Scottish Schools Adolescent Lifestyle and Substance Use Survey (SALSUS)

DRUG USE REPORT (2018)

Scottish Government
Riaghaltas na h-Alba
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Executive Summary

Introduction

This report presents the drug use findings from the 2018 wave of the Scottish Schools Adolescent Lifestyle and Substance Use Survey (SALSUS). The research was commissioned by the Scottish Government and carried out by Ipsos MORI Scotland.

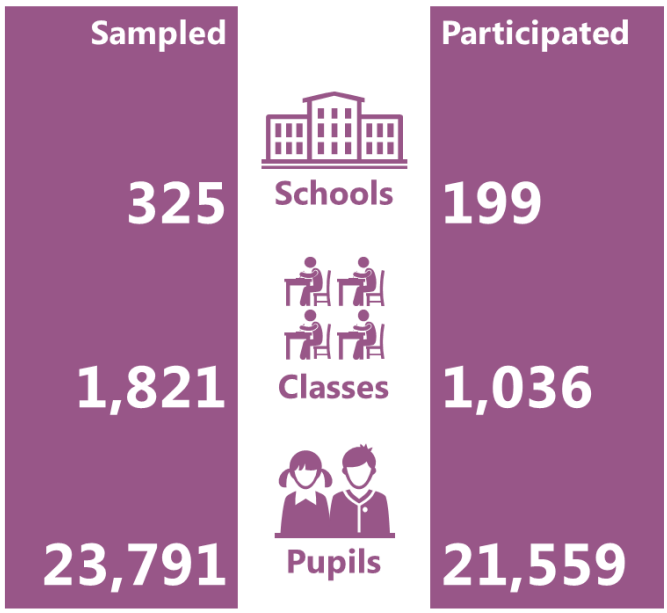
Survey background and purpose

SALSUS is a continuation of a long established series of national surveys on smoking, drinking and drug use. These were carried out jointly in Scotland and England between 1982 and 2000, to provide a national picture of young peoples' smoking (from 1982), drinking (from 1990), and drug use (from 1998) behaviours within the context of other lifestyle, health and social factors. Since 2002, Scotland has developed its own, more tailored survey, known as SALSUS.

About the survey

SALSUS is a self-completion survey administered by teachers in a mixed ability class, under exam conditions. In 2018, schools were encouraged to administer the survey online (but could administer it on paper if that was more feasible). Fieldwork was undertaken between September 2018 and April 2019.

Figure 1 Numbers sampled and participated



The overall response rate was **52%** based on class and pupil response rate[1].

For full details of the methodology please see the accompanying SALSUS 2018 Technical Report.

[1] The overall response rate excludes schools who took part in the Realigning Children's Services Survey and Glasgow state schools. For more details please see the SALSUS 2018 Technical Report.

Key findings

Prevalence and key trends

- 6% of 13 year olds and 21% of 15 year olds had ever used drugs.
- 4% of 13 year olds and 12% of 15 year olds reported using drugs in the last month.
- Drug use in the last month has been gradually decreasing since 2002, when 8% of 13 year olds and 23% of 15 year olds reported using drugs in the last month. However, between 2013 and 2018, there was an increase in the proportion of 13 year old and 15 year old boys who took drugs in the month prior to the survey (from 2% and 11% respectively in 2013, to 4% and 15% in 2018).
- Cannabis was the most widely used drug; 19% of 15 year olds had ever used cannabis. 6% of 15 year olds had ever taken ecstasy, 5% had ever taken cocaine, 5% had ever taken any form of Novel Psychoactive Substances (NPS) and 5% had ever taken MDMA powder.
- 31% of 13 year olds and 42% of 15 year olds who had ever used drugs had been drinking alcohol the last time they had used drugs 15% of all pupils had used more than one drug (polydrug use) the last time they had used drugs.
- 36% of 13 year olds and 45% of 15 year olds who had ever taken drugs had experienced at least one negative effect as a result (in the last year). The most common effects were having an argument, vomiting, and doing something they later regretted.
- It was most common for pupils to have used drugs out in the street or in someone else's home.

Sources and availability

- 22% of 13 year olds and 47% of 15 year olds had ever been offered drugs. There was an increase in the proportion who had ever been offered drugs between 2015 and 2018 (from 19% to 22% among 13 year olds and from 42% to 47% among 15 year olds).
- 15 year old pupils were most commonly offered cannabis. 37% of all 15 year olds had been offered cannabis, 18% had been offered ecstasy, 15% had been offered cocaine, and 14% had been offered MDMA powder or some form of NPS.
- Since 2015, there has been an increase in the proportions of 15 year olds who have been offered cannabis, cocaine, MDMA powder, LSD and ketamine.
- It was most common for pupils who had ever taken drugs to get them from friends (friends of the same age or older).

Attitudes to drugs

- Among 15 year olds, the acceptability of trying cannabis and sniffing glue has increased since 2015 – 33% of 15 year olds thought it was 'ok' to try cannabis, compared with 24% in 2015, and 11% thought it was 'ok' to try sniffing glue, compared with 7% in 2015.
- 9% of 15 year olds thought it was 'ok' to try cocaine.

Acknowledgements

First and foremost, we would like to thank all of the pupils who participated in the 2018 Scottish Schools Adolescent Lifestyle and Substance Use Survey (SALSUS).

We would also like to thank the schools that participated and, in particular, the teachers who organised and administered the survey. In addition, we would like to thank individuals from Alcohol and Drug Partnerships (ADPs) and local authority education departments who encouraged schools to take part.

We are grateful to Scottish Government colleagues for their help and guidance over the life of the project, and in particular to Carol Brown and Neil White for their support throughout.

Finally, we would like to acknowledge the contributions of many Ipsos MORI colleagues, in particular: Lucy Setterfield, Lorraine Murray, Chris Martin, Melissa Behm, Yinka Oluwi, Russell Painter and Kevin Pickering.

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1 Introduction and background

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Survey background

SALSUS is a continuation of a long established series of national surveys on smoking, drinking and drug use. These were carried out jointly in Scotland and England between 1982 and 2000, to provide a national picture of young peoples' smoking (from 1982), drinking (from 1990), and drug use (from 1998) within the context of other lifestyle, health and social factors. Since 2002, Scotland has developed its own, more tailored survey known as SALSUS.

Survey purpose

SALSUS informs progress towards Scottish Government policies to reduce the harms from smoking, drinking and drug use among children and young people.

The survey series also provides local prevalence rates for smoking, drinking and drug use across Alcohol and Drug Partnerships (ADPs), local authorities and NHS Boards.

Policy background

It is a Scottish public health priority to reduce the harm from drugs[2]. In November 2018, the Scottish Government published its combined alcohol and drugs treatment strategy, Rights, Respect and Recovery[3], aimed at improving the nation's health by preventing and reducing alcohol and drug use, harm and related deaths. It emphasises prevention and early intervention for young people and for those most at risk of becoming addicted to alcohol or drugs.

The strategy's commitments include: identifying and implementing actions to reduce inequalities; developing recovery oriented systems of care; getting it right for children, young people and families; and taking a public health approach to addiction. The strategy also challenges services to better meet the complex health and social needs of those who are most at risk as a result of their substance use.

The strategy will be delivered in partnership with Scotland's 31 Alcohol and Drug Partnerships (ADPs), including health boards, local authorities, police and voluntary agencies. The Scottish Government has announced a commitment of £20 million per year until 2021, to allow ADPs working in local areas across Scotland to fund treatment and support services.

There is an ambitious programme for alcohol and drug education currently in place to ensure that all children and young people in Scotland have credible and accessible information and advice on drugs. The Scottish Government has implemented health and wellbeing learning outcomes through Curriculum for Excellence[4], which includes specific emphasis on substance use. Learning in this area is aimed at promoting confidence, independent thinking and positive attitudes. It also aims to promote risk and resilience management skills in children and young people that equip them to make positive lifestyle choices.

Rights, Respect and Recovery commits to revising that programme of alcohol and drug education in schools and to developing guidance and resources that will provide accurate, evidence-based, relevant and current information around alcohol and drug use, and how to access help.

Further information about policy relating to drugs is available at:

- NHS Health Scotland: http://www.healthscotland.scot/health-topics/drugs
- Scottish Government: https://www.gov.scot/policies/alcohol-and-drugs

[2] Scottish Government and COSLA (2018) Public Health Priorities for Scotland https://www.gov.scot/publications/scotlands-public-health-priorities/

[3] Scottish Government (2018) Rights, Respect and Recovery: Drug and Alcohol Treatment Strategy https://www.gov.scot/publications/rights-respect-recovery/

[4] Scottish Government (2019) Scotland's Curriculum For Excellence: Putting learners at the heart of education https://scotlandscurriculum.scot/

Methods

SALSUS is a self-completion survey administered by teachers in a mixed ability class, under exam conditions. In the past the survey has been completed on paper, but in 2018 schools were given the choice to complete the survey online or on paper.

A random, nationally representative sample of S2 and S4 pupils in Scottish schools was drawn with classes as the primary sampling unit. All local authority and independent schools in Scotland were eligible for inclusion in the sample, with the exception of special schools.

Fieldwork was completed between October 2018 and April 2019. A total of 12,558 S2 and 10,807 S4 pupils responded (including schools that took part in the Realigning Children's Service Survey).

The overall response rate was 52% (excludes schools that took part in the Realigning Children's Services Survey and Glasgow state schools).

Data was weighted by local authority, age, sex, school sector (state/independent), school denomination and by urban/rural classification.

Throughout the report pupils in S2 are referred to as '13 year olds' and S4 pupils are referred to as '15 year olds' for ease. It should be borne in mind that some pupils within these categories may be slightly older or younger.

Some pupils did not answer each question. Where answers are missing, these have been excluded from the analysis and so charts and tables that describe the same population may have varying bases. When differences between estimates are specifically commented on in the report, these differences are statistically significant to the level of 0.05.

Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

For full details of the methodology, please see the SALSUS 2018 Technical Report[5].

Finally, it is important to note, that while there are associations between many of the behaviours explored in this report, conclusions about causality cannot be drawn.

Changes to the questionnaire

Only minor changes were made to the drugs questions for 2018 (i.e. updating the names of drugs in the solvents and tranquilisers categories) (see Appendix A). For further details on other question changes and survey methodology see the SALSUS 2018 Technical Report. A copy of the full 2018 questionnaire is also available[6].

[5] The SALSUS 2018 Technical Report can be found at: http://www.gov.scot/ISBN/9781839603327

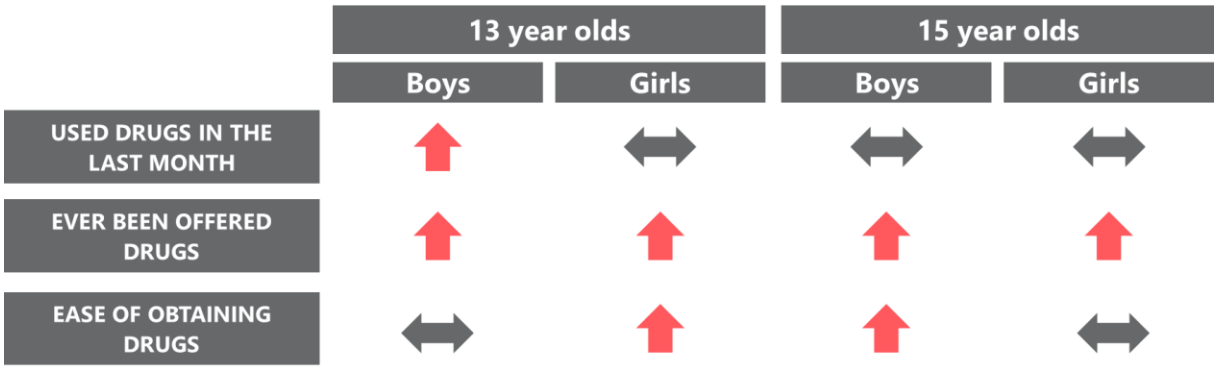
[6] The SALSUS 2018 Questionnaire can be found at: http://www.gov.scot/ISBN/9781839603327

2 Prevalence and key trends

Summary of key changes over time

Prevalence of drug use in the last month remained stable between 2015 and 2018, except among 13 year old boys (where it rose from 3% to 4%). However, there have been increases in the proportion of pupils who have been offered drugs since the last wave of the survey. The proportion of 13 year old girls and 15 year old boys who say they would find it easy to obtain drugs if they wanted to has also increased since 2015 (Figure 2.1).

Figure 2.1 Summary of trends in drug use between 2015 and 2018



Drug use prevalence

Pupils were provided with a list of drugs (including their commonly used street names) and asked if they had used each of them. This information was used to create an overall measure of any drug use ‘in the last month’, ‘in the last year’ (including in the last month), ‘ever’ (including in the last month and last year) and ‘never’.

2018 FIGURES

Most pupils have never used drugs at all: 94% of 13 year olds and 79% of 15 year olds (Figure 2.2). 15 year olds were more likely than 13 year olds to have ever used drugs or to have used them in the last month (Figure 2.3): 21% of 15 year olds had ever used drugs, compared to 6% of 13 year olds; while 12% of 15 year olds reported using drugs in the last month, compared to 4% of 13 year olds. Less the 0.5% of 13 year olds and 1% of 15 year olds said they took drugs at least once a week.

TRENDS OVER TIME

Drug use in the last month has been gradually decreasing since 2002. However, since 2013 there has been an increase in the proportion of boys who took drugs in the last month (2% of 13 year olds boys in 2013, compared to 4% in 2018; and 11% of 15 year old boys in 2013, compared to 15% in 2018). Drug use among girls of both age groups has remained fairly stable since 2013.

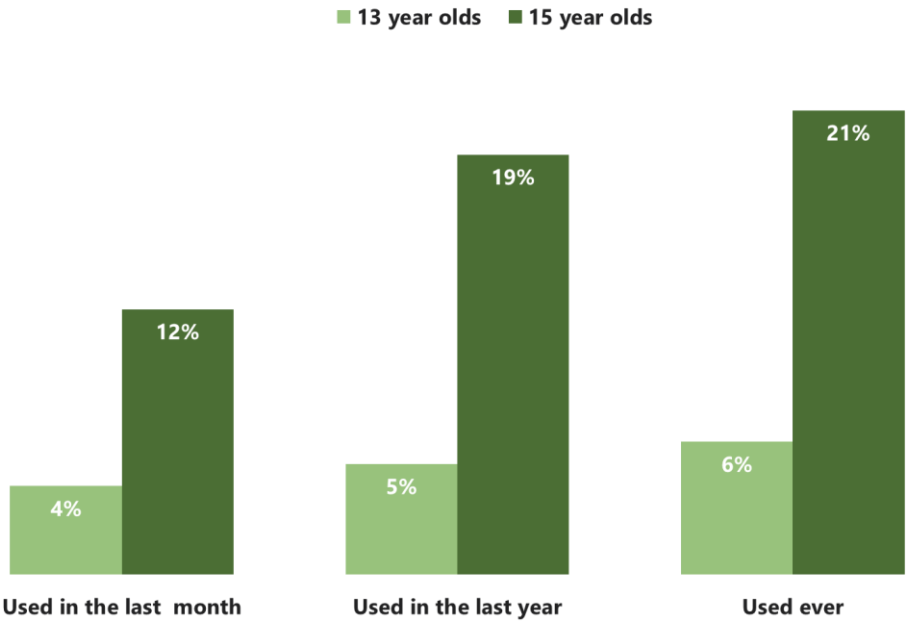
GENDER DIFFERENCES

15 year old boys were more likely than 15 year old girls to have used drugs in the last month. There were no differences between 13 year old boys and girls (Figure 2.4)

Figure 2.2 Proportion of pupils who have never used drugs, by age (2018)

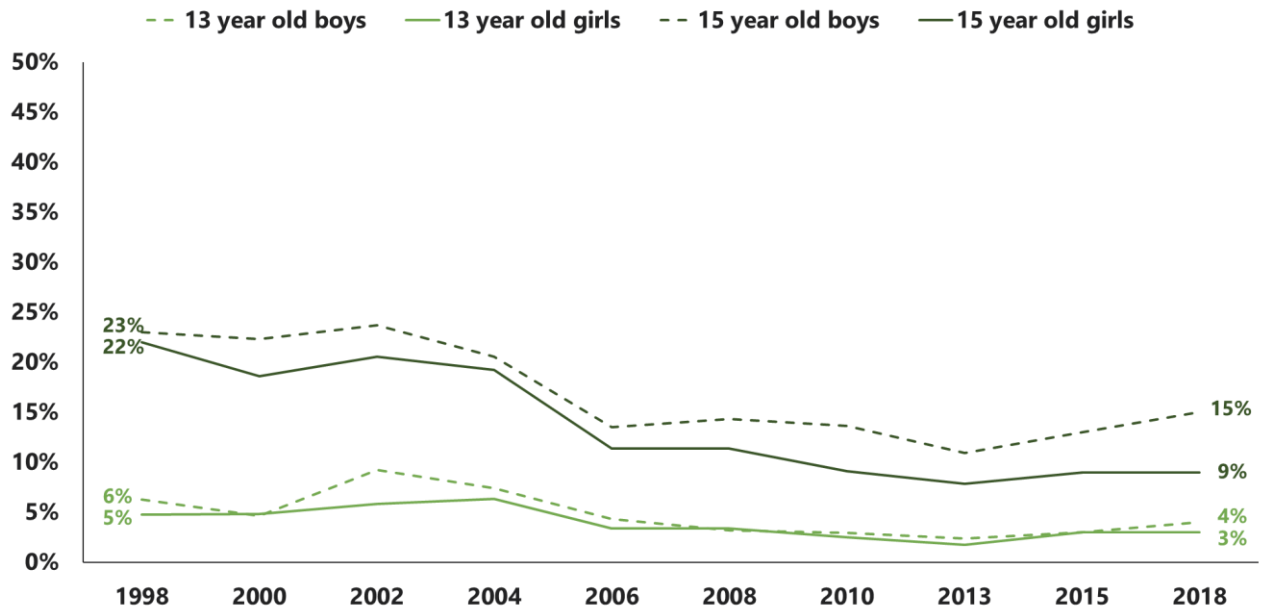
Base: all 13 year olds (11,746), all 15 year olds (10,068)

Figure 2.3 Use of drugs in the last month, last year or ever, by age (2018)



Base: all 13 year olds (11,746), all 15 year olds (10,068)

Figure 2.4 Proportion of pupils who have used drugs in the last month, by sex and age (1998- 2018)



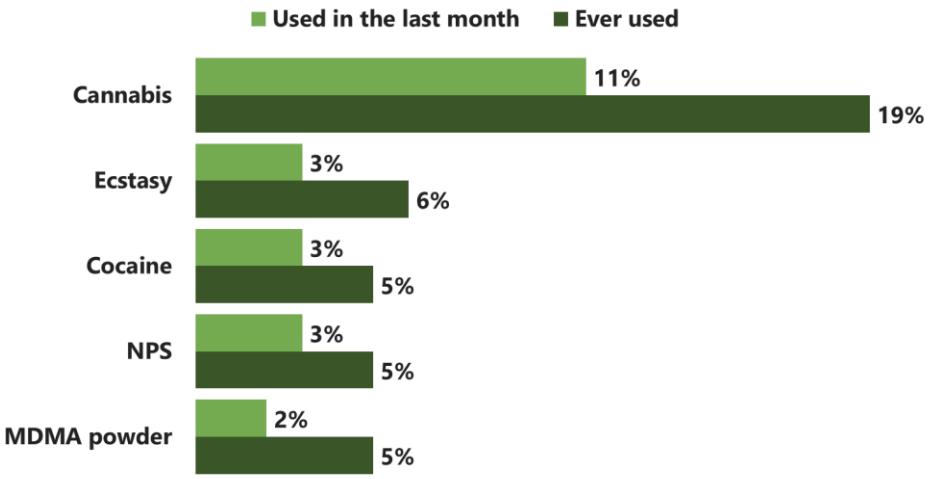
Base: all pupils (for full base sizes please see Appendix B)

Type of drugs used

This section focuses on **15 year olds** as use of any drugs among 13 year olds is so low.

