased, but they are also less likely to view those behaviours as risky.

Overall youth offences rates have significantly decreased, as has the number of first time offenders and reoffenders. In contrast knife offences and gunshot assaults have increased prior to the pandemic. Most young people are not worried about being a victim of crime and levels have been stable until 2021.

There has been no overall rise in sexting between 2009-15 and 2016-21 but younger young people are now receiving sexts at similar rates to older young people. Negative consequences to sexting are rare in young people's views.

Young people today appear to be leading more home-based lives with less outdoor play and socializing than in 1975 or 2000. Between 2005 and 2014 there was a drop in young people spending time out, or in their own houses, with friends, and they were likely to spend time by themselves.

In 2019 young people were spending seven hours more online than in 2009 and one hour a day more interacting with friends online.

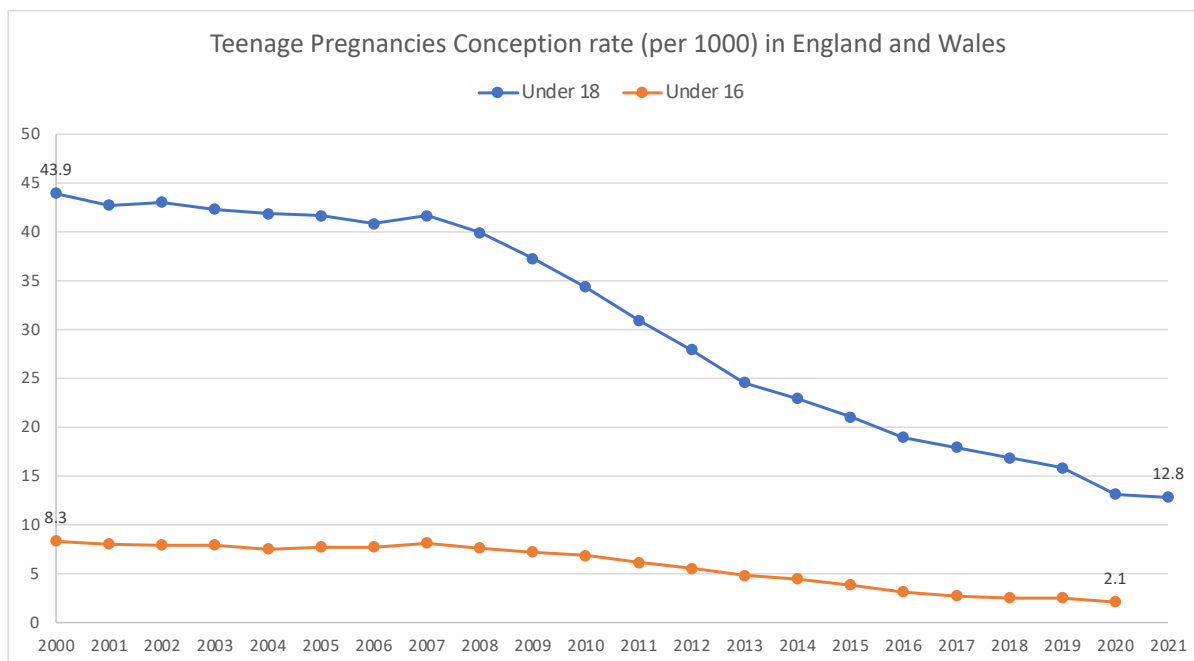
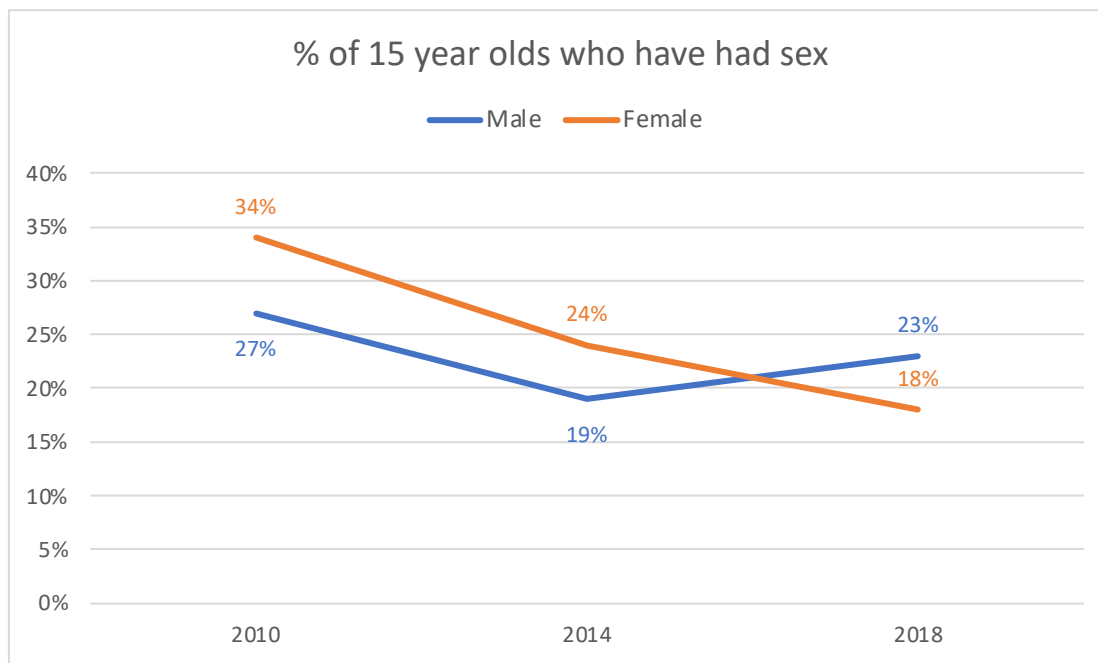
Phones have overtaken laptops/desktops as the most common way to go online and video sharing platforms are becoming more popular as social media platforms.

Young people have increasingly had experiences online or seen content that causes discomfort.

3.1 Risk-taking behaviour

Sexual Activity

Fewer teenagers are having underage sex, with a steady decline observed since 2002 and a significant reduction in under-18 pregnancy rates.²⁹

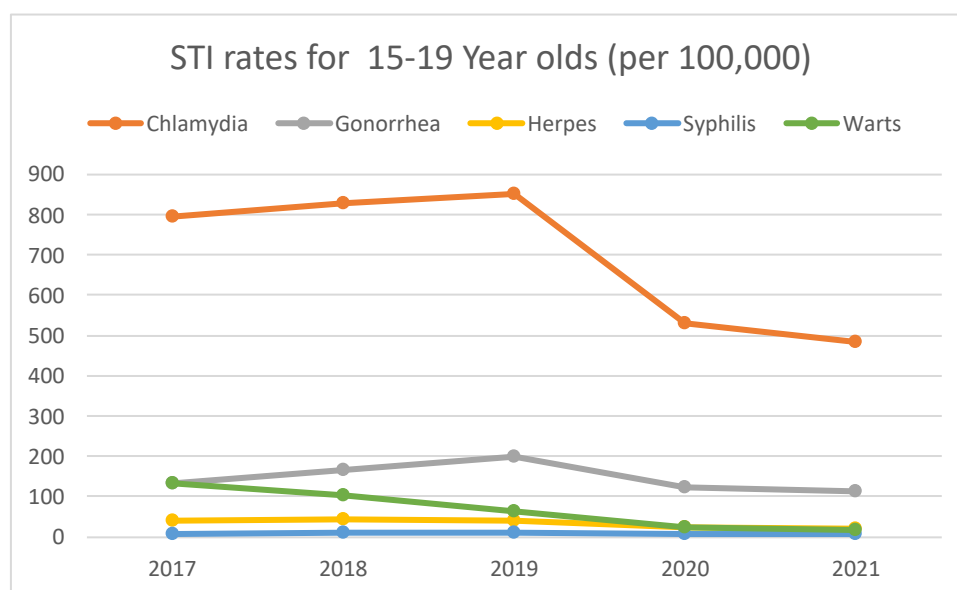
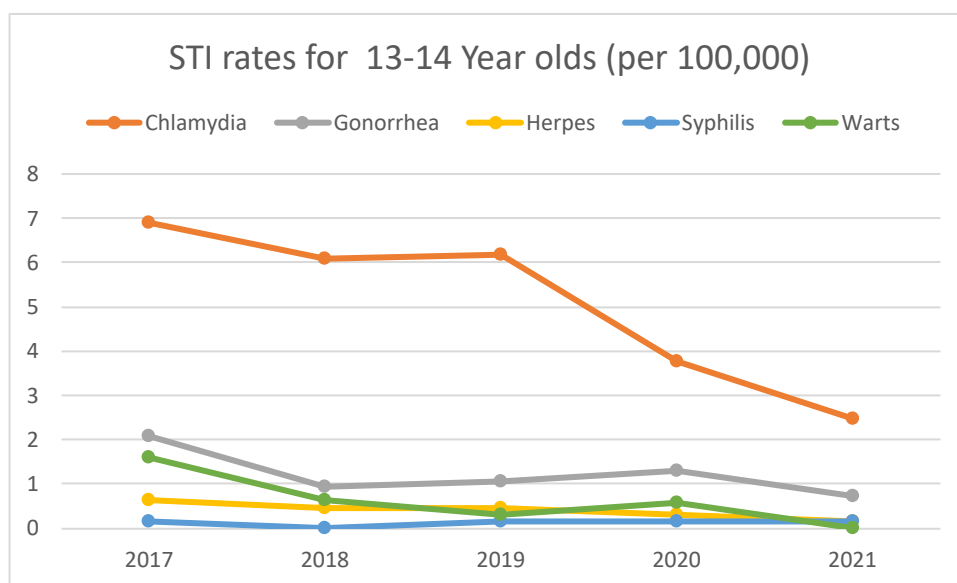


²⁹ The British Pregnancy Advisory Service suggests that the decline in conception rates is possibly due to a combination of a reduction in alcohol consumption by teenagers (which research and young people themselves link with sexual activity) and changes in socialising patterns and lifestyles due to the increase in use of digital technologies and improved relationships and sex education.

Most 14-year-olds in the Millennium Cohort study had engaged in only light or no intimate activity in 2018 with only 1 in 30 saying they had taken part in 'heavy' activity which included oral sex or intercourse. 15.52% of young people in this study said they had sex before the age of 16 compared with 30% in a study from 2012.

Sexually Transmitted Infections

There's a general decline in rates of sexually transmitted infections although how much of this is due to the impacts of the pandemic and lockdowns rather than a general trend won't be clear until data from 2022 onwards becomes available. Rates of genital warts have decreased significantly since the introduction of the HPV vaccine in 2008 that is now routinely offered to both boys and girls aged 13/14 in England.



Pornography

Data published in 2016 reported that 46% of young people aged 11-16 who had ever seen pornography had been exposed by age 14. This compares to data from the Children's Commissioner in 2022 that reported 50% of 1000 young people they surveyed, who had seen online pornography, were first exposed to it by age 13 and the most common online platform for them to see it was Twitter. The Dignify survey in 2022/23 reported that 32% of 14–18-year-olds who had viewed pornography at least once had been exposed to pornography at age 11 or younger with the average age of first exposure being 12.³⁰

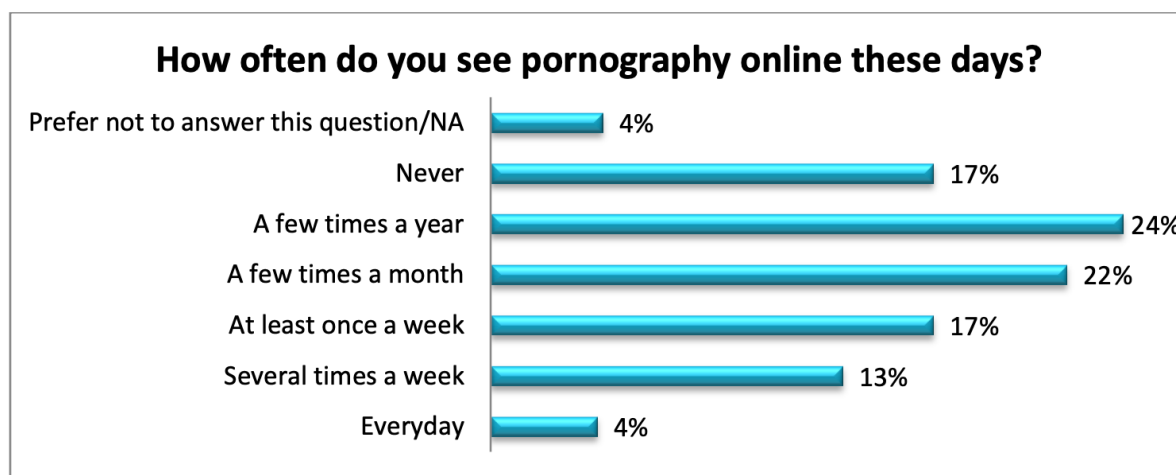


Figure 7: Frequency of viewing online pornography, N=476

15% of young people in the 2022/23 survey who viewed porn once now view daily or several times a day. The higher % may be due to it being an older age group (14-18) compared with the 4% of the 11–16-year-olds in the 2016 survey as shown in the graph above³¹. It may also be due to increase in the percentages of young people regularly viewing pornography.

Snapshot:

Use of pornography is influencing the sexual behaviours of young people and normalising sexual violence.³² Recent research among 1002 students in England suggests that school-based relationships and sex education is still not teaching enough about the impact of pornography and dangerous relationships. Of the 16- to 17-year-olds surveyed, 58% thought the issue of power imbalances in relationships was being either completely missed or not taught sufficiently, with the same percentage thinking this was also the case for pornography. More than half (54%) said teaching about healthy relationships,

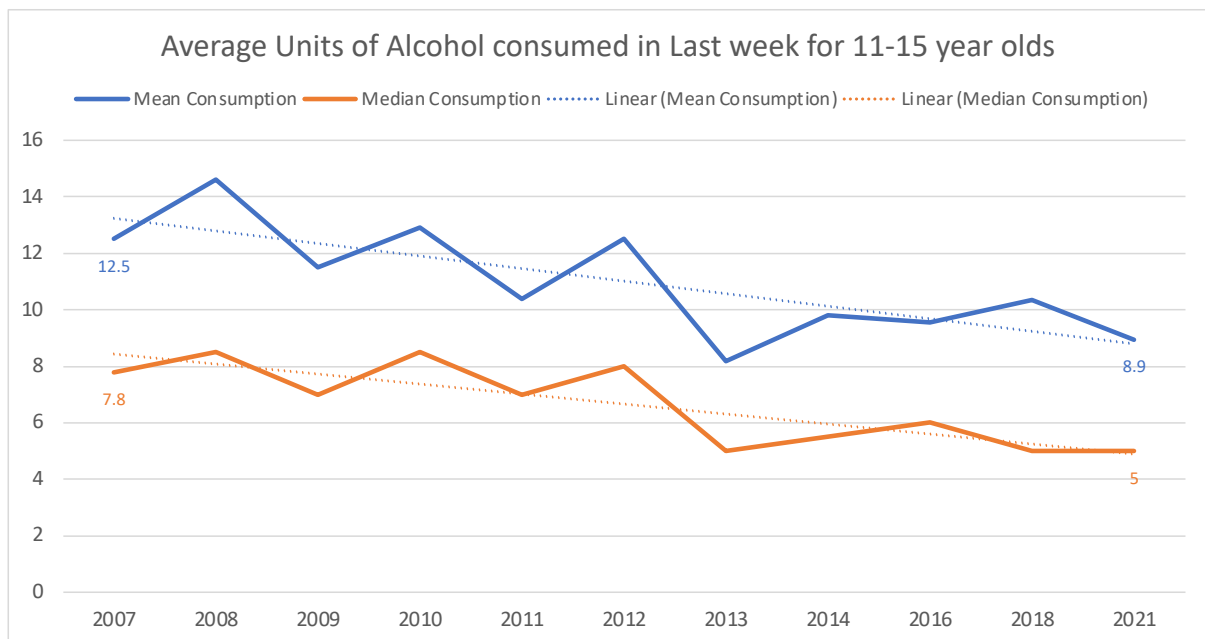
³⁰ Clear trend data was difficult to find regarding young people's exposure to and use of pornography in the UK and we've had to compare data from different studies where methods of collection may vary.

³¹ Elena Martellozzo and others, *...I Wasn't Sure It Was Normal to Watch It...* A Quantitative and Qualitative Examination of the Impact of Online Pornography on the Values, Attitudes, Beliefs and Behaviours of Children and Young People, 2016 <<https://doi.org/10.6084/m9.figshare.3382393>>.

³² Chanel Contos, 'Sexual Choking Is Now so Common That Many Young People Don't Think It Even Requires Consent. That's a Problem', *The Guardian*, 7 December 2022, section Opinion <<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2022/dec/08/sexual-choking-is-now-so-common-that-many-young-people-dont-think-it-even-requires-consent-thats-a-problem>> [accessed 17 April 2023].

including online relationships, was missing or not good enough, and 55% thought they were not taught enough about attitudes and behaviour of boys and men towards women and girls. ³³ Research published in May 2023 by the Children’s Commissioner found that watching pornography was influencing young people’s perceptions of what a healthy relationship is with almost half (47%) of the 16–21-year-olds surveyed stating that they expected sex to involve physical aggression and police interview data suggesting pornography may be influencing young people’s expectations of sex. ³⁴

Alcohol Consumption



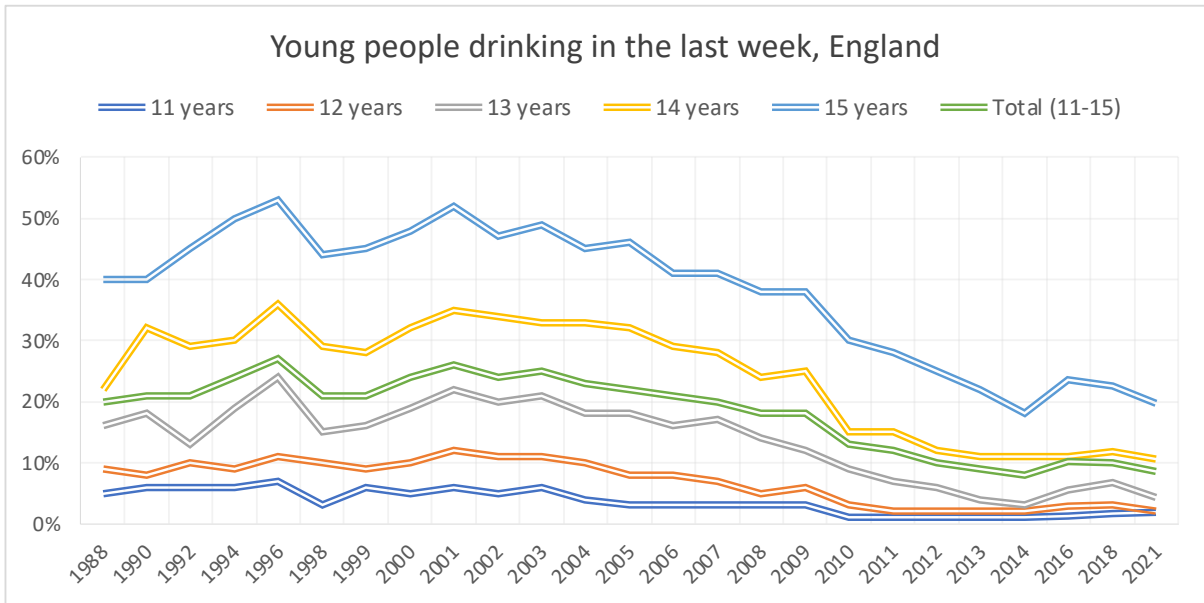
Young people today are clearly drinking less alcohol, less frequently than the previous generation, despite a slight rise in 2014 for most ages there was an overall 57% decrease of 11–15-year-olds consuming alcohol in the last week from 1988 to 2021. These decreases may be related in part to reduced accessibility to buying alcohol underage following the introduction of Challenge 21 in 2006 and Challenge 25 in 2009, both schemes aimed at reducing sales to underage buyers. The percentages of 15-year-olds who are drinking alcohol clearly sits above the rest of the data and pulls the total averages up suggesting there is an increased risk as young people get closer to the legal drinking age.

