

Growing up in the West

The lives and
lifestyles of our
young people

[VIEW REPORTS](#)

info@planetyouth.ie



For event details and
registration go to:

<https://wrdatf.ie/training-awareness-week.php>



DRUG & ALCOHOL WRDATF AWARENESS WEEK

NOVEMBER
10 - 14TH
2025

Monday	10	11AM	The European Drug Report 2025	...
		2.30PM	Cannabis & Pregnancy	...
		7PM	Support our Teens When They're Feeling Socially Excluded	...
Tuesday	11	10:30AM	Substance Use and Intergenerational Trauma	...
		1PM	Target; Test; Hook; Trap:	...
		3PM	Introduction to the WRDATF Parent Hub	...
Wednesday	12	10AM	DRIVE Project	...
		11AM	Silent Voices – Ending the Omerta	...
		12.30PM	The Student Voice on Higher Education	...
		1PM	Information Session on Spiking & Family Support	...
		3PM	Neurodiversity and Substance Use	...
Thursday	13	10AM	Recovery for Family Members impacted by Substance Use	...
		2PM	Reducing Alcohol Harm - A practical guide for groups and organisations	...
		7PM	The Importance of Sleep for our Teens	...
Friday	14	9.30AM	WRDATF Drug & Alcohol Health-Based Needs Assessment Stakeholders Consultation	...

Keep an eye on our website and social media for additional events

More Information



www.wrdatf.ie

Supporting your teen when they're feeling socially excluded

A webinar for parents of teenagers

With
Dr Malie Coyne
Clinical Psychologist and Author



Drawing on her clinical expertise, Planet Youth findings, and her own parenting experience, Malie will discuss why belonging is vital for young people and how exclusion can affect self-esteem and mental health. She will share compassionate, practical strategies to help parents strengthen communication, support resilience, and navigate the challenges of peer rejection in today's technology-driven world.

Parents will leave with reassurance, tangible tools, and the opportunity to have their questions answered.

Monday the 10th of November

19.00 – 20.15

Register at: <https://bit.ly/40K0DUn> or



The importance of sleep for our teenagers

A webinar for the parents of teens

With
Lucy Wolfe
Sleep Consultant and Author



A webinar for parents that explores the importance of sleep, the reasons behind typical sleep challenges, and how parents can practically support their teenagers to understand and prioritise their sleep.

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19.00 – 20.15

Register at: <https://bit.ly/40K0DUn> or



PLANET
youth

What is Planet Youth



A public health project, based on the Icelandic Prevention Model, designed to improve health and life outcomes for our school-going population.

An interagency project, led by the WRDATF.



gretb

Bord Oideachais agus Oiliúna
na Gaillimhe agus Ros Comáin
*Galway and Roscommon
Education and Training Board*



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
Health Service Executive



Comhairle Contae
Ros Comáin
Roscommon
County Council



Comhairle Chontae na Gaillimhe
Galway County Council



Comhairle Contae Mhaigh Eo
Mayo County Council

Growing up in the West

The lives and
lifestyles of our
young people

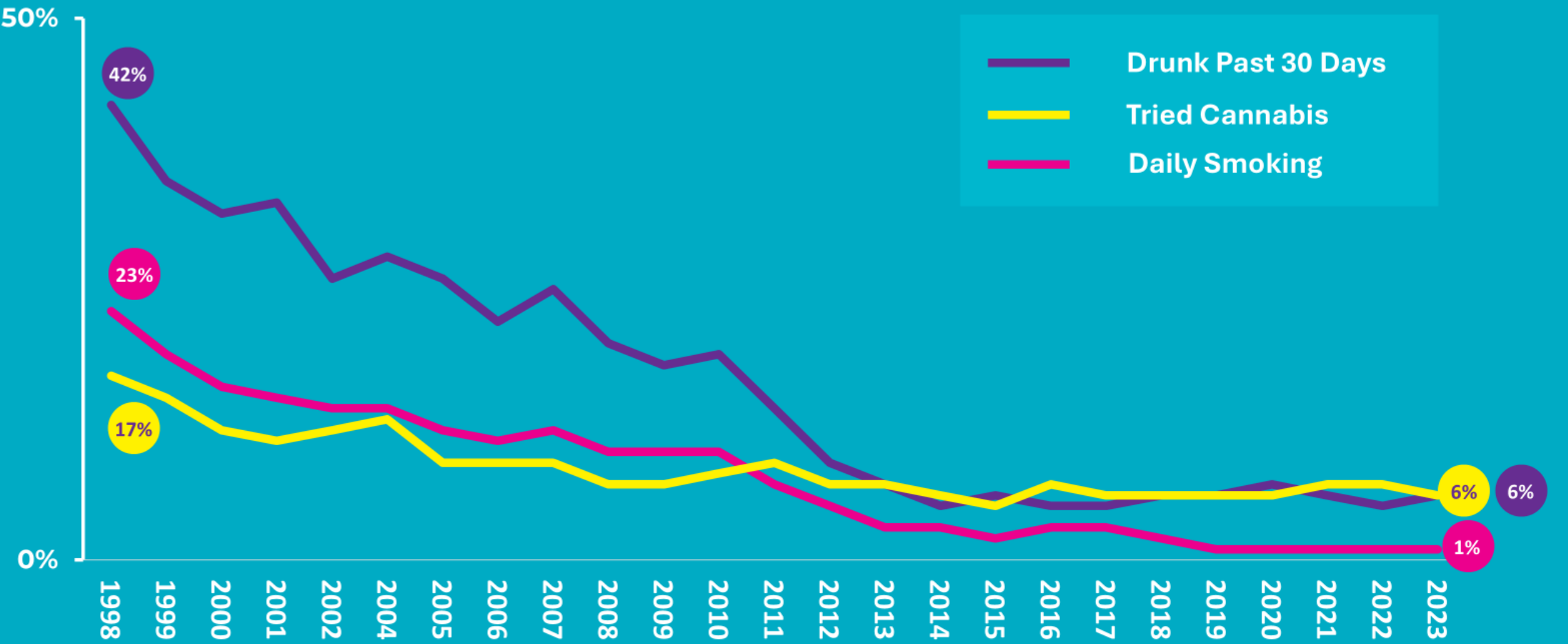
[VIEW REPORTS](#)

west.planetyouth.ie



CHANGE THROUGH PRIMARY PREVENTION

SUBSTANCE USE IN ICELANDIC 15-16 YEAR OLDS (1998 – 2023)

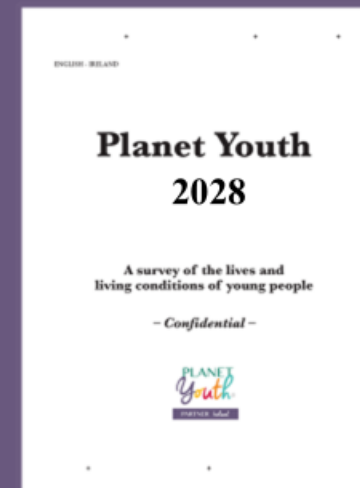
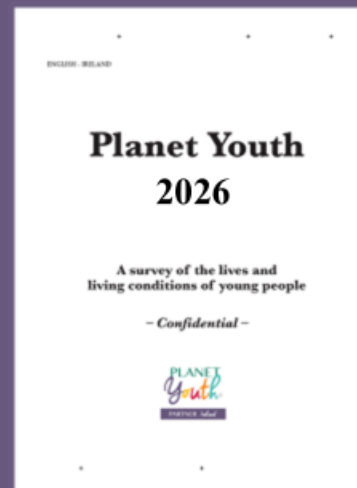
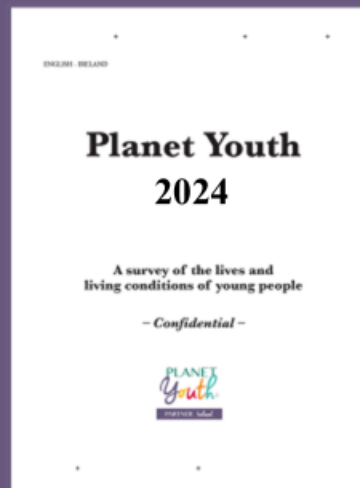
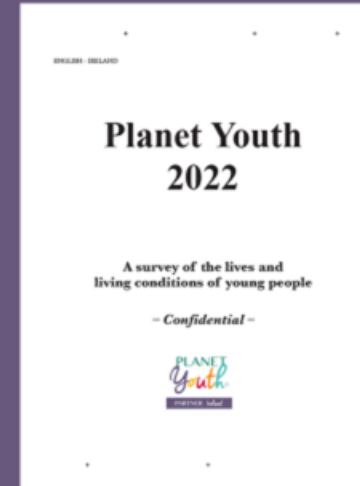
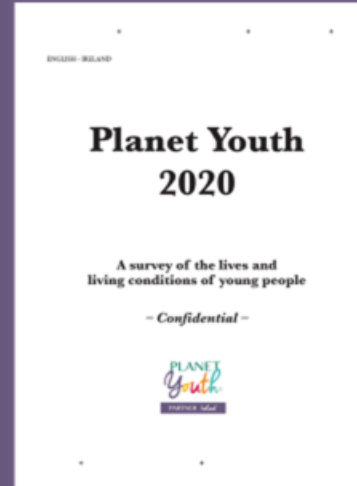
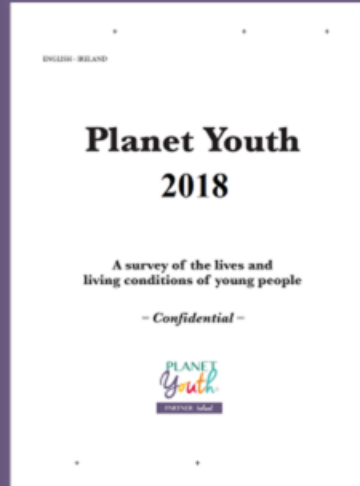


The primary prevention approach will be used here to address many areas related to the health and wellbeing of our young people.