2018 FIGURES	Cannabis was the most widely used drug; 11% of 15 year olds had used cannabis in the last month and 19% had used it ever (Figure 2.5). In comparison with cannabis, the use of cocaine, ecstasy, MDMA powder and Novel Psychoactive Substances (NPS - see Appendix C) was low.
TRENDS OVER TIME	Since 2015, there have been no statistically significant changes in the proportion of pupils using any of the individual drugs in Figure 2.5 in the last month or the last year.
GENDER DIFFERENCES	15 year old boys were more likely than 15 year old girls to have taken each of the individual drugs in Figure 2.5 in the last month.

Figure 2.5 Types of drugs used in the last month and ever, among 15 year olds (2018)
Q. When was the last time you ever used or took any of the following…?



Base: all 15 year olds pupils (10,068)

Alcohol use and drugs

2018 FIGURES

Among pupils who have ever used drugs, 31% of 13 year olds and 42% of 15 year olds had been drinking alcohol the last time they had used drugs.

TRENDS OVER TIME

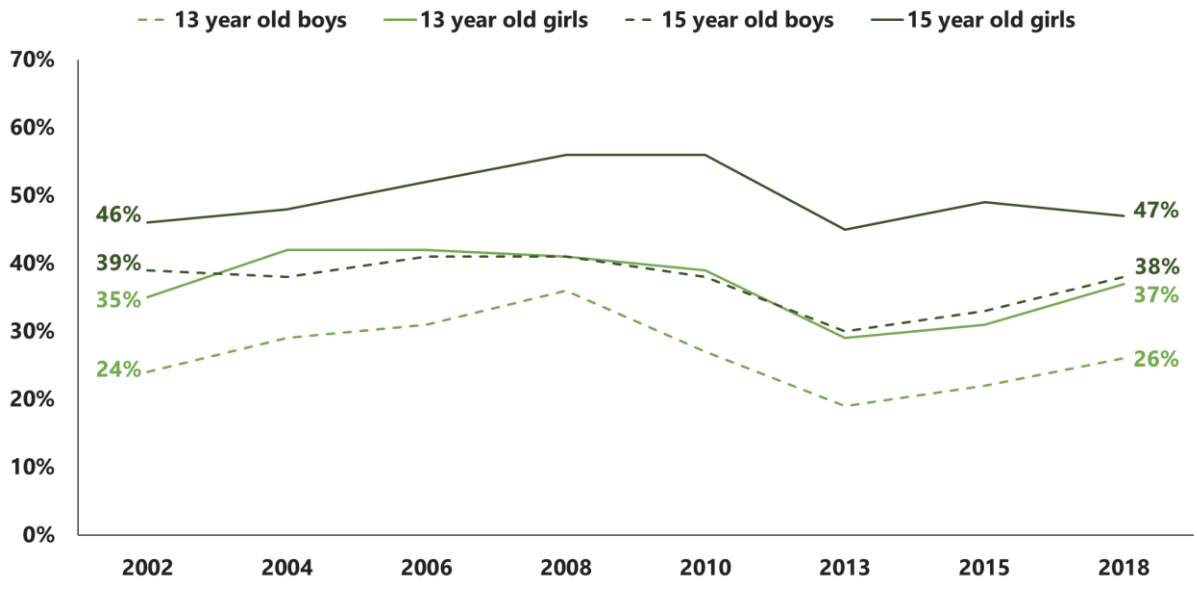
Between 2010 and 2013 there was a notable decrease in the simultaneous use of alcohol and drugs. Between 2013 and 2018 however, there was been an increase in the number of 15 year old boys who had been drinking the last time that they used drugs (the increase among 13 year olds boys and 13 year old girls is not statistically significant) (Figure 2.6).

GENDER DIFFERENCES

Among both age groups, girls were more likely than boys to have been drinking the last time that they used drugs.

Figure 2.6 Proportion of pupils who were drinking alcohol the last time they used drugs, by sex and age (2002-2018)

Q. The last time you used drugs, were you also drinking alcohol?



Base: pupils who have ever used drugs (for full base sizes please see Appendix B)

Polydrug use

2018 FIGURES

Among those who had ever used drugs, 16% of 13 year olds and 15% of 15 year olds had used more than one drug (polydrug use) the last time they used drugs (Figure 2.7).

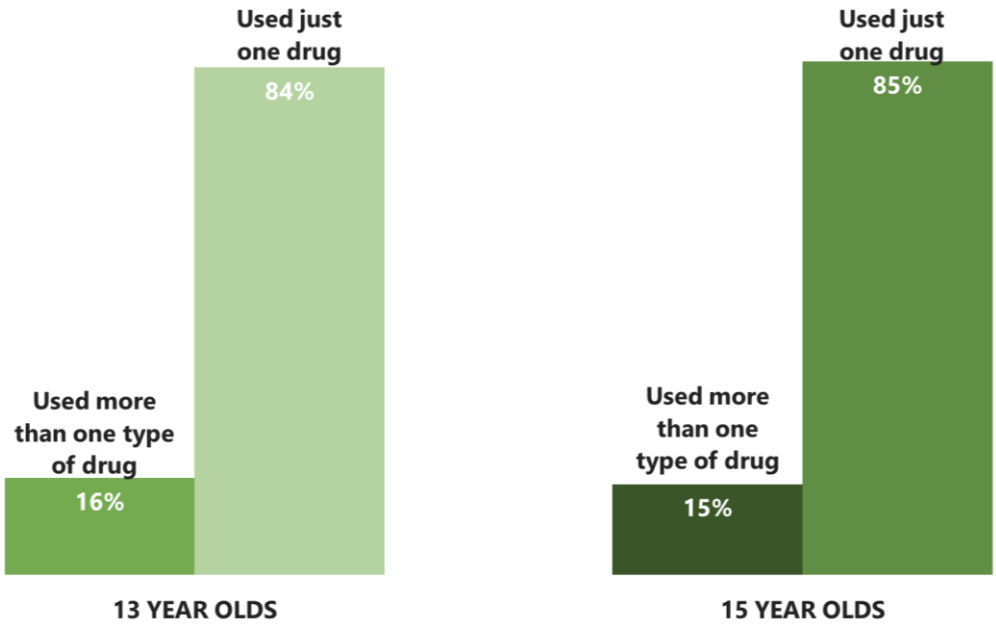
TRENDS OVER TIME

Since 2015, among both age groups there has been no change in the proportions who used more than one type of drug the last time they used drugs.

GENDER DIFFERENCES

15 year old boys were more likely than 15 year old girls to have taken more than one type of drug the last time they used drugs (17% of 15 year olds boys, compared with 12% of 15 year old girls). There was no statistically significant difference between 13 year old boys and girls.

Figure 2.7 Proportion of pupils who used more than one drug the last time they used drugs, by age (2018)
Q. The last time you used drugs, did you use more than one type of drug?



Base: 13 year olds who have ever used drugs (709), 15 year olds who have ever used drugs (2,079)

Effects of drug use

2018 FIGURES

In the last year, 45% of 15 year olds and 36% of 13 year olds who had ever taken drugs had experienced at least one immediate negative effect as a result[7].

The most common effects were vomiting, doing something they later regretted and having an argument (Figure 2.8).

TRENDS OVER TIME

There was no change in the proportion of pupils who had experienced negative consequences as a result of using drugs.

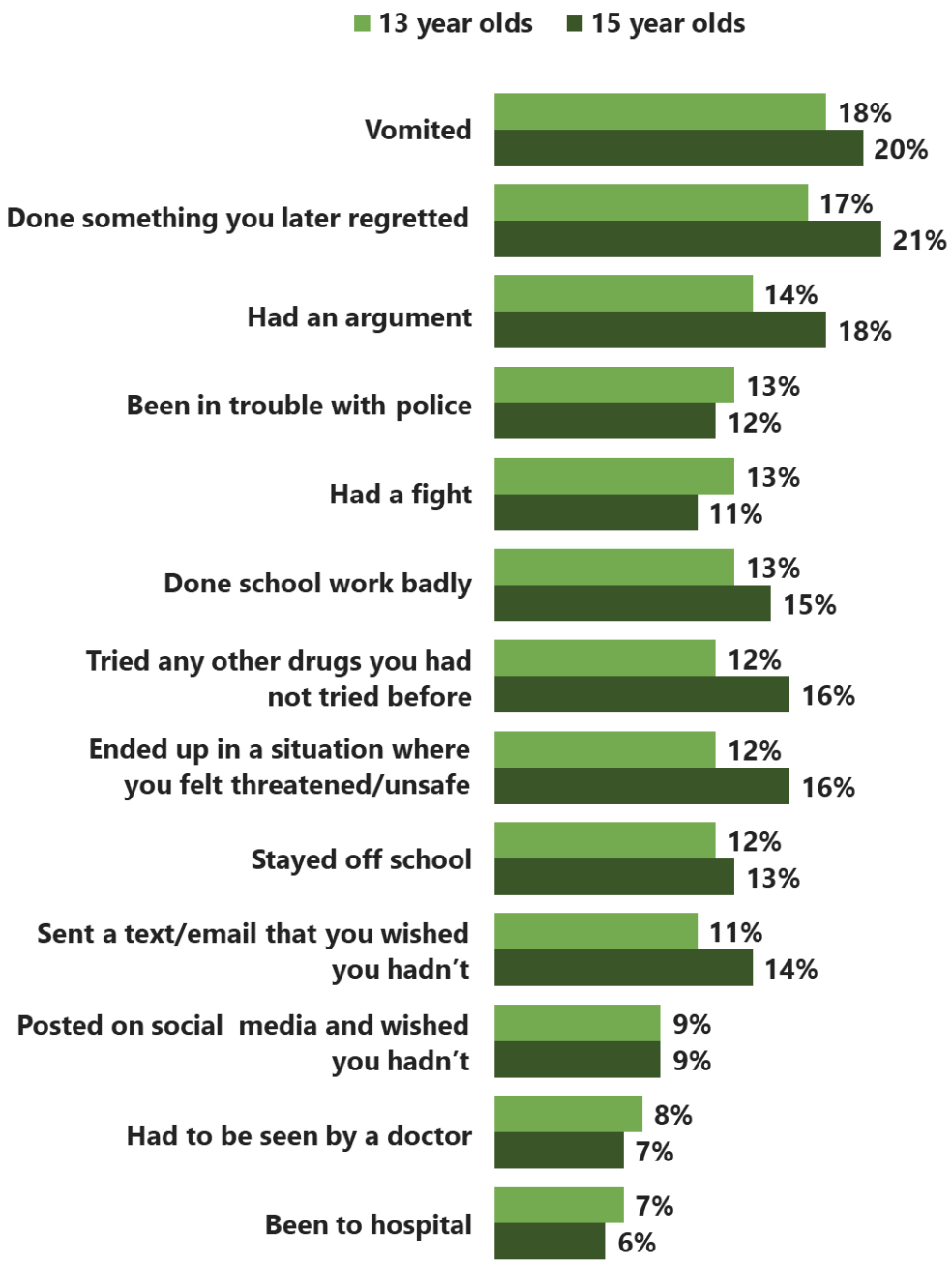
GENDER DIFFERENCES

There were no gender differences in the proportions who experienced one or more negative effects of using drugs. In terms of the effects experienced, boys who had ever used drugs were more likely than girls who had ever used drugs to have had a fight as a result of taking drugs (13% of boys, compared with 9% of girls).

[7] The survey did not attempt to capture any longer-term negative effects.

Figure 2.8 Proportion of those who have ever used drugs who experienced negative effects as a result, by age (2018)

Q. In the past year, as a result of taking drugs have you…?



Base: 13 year olds who have ever used drugs (779), 15 year olds who have ever used drugs (2,188)

Location of drug use

2018 FIGURES

Among both age groups, it was most common for pupils to have used drugs out in the street. The next most common locations were in someone else's home and (among 15 year olds) at a party (Figure 2.9).

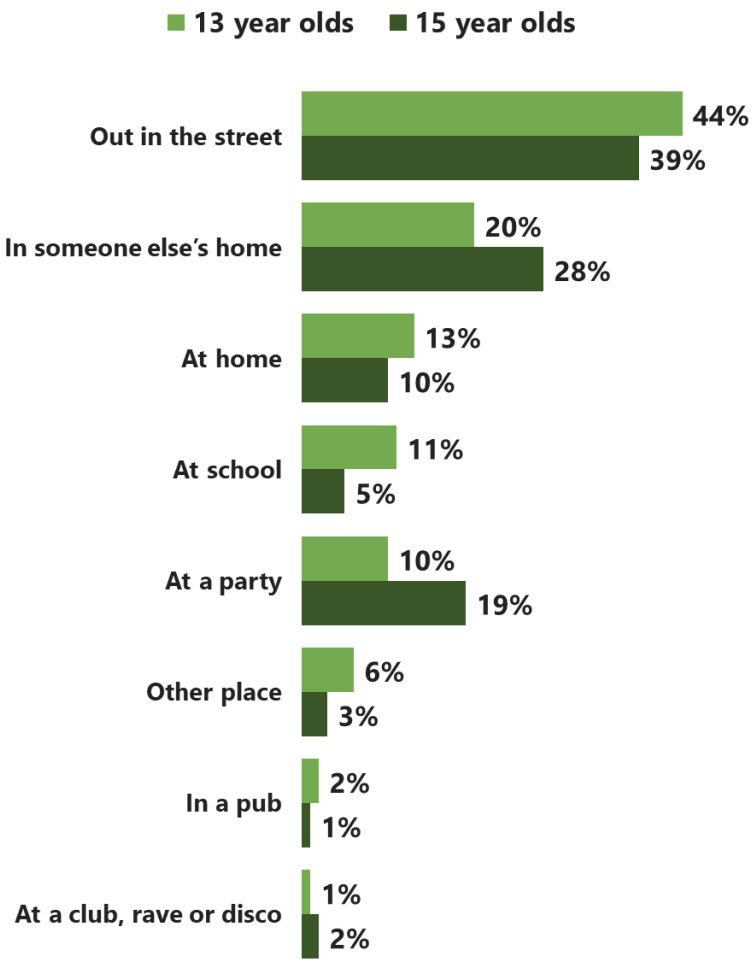
TRENDS OVER TIME

There was no change in the proportion of pupils who reported using drugs in the various locations.

GENDER DIFFERENCES

In general, there were no gender differences by location of drug use, except among 13 year olds, where girls were more likely than boys to have taken drugs in someone else's home (29% of girls, compared with 14% of boys).

Figure 2.9 Location of last drug use, by age (2018)
Q. Where were you the last time you used drugs?



Base: 13 year olds who have ever used drugs (605), 15 year olds who have ever used drugs (1,952)

What pupils did with their drugs (used, sold, given away)

2018 FIGURES

Around half of pupils who had ever used drugs gave some of their drugs to someone else the last time they used them (52% of 13 year olds and 51% of 15 year olds) (Figure 2.10). Around four in ten used it all themselves (40% of 13 year olds and 42% of 15 year olds). Only a small proportion sold some of their drugs (10% of 13 year olds and 8% of 15 year olds).

TRENDS OVER TIME

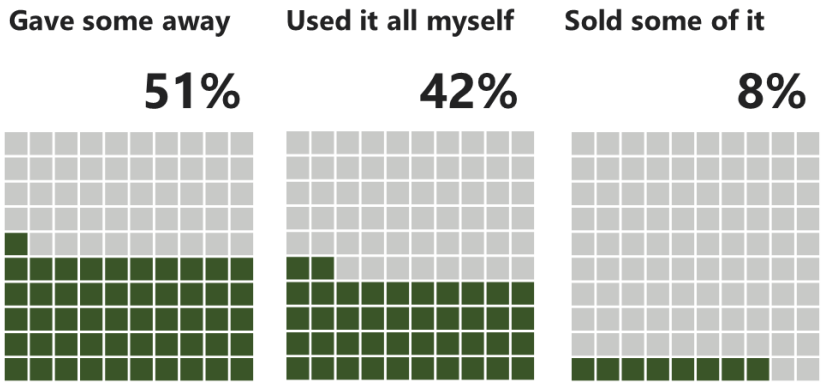
Among 15 year olds, there was an increase in the proportion who said they used all of their drugs themselves (42% in 2018, compared with 37% in 2015) and a corresponding reduction in the proportion who gave some of their drugs away (51% in 2018, compared with 57% in 2015). Among 13 year olds there was no change between 2015 and 2018.

GENDER DIFFERENCES

Among 15 year olds, girls were more likely than boys to give some of their drugs away (56% of 15 year old girls, compared with 48% of 15 year old boys), while boys were more likely than girls to sell some of their drugs (9% of 15 year olds boys, compared with 5% of 15 year old girls). There were no differences between 13 year old boys and girls.

Figure 2.10 What 15 year old pupils did with their drugs on the last occasion that they used them (2018)

Q. The last time you used drugs, did you use them all yourself or did you sell or give some to someone else?



Base: 15 year olds who have ever used drugs (1,783)

Would like to stop taking drugs

2018 FIGURES

55% of 13 year olds and 40% of 15 year olds who had ever used drugs reported that they would like to stop using them (Figure 2.11). 30% of 15 year olds who use drugs once a month or more would like to stop.