³³ ‘Young Peoples RSE Poll 2022 - Report.Pdf’

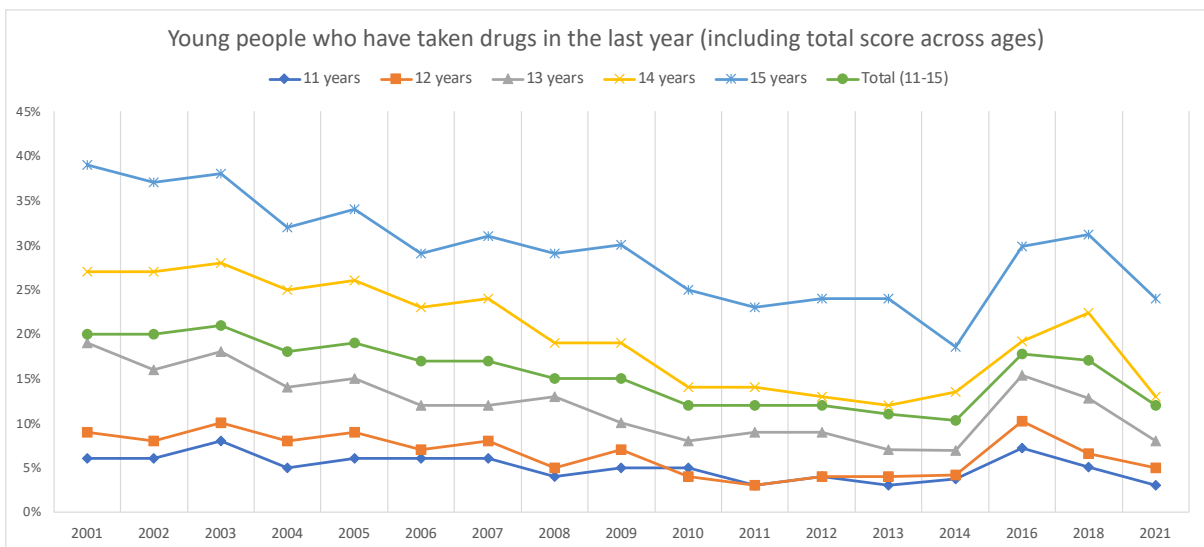
<<https://www.sexeducationforum.org.uk/sites/default/files/field/attachment/Young%20Peoples%20RSE%20Poll%202022%20-%20Report.pdf>> [accessed 17 April 2023].

³⁴ ‘Evidence-on-Pornographys-Influence-on-Harmful-Sexual-Behaviour-among-Children.Pdf’

<<https://assets.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/wpuploads/2023/05/Evidence-on-pornographys-influence-on-harmful-sexual-behaviour-among-children.pdf>> [accessed 11 May 2023].

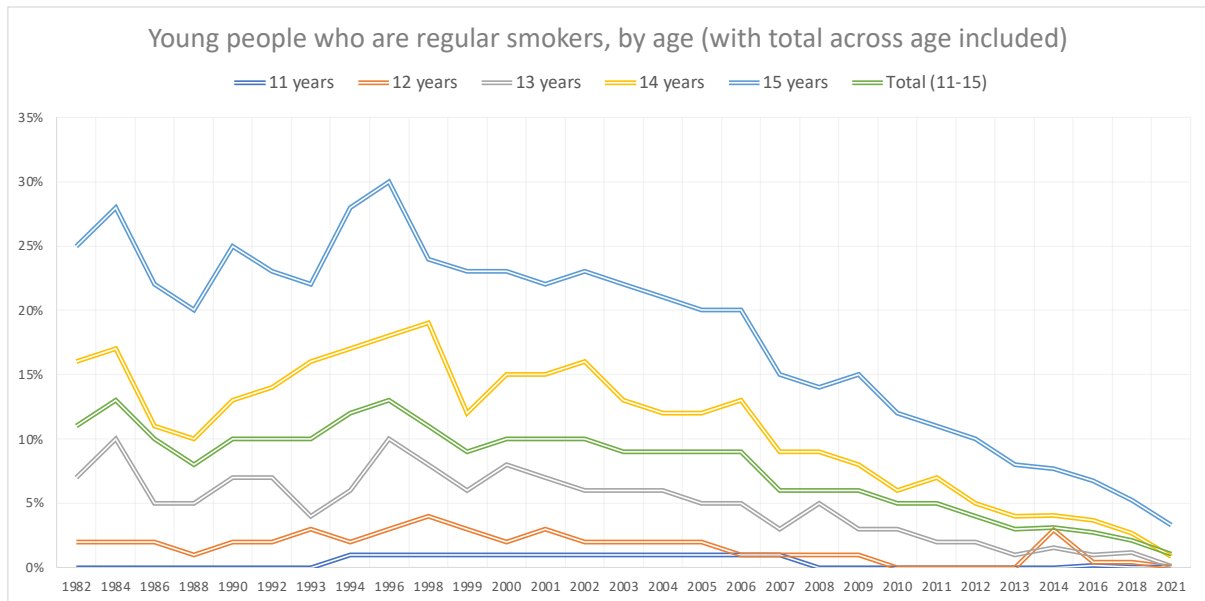


Use of Illegal Drugs

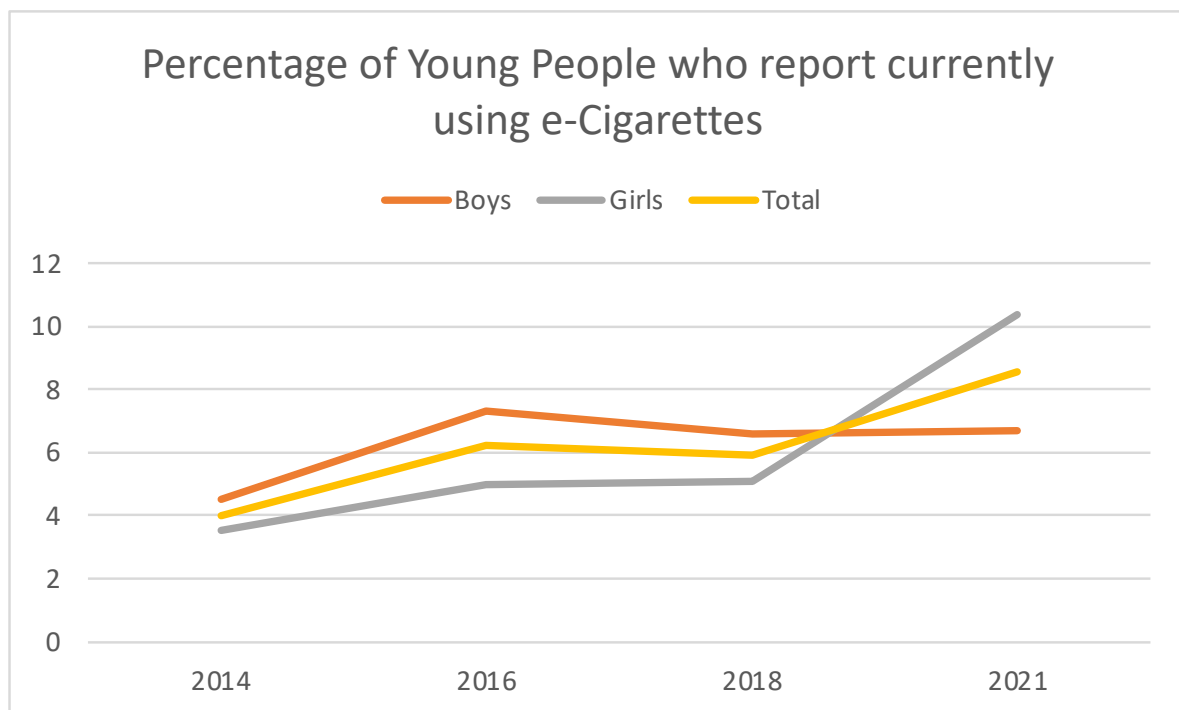


There has been a decline in the proportions of young people who used illegal drugs in the last year, with an overall decrease of 49% for all 11–15-year-olds from 2001 to 2014. Despite the more recent rise in cases in 2016-2018 we then see a similar decrease from 2001 to 2021 of 40%. It's unclear whether the more recent decrease since 2018 is largely due to the impact of the pandemic or other factors. As with alcohol consumption we see that the 15-year-olds drive up the average % with much higher rates than 11-14 year-olds. There doesn't seem to be any significant differences between the genders. Additional data for older young people (16–24-year-olds) shows that despite a steadily decreasing trend in Class A drug use up to 2013, since then use has risen to similar levels as seen in 2001/2.

Smoking and Vaping



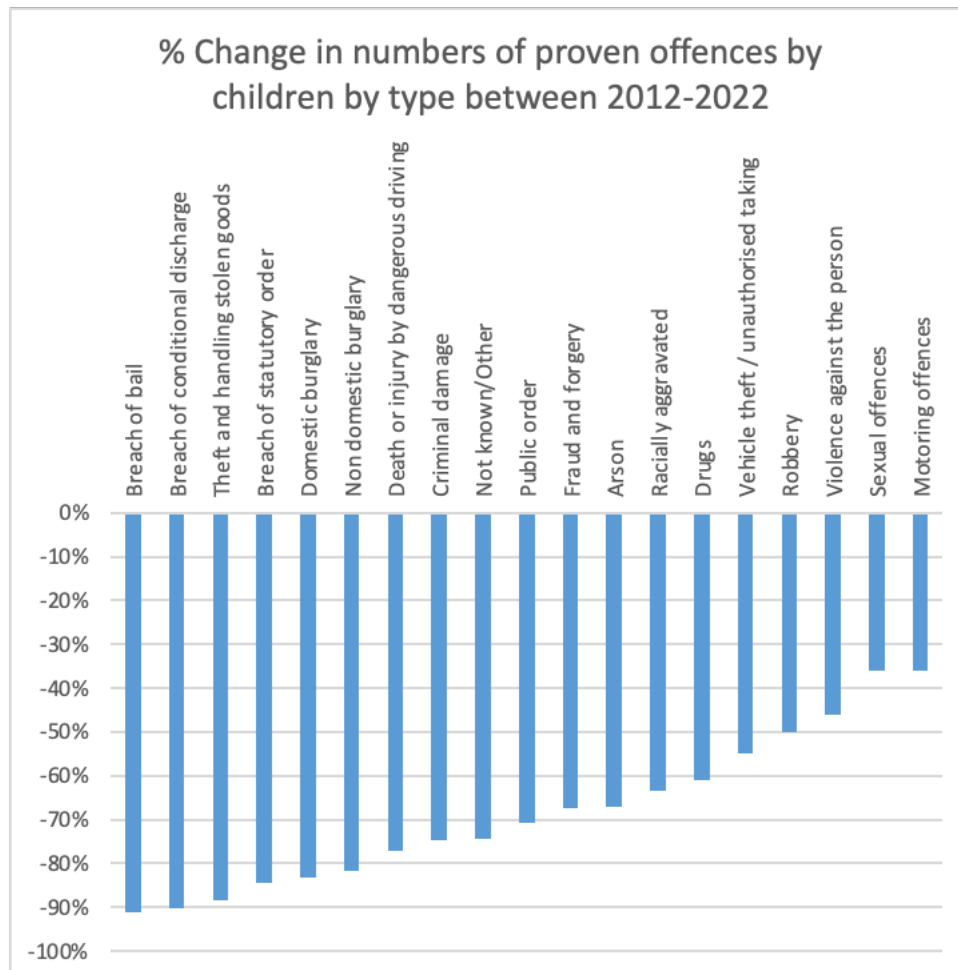
We've seen a significant continual decrease in young people who are regular smokers since 1996 being led by declines in 14- and 13-year-olds, plateaued low numbers in 11- and 12-year-olds and sharp declines for 15 year-olds across this time. This decrease has occurred for a long time and continues at a similar rate. Interestingly, when we look at gender data, we see that girls seem to have had a higher rate of smoking than boys, but there is now similarity since 2018.



Here we see that rates of young people using e-cigarettes are overall quite low, but that there has been a spike from 2018 to 2021 following a plateau from 2014 to 2018. This is led

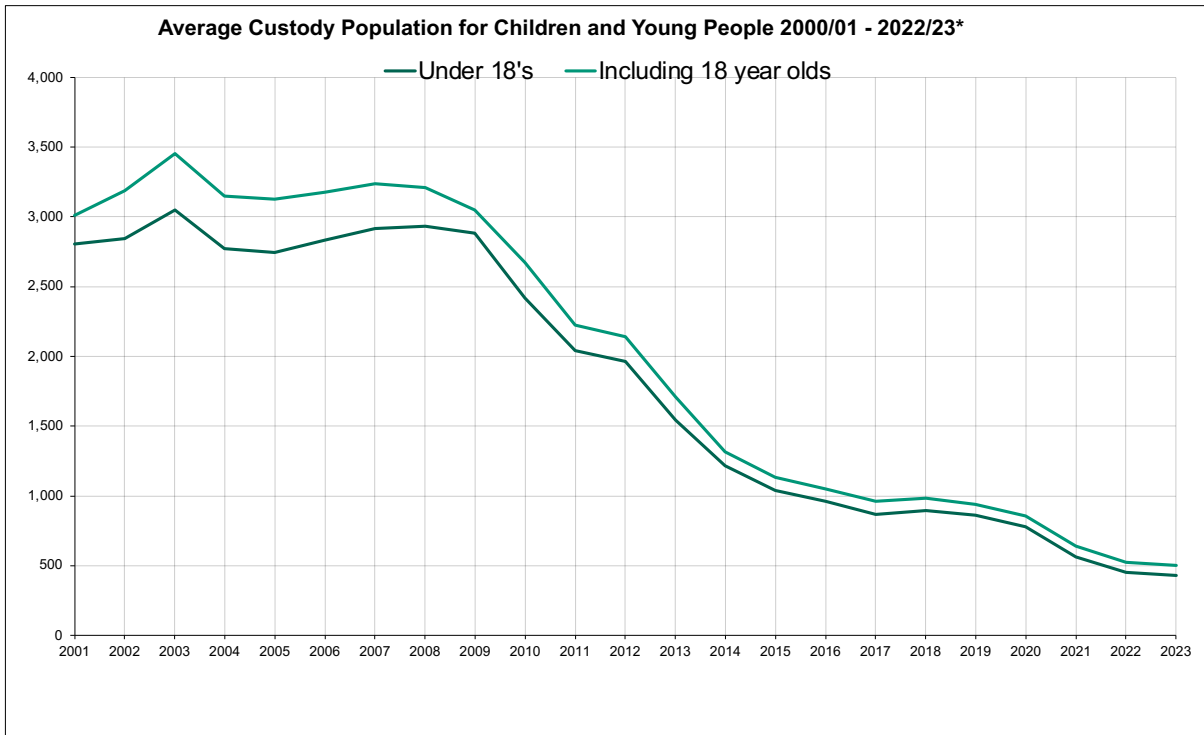
by a spike in girls (from 5% to over 10%) using them as we see a plateau for boys at around 6%.

Criminal Offences



There has been an overall decrease in all categories of offences committed by young people aged 10-15. This reflects a consistent downward trend over the decade for all offences, except motoring offences, where an increase was seen from 2013 to 2017 before a sharp fall where numbers dropped by nearly half. The overall decrease has been attributed to changes in policing and approaches to youth offending and/or the increased security of cars and homes in the last decade as technology advances, thereby reducing rates of typical youth offences relating to property and vehicles.

The gravity of offences remained fairly consistent with 81% scoring in the lower end (1-3) of the 8-point scale each year.



*Data for April 2022/23 is provisional

There has also been a significant decrease in the number of young people in custody each year and a rise in the proportion of young people in custody from 32% in March 2011 to 53% in March 2021.

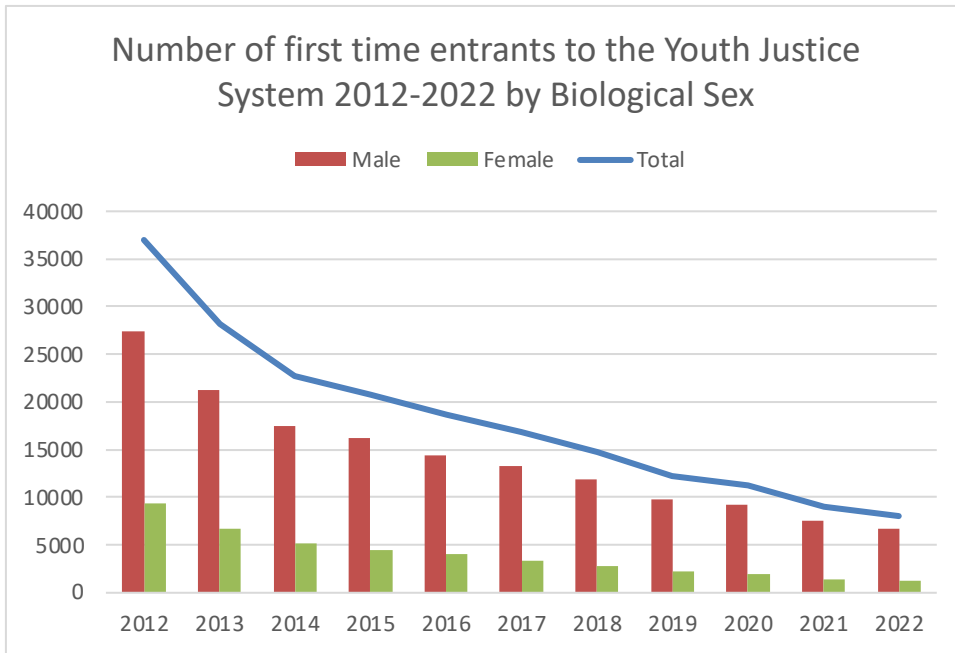
Snapshot:

Numbers of young people in custody are expected to double by September 2024 due to increased police numbers, clearing of the Covid-19 Court backlogs and tougher sentencing following the passing of the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Reform Bill.³⁵

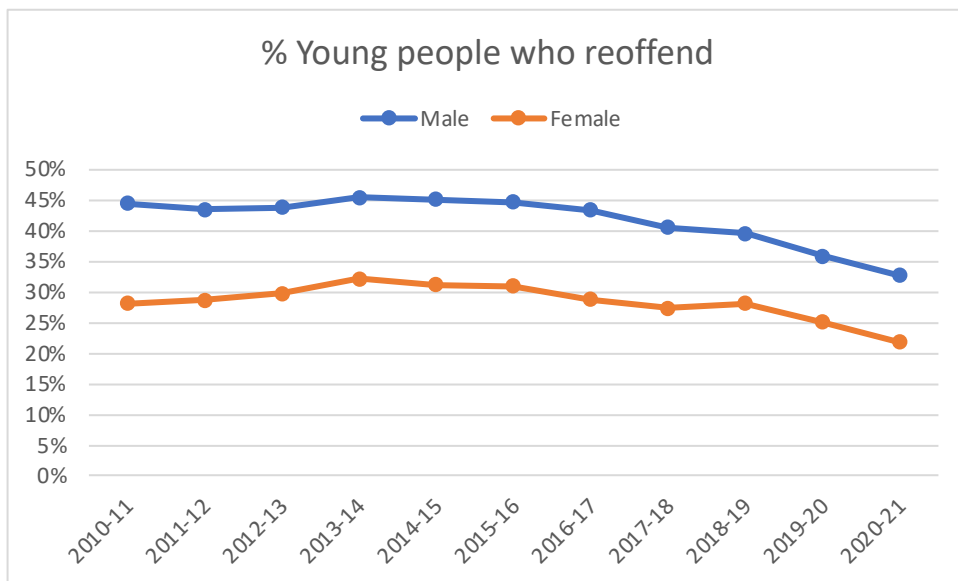
Following the closure of two of the three Secure Training Centres in England in 2020 and 2021 a new Secure School is due to open in September 2023 and will be run by a Christian Charity - The Oasis Charitable Trust.³⁶

³⁵ 'Children in Custody: Secure Training Centres and Secure Schools - National Audit Office (NAO) Press Release', *National Audit Office (NAO)*, 2022 <<https://www.nao.org.uk/press-releases/children-in-custody/>> [accessed 15 May 2023].