Including:

- **Alcohol and other drugs**
- **Excessive screen use**
- **Poor mental health**
- **Lack of sleep**

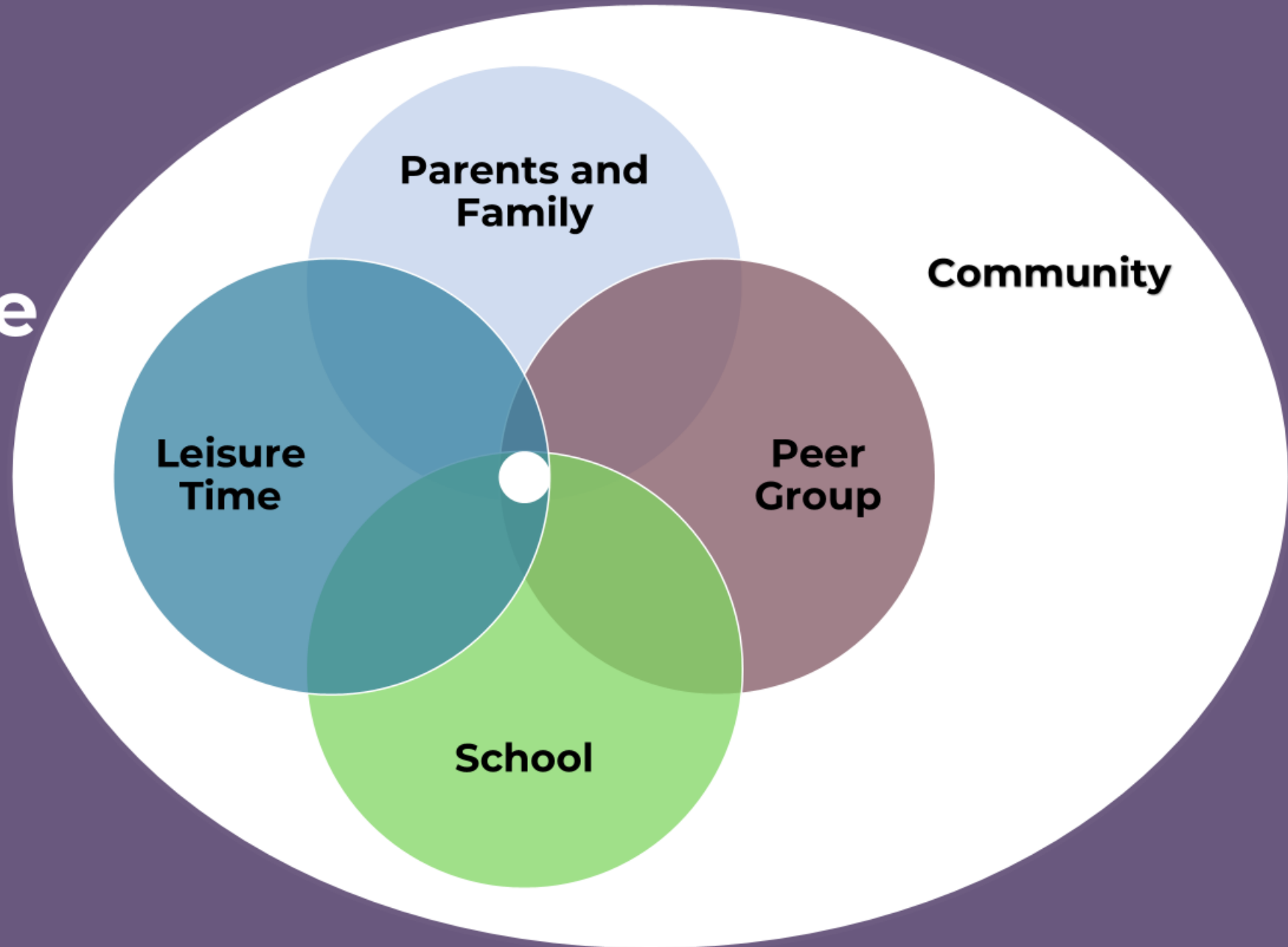
Biennial surveys





Schools Surveys 2018 2020

**Preventative
actions
that influence
risk and
protective
factors in
these
domains**

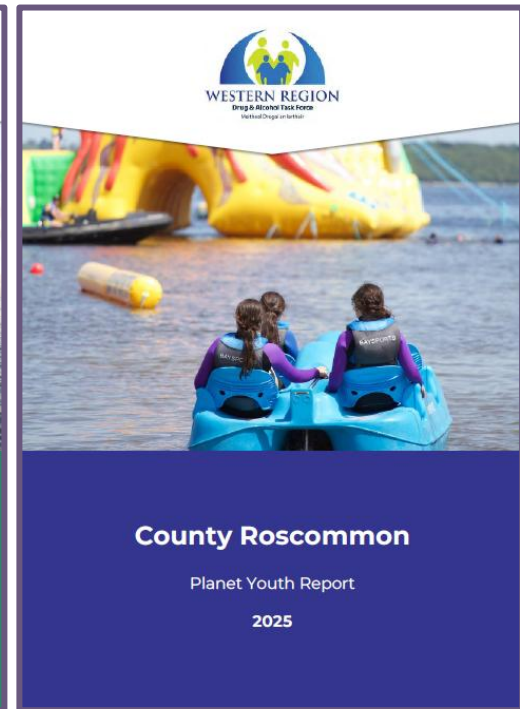
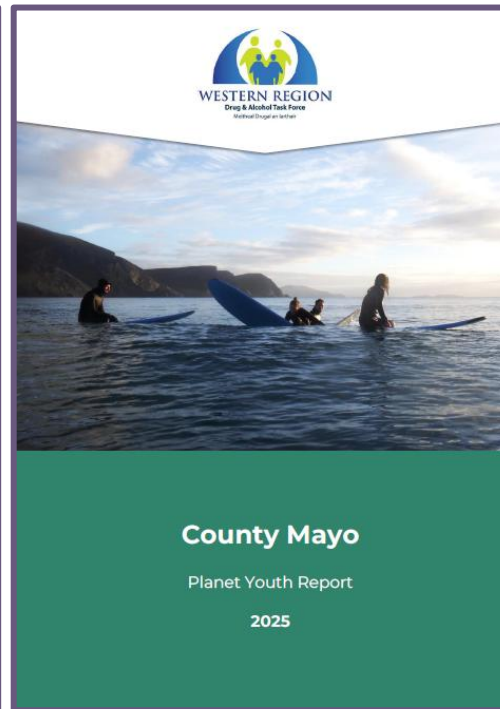
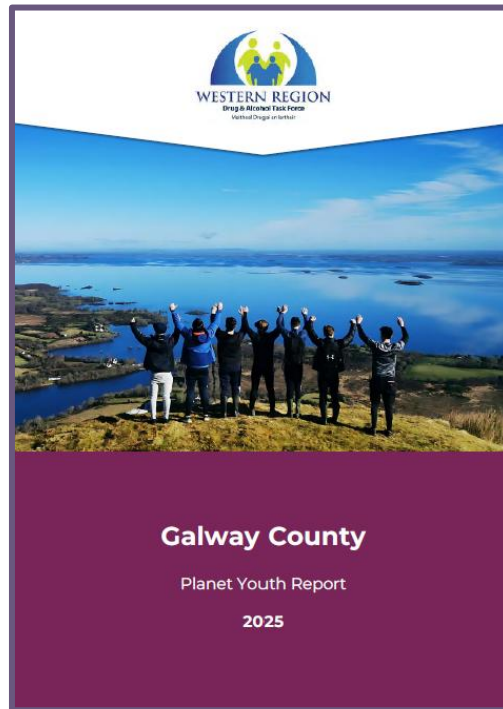
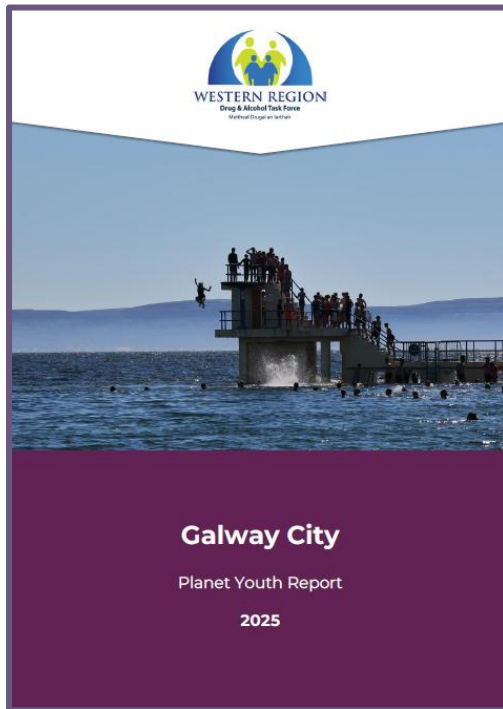