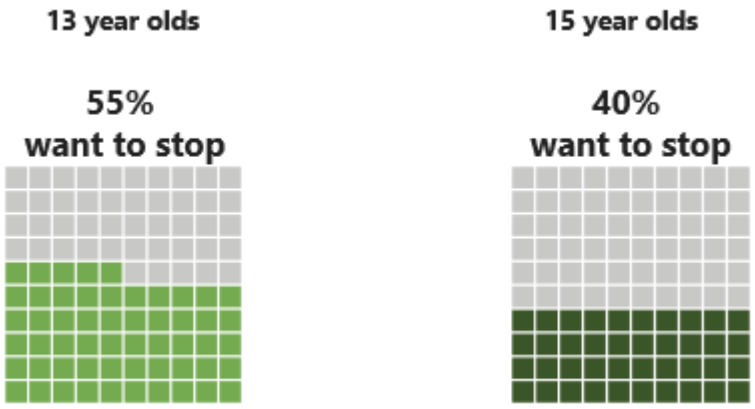
TRENDS OVER TIME

The proportion of 15 year olds who reported that they would like to stop using drugs has declined between 2015 and 2018 (46% in 2015, compared with 40% in 2018). There was no change among 13 year olds.

GENDER DIFFERENCES

Among 15 year olds, girls were more likely than boys to want to stop taking drugs (47% of girls, compared with 37% of boys). There were no differences between 13 year old boys and girls.

Figure 2.11 Proportion of pupils who have ever taken drugs who would like to stop taking drugs by age (2018)
Q. Do you want to stop taking drugs?



Base: 13 year olds who have ever used drugs (464), 15 year olds who have ever used drugs (1,528)

Need help due to drug use

2018 FIGURES

Only small proportions of those who have used drugs felt that they needed help because of their use (10% of 13 year olds who have ever used drugs and 7% of 15 year olds who have ever used drugs).

TRENDS OVER TIME

The proportion of pupils who use drugs who feel they need help has remained stable over time.

GENDER DIFFERENCES

There were no differences in the proportion of boys and girls in either age group that thought they needed help due to drug use.

3 Availability of drugs

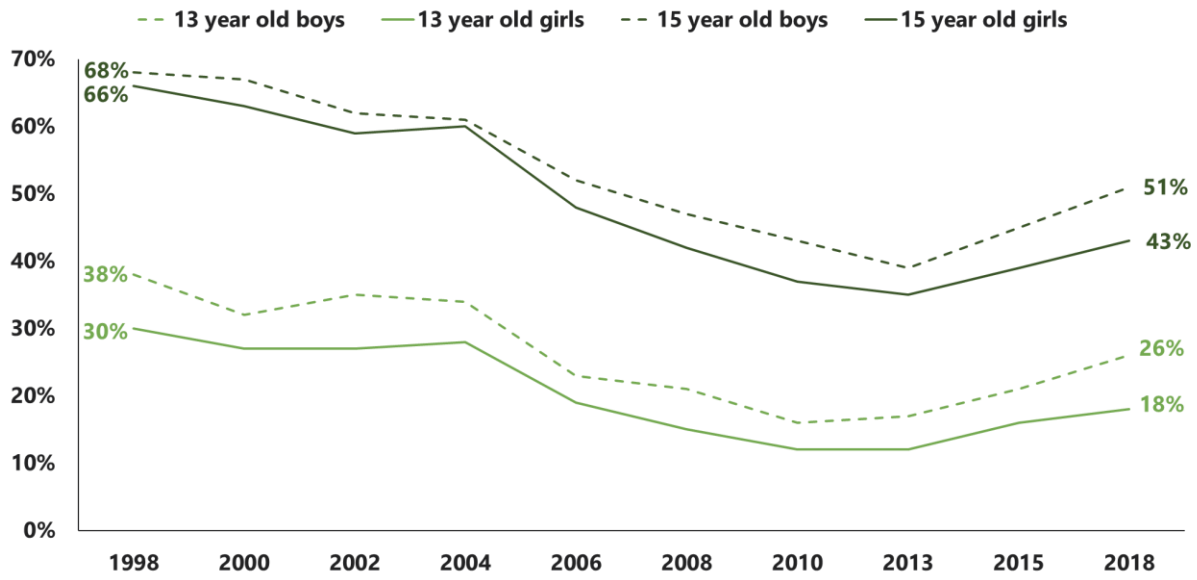
Ever been offered drugs

22% of 13 year olds and 47% of 15 year olds have ever been offered drugs.

Among both age groups, the proportion of pupils who had ever been offered drugs declined overall between 1998 and 2013. However, since 2013, the proportion of pupils who had ever been offered drugs increased across both age groups and genders (for example, 51% of 15 year old boys were offered drugs in 2018, compared with 45% in 2015, and 39% in 2013) (Figure 3.1).

Among both age groups, boys were more likely than girls to have been offered drugs (Figure 3.1).

Figure 3.1 Proportion of pupils ever offered drugs, by sex and age (1998-2018)
Q. Have you ever been offered any of the following drugs?



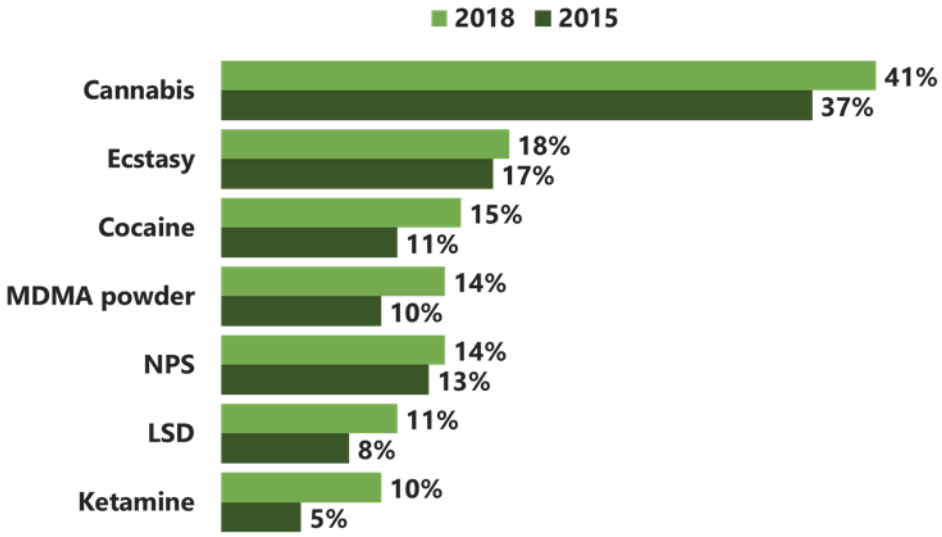
Base: all pupils (for full base sizes please see Appendix B)

Types of drugs ever offered

15 year old pupils were most commonly offered cannabis. 41% of all 15 year olds had been offered cannabis, 18% had been offered ecstasy and 15% had been offered cocaine (Figure 3.2). 14% of 15 year olds had been offered MDMA powder and the same proportion had been offered some form of Novel Psychoactive Substances (NPS).

As shown in Figure 3.2, since 2015 there has been an increase in the proportions of 15 year olds who have been offered cannabis (41% in 2018, compared to 37% in 2015), cocaine (15% in 2018, compared to 11% in 2015), MDMA powder (14% in 2018, compared to 10% in 2015), LSD (11% in 2018, compared to 8% in 2015) and ketamine (10% in 2018, compared to 5% in 2015).

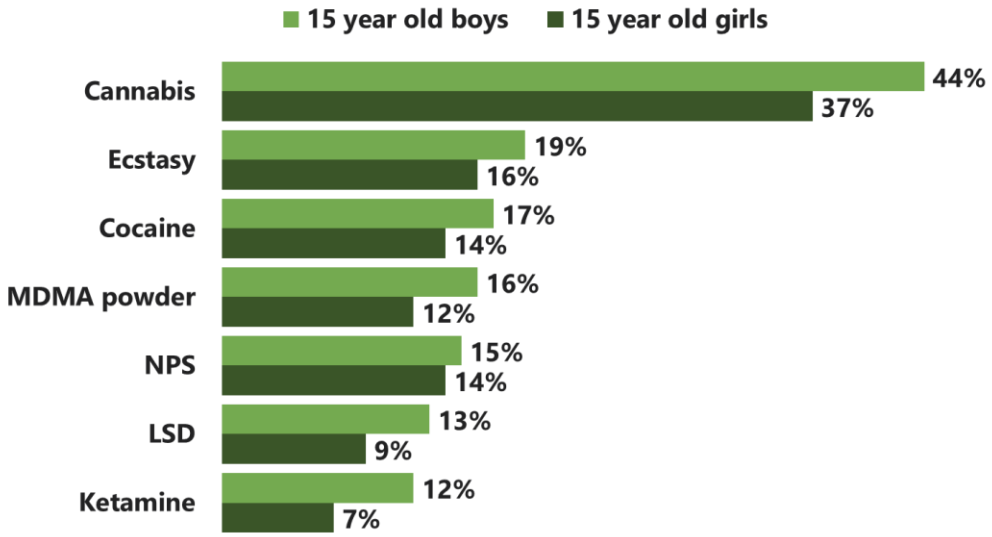
Figure 3.2 Drugs offered to 15 year olds (2015-2018)
Q. Have you ever been offered any of the following drugs?



Base: all 15 year olds in 2018 (10,347), all 15 year olds in 2015 (11,401)

15 year old boys were more likely than 15 year old girls to have been offered each of the individual drugs in Figure 3.2, with the exception of NPS which had been offered to similar proportions of 15 year old boys and girls (Figure 3.3).

Figure 3.3 Drugs offered to 15 year olds, by sex (2018)
Q. Have you ever been offered any of the following drugs?



Base: all 15 year old boys (4,856), all 15 year old girls (4,948)

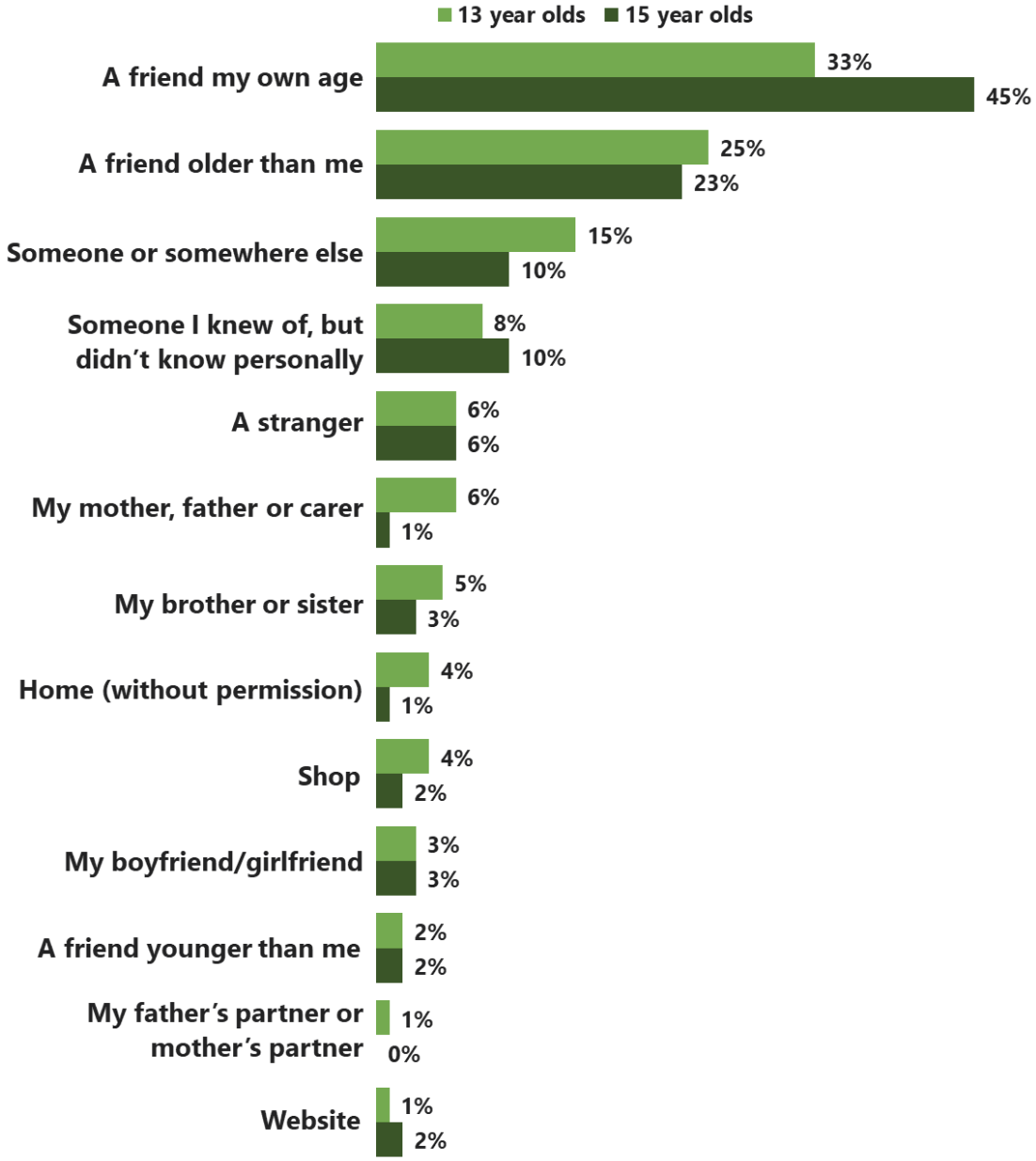
Source of drugs

Among pupils who had ever taken drugs, it was most common to get them from friends (friends of the same age or older) (Figure 3.4).

There has been no change in the sources of drugs since 2015.

Overall, girls were more likely than boys to get drugs from an older friend (27% of girls, compared with 21% of boys) or from their boyfriend/girlfriend (4% of girls, compared with 1% of boys).

Figure 3.4 Source of drugs, by age (2018)
Q. The last time you used drugs, how did you get them?



Base: 13 year olds who have ever used drugs (526), 15 year olds who have ever used drugs (1,801)

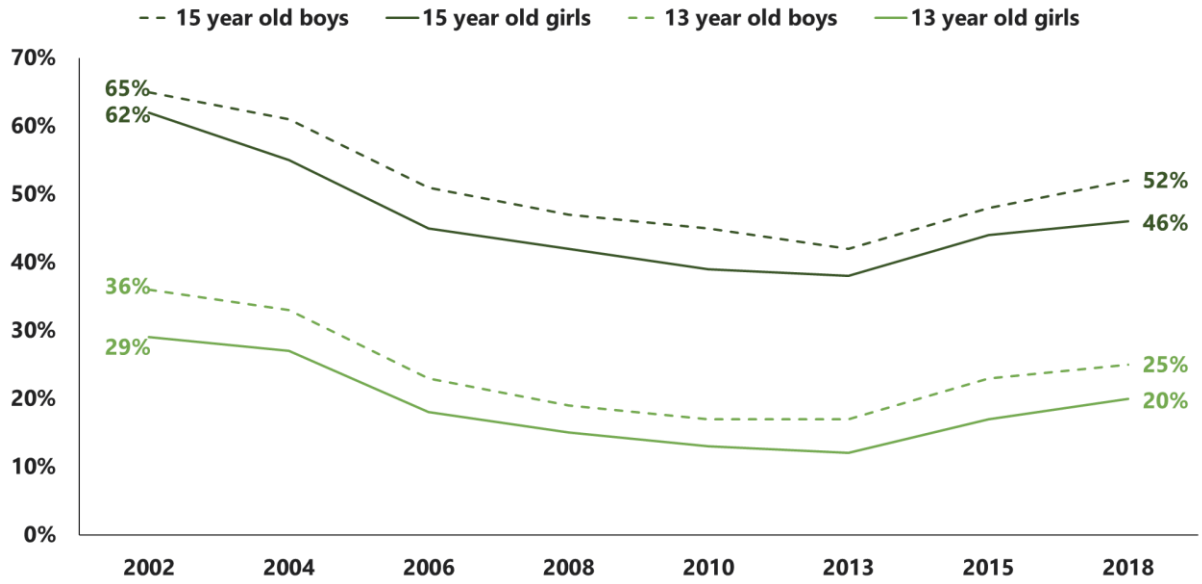
Ease of obtaining drugs

22% of 13 year olds and 49% of 15 year olds thought it would be ‘very’ or ‘fairly’ easy to get drugs if they wanted to.

Between 2002 and 2013, the proportion of pupils who thought it was easy to get drugs gradually decreased. However, there was an increase among all groups between 2013 and 2015 and since 2015 there has been a further increase in the proportion of 13 year old girls and 15 year old boys who thought it was easy to get drugs. 20% of 13 year old girls thought it would be easy to get drugs in 2018, compared with 17% in 2015, and 52% of 15 year old boys thought it would be easy to get drugs in 2018, compared with 48% in 2015 (Figure 3.5).

Among both age groups, boys were more likely than girls to think it would be easy to get drugs if they wanted to.

Figure 3.5 Proportion of pupils who think it would be very or fairly easy to get drugs, by age and sex (2002-2018)
Q. How easy would it be for you to get illegal drugs if you wanted to?



Base: all pupils (for full base sizes please see Appendix B)

4 Attitudes to drug use

Views on the acceptability of trying cannabis, cocaine and sniffing glue

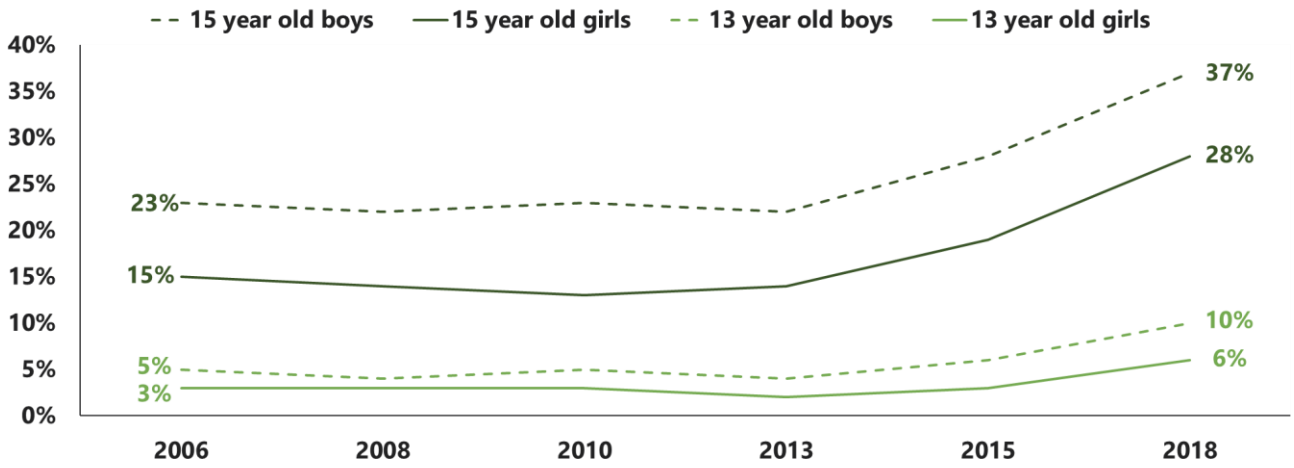
Cannabis

A third (33%) of 15 year olds thought that it was 'ok' for someone of their age to try cannabis, while only 8% of 13 year olds thought this.