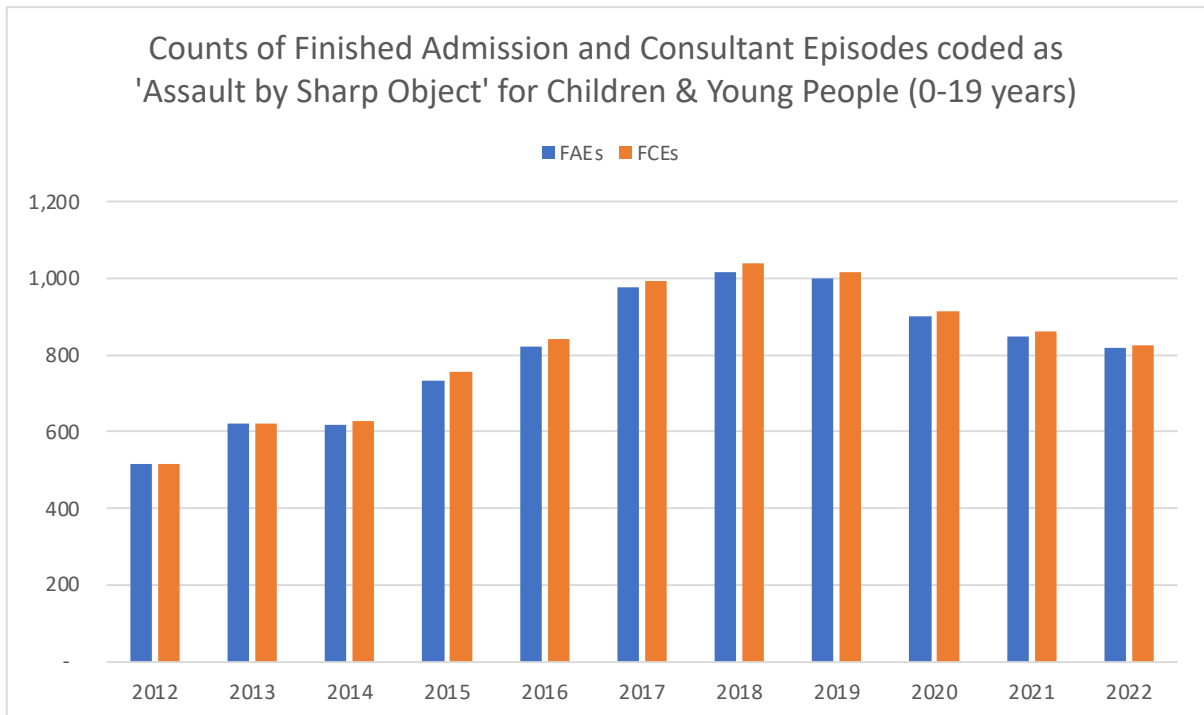
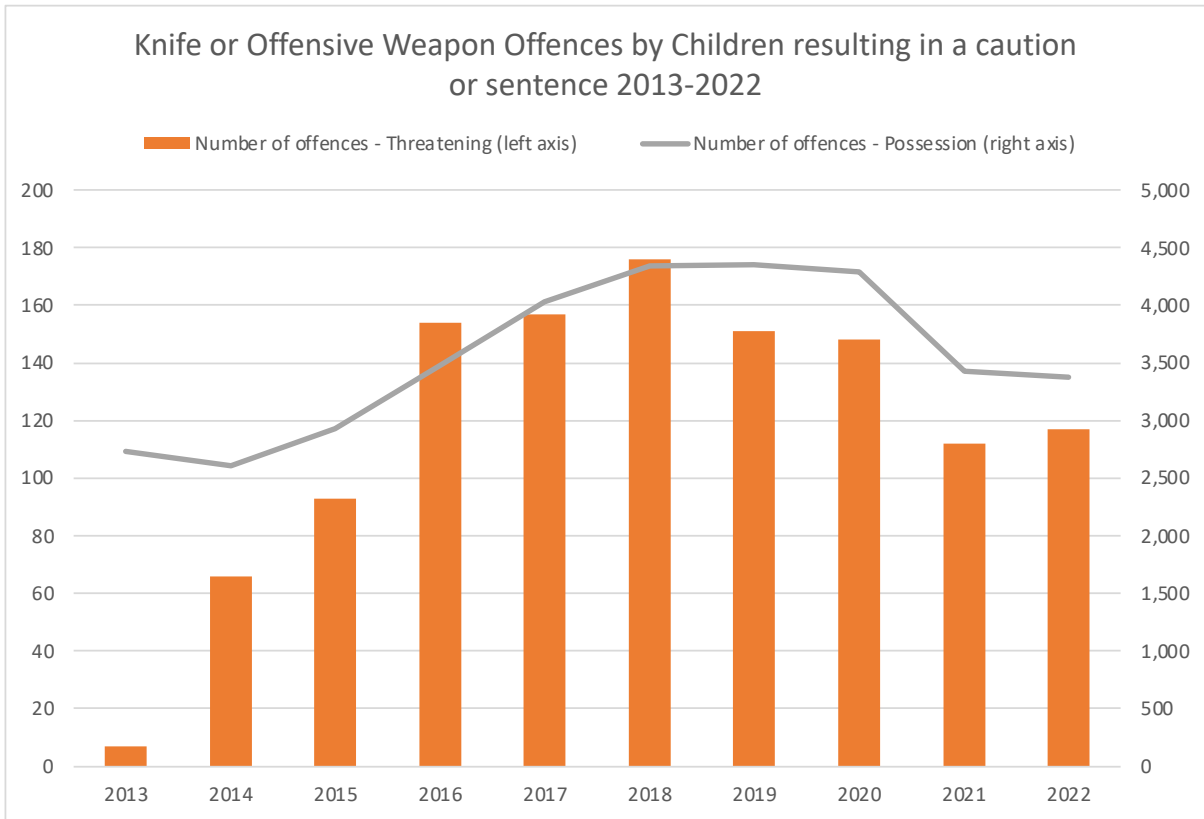
³⁶ 'Home - Oasis Restore', 2023 <<https://www.oasisrestore.org/>> [accessed 15 May 2023].



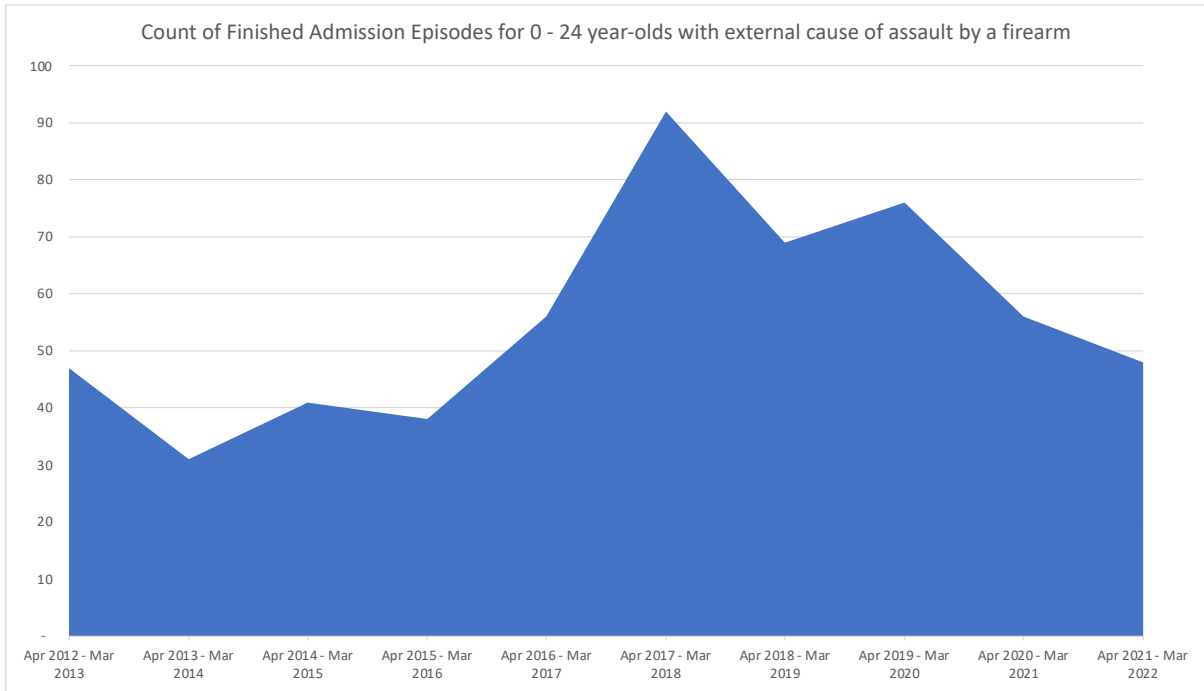
Numbers of first offenders has reduced consistently over the decade in both males and females.



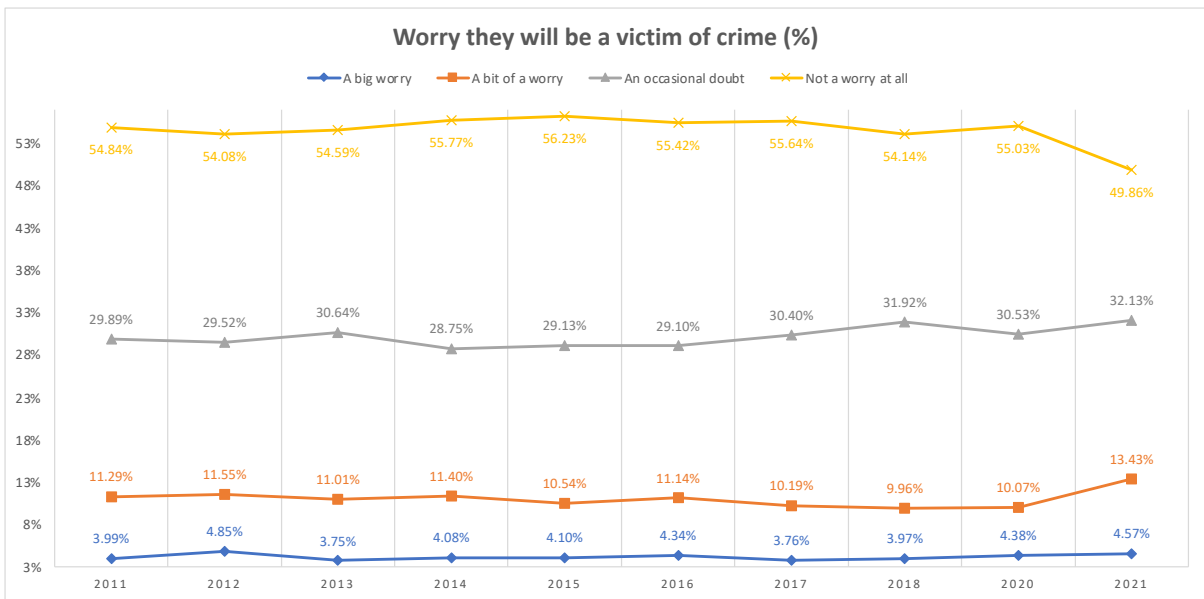
Boys have a higher reoffending rate than girls but there was a drop before the pandemic and this continued during 2020-21. We don't yet have any data for 2022 to see if this trend is continuing.



There have been increases in knife or offensive weapon offences and hospital admissions for an 'assault by sharp object' in the last decade. During the pandemic rates reduced but may be on the rise again.

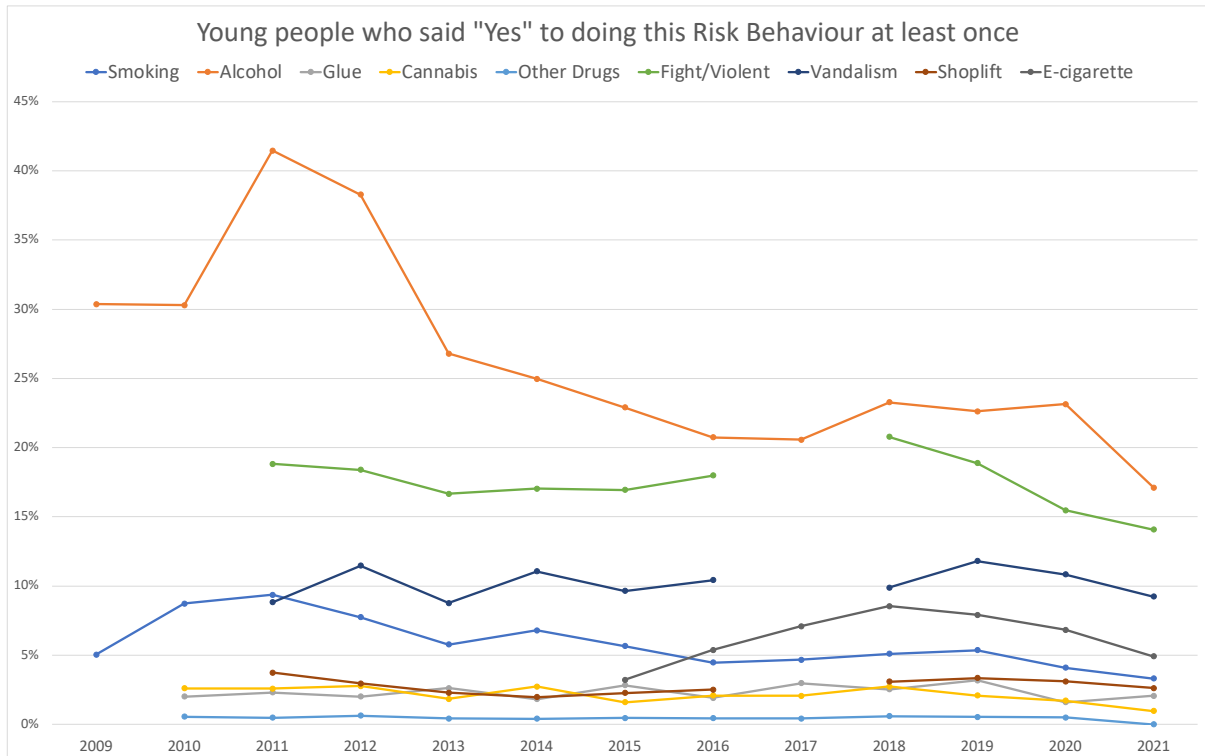


A rise has also been seen in Hospital Admissions related to assault by a firearm from 2014 to 2018 with a drop in episodes during the pandemic.

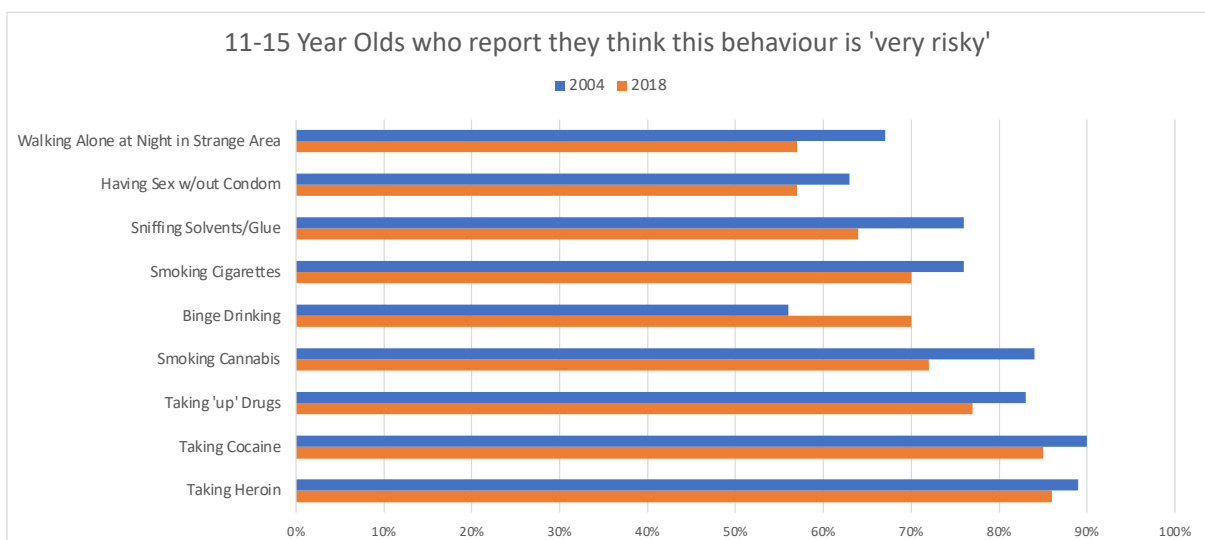


Most young people don't worry about being a victim of crime and rates have been steady over the decade, however in 2021 more young people were beginning to worry about crime. This may be related to increases in general anxiety during the pandemic or related to increases in knife crime and gunshot crime in the preceding years.

Overall risky behaviours



Overall, some aspects of risk-taking behaviour have significantly reduced across the last 10 years while others have continued to stay at the same rate. We see interesting fluctuations in vandalism (and to some extent violence and shoplifting) which may be due to a slow decline or stabilisation or alternatively caused by artefact errors within data collection (as this data was only gathered in certain waves). We saw the rise of e-cigarettes since 2015 which seems to have taken a downward turn since 2020, but is likely to have increased again post lockdown. While more young people each year seem to be using e-cigarettes regularly (see previous graphs in e-cigarettes section) this data suggests there aren't consistently higher numbers each year trying them.



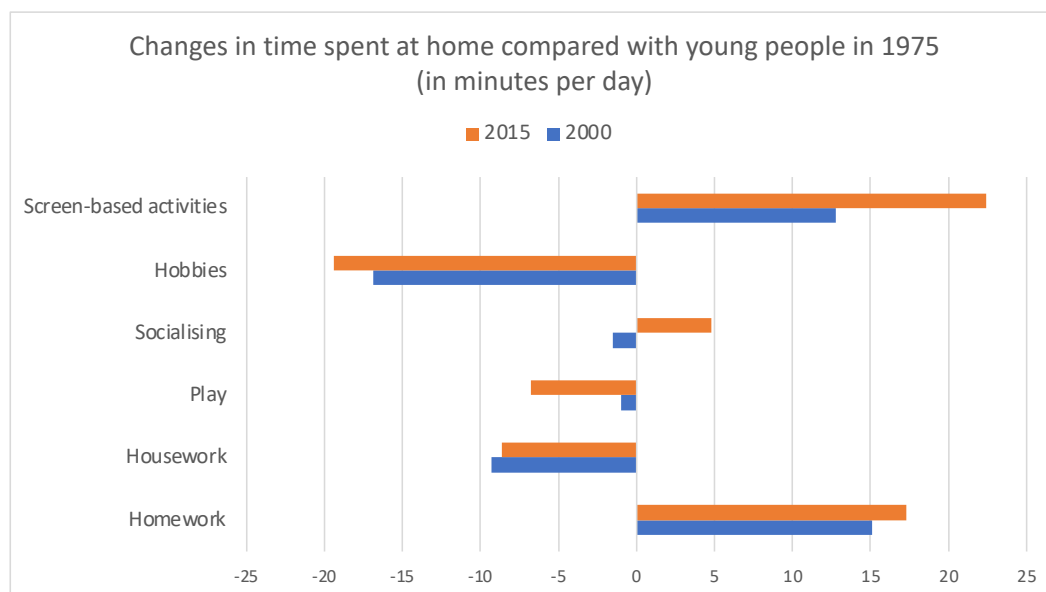
Reductions in the percentage of young people who report these risk-taking behaviours as 'very risky' for all risk behaviours apart from binge drinking (which may be explained by large binge culture from early in the 2000s that seems to no longer exist). Therefore, we see young people reducing their interest in risky behaviours while also seeing a reduction in their view of behaviours as risky.

Snapshot:

A survey of 2024 adults in April 2022 found that young adults (age 18-24) tend to be more concerned about antisocial behaviour than the rest of the adult population (46% compared with 32%) but less likely to report it (16% of young adults compared with 26% overall) perhaps suggesting a lack of confidence in the police to address it?³⁷

A meta-analysis³⁸ found that compared with data from 2009-2015 there has been no significant overall rise in sexting by young people between 2016-2021. Now approximately one in five youth send, one in three receive, and one in seven forward sexts without consent. Females are receiving sexts at a higher rate than males, older youth are more likely to be sending sexts, and younger and older adolescents are receiving sexts at similar rates. This and other studies suggest that from young people's perspectives negative consequences are rare, only non-consensual sexting results in poor outcomes. with one survey reporting that 78% of young people say nothing bad happens.³⁹ This raises questions for how we approach this with young people in a way that doesn't alienate them by disproportionately focusing on negative outcomes that don't reflect their reality.