Municipal Reporting



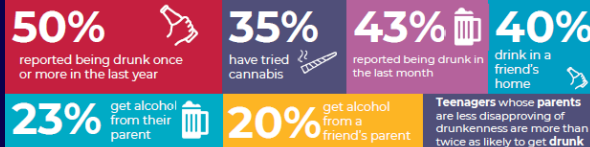
Municipal Reporting

Growing up in the West – Planet Youth School Report

SCHOOL



SUBSTANCE USE



PEER GROUP BEHAVIOUR



LEISURE TIME



SCREEN TIME AND ONLINE BEHAVIOUR



WELLBEING INDICATORS



SEXUAL HEALTH



Growing up in the West – Planet Youth School Report

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	- Survey document - Survey methodology	
3	Survey Results	page 8
	- School - Substance use - Peer group behaviour - Leisure time - Screen use and online behaviour - Wellbeing indicators - Sexual health - Gender differences - Cross tabulations	
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The Facts Website



THEFACTS
SPHE · CSPE · RSE · PLANET YOUTH SURVEY

HOMEABOUTCONTACT

1Select your
County

2Choose the
Topic

3Learn the
Facts

Select Your County



The Facts

This website has been developed for use as a teaching resource. Its purpose is to provide teachers with up-to-date and local information that will help inform discussion in the classroom and support the delivery of modules within the SPHE curriculum.

6

Step Up Website



**Helping students and parents
with the move from primary
school to secondary school**



Sleep teaching module



Lesson 1: About Sleep

Presentations

[Download the PowerPoint version \(PPTX\)](#)

[Download the PDF version \(PDF\)](#)

***Please note:** the PDF version of the presentation does not contain slide notes.*

Resources

[Download the Diamond 9 Worksheet \(PDF\)](#)

[Download the 3-2-1 Worksheet \(PDF\)](#)

[Download the Sleep Questionnaire Worksheet \(PDF\)](#)

Teaching Plan

[Download the Teaching Plan \(PDF\)](#)

Video



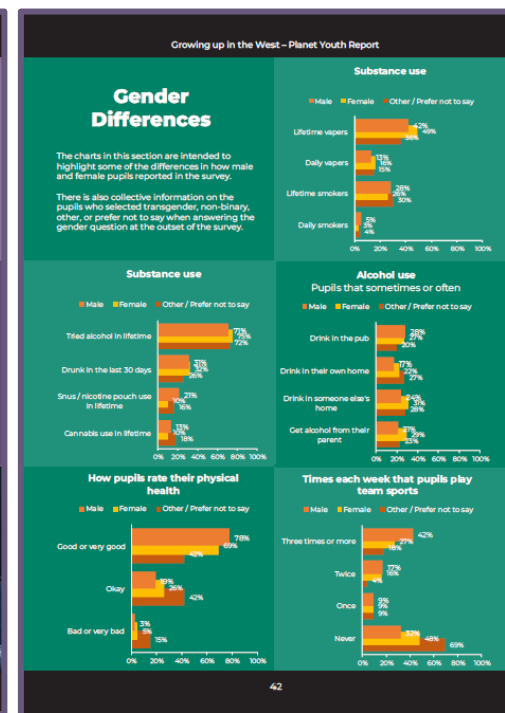
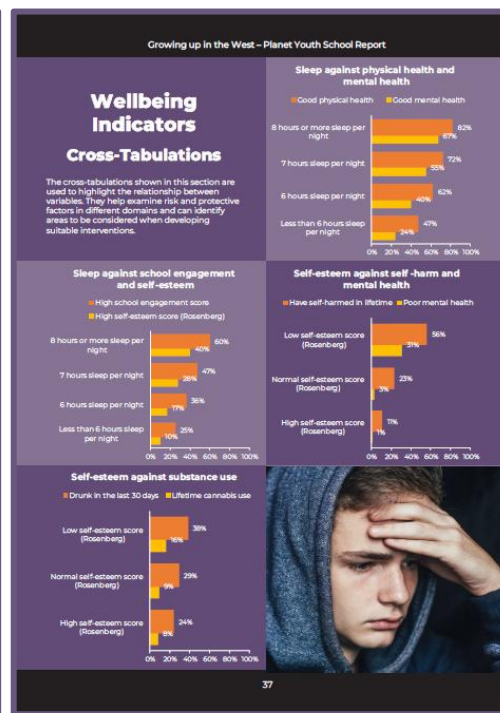
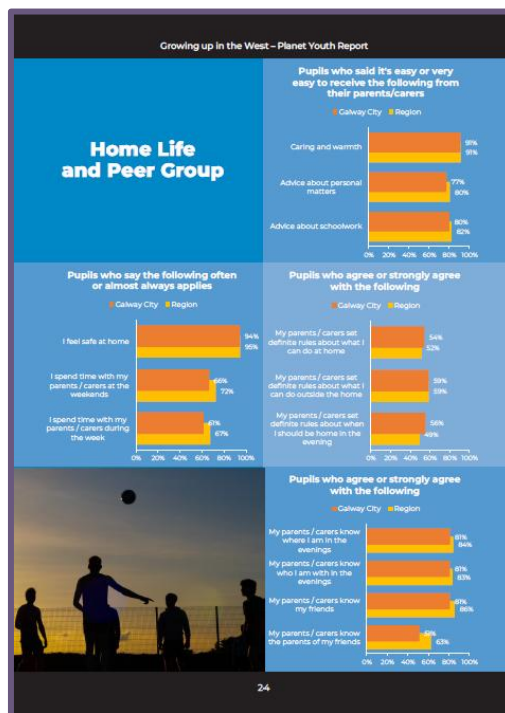
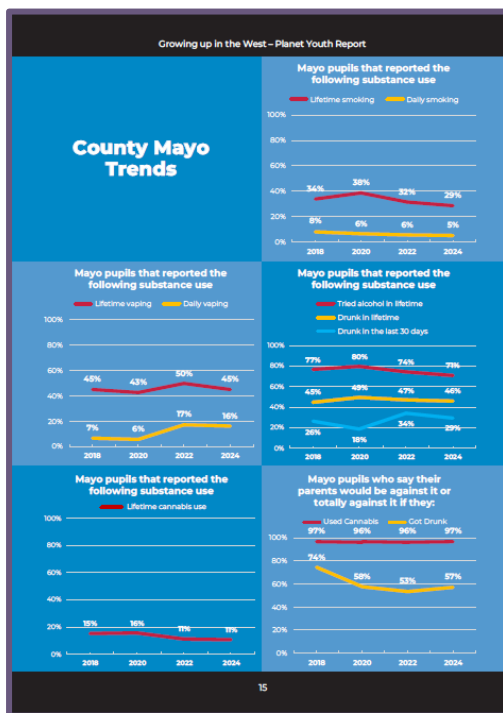
Lesson 1 video: The Importance of Sleep

[Click here](#)