Among both age groups, the acceptability of trying cannabis has increased considerably – 33% of 15 year olds thought it was 'ok' in 2018, compared with 24% in 2015 (and 17% in 2013), and 8% of 13 year olds thought it was 'ok' in 2018, compared with 5% in 2015.

Among both age groups, boys were more likely than girls to think that trying cannabis was acceptable (Figure 4.1).

Figure 4.1 Acceptability of trying cannabis, by age and sex (2006-2018)
Q. Do you think it is 'ok' for someone your age to try cannabis to see what it is like?



Base: all pupils (for full base sizes please see Appendix B)

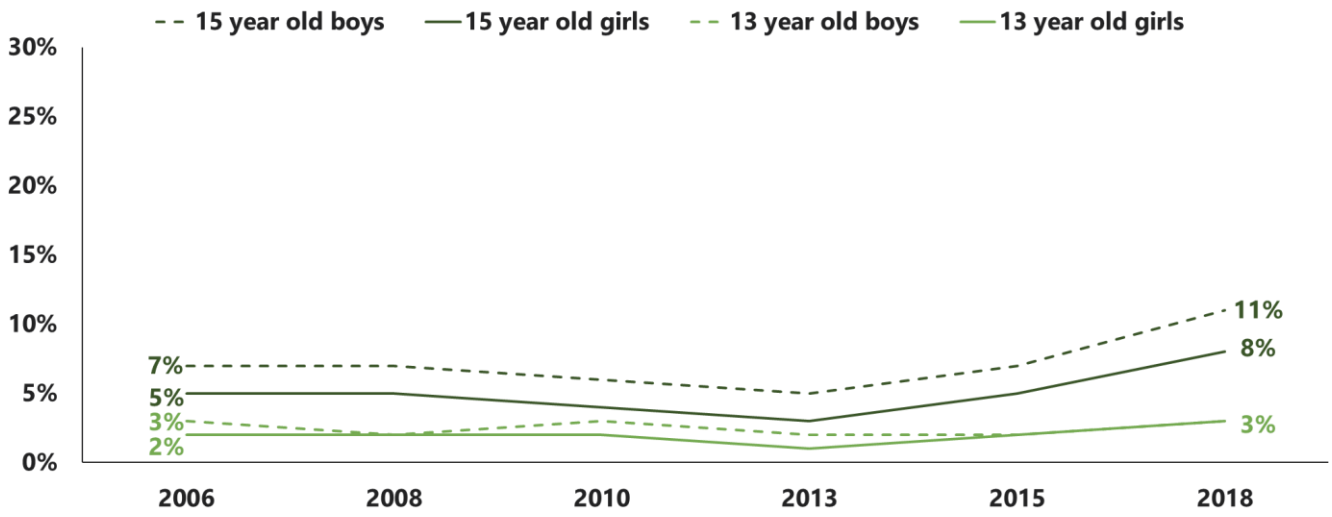
Cocaine

Only 3% of 13 year olds thought it was 'ok' for someone of their age to try cocaine, while 9% of 15 year olds thought this was acceptable.

Since 2015, there has been an increase in the proportion of 15 year olds thought it was 'ok' for someone of their age to try cocaine (9% in 2018, compared with 6% in 2015).

Among 15 year olds, boys were more likely than girls to think that trying cocaine was acceptable (Figure 4.2).

Figure 4.2 Acceptability of trying cocaine, by age and sex (2006-2018)
Q. Do you think it is 'ok' for someone your age to try cocaine to see what it is like?



Base: all pupils (for full base sizes please see Appendix B)

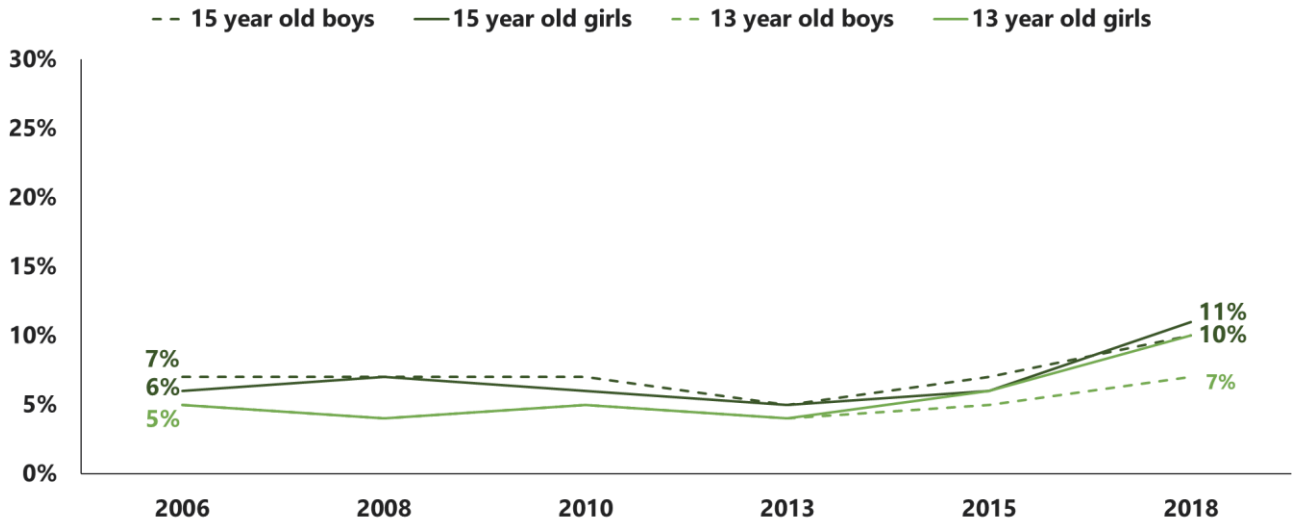
Sniffing Glue

8% of 13 year olds and 11% of 15 year olds thought that it was 'ok' for someone their age to try sniffing glue.

Since 2015, there has been an increase among both age groups in the proportions of pupils who thought that it was 'ok' for someone their age to try sniffing glue – 8% of 13 year olds thought it was 'ok' in 2018, compared with 6% in 2015, and 11% of 15 year olds thought it was 'ok' in 2018, compared with 7% in 2015.

Among 13 year olds, girls were more likely than boys to think that sniffing glue was acceptable (Figure 4.3).

Figure 4.3 Acceptability of trying glue sniffing, by age and sex (2006-2018)
Q. Do you think it is 'ok' for someone your age to try sniffing glue to see what it is like?



Base: all pupils (for full base sizes please see Appendix B)

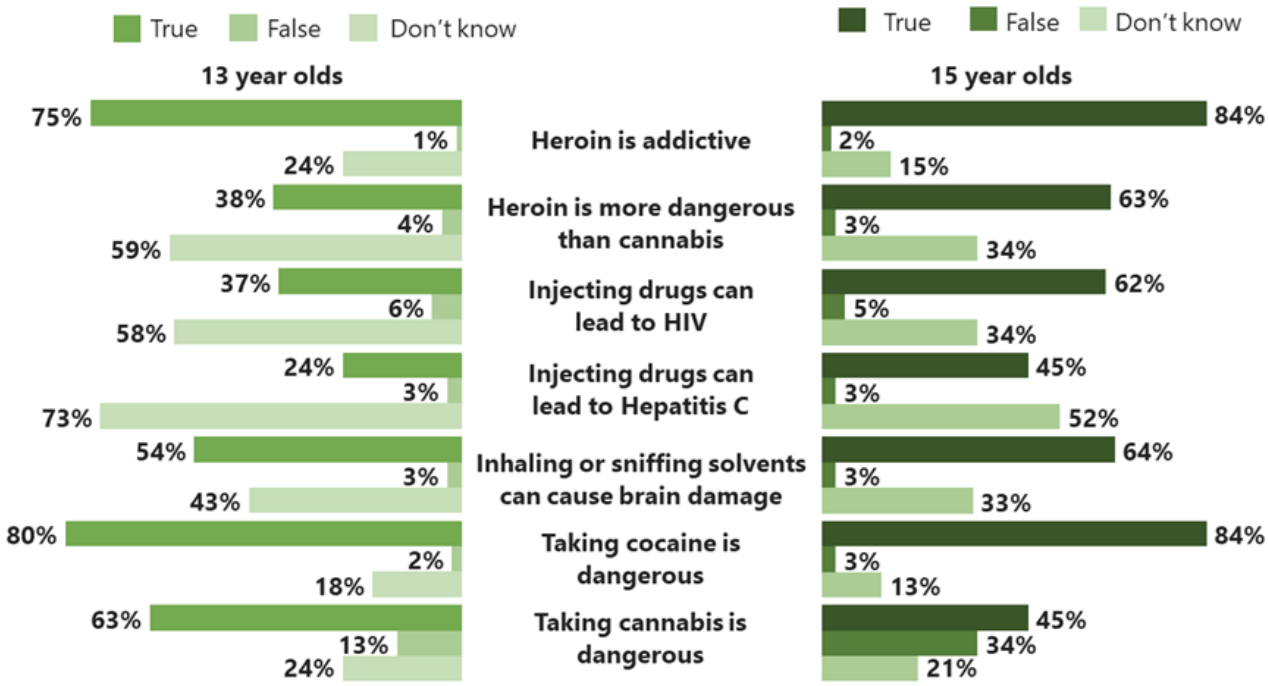
Perceptions of the risks of drug use

Pupils were given a number of (true) statements about the risks of drug use and asked if they thought they were true or false. They were most likely to think that the following statements about drugs were true: “taking cocaine is dangerous” and “heroin is addictive”.

For all but one of the statements, 15 year olds were more likely than 13 year olds to say that they were true. Thirteen year olds were more likely to answer “don’t know” to all statements (Figure 4.4).

The only statement thought to be “true” by a higher proportion of 13 year olds than 15 year olds was “taking cannabis is dangerous.” A third (34%) of 15 year olds stated that this was “false” (a much higher proportion than for any other statement).

Figure 4.4 Pupils’ perceptions of the risks of taking drugs, by age (2018)
Q. Please read the following statements about drugs and say if you think they are true or false.



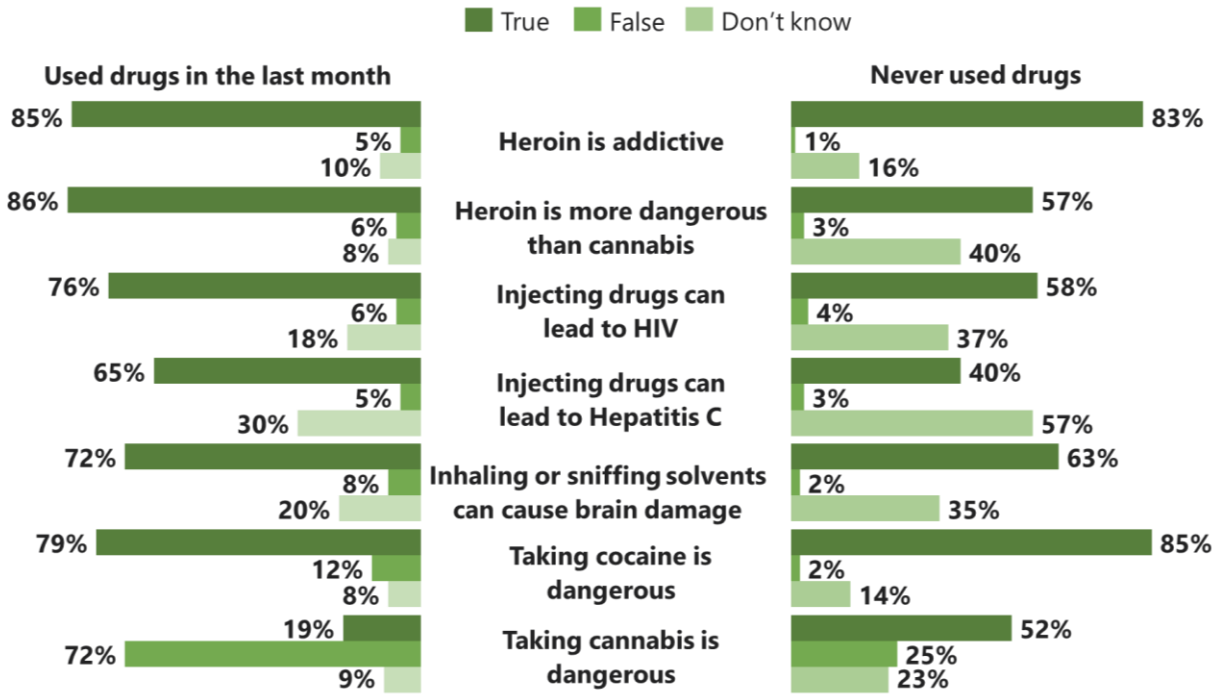
Base: all 13 year olds; all 15 year olds (for full base sizes please see Appendix B)

Pupils’ perceptions of the risks of taking drugs also varied depending on their drug use status. Pupils who had reported never using drugs were more likely than those who had used drugs within the last month to state they “don’t know” to all statements (Figure 4.5).

A higher proportion of recent users than those who have never used drugs, answered “true” to most statements. However, a much lower proportion of recent users (19%) compared with those who had never used drugs (52%), answered “true” to “taking cannabis is dangerous” (Figure 4.5). This is likely to reflect the fact that cannabis was the most commonly used drug among those who had used drugs in the last month.

Figure 4.5 15 year old pupils' perceptions of the risks of taking drugs, by own drug use (2018)

Q. Please read the following statements about drugs and say if you think they are true or false.

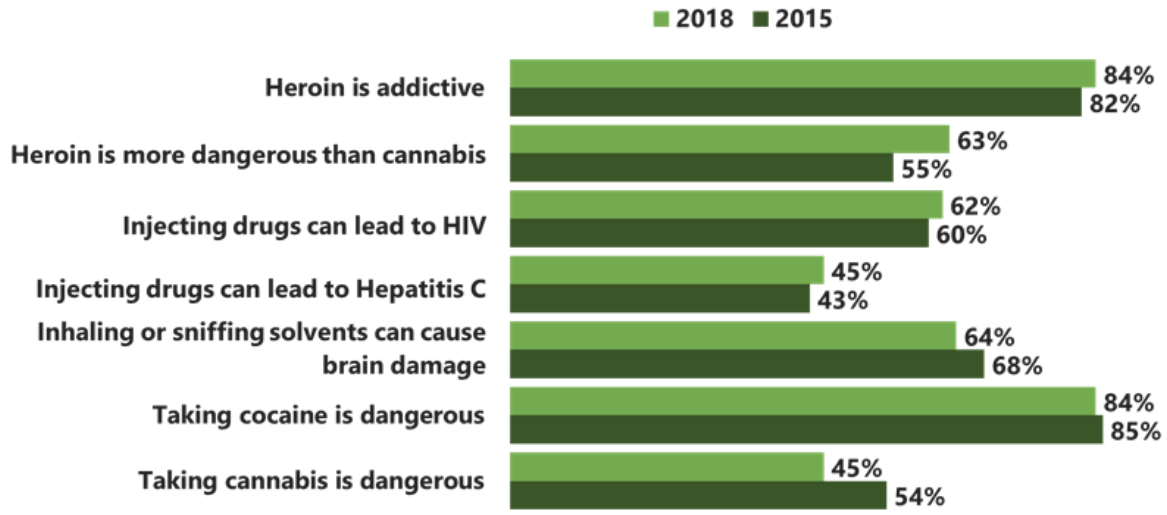


Base: 15 year old pupils who have used drugs in the last month; 15 year old pupils who have never used drugs (for full base sizes please see Appendix B)

Since 2015, there was an increase in the proportion of pupils who answered "true" to the statements "heroin is more dangerous that cannabis" (63% in 2018, compared to 55% in 2015), "heroin is addictive" (84% in 2018, compared to 82% in 2015), "injecting drugs can lead to HIV" (62% in 2018, compared to 60% in 2015), and "injecting drugs can lead to Hepatitis C" (45% in 2018, compared to 43% in 2015) (Figure 4.6).

Meanwhile, there was a decrease in the proportion of pupils who answered "true" to "taking cannabis is dangerous" (45% in 2018, compared to 54% in 2015), and "inhaling or sniffing solvents can cause brain damage" (64% in 2018, compared to 68% in 2015).

Figure 4.6 15 year olds who think statements are true (2015 to 2018)
Q. Please read the following statements about drugs and say if you think they are true or false.



Base: all 15 year olds in 2018; all 15 year olds in 2015 (for full base sizes please see Appendix B)

Attitudes to drug taking

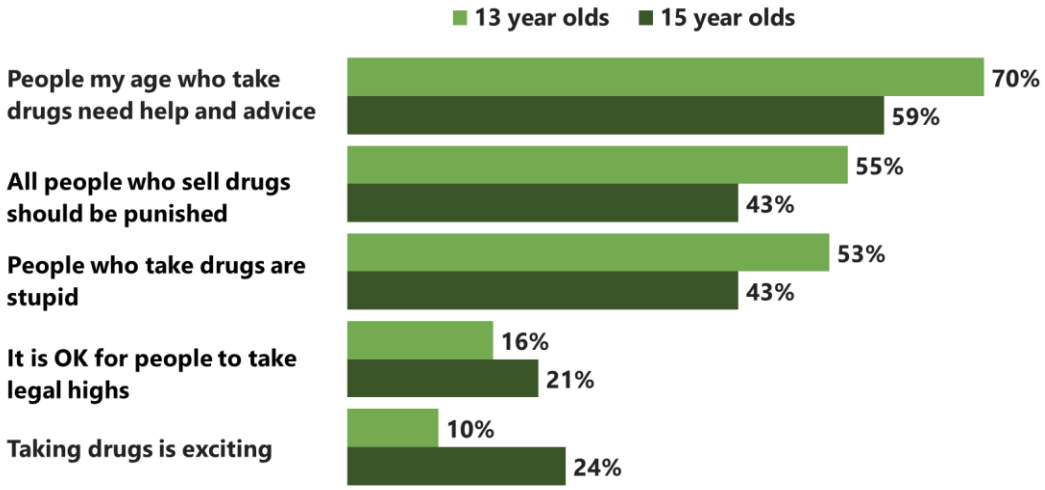
Pupils were given a number of statements about attitudes to drug use and asked if they agreed or disagreed with them. Pupils from both age groups were most likely to agree with the statements “people my age who take drugs need help and advice”, “all people who sell drugs should be punished” and “people who take drugs are stupid”. They were less likely to agree that “it’s ok for people to take legal highs[8]” and “taking drugs is exciting” (Figure 4.7).