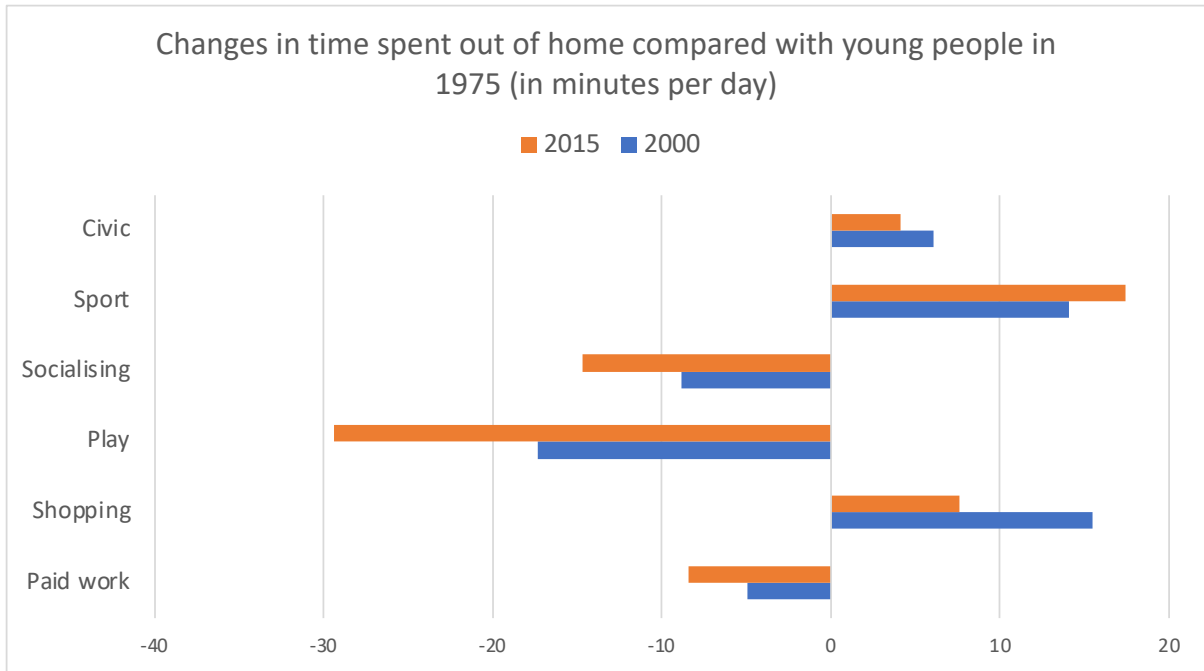
3.2 Leisure Time





³⁷ 'Rebuilding Communities: Why It's Time to Put Anti-Social Behaviour Back on the Agenda' <<https://www.institute.global/insights/geopolitics-and-security/rebuilding-communities-why-its-time-put-anti-social-behaviour-back-agenda>> [accessed 4 May 2023].

³⁸ Camille Mori and others, 'Are Youth Sexting Rates Still on the Rise? A Meta-Analytic Update', *Journal of Adolescent Health*, 70 (2022), 531–39.

³⁹ 'Internet-Matters-Look-At-Me-Report-1.Pdf' <<https://www.internetmatters.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Internet-Matters-Look-At-Me-Report-1.pdf>> [accessed 11 May 2023].



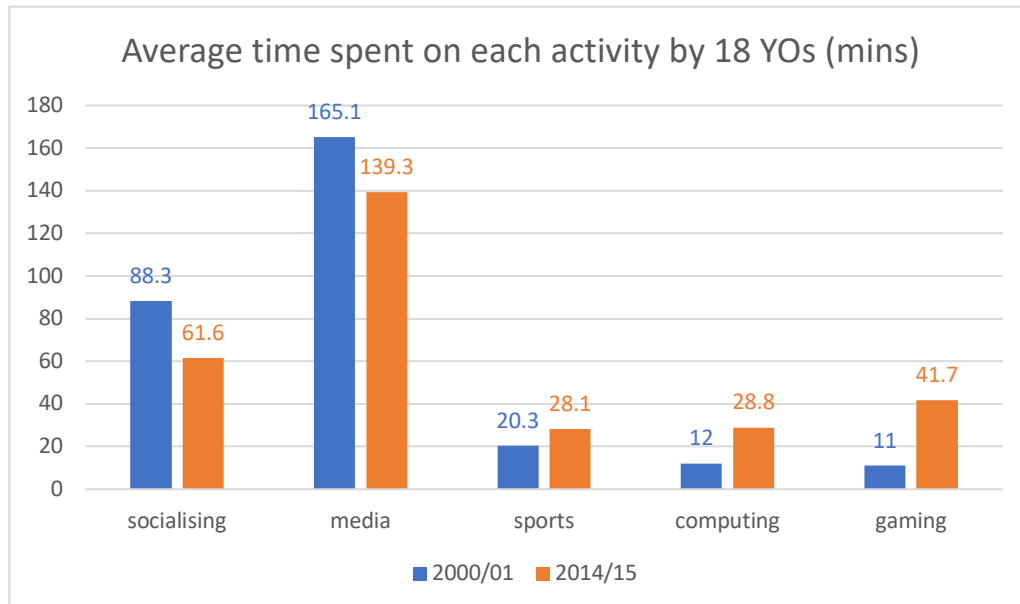
Young people today appear to be leading more home-based lives with less play and socializing than in 1975 and from 2000. Overall young people in 2015 spent 12 mins more at home a day and 21 mins less in activities outside the home than in 1975. Areas where there were significant changes were:

 Going down - time spent on....	 Going up – time spent on....
on housework in play (both at home and out of home) in socializing outside of the home in paid employment on hobbies	on screen-based activities at home homework shopping sport

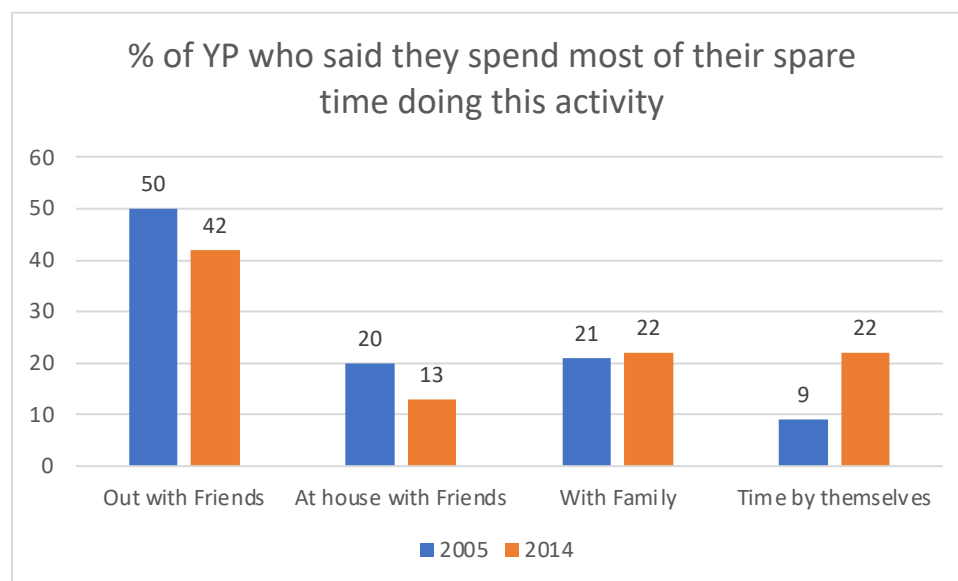
The change in time spent on housework was driven by a decrease for girls with little change for boys, there was a large decrease for boys in time spent on hobbies from 1975 (over 40 mins) to 2000 (under 20 mins) whilst girls appear to follow a steady and slower decline. Girls tended to spend more time on homework in all 3 years whilst boys screen time was already significantly higher than girls in 1975 and has continued to drive most of the rise.

Other data shows that the proportion of young people who are ever out after 9pm has decreased by 68% from 2009 to 2021. With increases in the percentage of young people who are never out after 9pm by around 13% - showing a slow consistent rise. This may highlight higher levels of fear about being out late, reduced risk behaviour, changes to culture/routine, increased loneliness or other factors that could be explored more.

The average number of books read per month by 10–15-year-olds increased across the decade (from 4.16 books in 2010 to 5.62 books in 2021), albeit with a drop back to 2010 levels in 2018 and 2019 – separate research indicates that young people enjoyed reading less between 2016 and 2019 which could explain this reduction.



Time spent with friends



Data from the Millennium Cohort Study shows a shift from 2005 to 2014 whereby 14/15-year-olds spent less time out, or in their own houses, with friends (15%), and more time by themselves (13%). The advent of smart phones in the late 00s, is highly likely to account for some of this shift, with teenagers connecting online more and more, rather than in person. The ONS Time Use Survey showed that 18-year-olds spent 30.7 minutes more a day 'gaming' in 2014/15 than they did in 2000/1 and 16.8 more minutes a day 'computing'. They spent 26.7 fewer minutes a day 'socialising' and 25.8 fewer minutes on 'media'. These categories

make less sense in 2023, where we recognise that socialising, gaming, computing and media now much overlap as activities young people engage in through smart phones.

Snapshot:

Research in 2016 and 2018 suggested that maximum security prisoners spend more time outside than UK children do during their school day^{40,41}

A report in Scotland said that young people are spending less time outside at school than they were prior to the pandemic.⁴²

Changes in how young people spend their time with less socialising outside of the home may be impacted by a decrease in availability of youth services that they can access. The YMCA reported in 2020 that a 71% cut in Local Authority funding had led to the closure of 750 youth centres,⁴³ whilst a Youth Sector Census by the National Youth Agency in 2021 found that young people in disadvantaged areas were less likely to have access to both youth facilities, youth activities and faith-based activities than their peers living in affluent areas.⁴⁴

3.3 Technology and social media

Time Spent Online

A lot of what we find in this section is hardly surprising; young people are going online more than they did in 2009 (7 hours more a week in 2019), they are playing games more (2 hours more a week in 2019) and are watching TV on a TV set less (5 hours less a week in 2019). Viewing has shifted away from live TV towards paid-for on-demand services.

Young people are also spending more time on social media. The average time spent interacting with friends on social media on a school day has increased by roughly an hour compared to 2009 (1h 34m to 2h 37m) with the biggest jump seen during the pandemic in 2020 (28 minutes) – this continued to increase going into 2021 (up by 10 minutes) rather than returning to pre-pandemic levels. 10- to 15-year-olds in 2021 were more likely spend 4 or more hours interacting with their friends on social media on a normal school day than in 2009, almost quadrupling across this period (increasing from 8% to 31%).

⁴⁰ Damian Carrington, 'Three-Quarters of UK Children Spend Less Time Outdoors than Prison Inmates – Survey', *The Guardian*, 25 March 2016, section Environment <<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2016/mar/25/three-quarters-of-uk-children-spend-less-time-outdoors-than-prison-inmates-survey>> [accessed 17 April 2023].

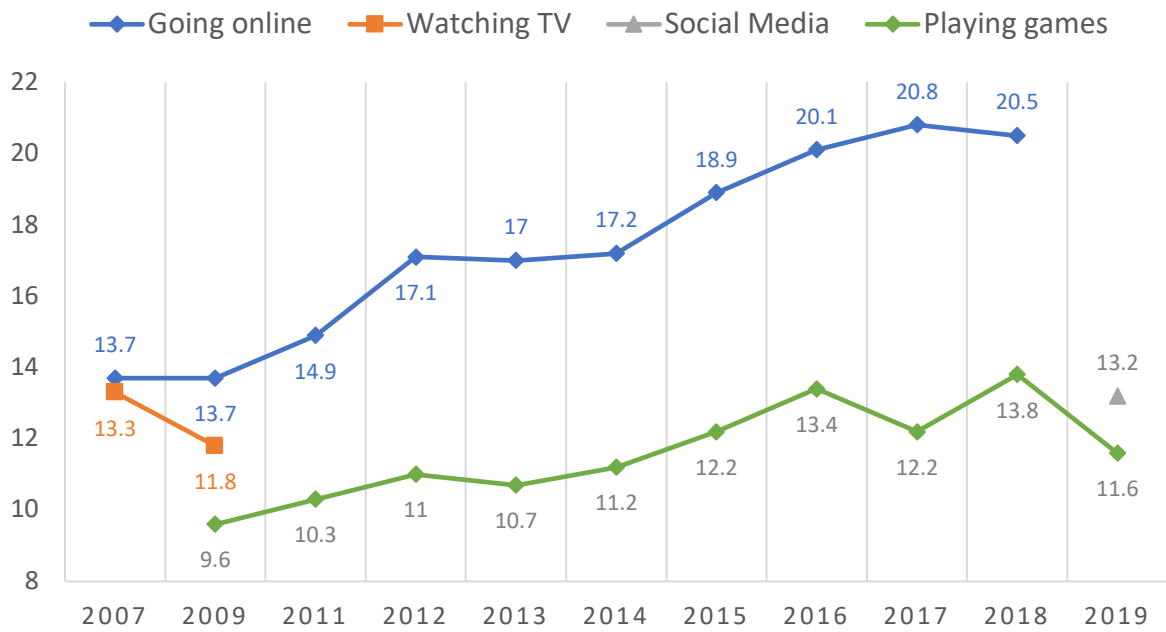
⁴¹ 'Persil Supports Outdoor Classroom Day Encouraging Children to Get Outside and Embrace the Outdoors!' <<https://www.primarytimes.co.uk/news/2019/05/persil-supports-outdoor-classroom-day-encouraging-children-to-get-outside-and-embrace-the-outdoors->> [accessed 17 April 2023].

⁴² 'NatureScot Research Report 1313 - Teaching, Learning and Play in the Outdoors: A Survey of Provision in Scotland in 2022', *NatureScot* <<https://www.nature.scot/doc/naturescot-research-report-1313-teaching-learning-and-play-outdoors-survey-provision-scotland-2022>> [accessed 17 April 2023].

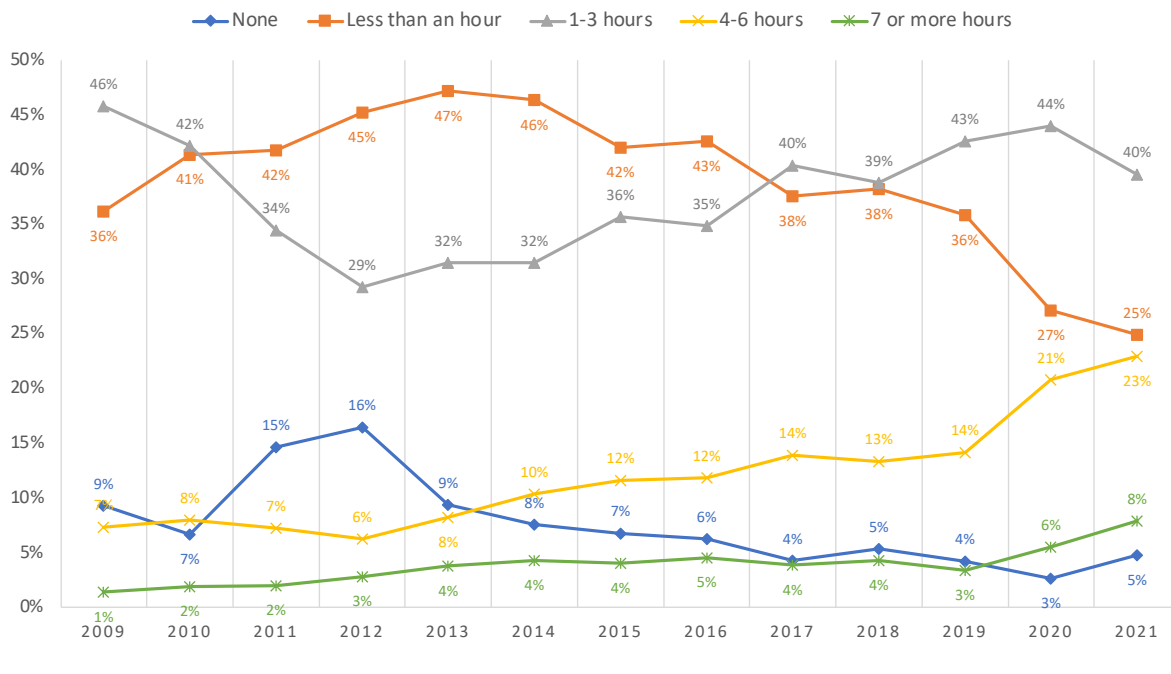
⁴³ 'YMCA-Out-of-Service-Report.Pdf' <<https://www.ymca.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/YMCA-Out-of-Service-report.pdf>> [accessed 11 May 2023].

⁴⁴ 'Summary-Report-v5.Pdf' <<https://www.nya.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Summary-Report-v5.pdf>> [accessed 11 May 2023].

Mean weekly hours of media consumption



No. of hours spent interacting with friends on social media

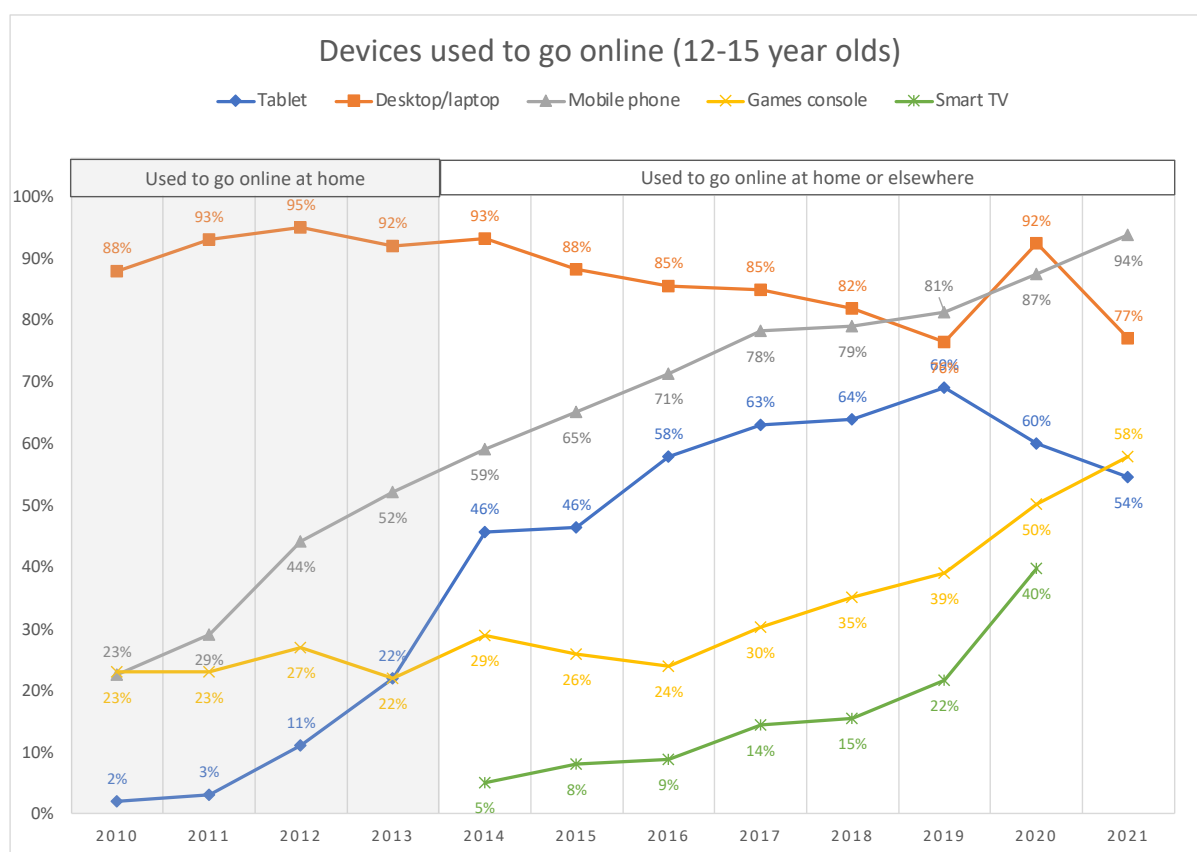


Snapshot:

We shouldn't assume that more time online is always detrimental to young people's friendships, although research to date is limited the context of those friendships may be significant. Research from 2019 suggests that frequent online communication with existing friends is associated with better wellbeing for both boys and girls whilst frequent online communication with 'virtual' friends is associated with negative effects on wellbeing⁴⁵

Devices used to go online

Perhaps unsurprisingly the use of mobile phones to go online has increased steadily since 2010 with almost all (94%) of 12–15-year-olds using one to go online in 2021 (up from 23% in 2010).