Sleep teaching module



Local data

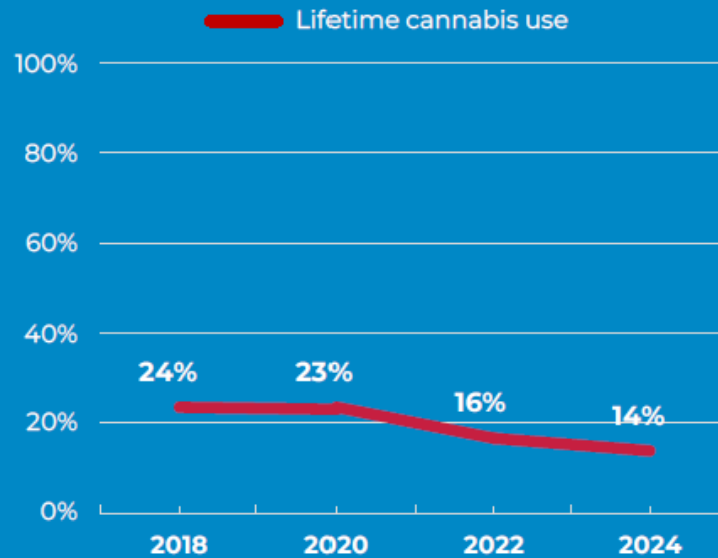


Local trends

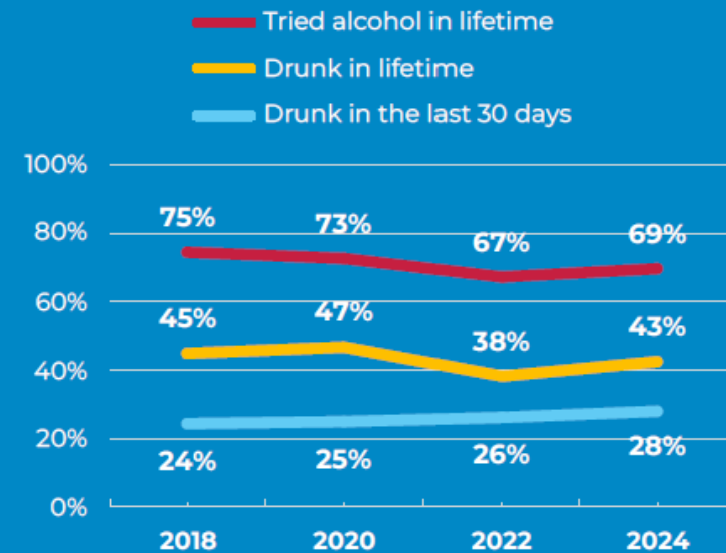


Local trends

Galway City pupils that reported
the following substance use

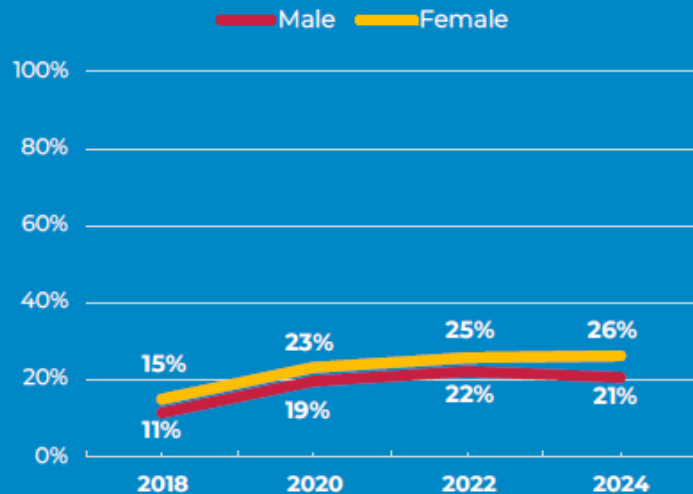


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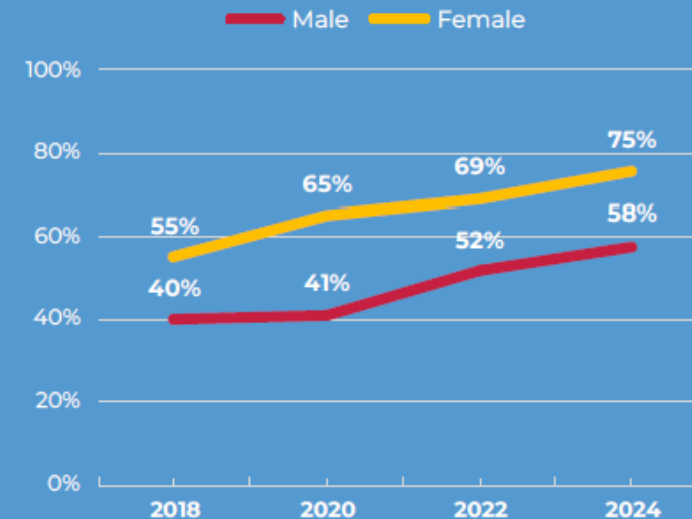


Local trends

Mayo pupils that get 6 hours or less sleep on an average night (sleep deficit)

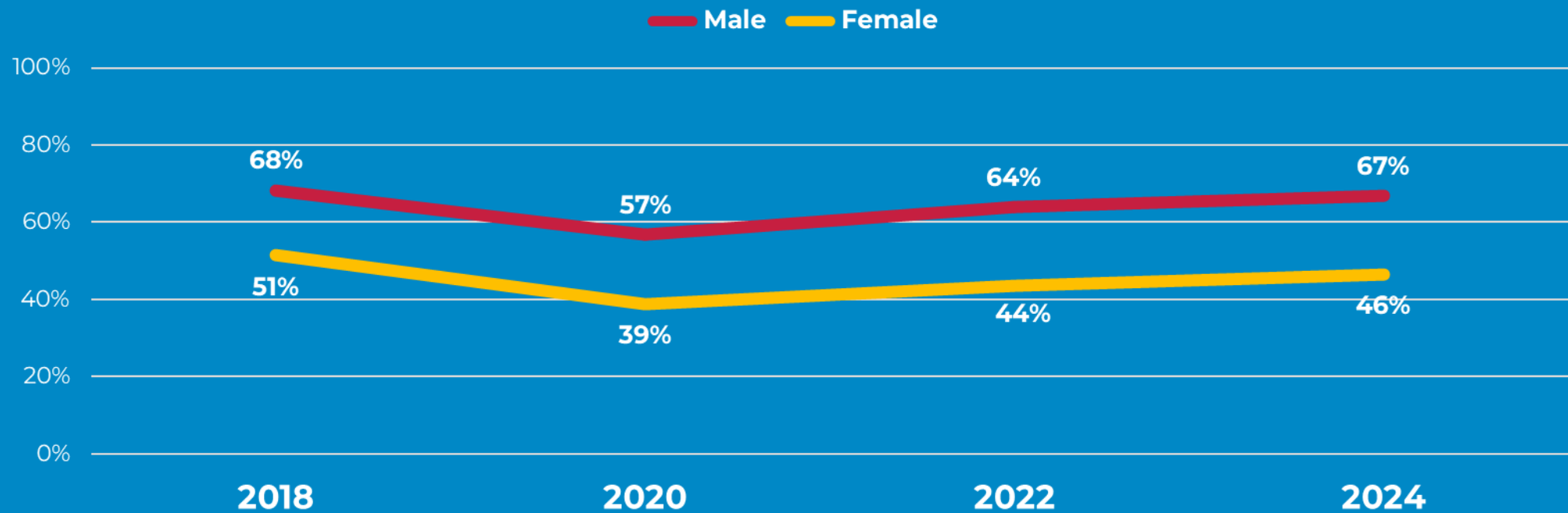


Mayo pupils using social media for more than 3 hours each day



Regional trends

Pupils that report their mental health as good

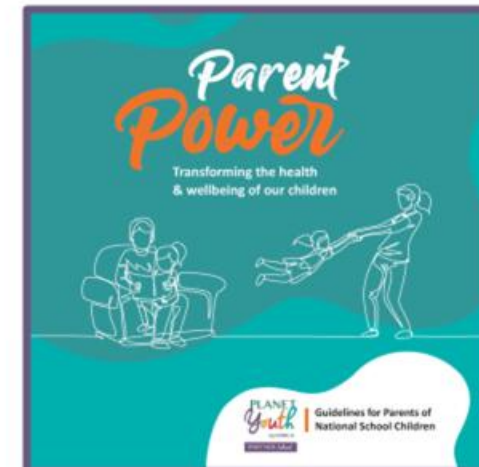


Information for parents



Literature is developed to highlight these issues. Booklets are printed after each survey and distributed every year, across the region, to the incoming first-year parents and the incoming junior-infant parents.

The Parent Power booklet, materials, and associated website, are for the parents with children in junior infant class.