All of the attitudes have seen a change since 2015. Among 15 year olds, the proportion of pupils agreeing with the following statements has decreased since 2015: “people my age who take drugs need help and advice” (59% in 2018, compared with 63% in 2015), “all people who sell drugs should be punished” (43% in 2018, compared with 48% in 2015), and “people who take drugs are stupid” (43% in 2018, compared with 50% in 2015). Meanwhile there was an increase in the proportion of 15 year olds who agreed that “it is ok for people to take legal highs” (16% in 2018, compared with 10% in 2015) and “taking drugs is exciting” (10% in 2018, compared with 8% in 2015). Trends among 13 year olds were similar.

Overall, 13 year olds had more negative attitudes towards drug taking than 15 year olds.

[8] Although the term ‘legal highs’ was used in the questionnaire, these are now referred to as Novel Psychoactive Substances (NPS).

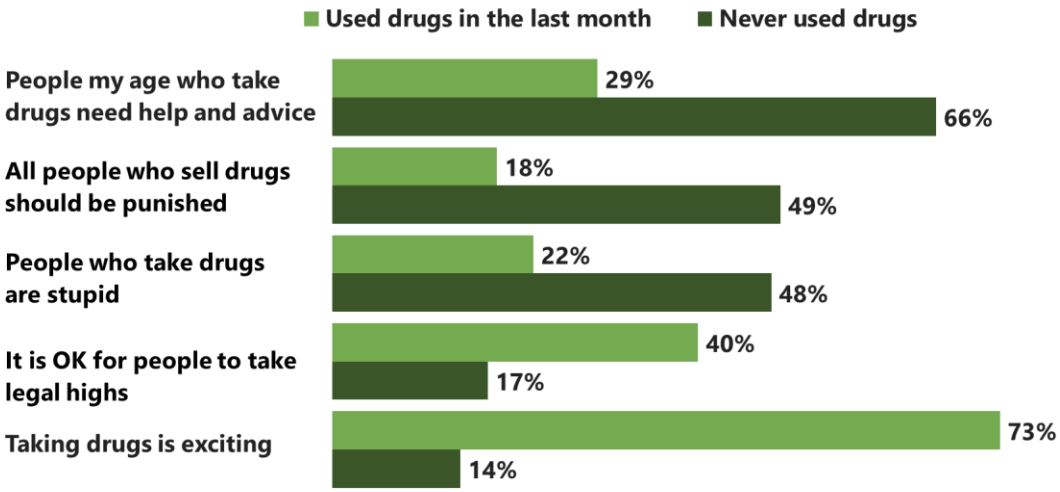
Figure 4.7 Proportion of pupils agreeing with attitudes to drug taking statements, by age (2018)
Q. Please read the following statements and say if you agree or disagree.



Base: all 13 year olds; all 15 year olds (for full base sizes please see Appendix B)

Pupils' attitudes towards drug taking varied greatly depending on their drug use status. Those who have never used drugs had much more negative views than those who have used drugs within the last month (Figure 4.8).

Figure 4.8 15 year old pupils' attitudes to drug taking, by drug use status (2018)
Q. Please read the following statements and say if you agree or disagree



Base: 15 year old pupils who have used drugs in the last month (1,218), 15 year olds pupils who have never used drugs (7,665)

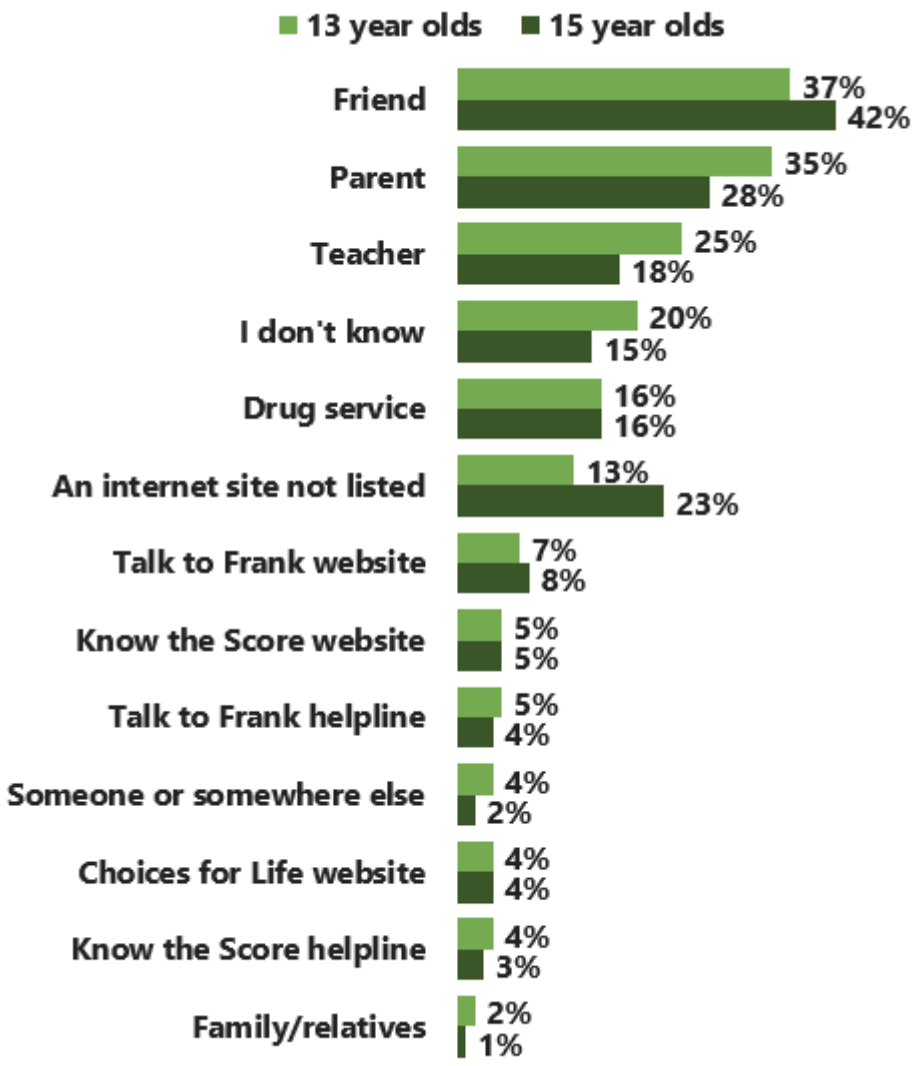
5 Drugs education and support

Where pupils would go for drugs information

Pupils who had used drugs were most likely to say that they would go to either a friend or a parent if they wanted more information about drugs. 13 year olds were about as likely to go to a friend or parent for advice, while 15 year olds were more likely to go to a friend (Figure 5.1).

Among both age groups, boys were more likely than girls to say that they would go to a parent (32% of boys, compared with 26% of girls) or teacher (22% of boys, compared with 17% of girls) for help. Girls were more likely than boys to say they would not know where to get help (20% of girls, compared with 13% of boys).

Figure 5.1 Where pupils would go if they wanted more information about drugs, by age (2018)
Q. If you wanted information about drugs, who/where would you go to?



Base: 13 year olds who have ever taken drugs (644), all 15 year olds who have ever taken drugs (1,891)

Drugs education

Two thirds (66%) of pupils from each age group had received lessons, videos/DVDs or discussion in class about drugs.

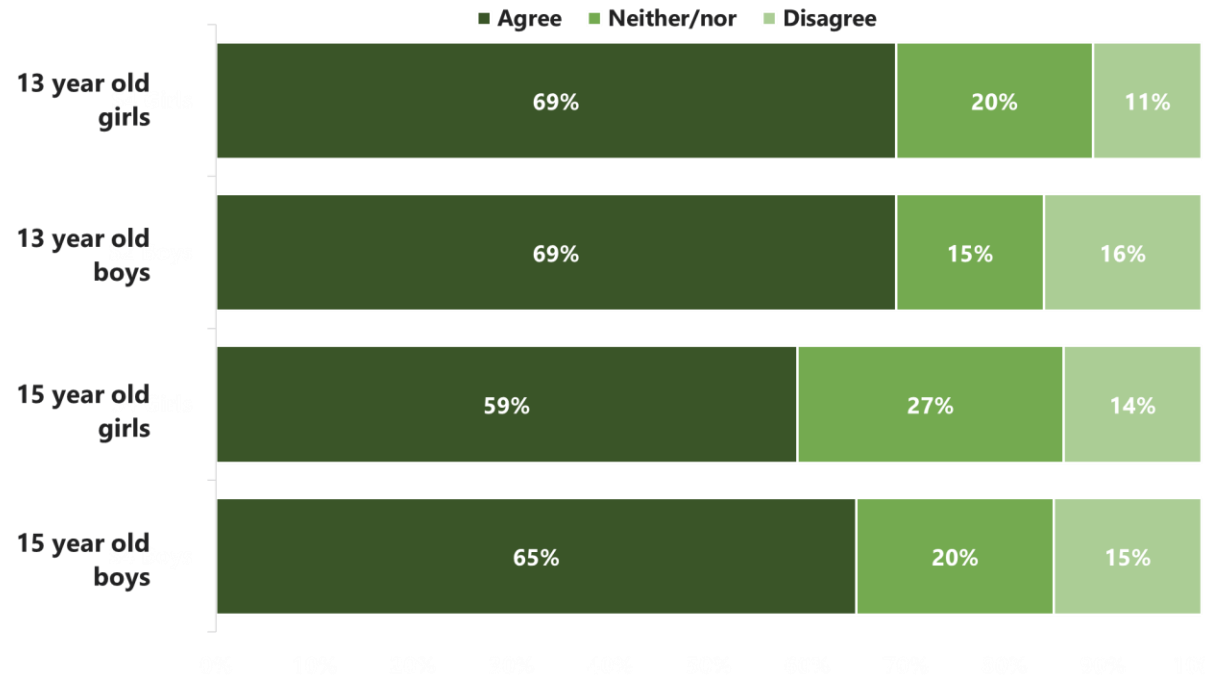
There was no difference in the likelihood of having received lessons, videos/DVDs or discussions in class about drugs between those who had taken drugs in the last month and those who had not.

School advice and support

The majority of pupils thought that their school was providing them with enough advice and support about taking drugs (69% of 13 year olds and 62% of 15 year olds).

While there were no gender differences among 13 year olds, 15 year olds girls were less likely than 15 year old boys to agree that they received enough advice and support about taking drugs – 59% of 15 year old girls, compared with 65% of 15 year old boys (Figure 5.2).

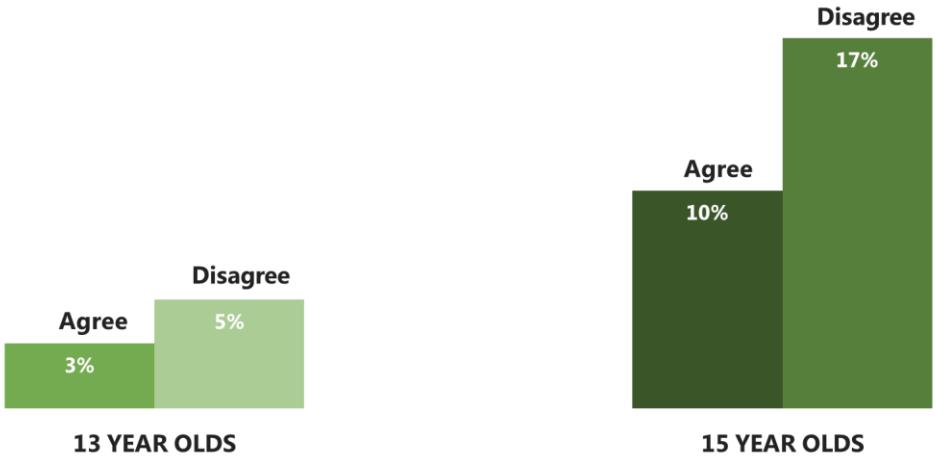
Figure 5.2 Advice and support about using drugs, by age and sex (2018)
Q. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement? My school provides me with enough advice and support about…? Taking drugs



Base: all 13 year old boys (5,099), all 13 year old girls (5,261), all 15 year old boys (4,392), all 15 year olds girls (4,655)

Among both age groups, those that agreed that their school provided them with enough advice and support about taking drugs were less likely to have used drugs in the last month than those that disagreed (Figure 5.3).

Figure 5.3 Comparison of prevalence of drug use among those who agree/disagree that their school provides them with enough advice and support about taking drugs (2018)
Q. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement? My school provides me with enough advice and support about…? Taking drugs



Base: all pupils who agreed/disagreed that their school provides them with enough advice and support about taking drugs (for full base sizes please see Appendix B)

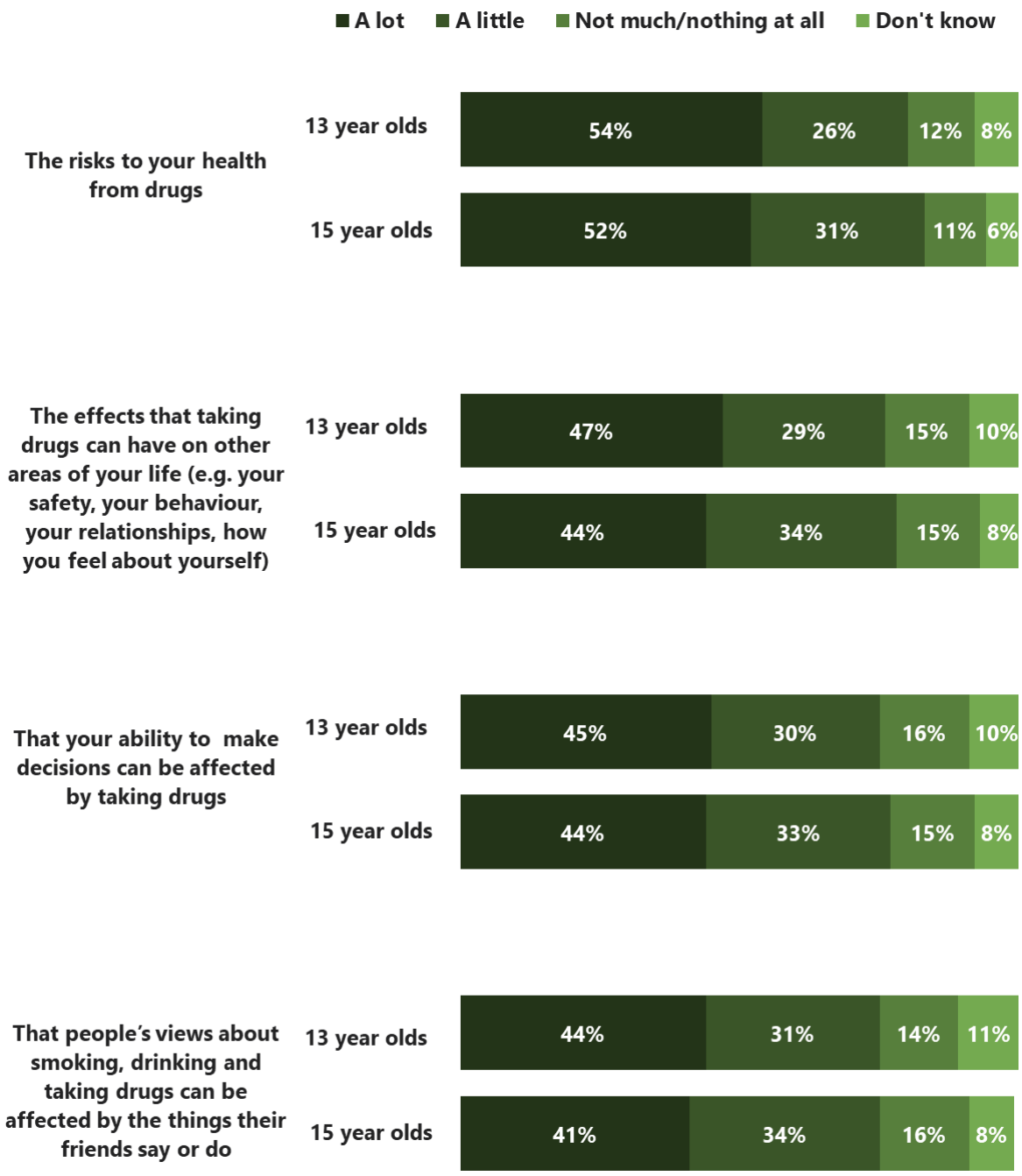
Amount learned in school about drugs

Pupils were asked how much they had learned at school about a series of topics relating to drugs. At least 40% said that they had learned ‘a lot’ about each of the topics (Figure 5.4).

Pupils in both age groups were most likely to say that they had learned ‘a lot’ about the risks to their health from drugs.

Overall, boys were more likely to say that they learned a lot about each topic.