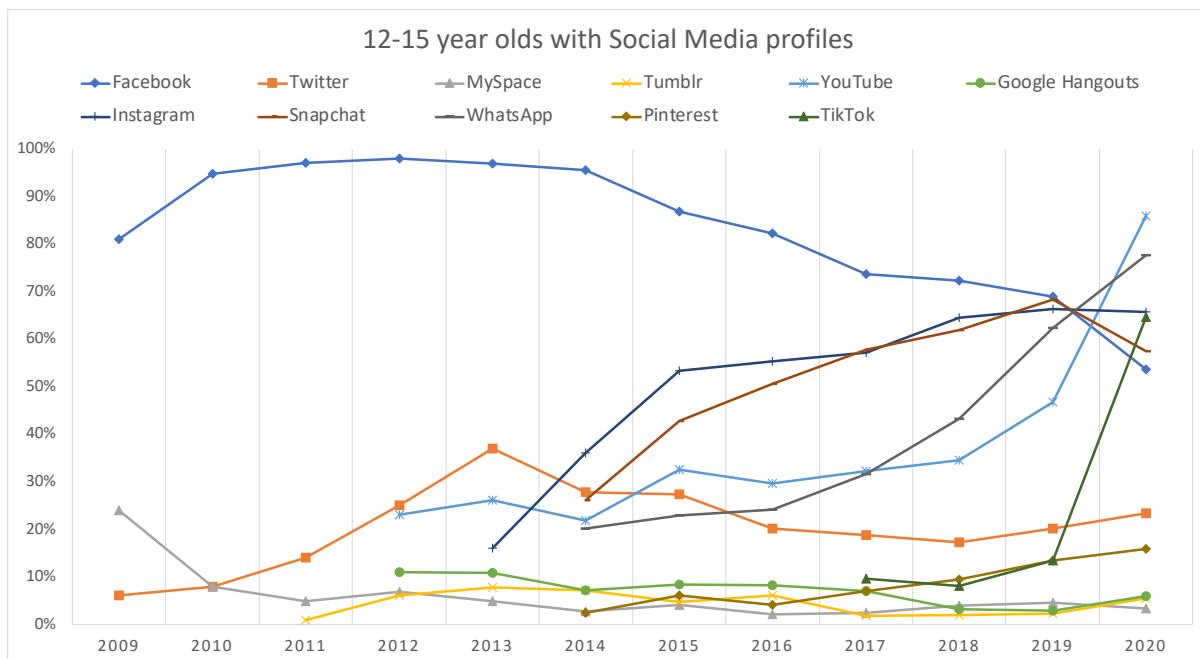
Use of different social media platforms

It may seem like the popularisation of social media platforms is relatively recent, but the number of 12 to 15-year-olds with a social media profile remained fairly stable throughout the 2010s, hovering around 70-80%. This increased to almost 90% between 2019-2021 –

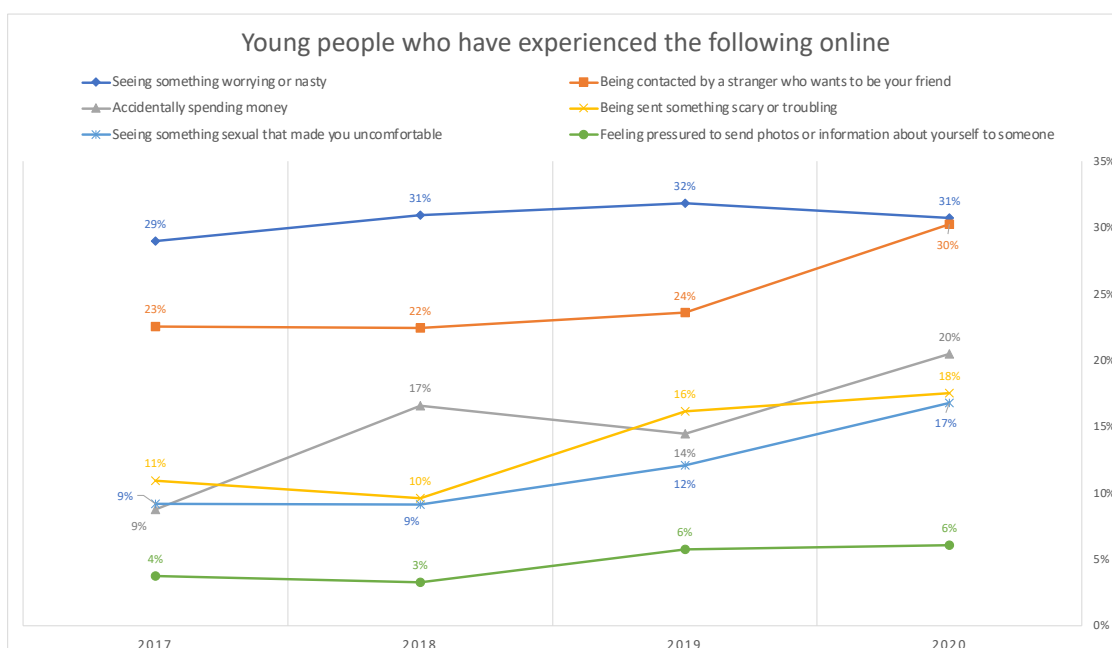
⁴⁵ Rebecca Anthony and others, 'Young People's Online Communication and Its Association with Mental Well-Being: Results from the 2019 Student Health and Well-Being Survey', *Child and Adolescent Mental Health*, 28.1 (2023), 4–11 <<https://doi.org/10.1111/camh.12610>>.

young people indicated that they used video sites (71%), social media sites (65%) and messaging apps (63%) more often during the pandemic than they did previously, which may explain the greater proportion of 12–15-year-olds with a social media profile following this period.

Which platforms are most popular is changing. Some of the shift is cultural and moving from following people you know (e.g., Facebook) to following trends or influencers – Instagram and TikTok. The use of Twitter was less popular, but relatively consistent with some ebbs and flows across the decade. YouTube saw a slow and steady increase between 2012 to 2019 (to 47%).



Uncomfortable experiences online



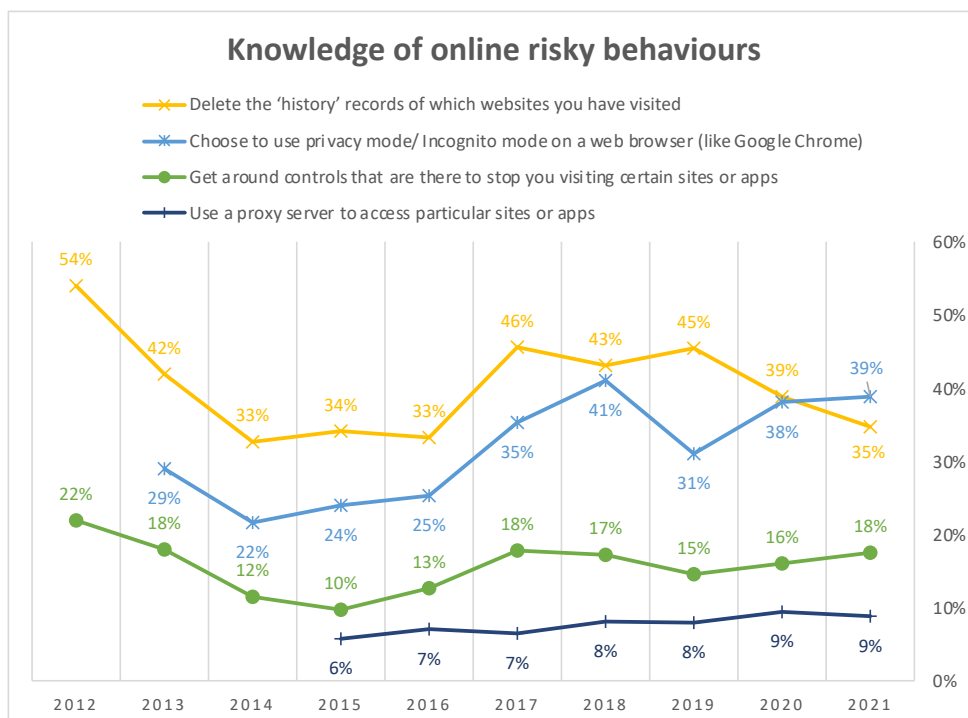
Young people also have a mixed experience of the online world. When considering the negatives, young people have increasingly had experiences or seen content online that cause discomfort or can be potentially harmful, for example, being contacted by a stranger who wants to be your friend (up from 23% to 30%) or accidentally spending money (up from 9% to 20%) between 2017 and 2020.

They also note the pressure to be popular on social media and other similar sites, with 91% of 12–15-year-olds agreeing that they felt this at least some of the time in 2021 (an increase from 73% in 2017). The expansion of the internet and technology has created additional avenues through which bullying can occur, with increases primarily seen in the experience of bullying through texts and messaging apps (5% to 29%) and social media (12% to 22%) among 12–15-year-olds between 2017 and 2021.

Unfortunately, face to face bullying has increased since 2017 alongside that enabled by technology, indicating that hurtful behaviour is increasing across both environments rather than simply displacing the behaviour from the ‘real world’ to online. However, there are some positives – 65% of young people report that social media, messaging and video apps help them feel closer to their friends, a figure that has remained stable since 2018.

Risky Behaviour Online

When we look at young people’s behaviour online with regard to risk despite some fluctuations there has been an overall drop in percentages deleting their browsing history and increase in their reported use of “incognito” or privacy modes. There is little overall change in those claiming to get around controls or using proxy servers between 2012 and 2021, a small drop and small increase respectively.



Snapshot:

The online safety bill is due to become law later this year and will place more responsibility on social media companies to keep young people safe on their platforms.⁴⁶ Campaigners have highlighted issues with social media algorithms leading young people to harmful content.⁴⁷

Social Media Influencers can have negative impacts on young people leading to depression and anxiety, unhealthy eating habits, drinking alcohol and poor body image.⁴⁸ Recently there have been widespread concerns about Andrew Tate's influence on boys and the impacts this may have on their treatment of girls and women. A recent survey of 1200 young people aged 16-24 in the UK found that 8 out of 10 boys had seen content published by the influencer who is currently under house arrest in Romania for human trafficking and rape allegations. 45% had a positive view of him whilst only 26% felt negatively about him. This is compared with just 1% of teenage girls aged 16-17 who reported holding a positive view of Tate.⁴⁹

A report by the Children's Commissioner in 2018 points out that young people today are the first generation to have a digital footprint from birth.⁵⁰ More data about children is being collected than ever before. This may have significant consequences for them in adulthood, in more subtle ways than we might have first imagined. The potential for a person's data profile to impact upon their daily experience of life becomes more likely with continued developments in analytical techniques and Artificial Intelligence.

⁴⁶ 'A Guide to the Online Safety Bill', *GOV.UK* <<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/a-guide-to-the-online-safety-bill>> [accessed 13 April 2023].

⁴⁷ Dan Milmo and Dan Milmo Global technology editor, 'Molly Russell: How Family Are Helping Shift Narrative on Online Safety', *The Guardian*, 30 September 2022, section Technology <<https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2022/sep/30/molly-russell-family-helping-shift-online-safety-regulation>> [accessed 17 April 2023].

⁴⁸ Charles Alves de Castro, Isobel O'Reilly, and Aiden Carthy, 'Social Media Influencers (SMIs) in Context: A Literature Review', *Journal of Marketing Management*, 9 (2021), 59–71 <<https://doi.org/10.15640/jmm.v9n2a9>>.

⁴⁹ 'Figures That Lay Bare the Shocking Scale of Andrew Tate's Reach among Young Men', *The Independent*, 2023 <<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/andrew-tate-influence-young-men-misogyny-b2283595.html>> [accessed 17 April 2023].

⁵⁰ 'Cco-Who-Knows-What-about-Me.Pdf' <<https://assets.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/wpuploads/2018/11/cco-who-knows-what-about-me.pdf>> [accessed 11 May 2023].

PART 4: Relationships

Summary

More young people are telling us that they occasionally experience loneliness, though the rates of those who often or always feel this way have stayed relatively small.

Young people are less satisfied with their friendships than they were ten years ago and are more likely to report experiencing bullying. There has been an increase in reports of sexual harassment, but a decrease in the percentage of girls' reporting cyber-bullying.

Between 2010 and 2021 the percentage of younger teenagers who said they have a steady girlfriend or boyfriend almost halved.

Family structures have remained stable over the last ten years, with most young people living in households with two married parents.

Between 2005-14 young people became more likely to talk to parents most days about things that matter to them, and more likely to say they got on very well with their parents.

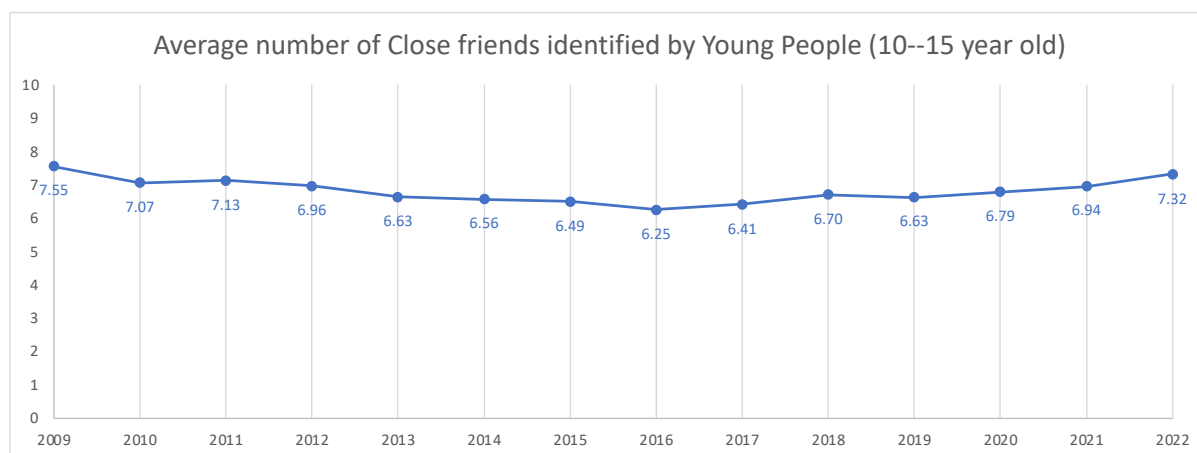
Between 2010-18 there was a 13.5% reduction in the number of young people reporting having a family mealtime every day.

There has been a 26% increase in the number of 'looked after' children in England between 2011-2021 and 1 in 10 experience high instability having more than 3 placements in a year.

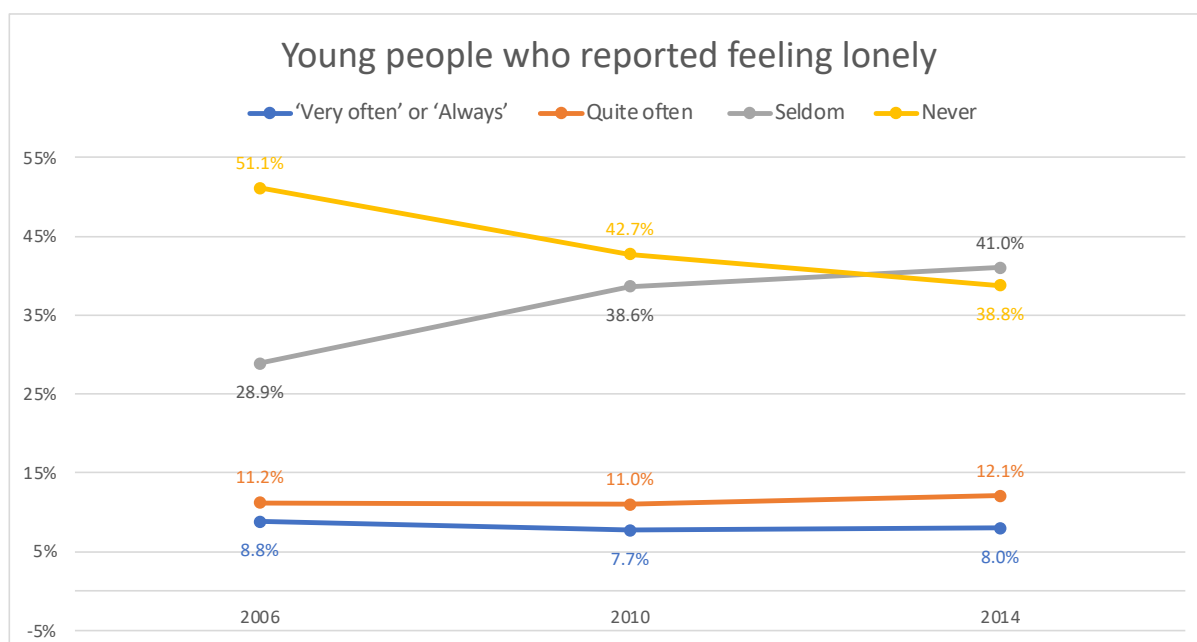
4.1 Friendships

Number of friends, satisfaction with friends and loneliness

There has been a little bit of fluctuation in the average number of close friends reported by 10–15-year-olds, with the average reducing from 7.55 in 2009 to 6.94 in 2021.

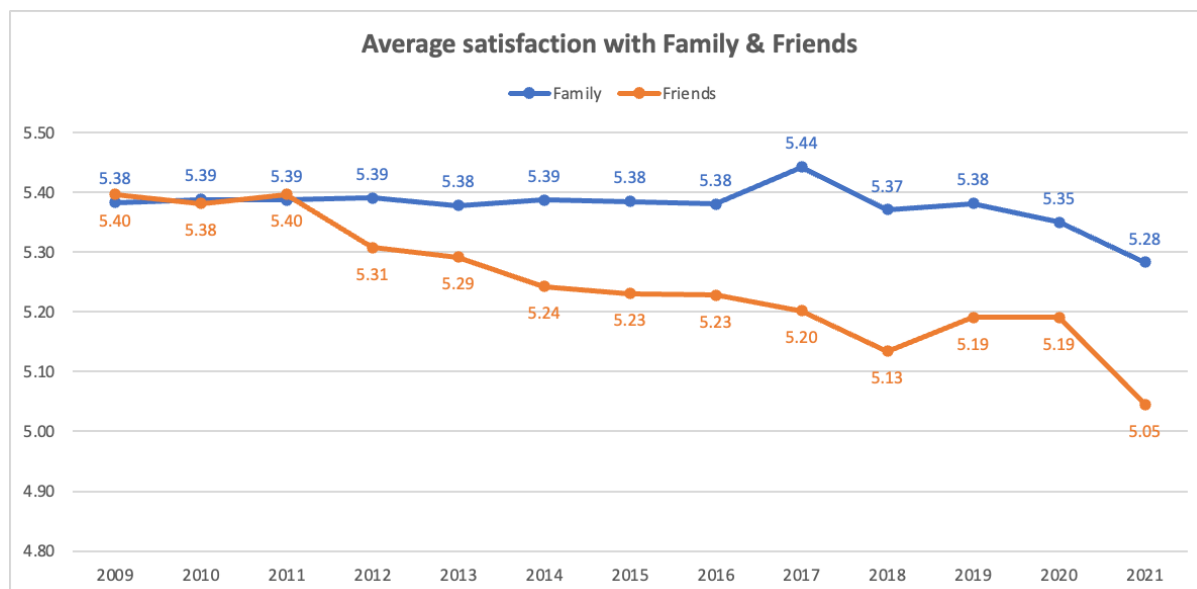


There was an increase in the % of young people experiencing loneliness between 2006-14, although the proportion of teenagers who ‘very often’, or ‘always’ feel lonely stayed fairly stable. Rather there was a significant drop in the percentage of 11–15-year-olds who reported that they ‘never’ feel lonely: from 51% to 38.8%.⁵¹ In an NHS survey over 2020-22, the percentage of 11–16-year-olds who said they ‘often’ or ‘always’ felt lonely was fairly stable from 2020 (5.4%) to 2021 (4.9%) and 2022 (5.2%).



⁵¹ There are no national or UK-wide population surveys that measure loneliness for school-aged adolescents, with recent data available.

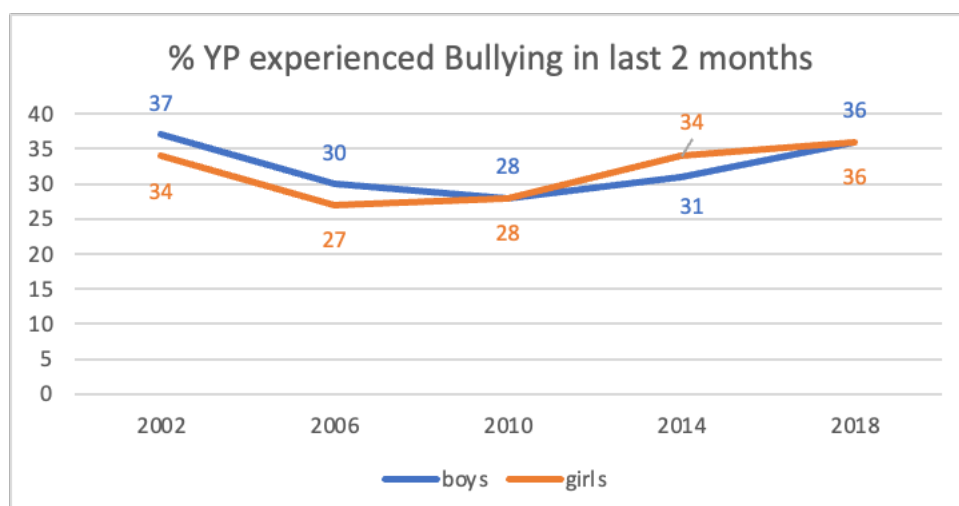
While satisfaction with family has remained very stable up to the pandemic, there has been a reduction in the average rating 10–15-year-olds gave their friendships over the last 10 years (scored out of 7).