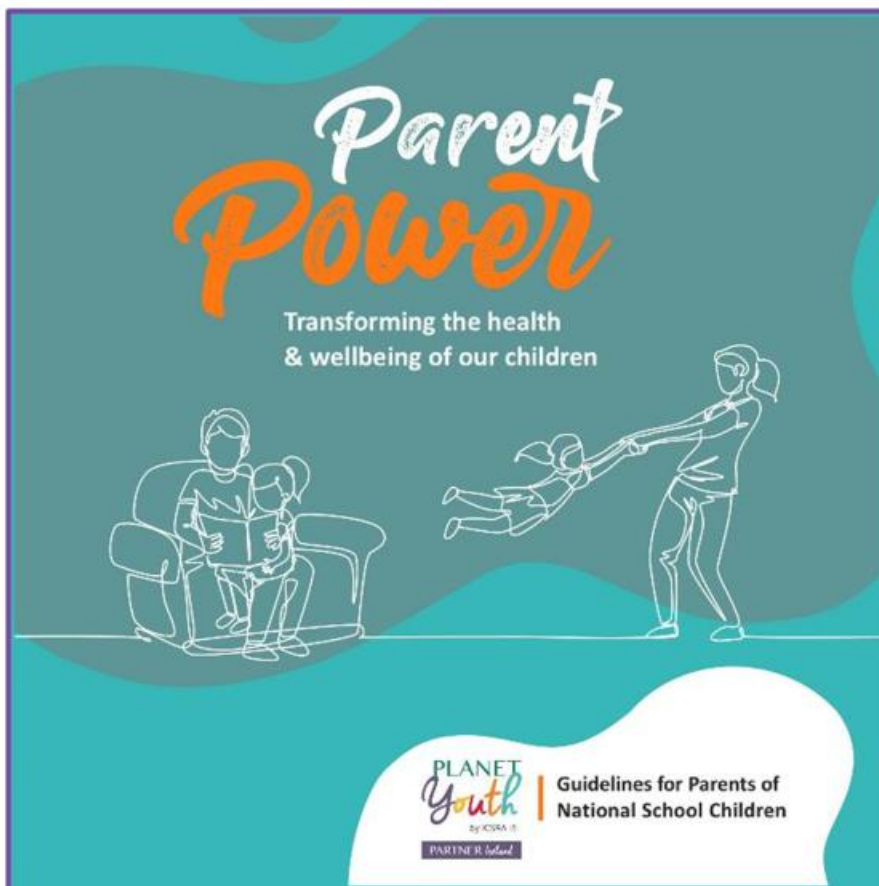


Booklet distribution



Parent Power

National School Booklet





Bedtimes

Junior infants	7:15pm
Senior infants	7:30pm
1st Class	7:45pm
2nd Class	8:00pm
3rd Class	8:15pm
4th Class	8:30pm
5th Class	8:45pm
6th Class	9:00pm

National school children typically require 9-12 hours of sleep each night and the younger they are, the more sleep they need. These bedtimes are based on getting up at 7.30am and are the lights-out times. Wind-down and bedtime routines start earlier. A good guide at this age is to move their bedtime up by 15 minutes each school year.



Screen Time

Overuse of screens is not good for the health and wellbeing of children.

The suggested guideline is to limit their use to a maximum of 1 hour per day in total. This should be after completion of homework and other activities.

Screens should be put away at least one hour before bedtime and there should be no screens in bedrooms.

www.parentpower.planetyouth.ie

Parent Power

First Year Parent Booklet



GUIDELINES FOR PARENTS

BEDTIMES

FIRST YEAR 09:30 PM	SECOND YEAR 09:45 PM	THIRD YEAR 10:00 PM
TRANSITION YEAR 10:15 PM	FIFTH YEAR 10:30 PM	LEAVING CERT YEAR 10:45 PM

 **IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT TEENAGERS GET 8 TO 10 HOURS OF UNDISTURBED SLEEP PER NIGHT**
Teenagers getting the recommended amount of sleep report greater resilience and better mental health.

SCREEN TIME & SOCIAL MEDIA
Overuse of screens and social media is not good for the health and wellbeing of young people.
The suggested guideline is to limit their use to a **maximum of 2 hours per day in total**. This should be after completion of homework and other activities and screens should be put away at least one hour before bedtime.

 **No screens in bedrooms after bedtime**

WWW.PLANETYOUTH.IE

Parent Power

First Year Parent Booklet



ABOUT PLANET YOUTH

Planet Youth is an evidence-based primary prevention project that provides us with the opportunity to improve the long-term health and wellbeing of our children. Every two years, we survey all of the 15 and 16 year olds in our schools in Galway, Mayo and Roscommon, and this gives us the information we need to make positive changes for the younger children coming behind them.

This booklet has been developed to bring some of that information to parents who have children starting post-primary school and we hope you find it useful.

The 5,079 teenagers that participated throughout the region in the November 2024 Planet Youth survey told us that:

91%

Easy to get caring and warmth from parents



66%

Spend 3 hours or more on social media daily



80%

Have a phone in their bedroom at night



35%

Out after midnight



55%

Not getting enough sleep



25%

Get alcohol from parents



56%

Report good mental health



73%

Report good physical health

86%

Feel safe in their community



33%

Reported self-harm once or more



61%

Exercise 3 times a week or more



31%

Drunk last month



14%

Are daily vapers



12%

Have tried Cannabis



28%

Tried alcohol by 13

FAMILY TIME

This was the fourth Planet Youth survey, and it had some really positive findings related to family life and the relationships that our teenagers have with their parents. 91% stated that it's easy to receive caring and warmth from their parents. Teens also report spending a lot of time with their parents and 84% stated that their parents know where they are in the evenings.

As they get older, it is important to maintain good quality communication with our teens and to stay connected, interested and engaged in what's happening in their lives. The survey showed that we are doing well here too, as 80% of our teens said that it's easy to talk to their parents or carers about personal matters.

Having shared interests, regular family mealtimes, family activities and family meetings creates enjoyable time and space to chat with, and listen to, our teenagers.

As parents, we are the most important role models or our teens so it is important that we set a good example with our own behaviours.

91%

Easy to get caring and warmth from parents



Parent Power

First Year Parent Booklet



INTERESTS, HOBBIES & SPORTS

It is important that young people are encouraged to keep engaging in quality supervised, structured activities that interest them as they get older.

Physical activity is important for good health and wellbeing but not every child is interested in sports. Other hobbies and interests that provide opportunities to get involved in their community outside of school allow our children to further develop their social skills and build emotional resilience.

Good quality supervised and structured activities are also a known protective factor against substance use and anti-social behaviour.

34%

Play team sports 3 times a week or more



61%

Exercise 3 times a week or more



VAPING, SMOKING, NICOTINE POUCHES AND CANNABIS

Daily smoking and monthly cannabis use rates have decreased slightly since the last survey. However, daily vaping rates remain high at 14% and the use of nicotine pouches has become common also.

The use of nicotine is unsafe for teenagers as it is a substance that is highly addictive and can harm adolescent brain development.

Using nicotine in adolescence can affect the parts of the brain that regulate attention, learning, mood, and impulse control. It may also increase the risk of future addiction to other drugs. Additionally, vaping or inhaling any substance can cause harm to the lungs and respiratory tract.

Experimentation with vapes is not uncommon in first-year, so talk to your teen about why vaping is harmful for them, and set a good example by being nicotine free.

14%

Are daily vapers



4%

Are daily smokers



5%

Used cannabis in the last month



16%

Have tried nicotine pouches



Parent Power

First Year Parent Booklet



73%

Have
tried
alcohol



31%

Drunk in
the last
month



ALCOHOL AND PARENTS

Alcohol is the most commonly used substance among young people in Ireland. As our teenagers get older, they will increasingly ask parents for access to alcohol to use before or at parties and events. These requests can start as early as second year and become more common by transition year.

Use of alcohol at a young age can impair brain development and will increase the chances of developing a dependency later in life. This is in addition to increasing the risk of other alcohol-related harms. The best thing we can do for our teenagers is to try and defer all alcohol use until they are 18 years of age.

The Planet Youth survey shows us just how important parental attitude and parental alcohol supply is when it comes to adolescent binge drinking. Teenagers that get alcohol from a parent are getting drunk at two and half times the rate of those that don't. Introducing alcohol to teenagers at home, in the pursuit of teaching them to drink responsibly, may have the opposite effect.

The chart opposite clearly shows the importance of parental disapproval. Parents don't have to be at one end of the scale or the other, every conversation and effort made to defer alcohol use is important.

25%

Regularly get
alcohol from
their parent



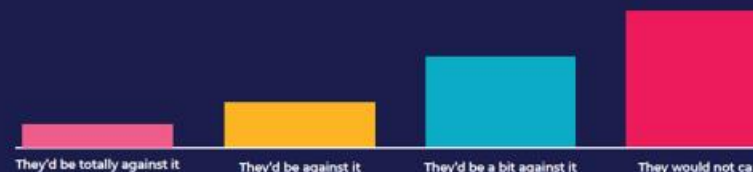
27%

Regularly
drink at a
friend's home



OF THE 31% OF PUPILS THAT WERE DRUNK IN THE LAST MONTH

How would your parents react if you got drunk?



PERCEIVED PARENTAL TOLERANCE FOR SUBSTANCE USE

MY PARENTS WOULD BE TOTALLY AGAINST IT OR AGAINST IT IF I:

97%



USED CANNABIS

94%



SMOKED CIGARETTES

90%



VAPED

57%



GOT DRUNK

Parent Power

First Year Parent Booklet



SCREEN TIME GUIDELINES

The Planet Youth survey showed us that 66% of our young people are spending 3 hours a day or more on social media. We know that too much screen time impacts upon homework and hobbies and can be detrimental to good mental health. **Screen use should be kept to a maximum of 2 hours per day** after homework and other activities are completed.