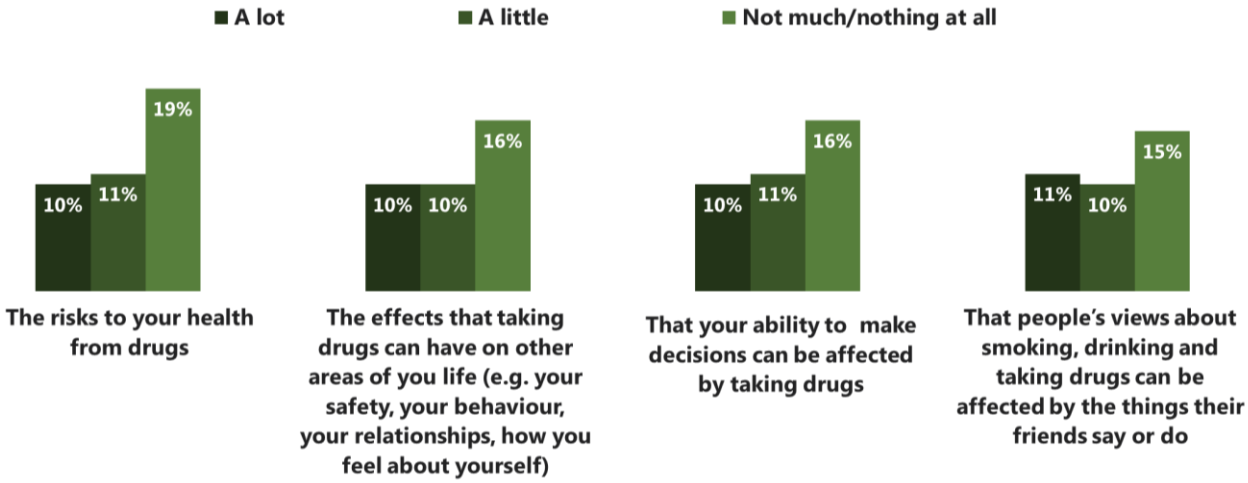
Figure 5.4 Amount learned about drugs at school, by age (2018)
Q. In school, how much have you learned about the following?



Base: all 13 year olds (10,975), all 15 year olds (9,576)

Across all four topics, those that said they had learned ‘a little’ or ‘a lot’ were less likely to have used drugs in the last month than those who learned ‘not much’ or ‘nothing at all’ (Figure 5.5). This was the case for both 13 and 15 year olds.

Figure 5.5 Comparison of prevalence of drug use among 15 year olds by how much they say they have learned about drug topics in school (2018)
Q. In school, how much have you learned about the following?



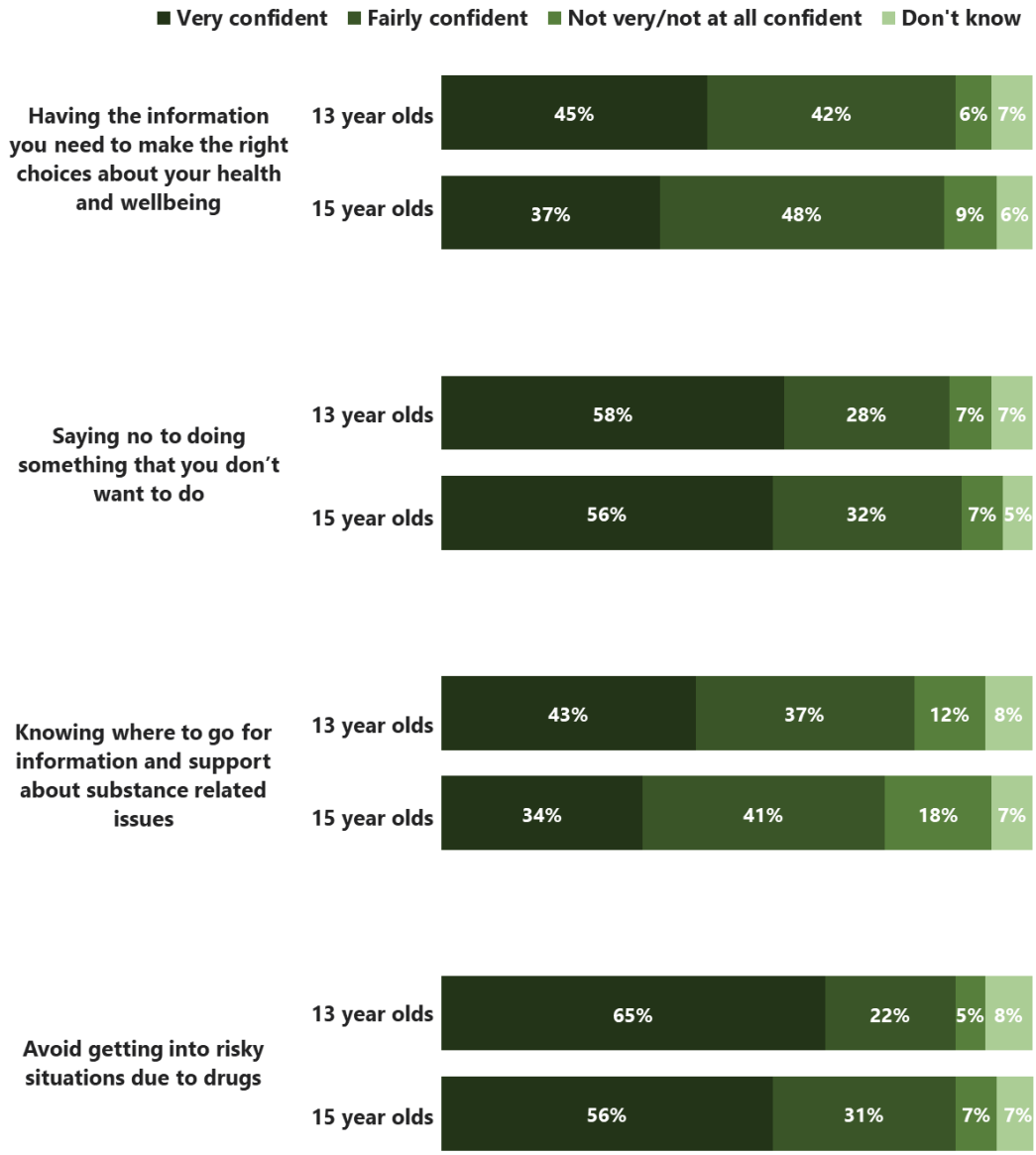
Base: 15 year olds who learned a lot about drug topics, 15 year olds who learned a little, 15 year olds who learned not much/nothing at all (for full base sizes please see Appendix B)

Confidence in health and wellbeing choices

Pupils were asked how confident they were about four aspects of health and wellbeing. Across each, the majority of pupils of both age groups reported that they felt confident in their health and wellbeing choices. 13 year olds were more likely than 15 year olds to feel confident that they had the information they needed to make the right choices about their health and wellbeing, and that they knew where to go for information and support about substance related issues (Figure 5.6).

Across both age groups, boys were more likely to say they knew where to go for information and support about substance use related issues (82% of 13 year old boys, compared with 78% of girls, and 79% of 15 year old boys, compared with 72% of girls). 15 year old boys were more likely than 15 year old girls to say they had the information they need to make the right choices about their health and wellbeing (87% of 15 year old boys, compared with 84% of girls)

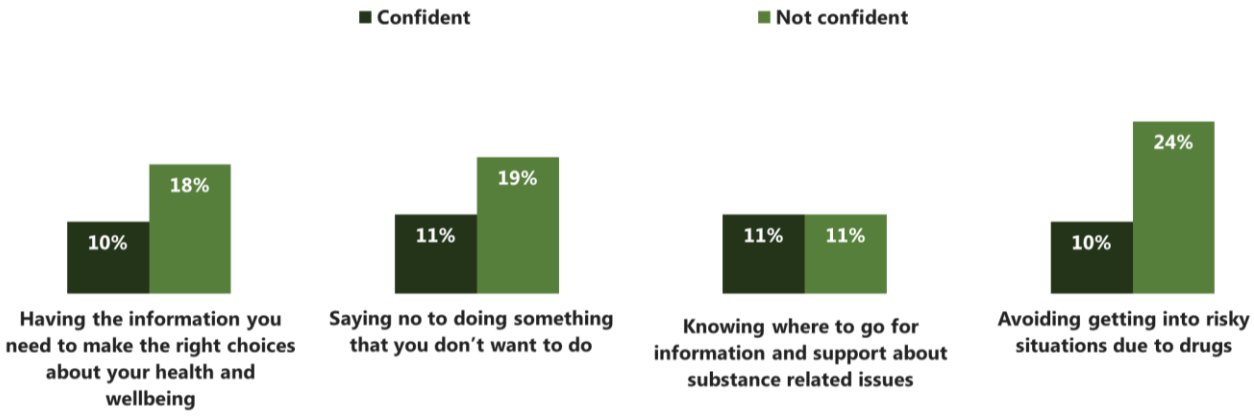
Figure 5.6 Confidence in health and wellbeing choices, by age (2018)
Q. Thinking about the future, how confident do you feel about…?



Base: all 13 year olds; all 15 year olds (for full base sizes please see Appendix B)

Feeling less confident about health and wellbeing choices was associated with drug use in the last month. Among 15 year olds, those who did not feel confident were more likely to have used drugs in the last month than those who did not (Figure 5.7). There was one exception to this: there was no difference in drug use in relation to confidence about knowing where to go for information and support about substance related issues.

Figure 5.7 Comparison of prevalence of drug use among 15 year olds, by confidence in future health and wellbeing choices (2018)
Q. Thinking about the future, how confident do you feel about…?



Base: 15 year olds who were confident about their future health and wellbeing choices, 15 year olds who were not confident (for full base sizes please see Appendix B)

6 Risk factors and protective factors

The charts in this chapter show the proportion of pupils who had used drugs in the last month among different subgroups of 13 and 15 year olds. For example, the first chart in Figure 6.1 shows that 5% of 13 year olds and 17% of 15 year olds who live with a single parent used drugs in the last month.

Family

A number of aspects of family life were associated with drug use in the month before the survey. These were: who you live with; maternal awareness; paternal awareness; family communication and caring responsibilities (Figure 6.1).

Who you live with

Among 13 year olds, those living with a single parent were more likely to have used drugs in the last month than those who lived with both parents (there was no statistically significant difference between those living with a step-parent and both parents), while among 15 year olds, those living with either a single or step parent were more likely to have used drugs in the last month than those who lived with both parents.

Maternal and paternal awareness

All pupils were asked ‘How much does your mother really know about…’: ‘Who your friends are?’; ‘How you spend your money?’; ‘Where you are after school?’; ‘Where you go at night?’; and ‘What you do in your free time?’. For each, pupils were asked whether they thought their mother knew ‘a lot’, ‘a little’ or ‘nothing’. A composite score for maternal awareness was calculated. The same questions were asked to establish their father’s awareness.

Among both age groups, drug use in the last month was higher among those who thought that their mother knew a below average amount about what they do and who they are with. The same pattern emerged for father’s perceived knowledge of activities, although to a slightly lesser degree.

Family communication

Across both age groups, those that said they would be likely to talk to their family if they felt worried about something were less likely to have taken drugs in the last month than those who would not.

Caring responsibilities

Among both age groups, those with caring responsibilities were more likely to have used drugs in the last month than those who did not.

Figure 6.1 Comparison of prevalence of drug use, by factors relating to family life and age (2018)

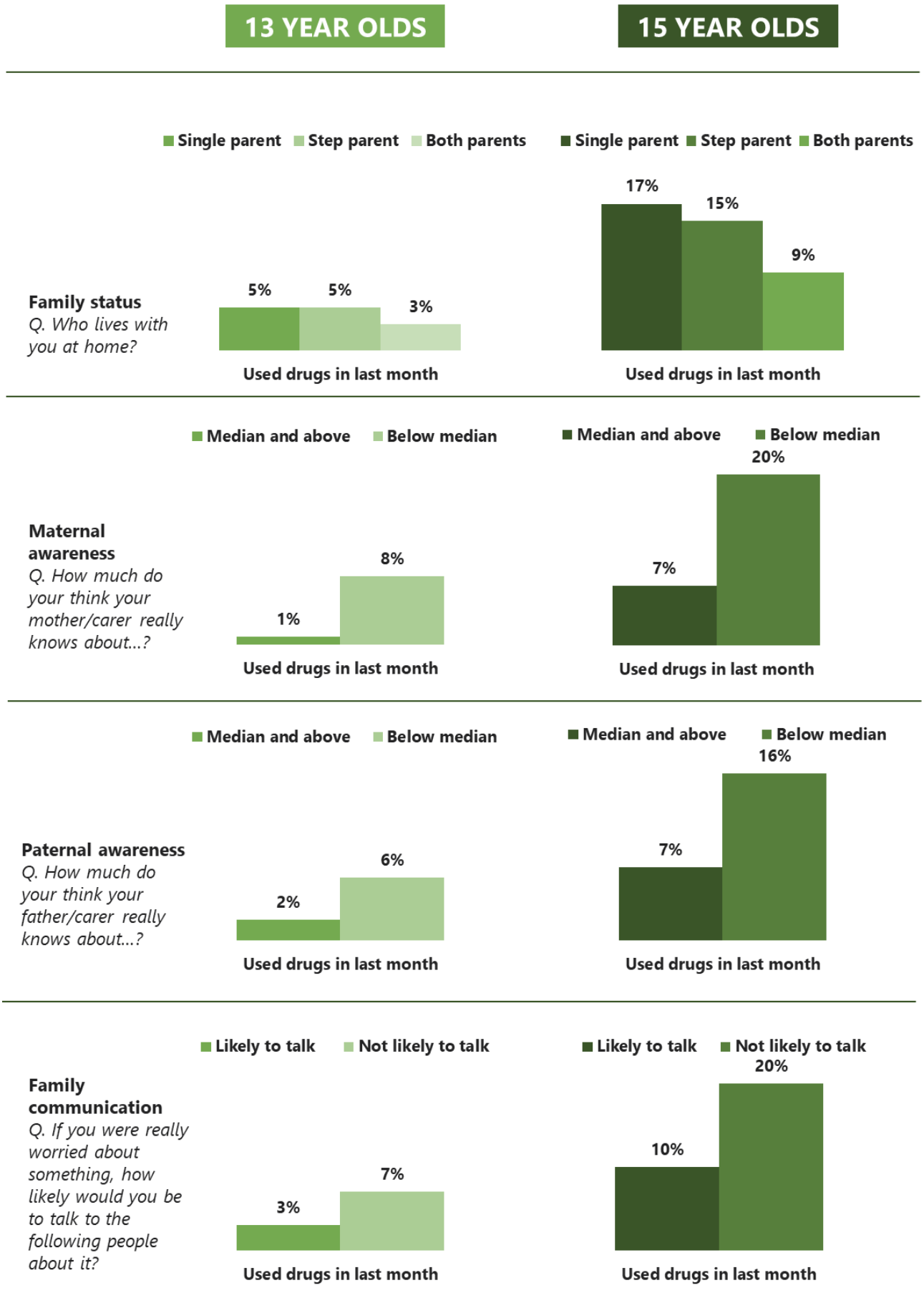
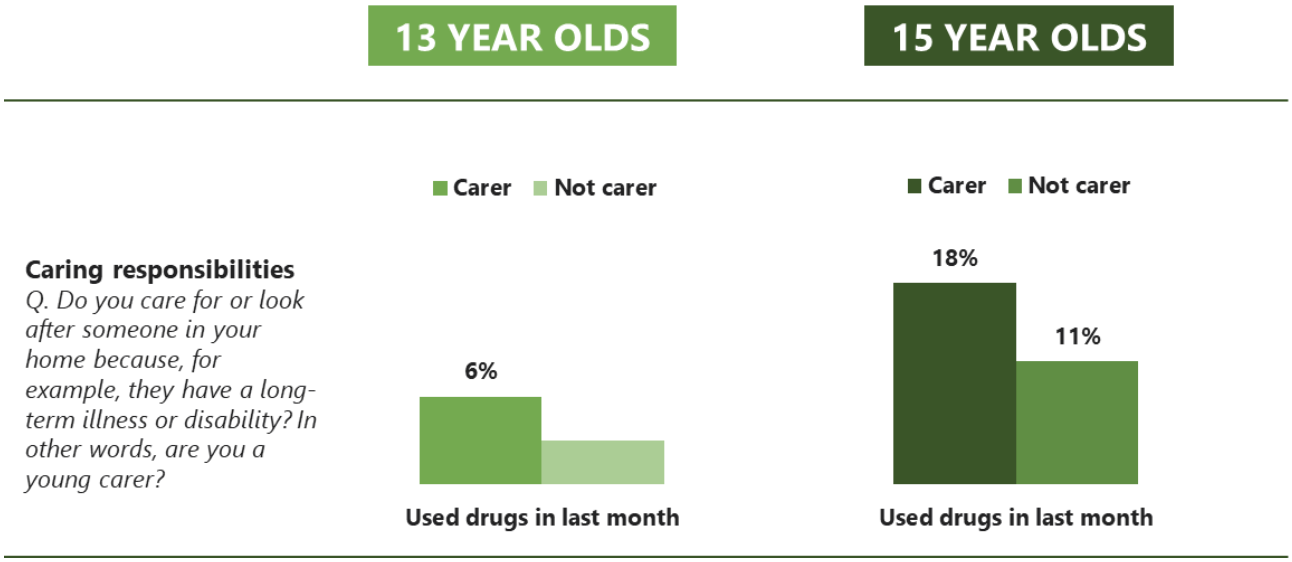


Figure 6.1 – continued – Comparison of prevalence of drug use, by factors relating to family life and age (2018)



Base: all pupils (for full base sizes please see Appendix B)

Friends and leisure activities

Aspects of a pupil's social life were also associated with having used drugs in the last month. These were: number of close friends; age of friends; number of evenings spent out with friends; and amount of own cash to spend (Figure 6.2).

Number of friends

Pupils with no close friends were more likely to have used drugs in the last month than those who had one or more close friends.

Age of friends

Pupils with mostly older friends were more likely to have used drugs in the last month than those who had younger friends or friends about the same age. Among 15 year olds, having friends of mixed ages was also associated with a higher likelihood of using drugs in the last month, but this was not the case among 13 year olds.

Number of evenings spent out with friends

The greater the number of evenings pupils spent out with friends in a week, the greater the likelihood that they had used drugs in the last month.