Snapshot:

Calls to Childline by children under 11 about loneliness have risen by 71% in 5 years.⁵²
 A Prince’s Trust survey in 2022 found that 30% of young people didn’t know how to make new friends and said they had never felt more alone.⁵³

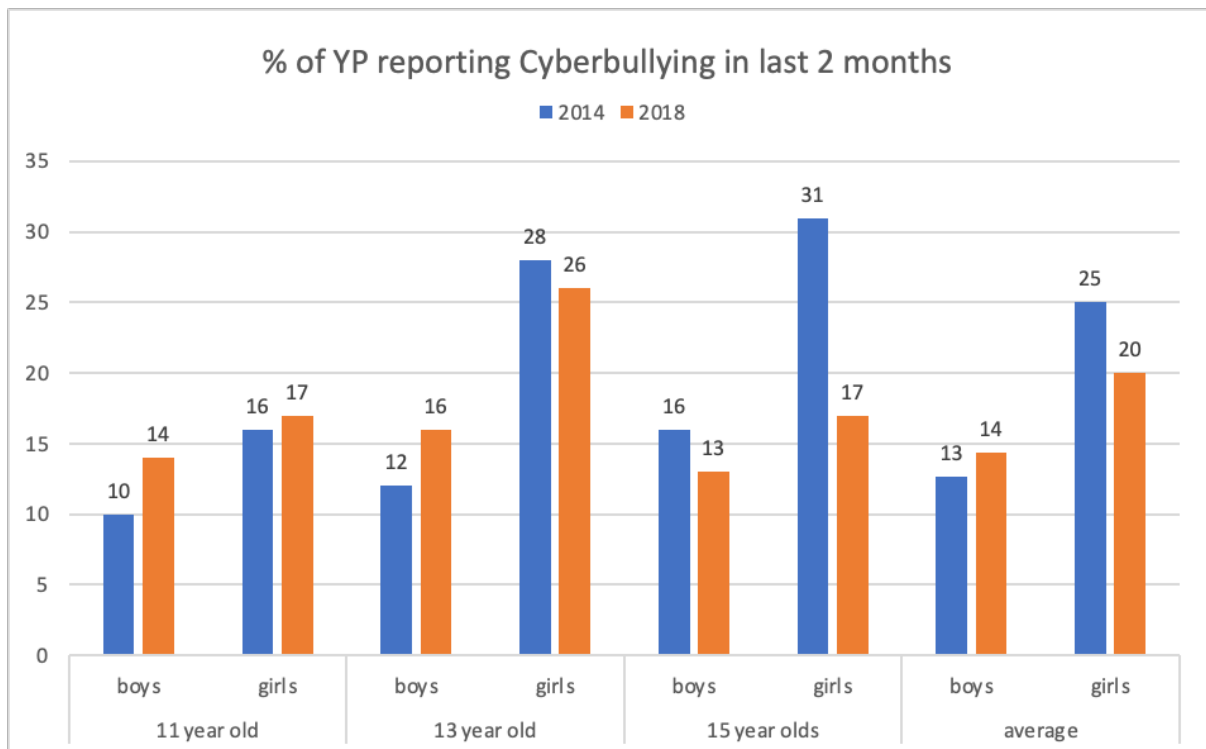
Bullying



⁵² ‘Rise in Loneliness among Children Sparks Wellbeing Concerns’, *CYP Now* <<https://www.cypnow.co.uk/news/article/rise-in-loneliness-among-children-sparks-wellbeing-concerns>> [accessed 17 April 2023].

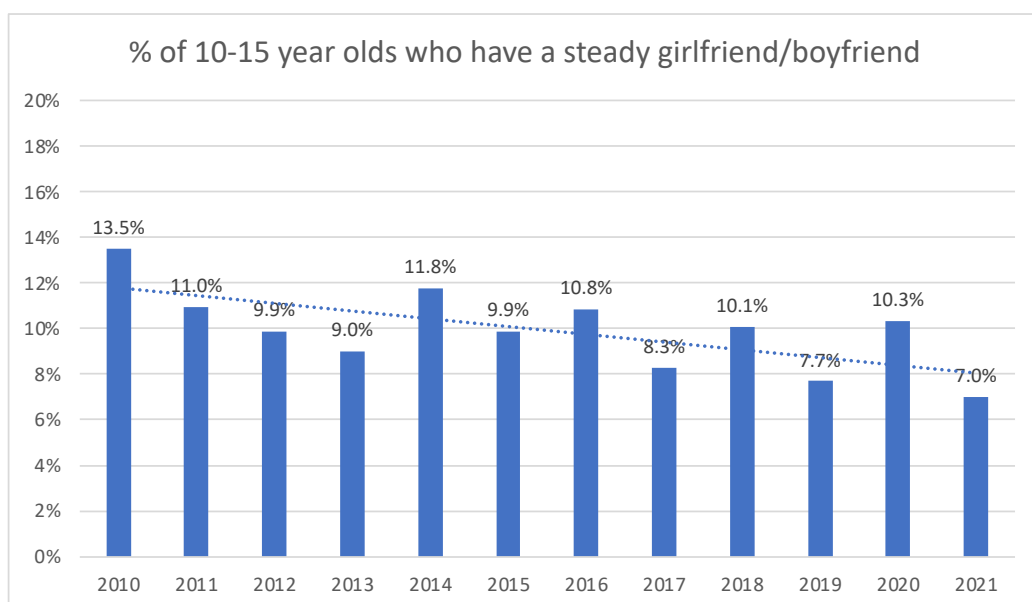
⁵³ Nana Baah, ‘Young People Are Lonelier Than Ever’, *Vice*, 2022 <<https://www.vice.com/en/article/z3n5aj/loneliness-epidemic-young-people>> [accessed 17 April 2023].

Between 2006 and 2018 there was a rise in the percentage of 11–15-year-olds reporting that they have experienced some kind of bullying in the previous two months.



While there has been a rise in bullying overall in the last decade, the four years between 2014 and 2018 saw a reduction in the percentage of 11–15-year-old girls reporting cyberbullying, and a slight increase in reporting by boys.

4.2 Relationships

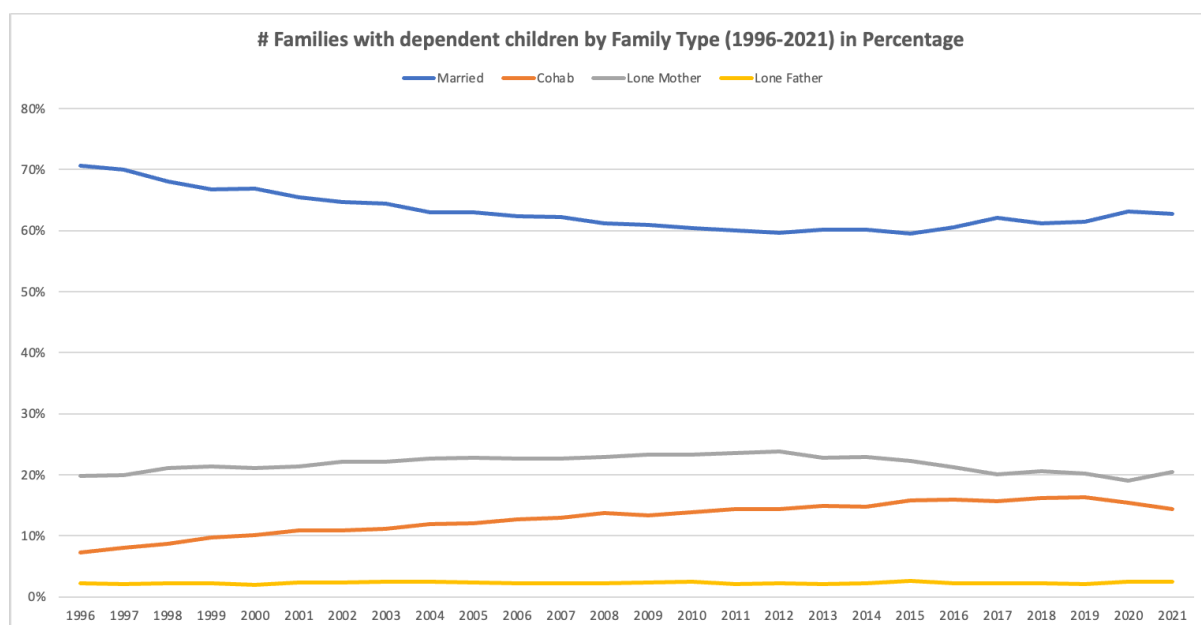


The number of 10–15-year-olds who say they have a steady girlfriend or boyfriend dropped from 13.5% in 2010 to 7% in 2021. The chart shows some fluctuation in this rate, and it's not clear why. Nevertheless, there is an overall trend that shows fewer steady relationships.

4.3 Family and home

Family structure/living arrangements

Since the 1980s there has been a steady decrease in young people living in two-parent households, accompanied by an increase in lone-parent and co-habiting households. However, in the last 10 years these rates have been very stable. In 2011 60% of those with dependent children were married, rising slightly to 62.7% in 2021, while there's been a slight reduction in lone-mother households from 23.4% to 20.4%



Looked after children

There has been a continual increase in 16+ year olds who are looked after from 2012, whereas the 10-15 age bracket has risen from 2014. Overall there has been a 26% increase in looked after children in England from 2011 to 2021. In this time there was a 10% increase in those 16 and over, and a 5% increase in 10-15yo.

The proportion of looked after children who experienced more than one placement in a year has remained stable since 2016 at one third with 1 in 10 experiencing high instability of three or more placements. There has been a slight decrease since 2018 in the % of young people placed within a council boundary from 59% to 56% in 2021.

Young Carers

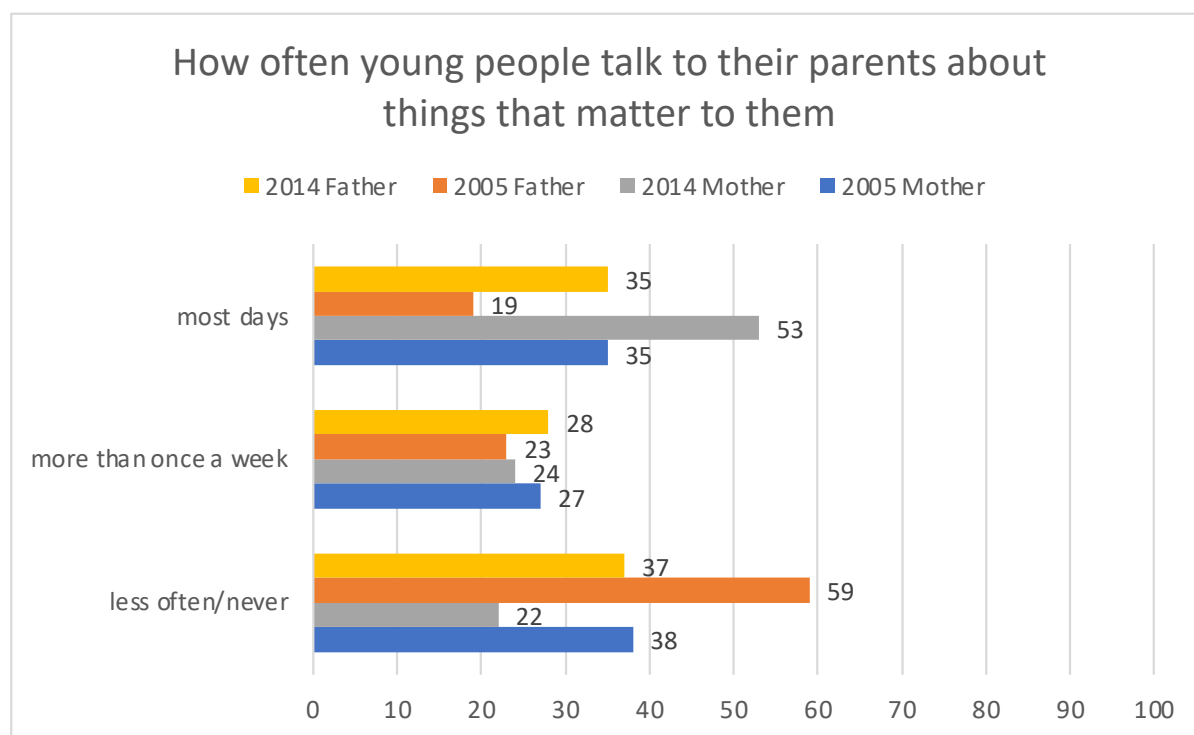
The Children's Society reports that there are as many as 800,000 young carers in the UK with 39% saying that schools are unaware of their caring responsibilities. 27% of young

carers age 11-15 miss school because of their responsibilities and one in three have a mental health issue.

Snapshot:

More than 1200 young people in care had to move placements over Christmas 2021.⁵⁴ From January 2023 the School Census in England will include collection of data about the number of young carers which will help gather more reliable trend data⁵⁵

Relationship with parents

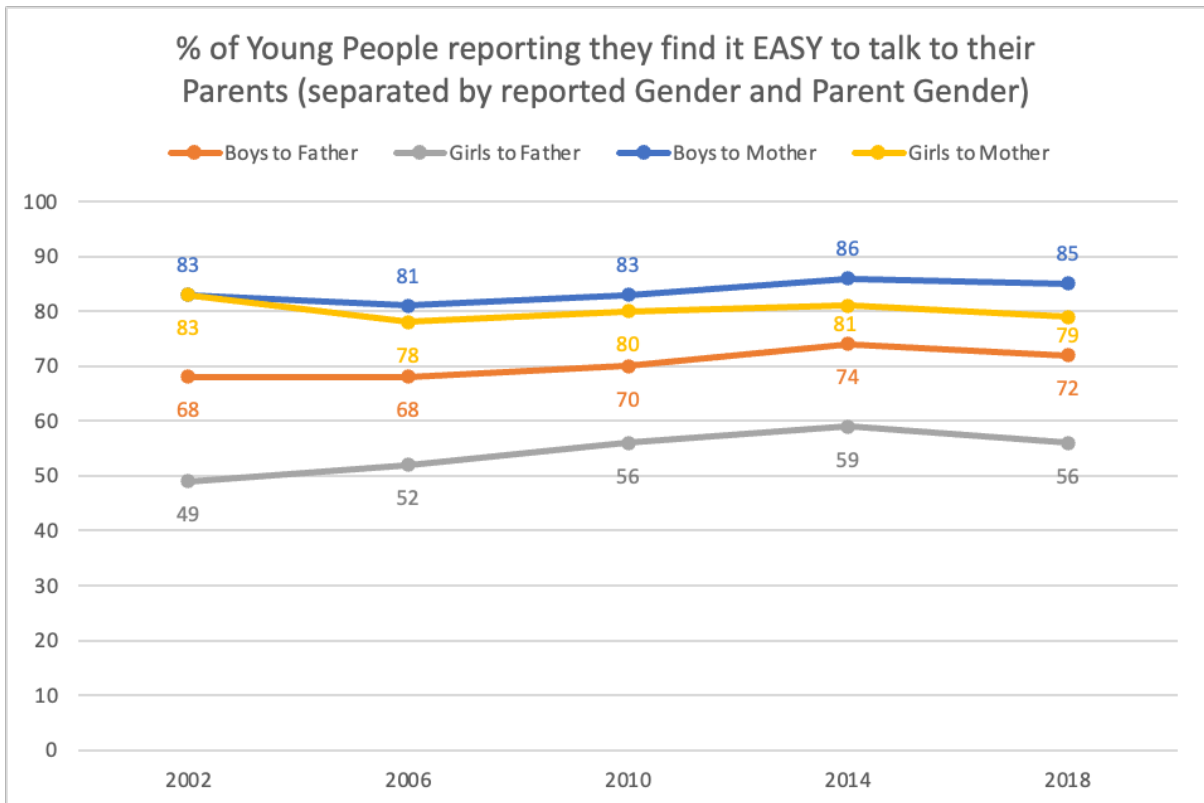


Young people have consistently reported finding it easier to talk to their mothers than their fathers, with girls finding it hardest to speak to their fathers. However, the evidence reveals a slight increase over time in how easy girls and boys find it to speak to their fathers.

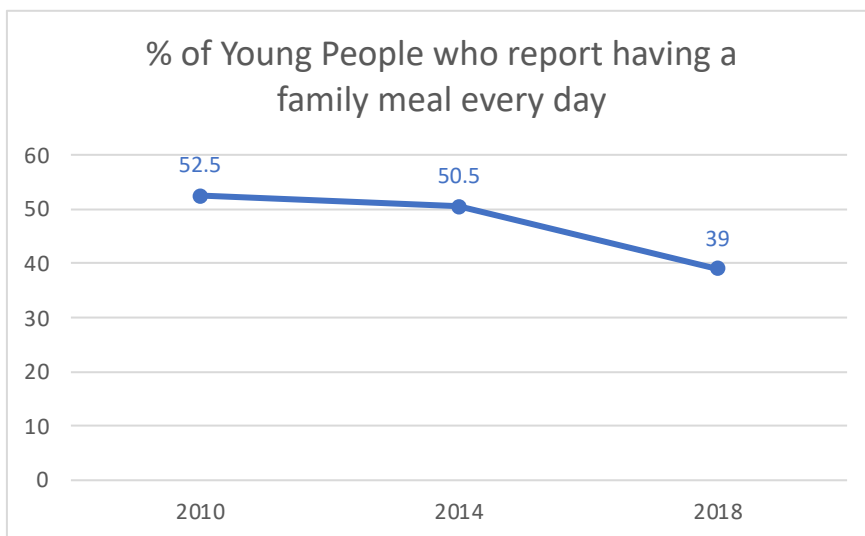
Since 2005 young people are more likely to talk to parents frequently about things that matter to them. The chart shows a 16% increase in the number of 14/15 year olds in England who spoke to their father, and an 18% increase in the number who spoke to their mother 'most days' about things that matter to them. This aligns with data from the same study, showing an increase in the percentage of 13-year-olds in England reporting that they get on 'very well' with their mother (5%) and father (6%) between 2004 and 2015.

⁵⁴ Helen Pidd, 'England's Care Crisis Forces 1,200 Children to Move over Christmas', *The Guardian*, 2 January 2023, section UK news <<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2023/jan/02/children-in-care-moved-christmas-2021-figures>> [accessed 17 April 2023].

⁵⁵ 'Young Carers: Are You Ready for the Big Census Change?', 2022 <<https://schoolsweek.co.uk/census-2023-do-you-know-who-your-young-carers-are/>> [accessed 17 April 2023].



Family mealtimes



The Health Behaviour of School-aged Children study showed a drop in the % of 11–16-year-olds who reported having a family meal-time every day from 52.5% in 2010 to 39% in 2018.

PART 5: School and future

Summary

Young people are less satisfied with school, and with schoolwork than they were ten years ago.

Most teenagers think it's important to do well in their GCSEs exams, but there's been a 10% drop in the number who think it is 'very important'

Most younger teenagers still take part in after-school class, with sport the most consistently popular activity. There's been a small reduction in the number who don't do any classes, and an increase in tutoring and religious classes.

The proportion of 16–17-year-olds in full-time education has generally been increasing while those in apprenticeships decreasing, with total participation being broadly stable in recent years.

Most teenagers don't have a job or do any paid work. Around 12% of 10–15-year-olds and 24% of 16 and 17 year olds report doing paid work, and rates have remained relatively stable over the last ten years.

About 90% of 10–15-year-olds receive pocket money, and these rates have remained fairly consistent. Younger teenagers are now slightly more likely to save for specific things and less likely to spend their money asap.

There has been no reduction in the number of young people seeking and getting their driving licenses, although the pandemic has created a backlog in tests.

The average age of moving out of home increased very slightly between 2011 and 2021, as did the age 10–15-year-olds say they *want* to move out of home.

In the general population people are marrying later, and between 2009 and 2019 there was a 63% decrease in the number of 18-year-olds marrying opposite-sex partners.