Screens should be off at least one hour before bed and kept out of bedrooms at night.

If you can have these guidelines in place from first year they will become increasingly important as your child gets older. Talk to your child about their online life and be a good role model with your own screen use.

66%

Spend 3 hours or more on social media daily



80% have a phone in their bedroom at night



BEDTIME GUIDELINES

55%

Don't get enough sleep



The Planet Youth survey revealed that over half of our young people are not getting enough sleep. The suggested guidelines for bedtime are:

FIRST YEAR	09:30PM
SECOND YEAR	09:45PM
THIRD YEAR	10:00PM
TRANSITION YEAR	10:15PM
FIFTH YEAR	10:30PM
LEAVING CERT YEAR	10:45PM



It is recommended that teenagers get a minimum 8 to 10 hours of undisturbed sleep per night. For example, a first year that has to get up at 07.30am should be asleep by 09.30pm in order to get their 10 hours of sleep. No child should have a phone in their bedroom at night, a regular alarm clock is enough.

Parent Power

First Year Parent Booklet



THE IMPORTANCE OF SLEEP

The Planet Youth survey has shown us just how little sleep our teens are getting. This is a significant problem because sleep plays a critical role in a teenager's development, it is every bit as important as nutrition and physical activity.

Without sufficient quality sleep, every aspect of a teen's life becomes more challenging. Physical health and mental health are affected, school becomes harder, self-esteem, resilience, and emotional development are impacted, and small problems often appear insurmountable.

Don't underestimate the importance of helping your teenager to get sufficient, good quality sleep. That could just be improving their sleep environment, but good sleep hygiene, limited screen time, reduced caffeine, and a consistent sleep routine can all help also.

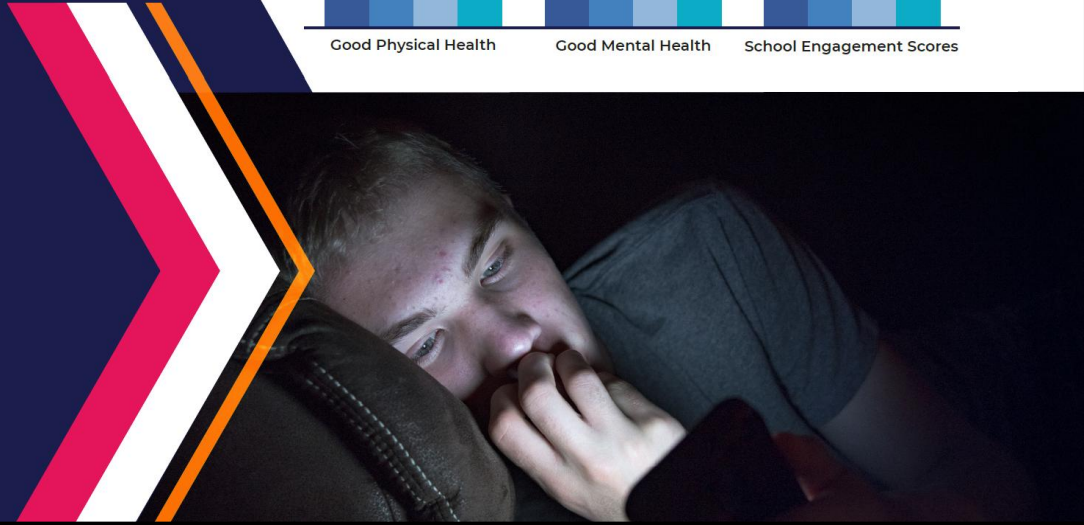
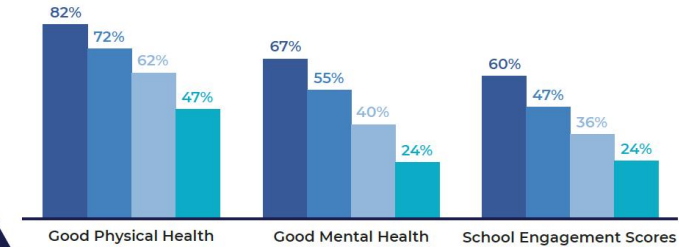
By creating a sleep positive culture in your home, you will be helping your teenager optimise their potential in many aspects of their development, health and wellbeing.

HOW MUCH SLEEP DO OUR TEENS GET?



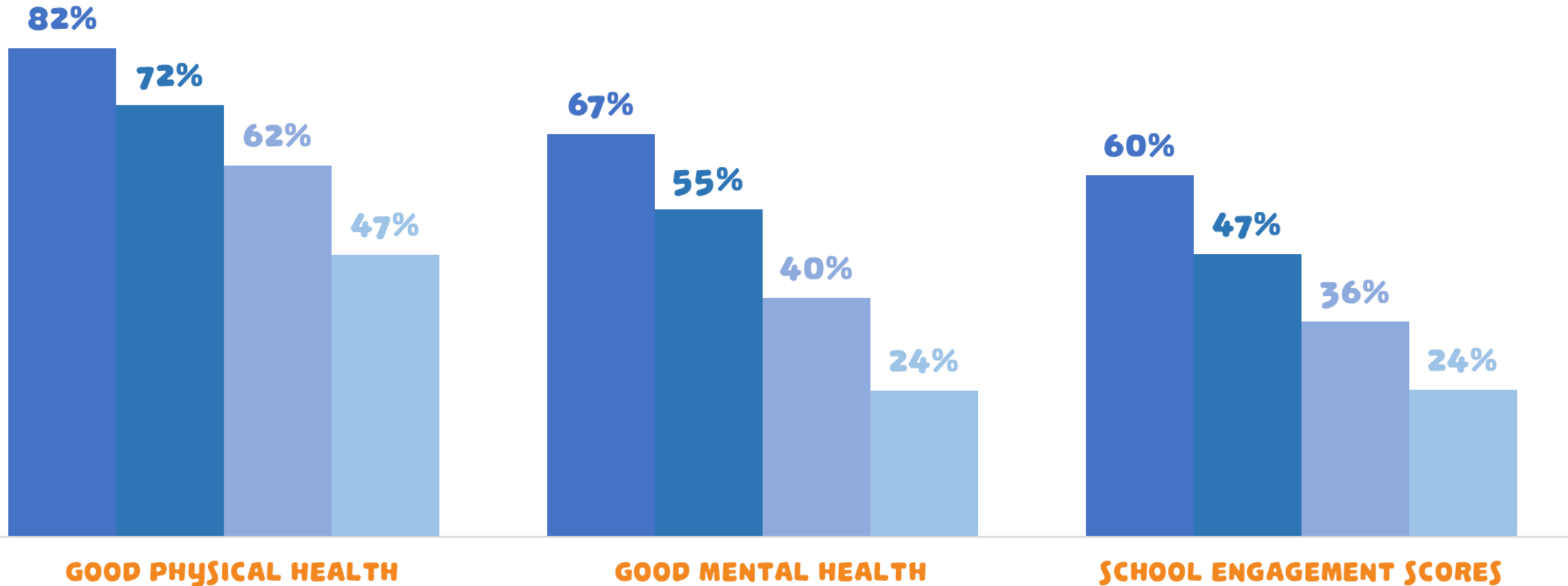
THE IMPORTANCE OF SLEEP

■ 8 hours or more sleep ■ 7 hours sleep ■ 6 hours sleep ■ Less than 6 hours sleep