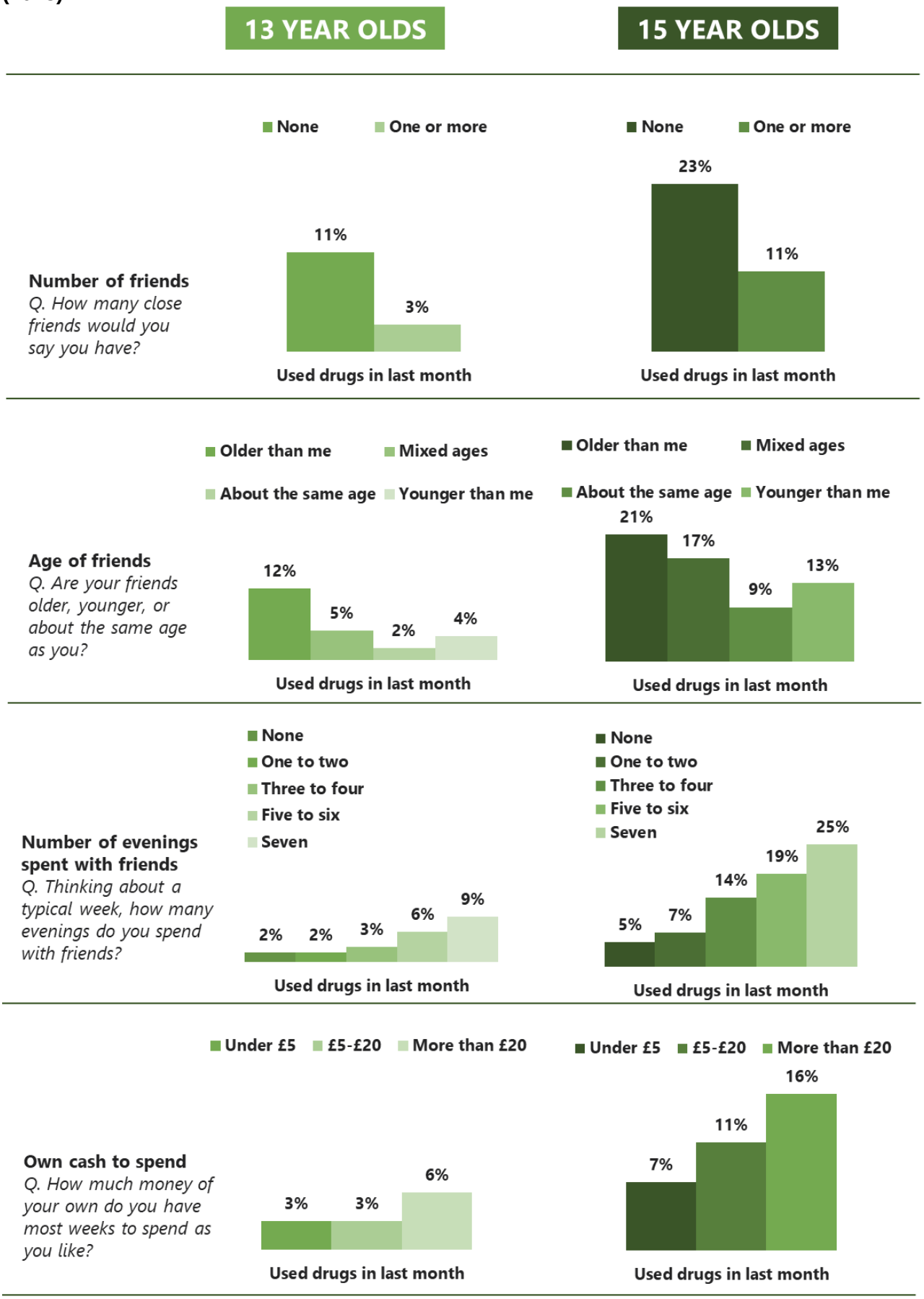
Amount of own cash to spend

Pupils with more money of their own to spend were more likely to have used drugs in the last month.

Leisure activities

Among 15 year olds, pupils who had never used drugs were more likely than those who had used drugs in the last month to regularly play sports, read books, do a hobby or volunteer. In contrast, with the exception of reading magazines and going to church, 15 year olds who had used drugs in the last month were more likely than those who had never used drugs to take part in all other activities (Figure 6.3).

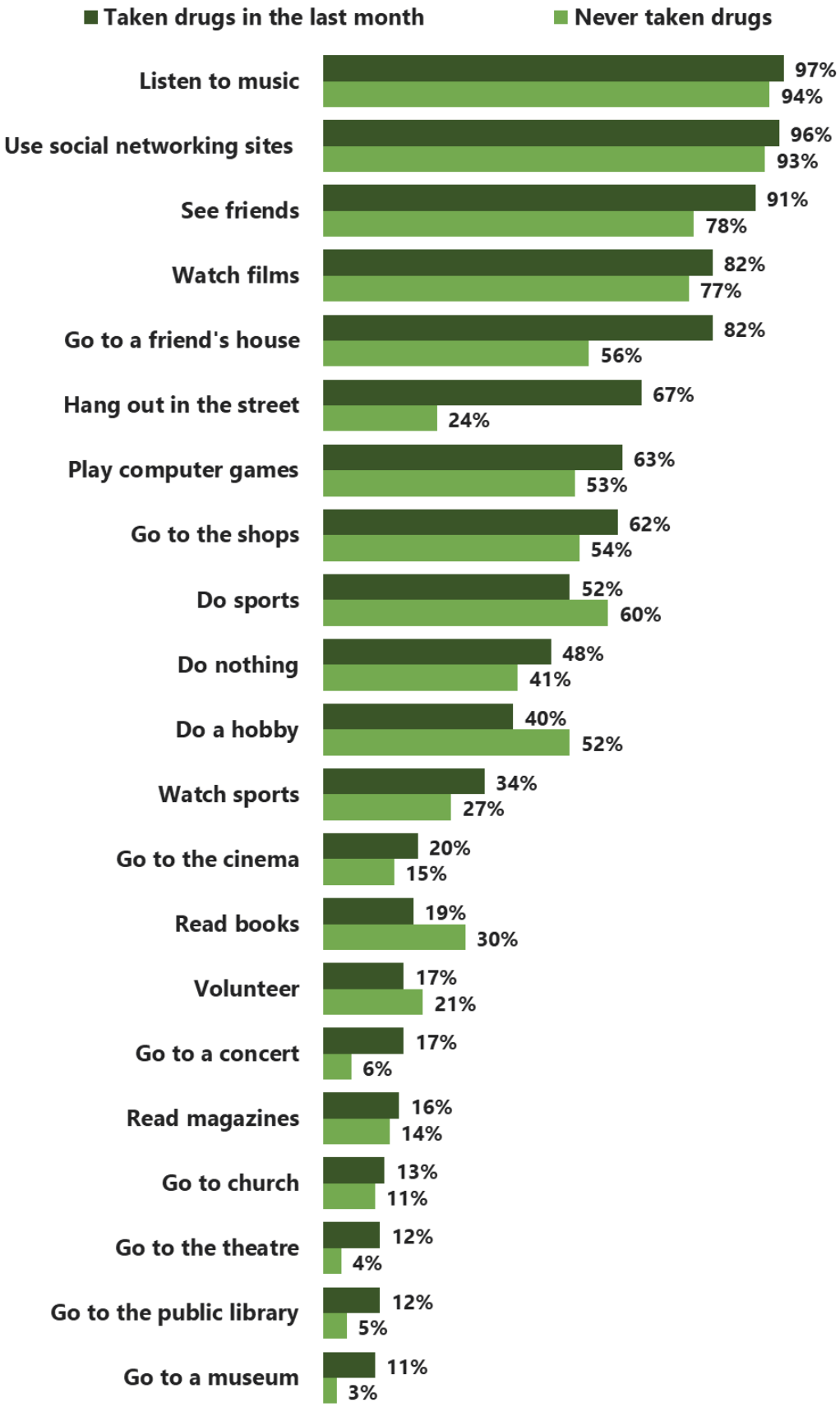
Figure 6.2 Comparison of prevalence of drug use, by factors relating to friendships and age (2018)



Base: all pupils (for full base sizes please see Appendix B)

Figure 6.3 Percentage of 15 year old pupils reporting taking part in leisure activities at least weekly, by drug use status (2018)

Q. Here is a list of things that young people sometimes do in their free time, when they aren't at school. What about you?



Base: all 15 year olds (for full base sizes please see Appendix B)

School

Factors relating to a pupils' engagement with school had a strong relationship with drug use. The more engaged a pupil was with school the less likely they were to have used drugs in the last month. The main factors were: enjoying school; feeling pressured by schoolwork; exclusion from school; and truanting (Figure 6.4). Post-school expectations were also related to drug use in the last month.

Enjoying school

Pupils who didn't like school were more likely to have used drugs in the last month than those who did like school.

Feeling pressured by schoolwork

At age 13 those who felt pressured by schoolwork a lot of the time or who never felt pressured were more likely to have used drugs in the last month than those who only sometimes felt pressured.

However, among 15 year olds, those who never felt pressured were substantially more likely to have used drugs in the last month.

Exclusion from school

Pupils who had been excluded from secondary school were more likely to have used drugs in the last month than those who had not been excluded. 13 year olds who had been excluded were five times more likely to have used drugs in the last month than 13 year olds who had not been excluded, while 15 year olds who had been excluded were more than twice as likely to have used drugs in the last month than 15 year olds who had not been excluded.

Truanting

Truancy was strongly correlated with drug use in the last month. Among both age groups, the more frequently a pupil truanted, the more likely they were to have used drugs in the last month.

Post-school expectations

Among both age groups (although to a lesser extent at age 13), those that said they expected to go to university after school were less likely to have reported using drugs in the last month than those who did not expect to go to university. Among 15 year olds, drug use in the last month was particularly prevalent among those who thought they would complete an apprenticeship after they leave school.

Figure 6.4 Comparison of prevalence of drug use, by school variables and age (2018)

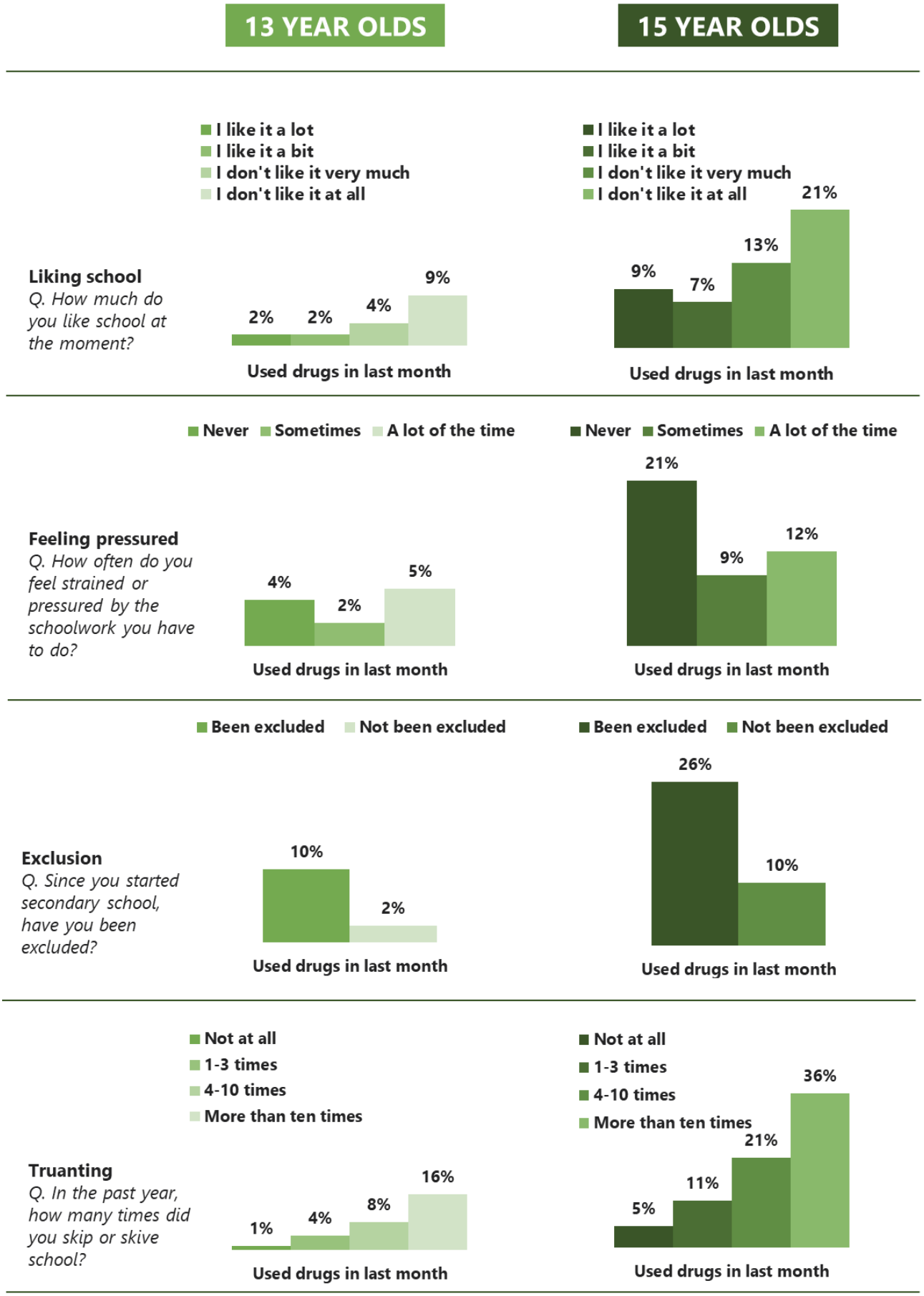
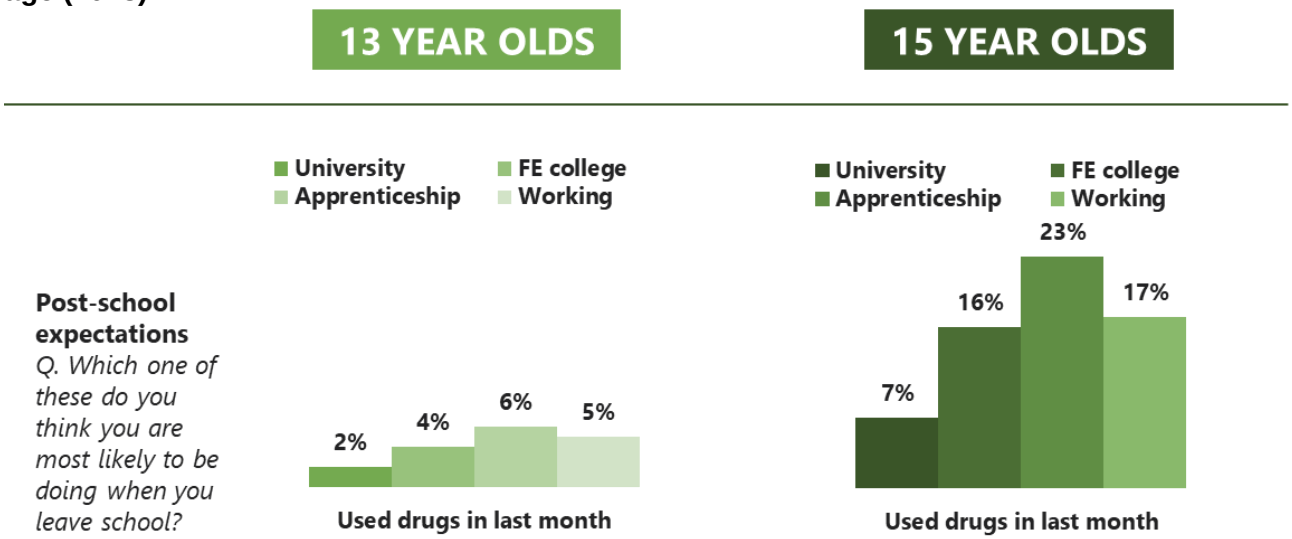


Figure 6.4 – continued – Comparison of prevalence of drug use, by school variables and age (2018)



Base: all pupils (for full base sizes please see Appendix B)

Inequalities

Inequalities related to health and wellbeing had a stronger relationship with drug use in the last month than deprivation. The main factors were: self-rated health; whether a pupil had an illness or disability; emotional and behavioural problems; and mental wellbeing (Figure 6.5).

Self-rated health

Among both age groups, pupils who rated their health as 'bad' were more likely to have used drugs in the last month than those who rated their health as 'good'.

Long-term illness or disability

Pupils who said they had a long-term illness or disability were more likely to have used drugs in the last month than those who did not.

Emotional and behavioural problems

Emotional and behavioural problems are assessed through the "Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire" (SDQ) in SALSUS[9]. The questionnaire contains 5 scales: emotional problems, conduct problems, hyperactivity problems, peer problems and pro-social behaviour. The SDQ score is a composite measure derived from the first 4 scales listed and provides an overall indicator of emotional and behavioural problems.

Pupils with borderline or abnormal scores for emotional wellbeing and behavioural conduct were more likely to have used drugs in the last month.

Mental wellbeing

Mental wellbeing is assessed in SALSUS using the Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-being Scale (WEMWBS). This is a scale of 14 positively worded items, with five response categories per item. The scale is scored by summing the response to each item answered on a 1 to 5 Likert scale. The minimum scale score is 14 and the maximum is 70. The higher a respondent's score, the better their mental wellbeing.

Among both age groups, those with a below average score for mental wellbeing were more likely to have used drugs in the last month than those with an average or above average score.

Area deprivation[10]

Area-based deprivation is assessed using the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD). This is used to provide an indication of material disadvantage in individual pupils.

Among both age groups there was no relationship between using drugs in the last month and SIMD.

[9] The terminology used to describe SDQ scores is borrowed from the original SDQ questionnaire designed by Robert Goodman. While the terms 'normal', 'borderline' and 'abnormal' may seem outdated in the context of the language used to describe mental wellbeing today, they have been retained in this report to draw comparisons to previous years.

[10] For full details of how area deprivation is calculated and its limitations please see the SALSUS 2018 Technical Report.