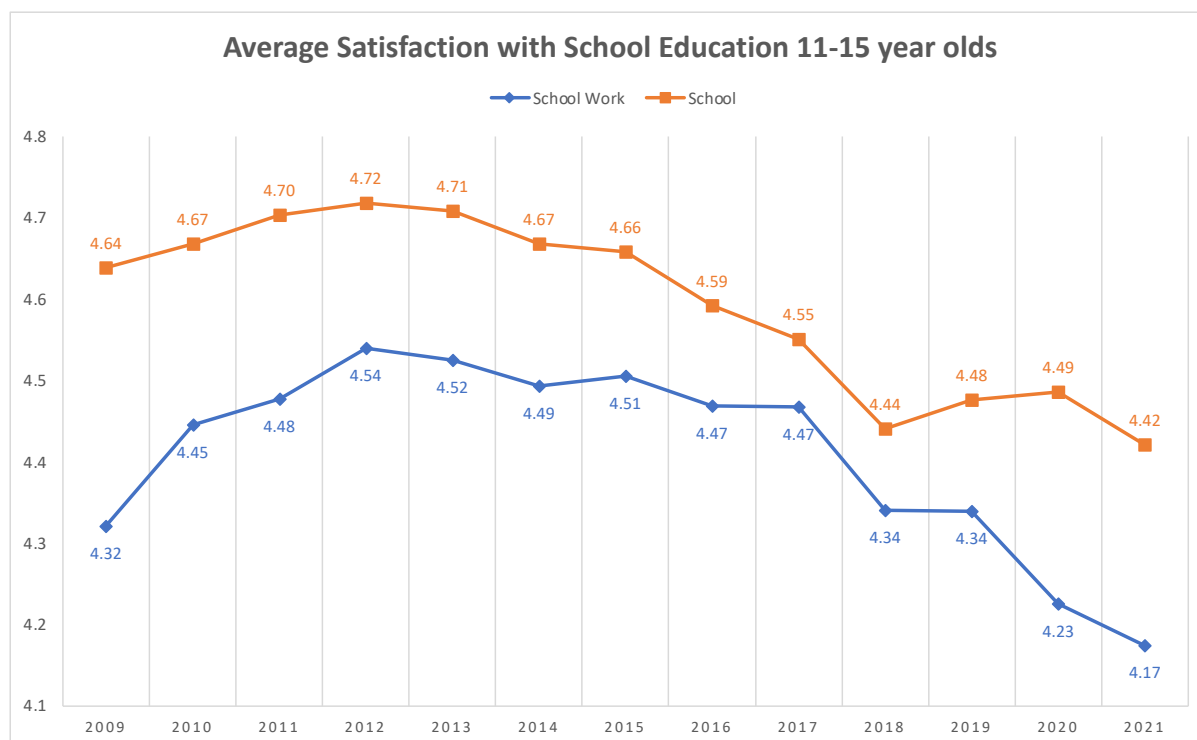
The proportion of young people living in poverty has fluctuated since 1994 but overall has decreased slightly, however there has been an increase since 2019 in the number of young people eligible for Free School Meals.

5.1 Education

School, well-being, and pressure

There has been a drop in 10–15-year olds' satisfaction with school from a mean-average of 4.70 out of 7 in 2011 to 4.42 in 2021. Young people's satisfaction with schoolwork has followed a similar trajectory, dropping from 4.48 to 4.17.

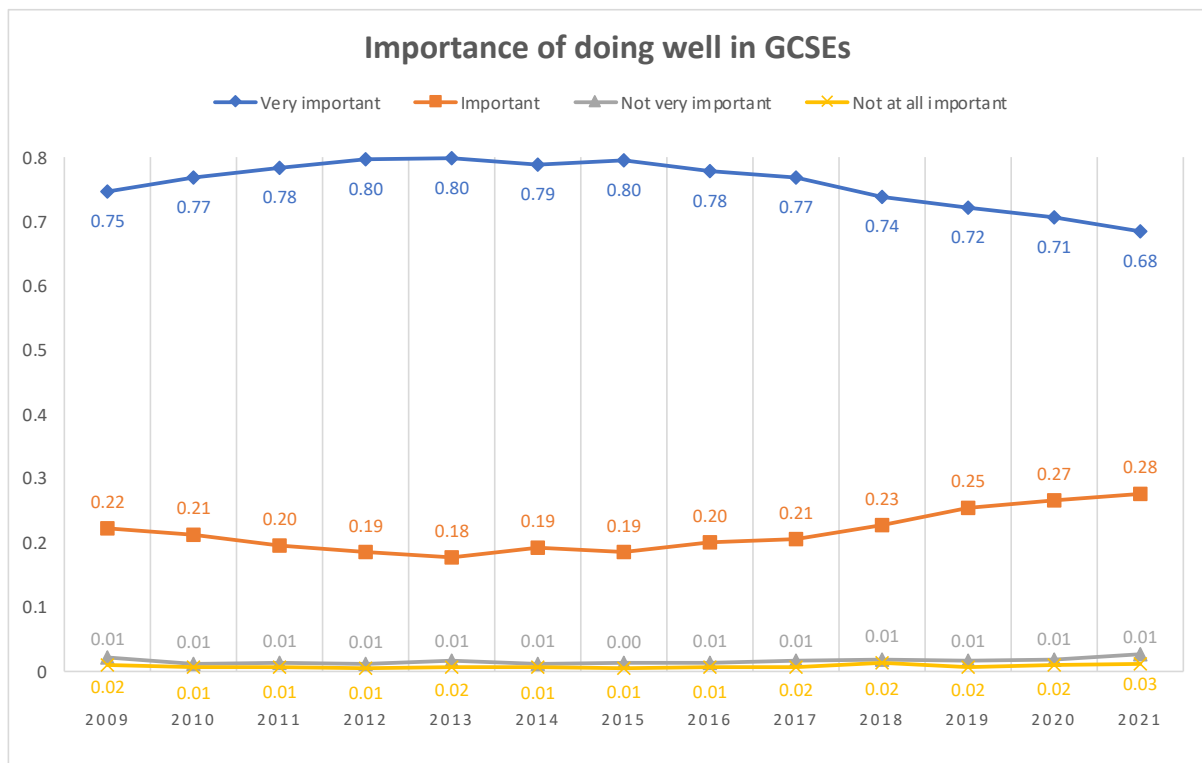
This may not look like a dramatic drop, with average scores still between 4-5 out of 7 across the whole decade. But scores for school are significantly lower than when the survey began. And although there was no significant difference in mean happiness scores for schoolwork in 2019-20, the downward curve continued in 2020-21.



The last five years have seen a reduction in the percentage of 10–15-year-olds who think it is 'very important' to do well in their GCSEs from 78% in 2016 to 68% in 2021, the lowest point in the last ten years. There's been a corresponding increase in the proportion who think it's 'important' from 20% to 28%. So, most young teenagers still value success in their exams, but some put slightly less weight on this success than they used to.

There has been an ongoing trend toward greater participation in Higher Education over the last 20 years, which has continued in the last decade. This will likely be part of how the wider context of young people's educational trajectories affects their relationship with schoolwork and pressure to do well.

A 2021 survey of 1000 13–17-year-olds in the UK found that just over a third (34%) ‘usually’ or ‘always’ felt pressure to be successful (22% usually and 12% always) with a further 36% feeling this pressure ‘sometimes’.



Snapshot:

There are growing concerns over the number of children not attending school since the pandemic with up to 140,000 students missing at least 50% of their lessons in the summer term of 2022.⁵⁶

There are also increasing concerns about the amount of stress 15–18-year-olds are experiencing since the introduction of linear GCSE and A Level Assessments in 2014.⁵⁷

After school classes

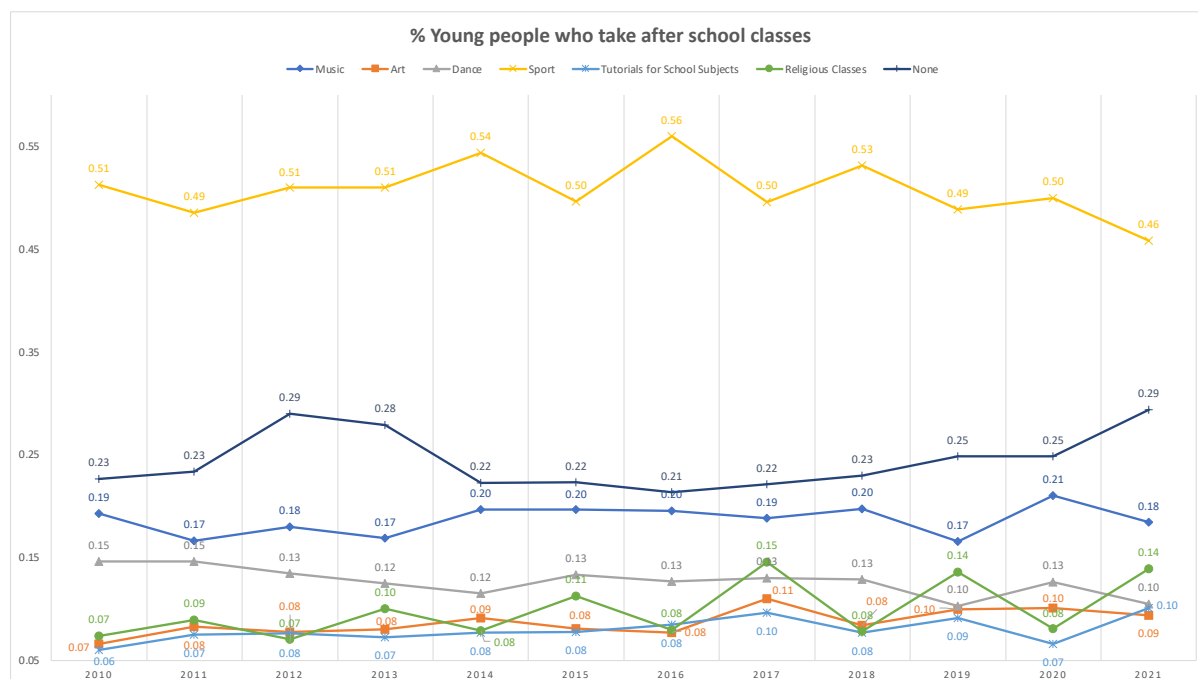
Between 2010 and 2021 the % of young people who don’t take any after-school classes increased by 6%. Sport remains the most popular after-school class, with almost half of 10–15-year-olds taking part (46%). The next largest group don’t do any classes (29%).

Participation in Music and Art classes has stayed fairly stable, but there has been a 5% drop in the number taking dance classes, a 5% drop in young people taking sports classes and a 8% drop in those taking ‘other’ after school classes. There has been an increase in the %

⁵⁶ ‘Terri White: How I Fear for the “ghost Children” Missing from School’, *BBC News*, 22 March 2023, section UK <<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-65031051>> [accessed 17 April 2023].

⁵⁷ ‘Has Education-Related Stress Increased among GCSE and A-Level Students since the Introduction of Linear Assessments?’ <<https://www.bera.ac.uk/blog/has-education-related-stress-increased-among-gcse-and-a-level-students-since-the-introduction-of-linear-assessments>> [accessed 17 April 2023].

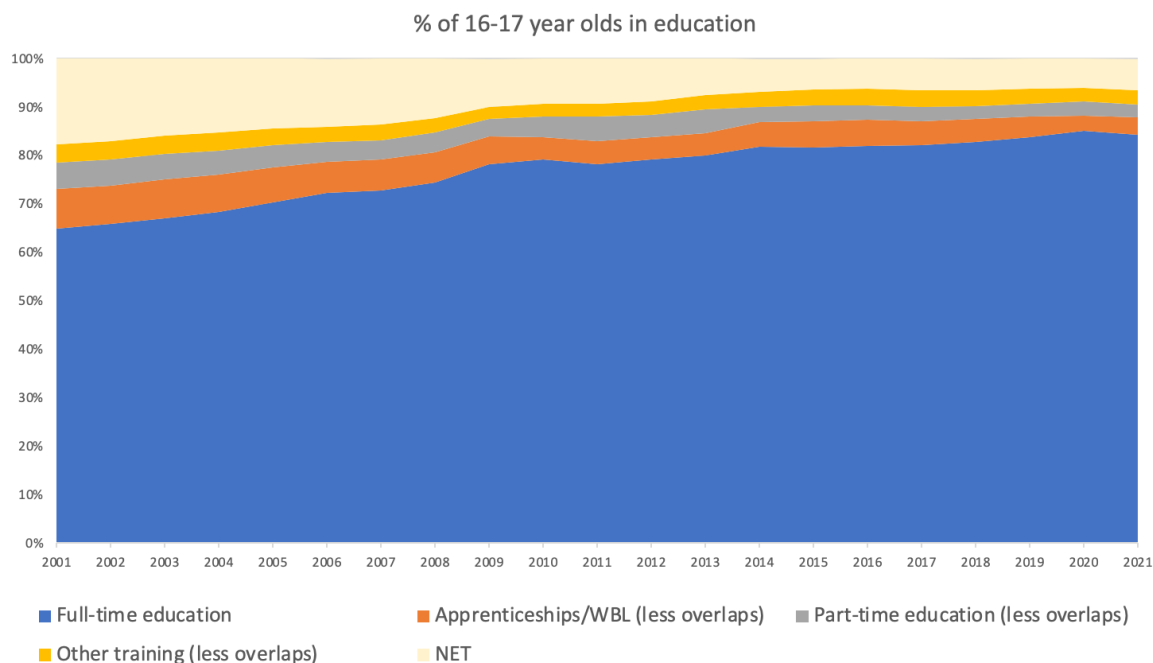
doing tutoring for school subjects (from 6 to 10%) and a doubling of the number doing religious classes (from 7 to 14%).



Participation in education

The proportion of 16–17-year-olds in full-time education has generally been increasing while those in apprenticeships decreasing, with total participation being broadly stable in recent years. Following the introduction of Raising the participation age (RPA) legislation in 2013/14, which required 16–17-year-olds in England to remain in education or training, participation in full-time education rose sharply in 2013, after which it remained on an upward trend, peaking in 2020 at 85.1% of 16–17-year-olds.

Since the introduction of RPA, these increases in full-time education have been largely offset by falls in apprenticeships and other training resulting in the relatively stable trend of those not in education or training (NET). In the latest year we have seen the opposite with fall in full-time education and rise in apprenticeships.



Snapshot:

A report for the Institute for Fiscal Studies in 2022 highlighted the increase in the number of young people in full-time education, and how it has disproportionately benefited those from better off backgrounds. It also identified that the expansion of further education has failed to increase levels of minimum basic skills of young adults and reports that for young people in England parental education has a higher impact on level of basic skills than in most other countries.⁵⁸ The current UK Government’s concern around basic numeracy skills and what it sees as a cultural acceptance of being “bad at maths” has led to a pledge to make some form of Maths education compulsory in post-16 education.⁵⁹

Over half of young people attending university in 2021 said they would have considered an apprenticeship but only 1% received help at school to apply for one.⁶⁰

5.2 Employment and money

Paid work

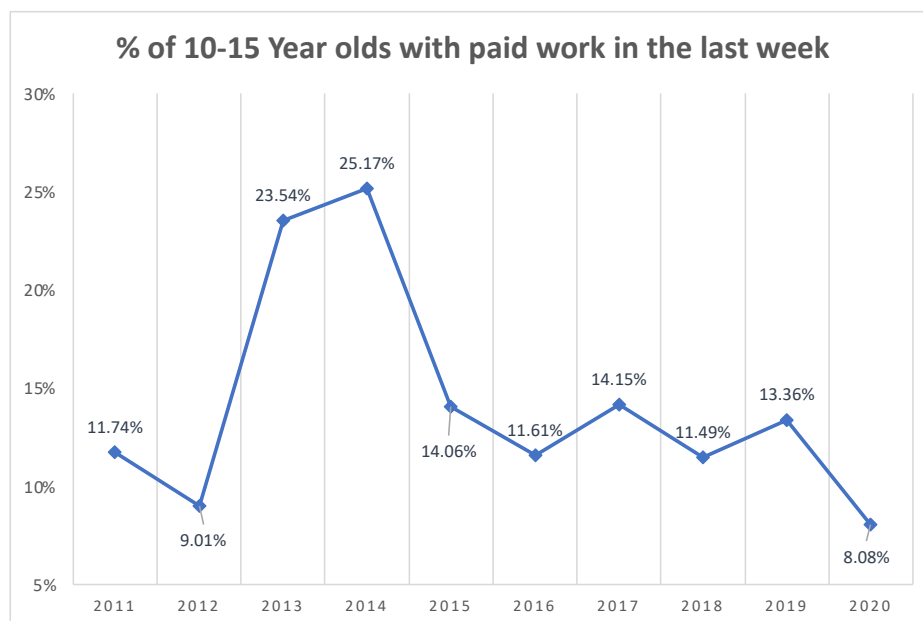
The percentage of 10–15-year-olds doing paid work has fluctuated somewhat but remained fairly stable over the last five years. A drop in 2020 is likely to be explained by the pandemic and subsequent lockdowns, and it is not clear why there was such a spike in 2013 and 2014.*

⁵⁸ ‘Inequality in English Post-16 Education’ <<https://ifs.org.uk/inequality/inequality-in-english-post-16-education/>> [accessed 17 April 2023].

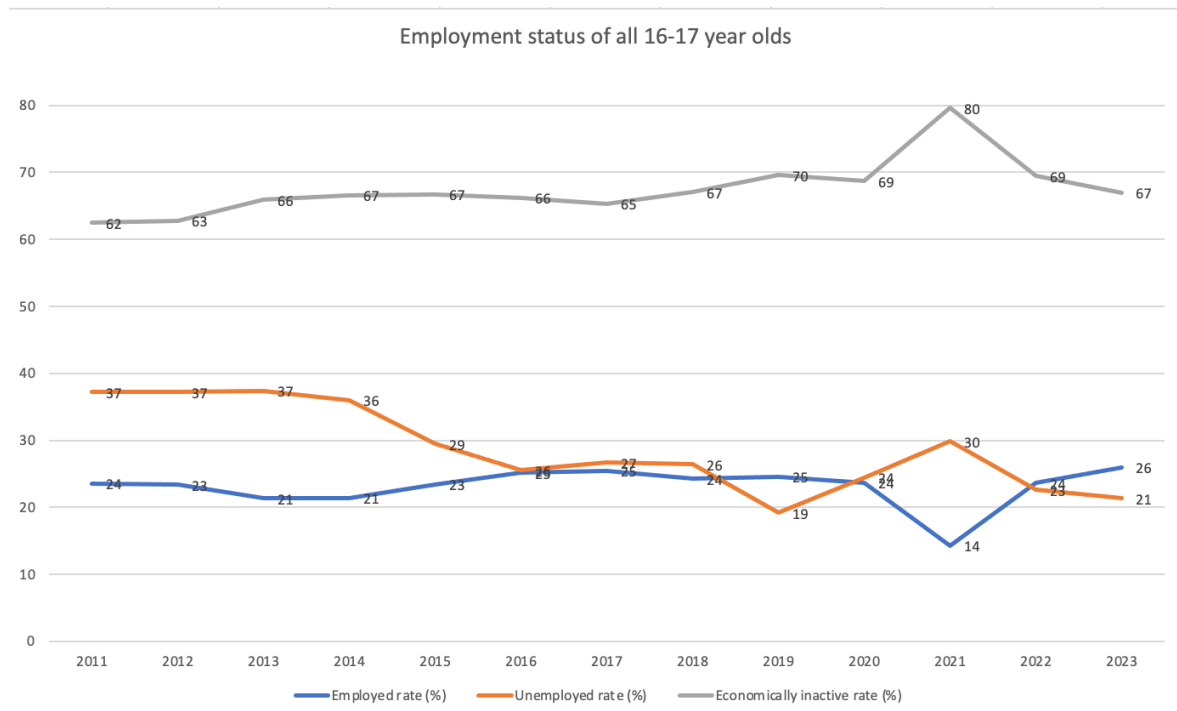
⁵⁹ ‘Studying Maths to 18 – What You Need to Know - The Education Hub’, 2023 <<https://educationhub.blog.gov.uk/2023/01/04/studying-maths-to-18-what-you-need-to-know/>> [accessed 17 April 2023].

⁶⁰ ‘Youth Employment in the UK 2021’, CIPD <<https://www.cipd.co.uk/knowledge/work/skills/youth-employment-2021>> [accessed 17 April 2023].

Unfortunately, this question was not asked in the most recent wave of the survey, and we can't yet see whether employment amongst younger teenagers has returned to pre-pandemic levels.