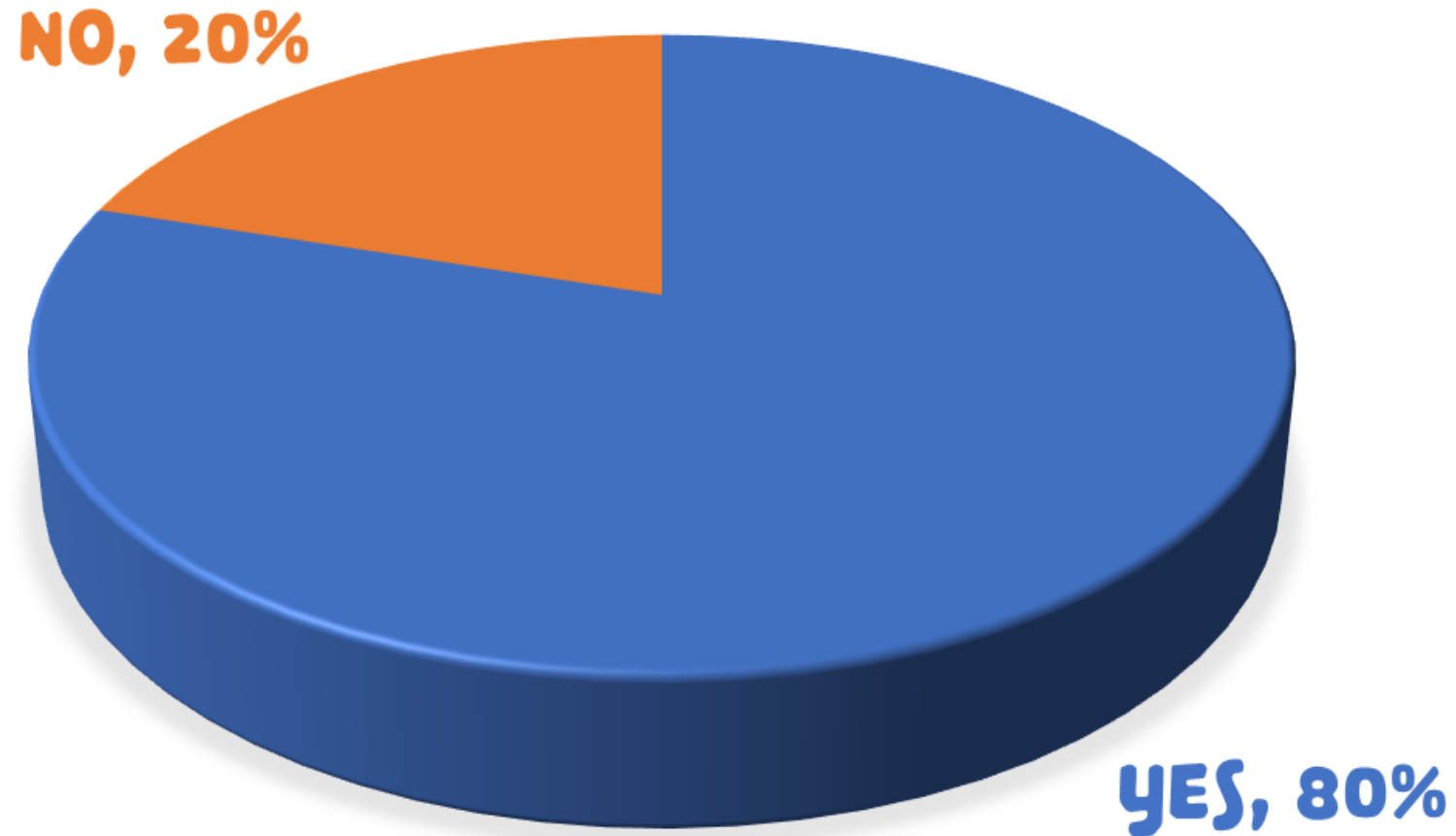


THE IMPORTANCE OF SLEEP

■ 8 HOURS OR MORE SLEEP ■ 7 HOURS SLEEP ■ 6 HOURS SLEEP ■ LESS THAN 6 HOURS SLEEP



DO YOU HAVE A PHONE IN YOUR BEDROOM AT NIGHT?



Working together



- Phones handed up and always charged overnight in the kitchen or hallway
- 8.00pm in first year, 8.30pm in second year, discuss after that
- Apps can be helpful, Google Family Link, Apple Screen Time
- WebWise is a good Irish site for information

Working together



- **Get to know other parents**
- **Share information**
- **Have common boundaries**
- **Attend school events**
- **Get involved**

The importance of sleep for our teenagers

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Monday the 10th of November

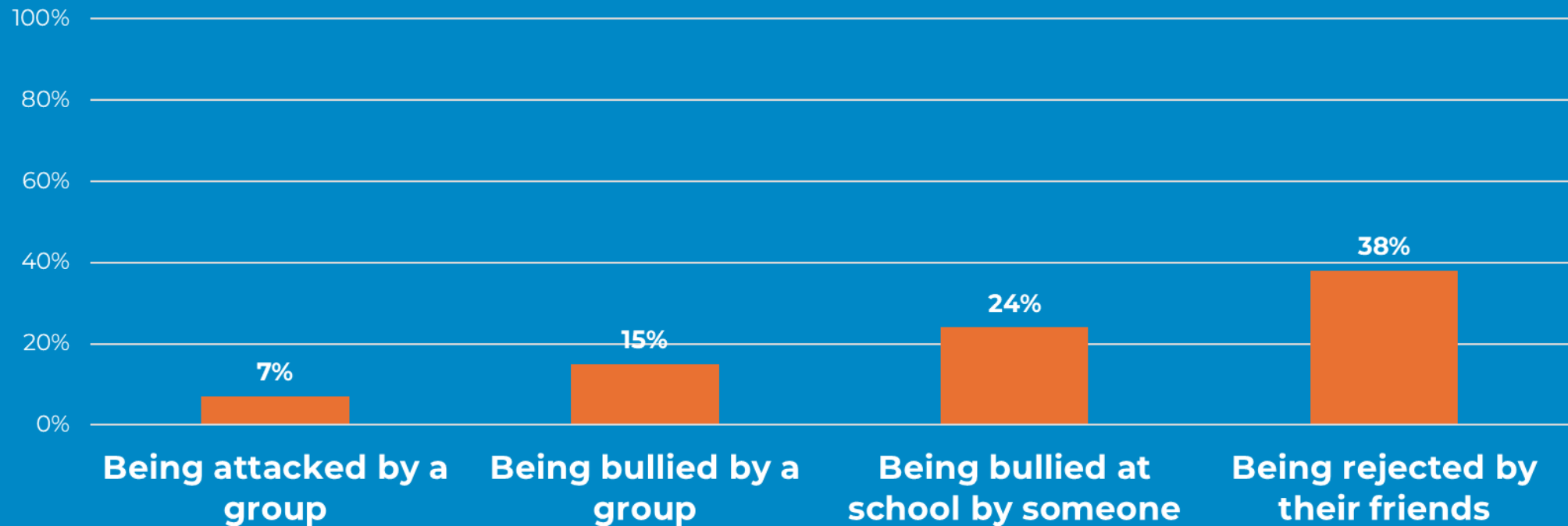
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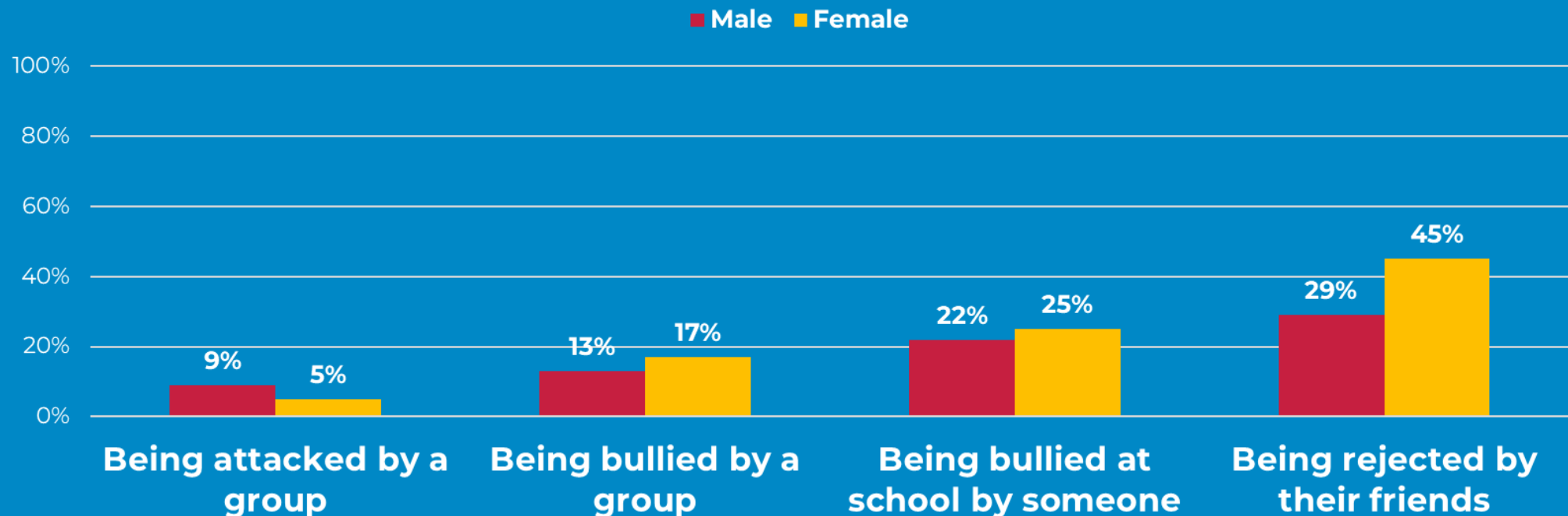
Bullying and Exclusion