Figure 6.5 Comparison of prevalence of drug use, by inequalities and age (2018)

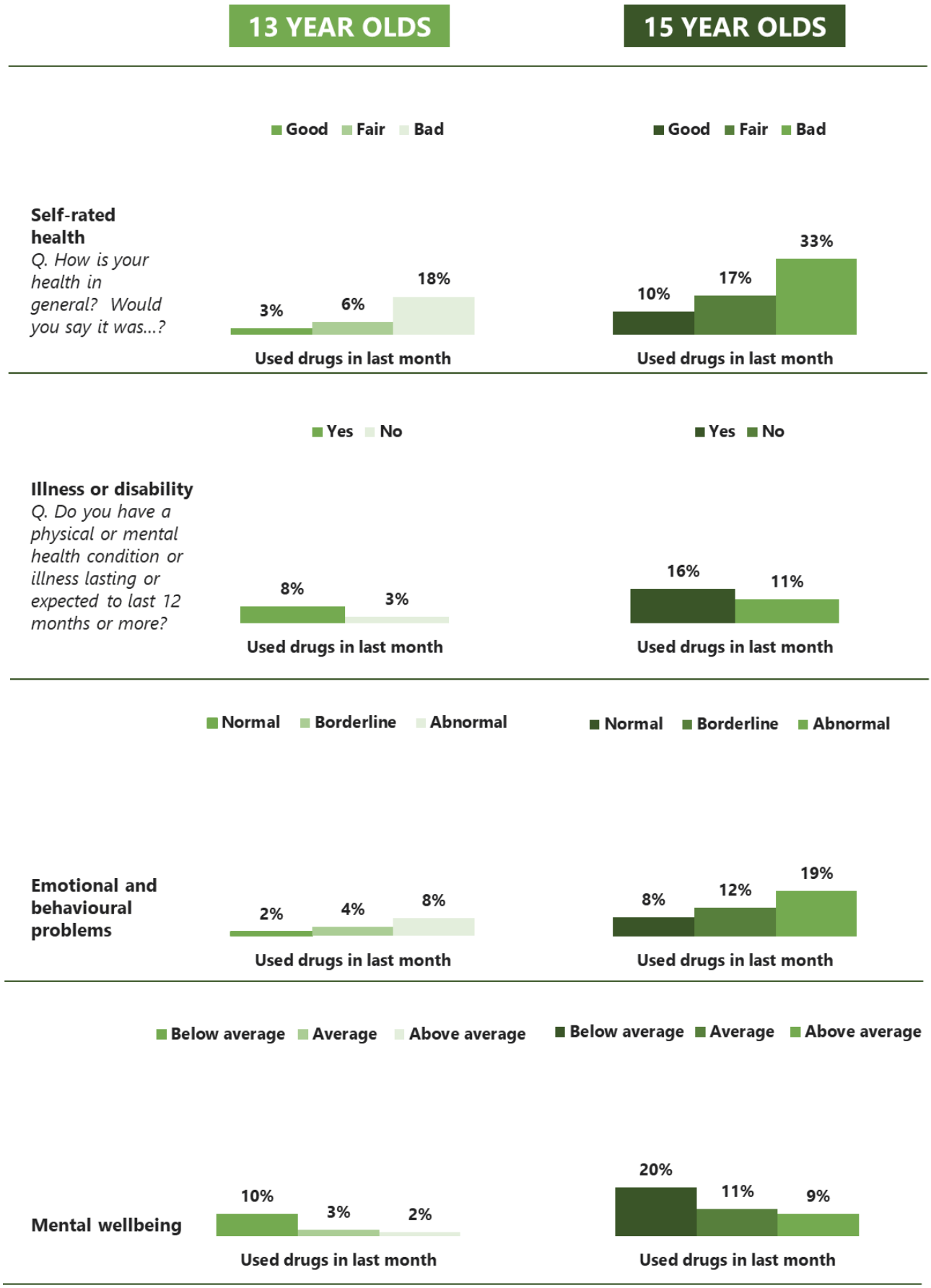
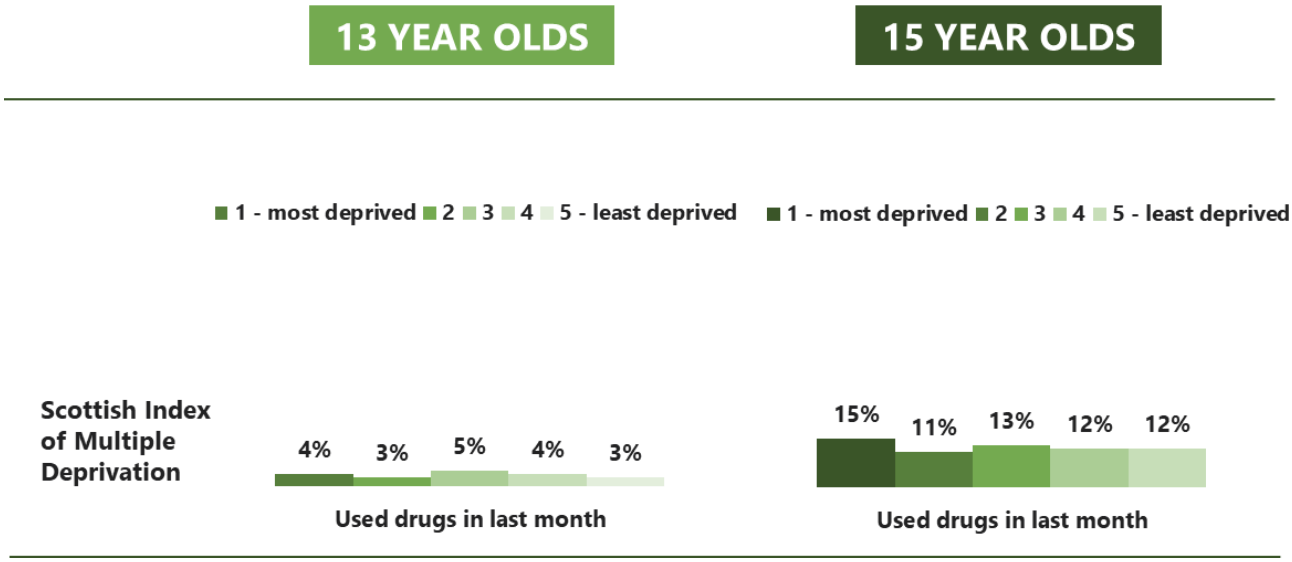


Figure 6.5 – continued – Comparison of prevalence of drug use, by inequalities and age (2018)



Base: all pupils (for full base sizes please see Appendix B)

Appendix A: Changes to the 2018 drug questions

No new drug questions were added to or removed from the 2018 survey.

The following were amended:

- For the questions ‘Have you ever been offered any of the following drugs?’ and ‘When was the last time you ever used or took any of the following?’, the names of the following drugs were updated (additions in bold):

    - Gas, Glue or other solvents (Tipp-Ex, lighter fuel, aerosols, NO, laughing gas, **nitrous oxide, noitrous or noz**) – To inhale or sniff
    - Tranquilisers (downers, benzos, Valium, vallies, blues, Temazepam, **Xanax, Xans**)

Appendix B: Base Tables

Table B.1 Bases for Figure 2.4 Proportion of pupils who had used drugs in the last month, by sex and age (1998-2018)

	All 13 year old boys	All 13 year old girls	All 15 year old boys	All 15 year old girls
1998	303	314	561	552
2000	624	582	592	571
2002	6027	6274	5278	5271
2004	1810	1736	1672	1742
2006	5821	5834	5649	5451
2008	2655	2710	2310	2337
2010	9788	9532	9118	8746
2013	8703	8657	8203	8047
2015	6209	6550	5496	5498
2018	5684	5634	4719	4844

Table B.2 Bases for Figure 2.6 Proportion of pupils who were drinking alcohol the last time they used drugs, by sex and age (2002-2018)

	13 year old boys who have ever used drugs	13 year old girls who have ever used drugs	15 year old boys who have ever used drugs	15 year old girls who have ever used drugs
2002	948	710	2013	1873
2004	268	210	568	595
2006	434	369	1458	1322
2008	189	147	581	501
2010	512	418	2076	1512
2013	419	322	1478	1260
2015	320	241	1056	803
2018	374	261	1079	811

Table B.3: Bases for Figure 3.1 Proportion of pupils ever offered drugs, by sex and age (1998-2018)

	All 13 year old boys	All 13 year old girls	All 15 year old boys	All 15 year old girls
1998	306	315	562	554
2000	619	577	593	570
2002	5862	6155	5242	5240
2004	1784	1732	1673	1732
2006	5573	5690	5484	5368
2008	2423	2584	2229	2301
2010	9081	9142	8761	8562
2013	8164	8322	7930	7894
2015	6325	6651	5625	5605
2018	5784	5750	4856	4948

Table B.4: Bases for Figure 3.5 Proportion of pupils who think it would be very or fairly easy to get drugs, by age and sex (2002-2018)

	All 13 year old boys	All 13 year old girls	All 15 year old boys	All 15 year old girls
2002	5808	6103	5202	5217
2004	1761	1708	1647	1731
2006	5405	5552	5339	5299
2008	2453	2572	2217	2278
2010	8885	8879	8534	8372
2013	8114	8276	7854	7822
2015	6097	6464	5446	5504
2018	5557	5605	4675	4853

Table B.5: Bases for Figure 4.1 Acceptability of trying cannabis, by age and gender (2006-2018)

	All 13 year old boys	All 13 year old girls	All 15 year old boys	All 15 year old girls
2006	5917	5900	5714	5491
2008	2655	2710	2310	2337
2010	9788	9532	9118	8746
2013	8703	8657	8203	8047
2015	6067	6463	5379	5449
2018	5522	5599	4618	4829

Table B.6: Bases for Figure 4.2 Acceptability of trying cocaine, by age and gender (2006-2018)

	All 13 year old boys	All 13 year old girls	All 15 year old boys	All 15 year old girls
2006	5917	5900	5714	5491
2008	2655	2710	2310	2337
2010	9788	9532	9118	8746
2013	8703	8657	8203	8047
2015	6068	6481	5371	5464
2018	5513	5595	4611	4829

Table B.7: Bases for Figure 4.3 Acceptability of trying glue sniffing, by age and gender (2006-2018)

	All 13 year old boys	All 13 year old girls	All 15 year old boys	All 15 year old girls
2006	5917	5900	5714	5491
2008	2655	2710	2310	2337
2010	9788	9532	9118	8746
2013	8703	8657	8203	8047
2015	6070	6481	5386	5457
2018	5524	5593	4617	4833

Table B.8: Bases for Figure 4.4 Pupils' perceptions of the risks of taking drugs, by age (2018)

	13 year olds	15 year olds
Heroin is addictive	11613	9984
Heroin is more dangerous than cannabis	11614	9987
Injecting drugs can lead to HIV	11599	9980
Injecting drugs can lead to Hepatitis C	11576	9967
Inhaling or sniffing solvents can cause brain damage	11583	9978
Taking cocaine is dangerous	11597	9968
Taking cannabis is dangerous	11560	9940

Table B.9: Bases for Figure 4.5 15 year old pupils' perceptions of the risks of taking drugs, by own drug use (2018)

	Used drugs in the last month	Never used drugs
Heroin is addictive	1238	7699
Heroin is more dangerous than cannabis	1234	7703
Injecting drugs can lead to HIV	1238	7692
Injecting drugs can lead to Hepatitis C	1231	7687
Inhaling or sniffing solvents can cause brain damage	1235	7695
Taking cocaine is dangerous	1236	7684
Taking cannabis is dangerous	1230	7660

Table B.10: Bases for Figure 4.6 15 year olds who think statements are true (2015 to 2018)

	2015	2018
Heroin is addictive	10904	9984
Heroin is more dangerous than cannabis	10903	9987
Injecting drugs can lead to HIV	10897	9980
Injecting drugs can lead to Hepatitis C	10884	9967
Inhaling or sniffing solvents can cause brain damage	10891	9978
Taking cocaine is dangerous	10894	9968
Taking cannabis is dangerous	10876	9940

Table B.11: Bases for Figure 4.7 Proportion of pupils agreeing with attitudes to drug taking statements, by age (2018)

	13 year olds	15 year olds
People my age who take drugs need help and advice	11517	9887
All people who sell drugs should be punished	11476	9859
People who take drugs are stupid	11427	9850
It is OK for people to take legal highs	11505	9883
Taking drugs is exciting	11521	9898

Table B.12: Bases for Figure 4.8 15 year old pupils' attitudes to drug taking by drug use status (2018)

	Used drugs in the last month	Never used drugs
People my age who take drugs need help and advice	1112	738
All people who sell drugs should be punished	1116	736
People who take drugs are stupid	1110	736
It is OK for people to take legal highs	1112	744
Taking drugs is exciting	1109	739

Table B.13: Bases for Figure 5.3 Comparison of prevalence of drug use among those who agree/disagree that their school provides them with enough advice and support about taking drugs (2018)

	13 year olds	15 year olds
Agree	7266	5784
Disagree	1515	1405

Table B.14: Bases for Figure 5.4 Amount learned about drugs at school, by age (2018)

	13 year olds	15 year olds
The risks to your health from drugs	10814	9370
The effects that taking drugs can have on other areas of your life	10812	9379
That your ability to make decisions can be affected by taking drugs	10790	9379
That people's views about smoking, drinking and taking drugs can be taking affected by the things their friends say or do	10782	9354

Table B.15: Bases for Figure 5.5 Comparison of prevalence of drug use among 15 year olds, by how much they say they have learned about drug topics in school (2018)

The risks to your health from drugs

	13 year olds	15 year olds
A lot	5927	4878
A little	2886	2909
Not much/not at all	1288	1129

The effects that taking drugs can have on other areas of your life

	13 year olds	15 year olds
A lot	5073	4143
A little	3182	3203
Not much/not at all	1613	1455

That your ability to make decisions can be affected by taking drugs

	13 year olds	15 year olds
A lot	4834	4155
A little	3208	3189
Not much/not at all	1743	1451

That people's views about smoking, drinking and taking drugs can be taking affected by the things their friends say or do

	13 year olds	15 year olds
A lot	4756	3886
A little	3335	3269
Not much/not at all	1567	1555

Table B16: Bases for Figure 5.6 Confidence in health and wellbeing choices, by age (2018)

	13 year olds	15 year olds
Having the information you need to make the right choices about your health and wellbeing	10859	9465
Saying no to doing something that you don't want to do	10847	9436
Knowing where to go for information and support about substance related issues	10822	9435
Avoid getting into risky situations due to drugs	10772	9384

Table B.17: Bases for Figure 5.7 Comparison of prevalence of drug use among 15 year olds, by confidence in future health and wellbeing choices (2018)

Having the information you need to make the right choices about your health and wellbeing

	13 year olds	15 year olds
Confident	9357	7943
Not very/not at all confident	630	801

Saying no to doing something that you don't want to do

	13 year olds	15 year olds
Confident	9290	8155
Not very/not at all confident	699	612

Knowing where to go for information and support about substance related issues

	13 year olds	15 year olds
Confident	8512	6972
Not very/not at all confident	1273	1639

Avoid getting into risky situations due to drugs

	13 year olds	15 year olds
Confident	9287	7950
Not very/not at all confident	500	637

Table B.18: Bases for Figure 6.1 Comparison of prevalence of drug use, by family variables (2018)

Family status

	13 year olds	15 year olds
Single parent	2089	1893
Step parent	907	874
Both parents	8001	6682

Maternal awareness

	13 year olds	15 year olds
Median and above	7338	5679
Below median	3893	3993

Paternal awareness

	13 year olds	15 year olds
Median and above	6367	4488
Below median	4380	4665

Family communication

	13 year olds	15 year olds
Likely to talk	9929	8186
Not likely to talk	1432	1514

Caring responsibilities

	13 year olds	15 year olds
Yes	1311	953
No	9846	8802

Table B.19: Bases for Figure 6.2 Comparison of prevalence of drug use, by friend variables (2018)

Number of friends

	13 year olds	15 year olds
0	248	328
1	343	380
2	1151	1271
3+	9332	7597

Age of friends

	13 year olds	15 year olds
Older	552	524
Younger	225	195
Same aged	7458	6283
Mixed	2872	2574

Number of evenings spent with friends

	13 year olds	15 year olds
None	1509	1301
1-2 evenings	3584	3581
3-4 evenings	3335	2852
5-6 evenings	1675	1064
7 evenings	640	552

Own cash to spend

	13 year olds	15 year olds
Less than £5 a week	2469	1509
£5 or more, but less than £20 a week	5763	4252
£20 or more a week	2761	3752

Table B.20: Bases for Figure 6.3 Percentage of 15 year old pupils reporting taking part in leisure activities at least weekly, by drug use status (2018)

	Used drugs in the last month	Never used drugs
Listen to music	1205	7659
Use social networking sites	1202	7651
See friends	1208	7655
Watch films	1198	7647
Go to a friend's house	1176	7581
Hang out in the street	1182	7588
Play computer games	1204	7645
Go to the shops	1199	7651
Do sports	1200	7629
Do nothing	1147	7424
Do a hobby	1173	7583
Watch sports	1199	7631
Go to the cinema	1179	7593
Read books	1202	7635
Volunteer	1174	7545
Go to a concert	1177	7589
Read magazines	1202	7634
Go to church	1170	7559
Go to the theatre	1175	7576
Go to the public library	1167	7577
Go to a museum	1172	7580

Table B.21: Bases for Figure 6.4 Comparison of prevalence of drug use, by school variables (2018)

How much do you like school at the moment?

	13 year olds	15 year olds
Like it a lot	1856	1038
Like it a bit	5308	4048
Not very much	2260	2540
Not at all	1487	1855

Feeling pressured by schoolwork

	13 year olds	15 year olds
Never	1593	576
Sometimes	6237	3487
A lot of the time	2974	5377

Exclusion

	13 year olds	15 year olds
Has been excluded	1365	1197
Has not been excluded	9267	8168

Truanting

	13 year olds	15 year olds
Not at all	5988	4600
1-3 times	3003	2611
4-10 times	991	1154
More than 10 times	579	899

Post-school expectations and age

	13 year olds	15 year olds
University	5978	4993
FE college	1263	1429
Apprenticeship	512	1073
Working	1114	811

Table B.22: Bases for Figure 6.5 Comparison of prevalence of drug use, by inequalities and geography variables (2018)

Self-rated health

	13 year olds	15 year olds
Very Good/Good	9610	7952
Fair	1705	1654
Bad/Very bad	301	374

Illness or disability

	13 year olds	15 year olds
Yes	1949	5140
No	8885	7274

Emotional and behavioural difficulties (overall SDQ score)

	13 year olds	15 year olds
Normal	6436	5351
Borderline	1695	1659
Abnormal	1878	1827

Mental wellbeing (WEMWBS Score)

	13 year olds	15 year olds
Below average	1271	5351
Average	1695	1659
Above average	1878	1827

SIMD Band

	13 year olds	15 year olds
1-most deprived	1568	1232
2	1952	1673
3	2406	2003
4	2912	2483
5- least deprived	2908	2677

Appendix C: Drugs categorised as NPS

The drugs that were included in the NPS analysis are listed below. This includes some substances which used to be described as ‘legal highs’ but which are now controlled, following the Psychoactive Substances Act 2016, which brought these substances under the control of the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971:

- Synthetic cannabis
- ‘MDAI, 6-APB (Benzo Fury), methylone (or other synthetic empathogen)’
- ‘MXE, MXP (or other synthetic dissociative)’
- ‘Ethylphenidate, MPA or branded packets such as Ching, Snow White, Blue stuff, Pink Panthers (or other synthetic stimulant)’
- ‘AMT, NBOMe, 2Cs (or other synthetic psychedelic)’
- Salvia.

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