The majority of 16–17-year-olds don't have a paid job. Over the last ten years, around a quarter of older teens surveyed in Jan/Feb each year had done paid work in the previous week. This was 24% in 2011, and apart from a dip in 2021 (lockdown 3), these rates recovered and were back to 26% in Jan/Feb 2023. Some young people who would have been considered 'unemployed' are now recategorized as 'economically inactive' because of the introduction of RPA (Raising the Participation Age) in 2013 and their inclusion in the education system.



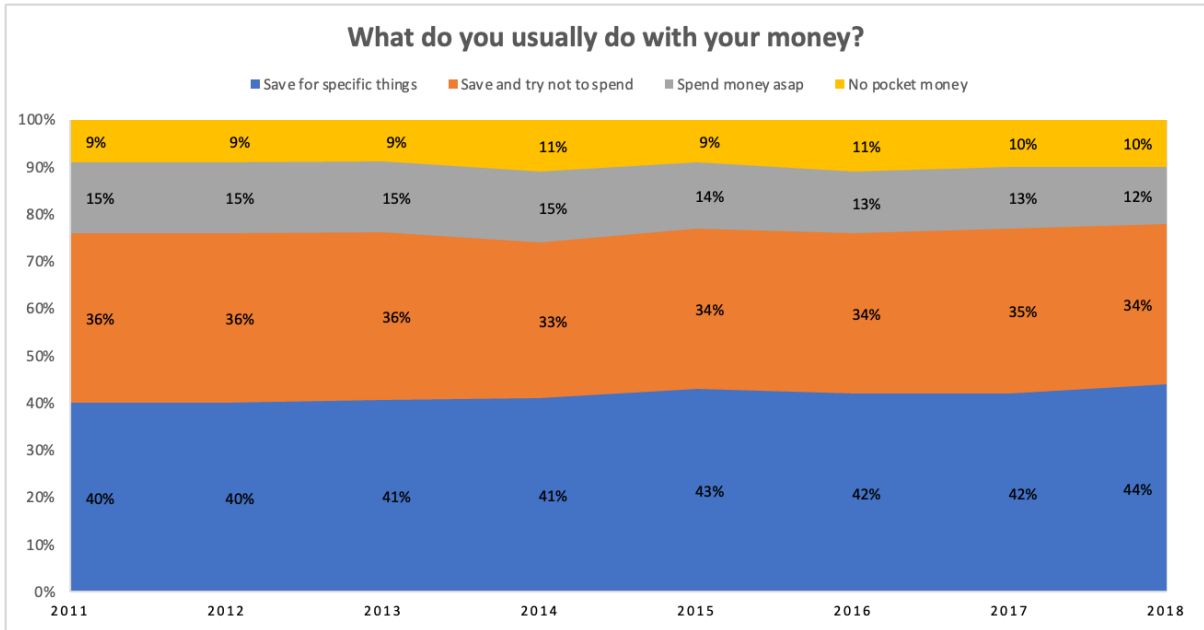
Snapshot:

A survey by the CIPD in 2021 found that 72% of the 18–30-year-olds they surveyed had some experience of paid work whilst in full-time education and that they were less likely to be unemployed post-education than those who didn't.⁶¹

Use of money

About 90% of 10–15-year-olds receive pocket money, and these rates have remained fairly consistent since 2013. By 2020, younger teenagers were slightly more likely to save for specific things (up 4%) and slightly less likely to spend their money asap (from 15% to 12%)

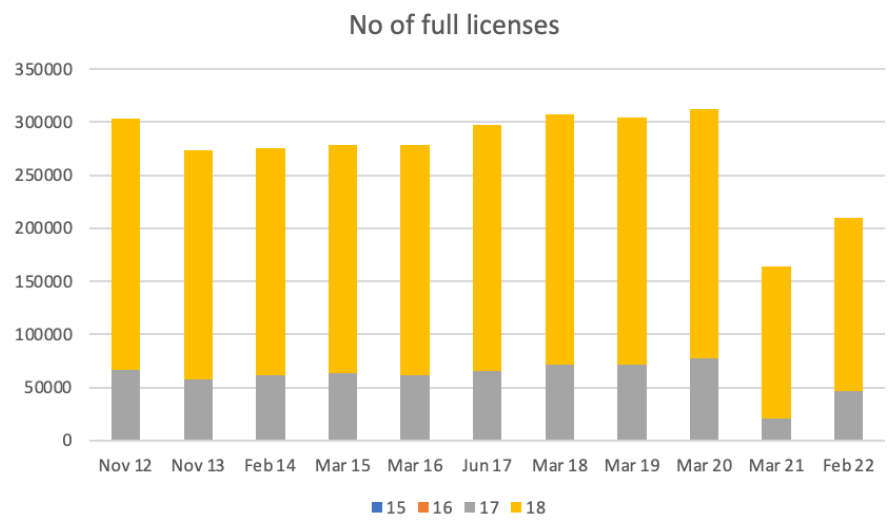
⁶¹ 'Youth Employment in the UK 2021'.

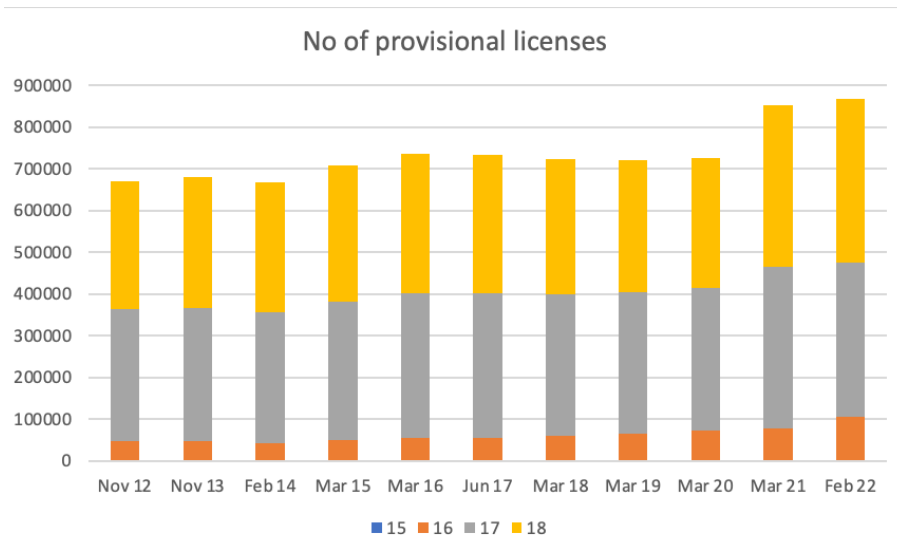


5.3 Transition to adulthood

Driving

Prior to the pandemic there was little change in the number of driving licenses issued, with slightly more licenses issued to males than females. The decrease in licenses issued in 2021 is likely due to the impacts of lockdowns and covid restrictions, with test backlogs continuing into 2022. The increase in provisional licenses suggests that young people may have been taking advantage of learning on quiet roads during the pandemic and/or applying earlier because of the test backlog.





Snapshot:

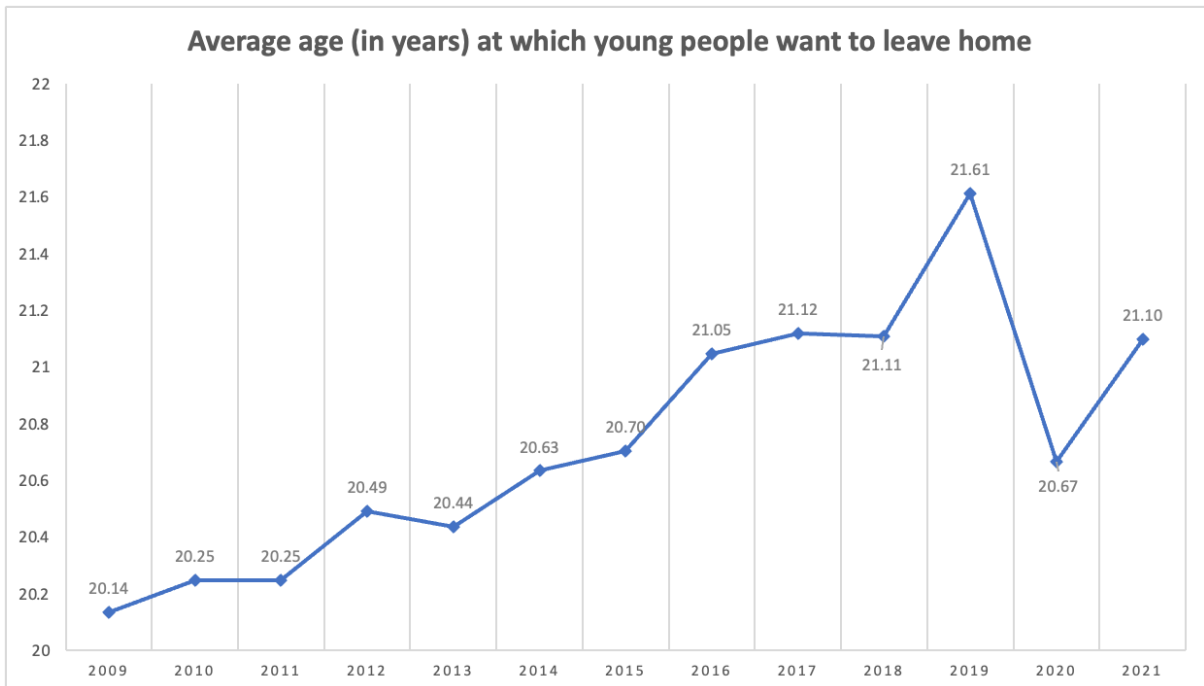
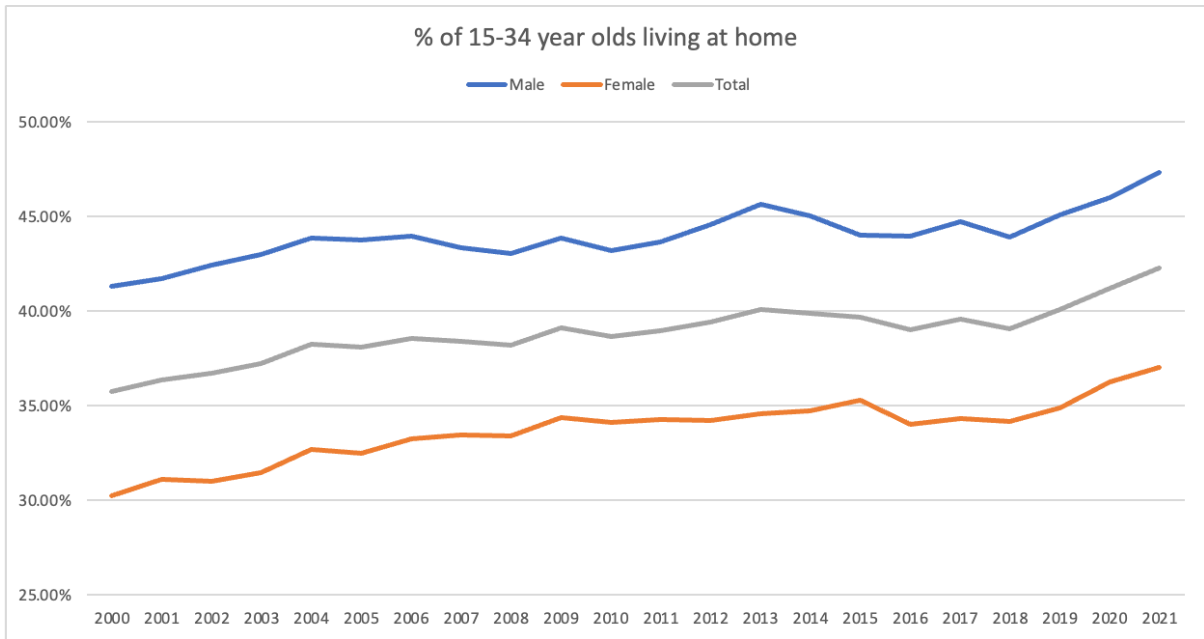
The new THINK! campaign, “Is pushing it worth it?” is targeted at young male drivers, as statistics show male drivers aged 17 to 24 are 4 times more likely to be killed or seriously injured than drivers aged 25 or over. Research findings also show that 60% of all serious and fatal collisions involving young male car drivers were on rural roads.⁶²

Moving out

The average age of moving out increased from 20.21 in 2011 to 20.68 in 2021 and there were 34.74% of 15–34-year-olds living with parents in 2000 compared with 42.28% in 2021.

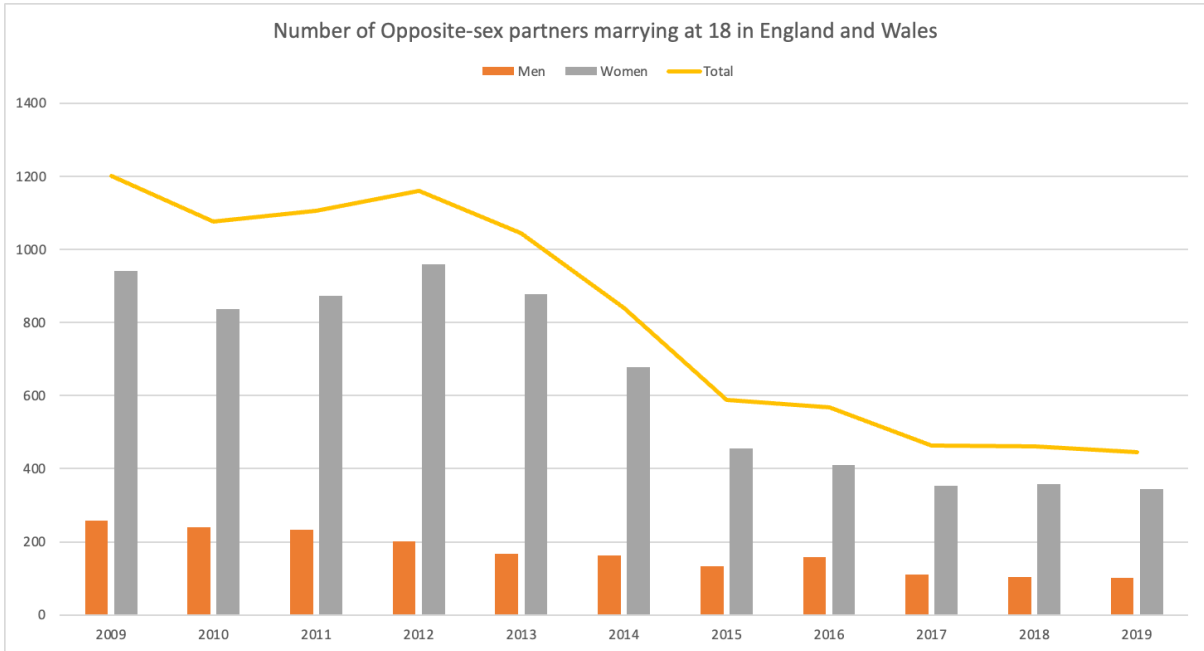
The increase from 2019-2021 may be related to the pandemic and its lockdowns with some young people choosing to move back home or delay moving out during this period.

⁶² ‘Rural Roads Targeted in New Safety Campaign to Prevent Deaths and Injuries among Young Drivers’, GOV.UK <<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/rural-roads-targeted-in-new-safety-campaign-to-prevent-deaths-and-injuries-among-young-drivers>> [accessed 17 April 2023].

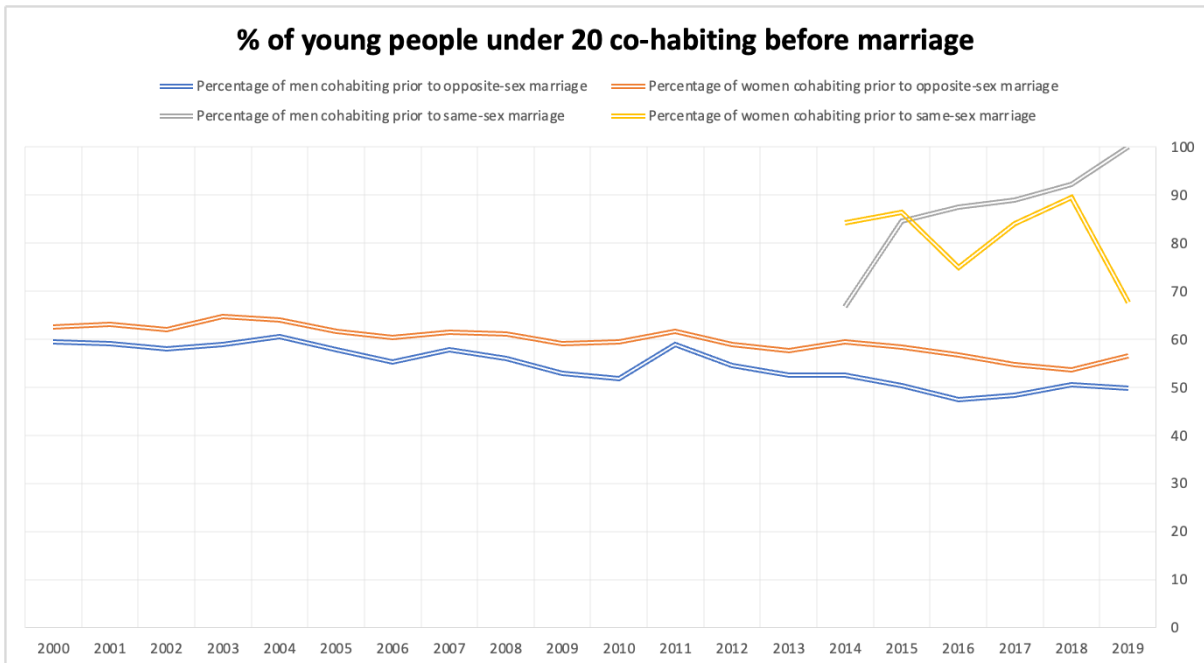


Getting married

An overall reduction in the rate of 18-year-olds getting married reflects the fact that people are marrying later, with the average age of first marriage rising steadily since the early 1970s. Between 2009 and 2019 there was a 63% decrease in the number of 18-year-olds marrying opposite-sex partners.



There have been relatively stable rates of cohabitation amongst the few under-20-year-olds who go on to get married, over the last 20 years. A reduction in these rates in the last few years may be the result of young people needing to save money by living at home. Gay young people who marry young are more likely to be already living together. In 2021, 100% of gay men under 20 who got married reported cohabiting before marriage.⁶³



⁶³ Gay marriage was only legal in UK from 2014.

Snapshot:

Research by UCL and The University of St Andrews suggests that there is a generational shift from moving in together as being a 'trial' before marriage to co-habiting becoming just another a stage in dating.⁶⁴

Economic Security

- 29% of children in 2022 in the UK were living in poverty, this follows a fluctuating but downward trend since 1994 from 32%
- 71% of children growing up in poverty live in a household where at least one parent works
- 800,000 children live in a household that used a foodbank in 2022
- The proportion of state-funded pupils eligible for free school meals in England has steadily risen year on year from 15.4% in January 2019 to 22.5% in January 2022.
- In the 2019 English Indices of Deprivation Middlesborough and Blackpool ranked as the two most deprived districts regarding income deprivation for children

Snapshot:

A co-op survey of 5000 young people up to age 25 in 2022 found that less than a quarter of young people think they will ever be financially secure with only two thirds believing they would be able to own their own house.⁶⁵

Almost half (47%) young people today are facing financial precarity.⁶⁶ A recent research report in 2022 by the RSA on the economic insecurity facing young people describes what they call 'atomisation' as "The breaking of societal bonds that should support young people, leaving them isolated and vulnerable".⁶⁷

⁶⁴ Meredith Turits, 'Why Millennials Aren't Moving in Together as a Trial Marriage' <<https://www.bbc.com/worklife/article/20220408-why-millennials-arent-cohabiting-as-a-trial-marriage>> [accessed 17 April 2023].

⁶⁵ '23% of Young People "Do Not Think They Will Ever Feel Financially Secure"', *The Independent*, 2022 <<https://www.independent.co.uk/money/23-of-young-people-do-not-think-they-will-ever-feel-financially-secure-b1987990.html>> [accessed 17 April 2023].

⁶⁶ Fran Landreth Strong and Hannah Webster, *The Cost of Independence* (London: RSA, January 2022) <https://www.thersa.org/globalassets/_foundation/new-site-blocks-and-images/reports/2022/01/cost_of_independence.pdf> [accessed 12 April 2023].

⁶⁷ Toby Murray and Hannah Webster, *Age of Insecurity: Young People's Economic Insecurity in an Age of Atomisation* (London: RSA, December 2022) <https://www.thersa.org/globalassets/_foundation/new-site-blocks-and-images/reports/2022/12/age-of-insecurity-report-final.pdf> [accessed 12 April 2023].