Bullying and Exclusion Pupils that report the following



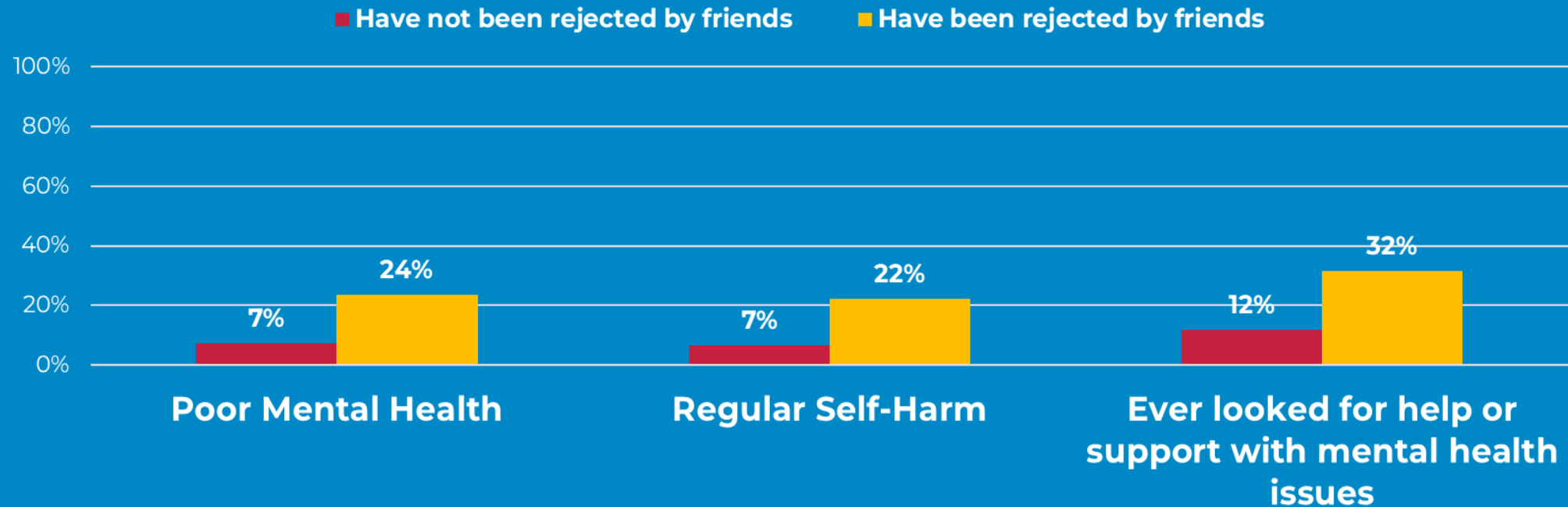
Bullying and Exclusion

Bullying and Exclusion Pupils that report the following



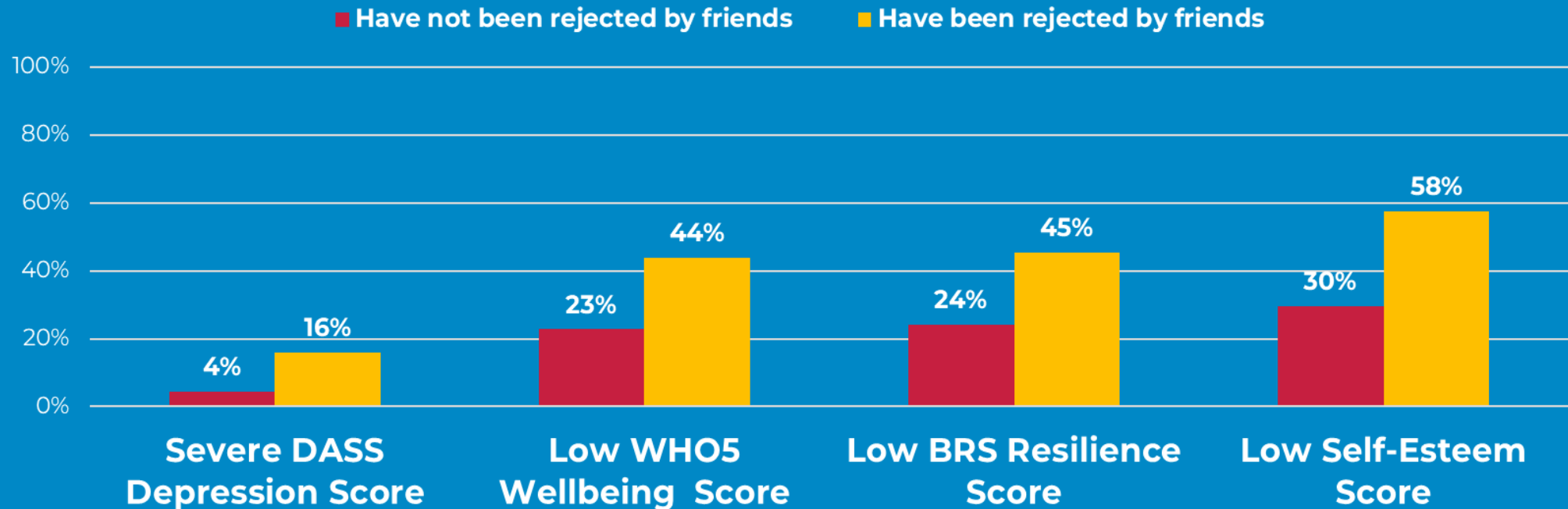
Correlations

Mental health correlated against Being rejected by friends



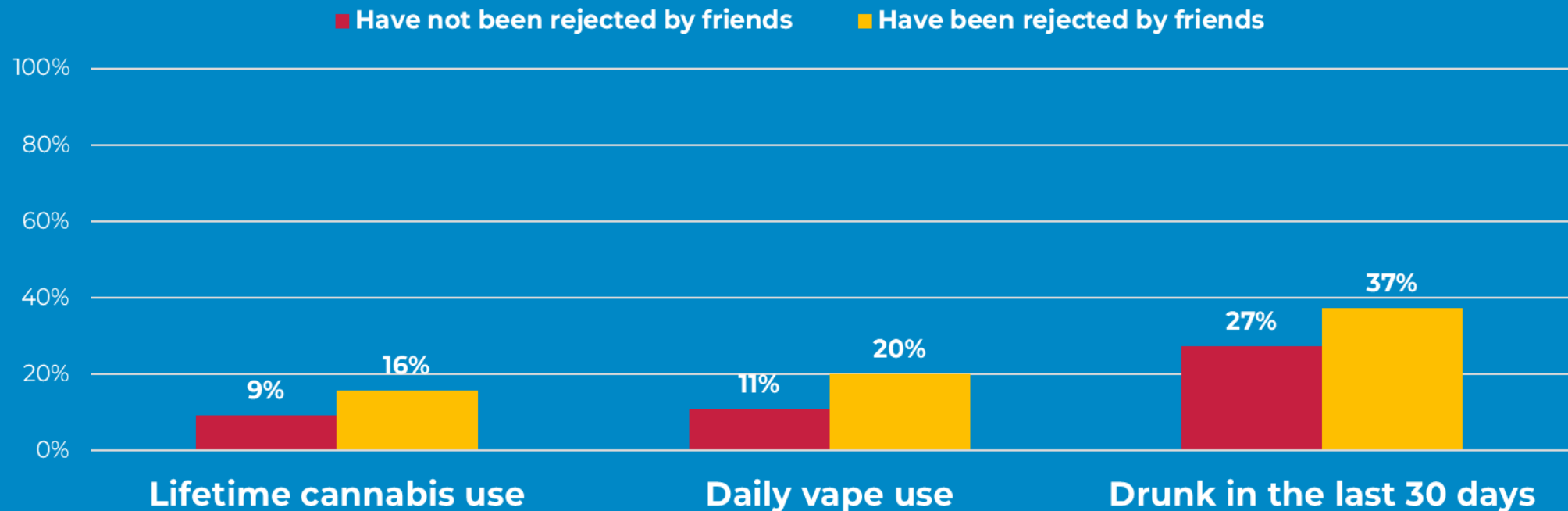
Correlations

Wellbeing indicators correlated against Being rejected by friends



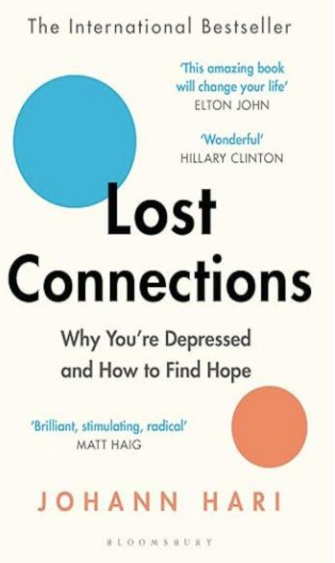
Correlations

Substance use correlated against Being rejected by friends



Reading

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'Wonderful' HILLARY CLINTON

Lost Connections

Why You're Depressed and How to Find Hope

'Brilliant, stimulating, radical' MATT HAIG

JOHANN HARI

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'Eye-opening' GUARDIAN

'Brilliant for anyone wanting a better understanding of mental health' ZOE BALL

'A game-changer' DAVINA MCCALL

'Extraordinary' DR MAX PEMBERTON

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