

Community Development, Engagement
and Participation Academic Group

**The Word on the Street:
A Survey of the Needs, Attitudes and Behaviour of
Young People in Bournemouth, 2006**

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July 2007

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Executive Summary of Survey Findings

Profile of respondents

- The majority of respondents were aged 13–15 years.
- 63% of respondents were female.
- 95% were attending school.
- 87% of respondents described themselves as being white British. This compares with the 2001 census on the ethnicity of the British population in which 92% described themselves as being white British.

When the young people were asked about the areas in which they lived, Southbourne (13%) was most commonly cited. BH9 (Winton) was the most common postcode given. From the results, the young person most likely to have responded to this questionnaire was a 14-year-old girl living in the BH9 postcode area.

Living arrangements

- 97% of the respondents lived with their parents.
- 1.6% lived with other relatives.
- 75% of the sample lived with their families in owner-occupied accommodation (a reduction from 85% in 2000).

Those homeless, or living with friends, formed less than 0.5% of the sample.

Engagement with youth services

In all, 33% of respondents were members of a youth club or took part in organised activities for young people. This compares with 38% in 2000. This figure does not include sports or arts clubs. Other activities encompassed a wide range, but sports clubs, particularly football, predominated. Smaller numbers reported attending arts, dance and drama groups. The area with the highest rate for engagement with youth service provision was BH3 (53%), the lowest being BH12 (12%).

The most common reason given by those young people who did not attend any youth provision was that they 'preferred to do their own thing'. The fact that they 'did not have the time' was cited by 20% of the sample, that youth provision was 'not their scene' by 19%, and that their 'friends didn't go' by 16%. Some stated that they were unaware of what was available locally. These five reasons were also the most frequently chosen in the 2000 survey.

Spare time activities

The most common spare time activities were meeting friends (84%) and listening to music (70%). However, 64% watched TV, 53% chose doing homework and 49% listed going to the cinema. Sports were enjoyed

by 45% and playing video and computer games by 41%. School activities and doing art both scored 20%. When asked to list their own activities, the most popular was dancing.

Top of the list of what young people would like to do but might not have the time, money or opportunity, was listen to music (51%), followed by doing sports (48%), foreign exchange visits (33%), making music (25%), clubbing (29%), doing drama (22%) and being involved in arts and culture and in outdoor pursuits (both 22%). Thus, although the interest in sport might be expected, there is also demand for foreign exchanges and artistic activities.

Going clubbing was chosen by 22% of boys and 34% of girls, perhaps indicating that girls tend to adopt young adult behaviours at an earlier age. There was no difference between girls and boys in the desire to take part in outdoor pursuits or make music. However, more boys (62%) than girls (43%) wanted to engage in sports in their spare time.

Only 11% of the sample said that they had money worries that prevented them leading the life they wanted; 40% said they sometimes worried about money and 49% said that they had no money worries.

Topics young people would like information about

The job market (43%) and further and higher education (41%) were the two principal topics about which young people wanted more information. In the 2000 survey, these topics only achieved 10% and 17% respectively. These high figures suggest that information is not easily available to young people at an earlier age, and may be because young people feel increasing pressure to make the 'right' decisions.

The next most popular choices were clustered around health-related topics. Healthy eating was chosen by 25% followed by the broad topic of health, chosen by 22%. There was also some interest in eating disorders at 13%. This was followed by a second cluster around sexual health issues, with 18% wanting more information about pregnancy, 15% about sexually transmitted infections, 13% about HIV/AIDS and 12% about sexuality. The most popular areas among the other topics were bullying with 17% and IT with 14%.

When considering information needs by gender, there was a substantial gap regarding healthy eating, with 15% of boys compared with 56% of girls wanting more information. Eating disorders showed a similar pattern, with 6% of boys as opposed to 24% of girls wanting more information. This may illustrate the difficult and contradictory role that food plays in the lives of young women, as well as the difficulty of engaging young men in

healthy nutrition. Conversely, more boys wanted information about IT (24% versus 11%).

The most popular method that young people wanted for receiving this information was through their school or college (75%), with 34% opting for Connexions; 43% would like to receive information via newsletter, 44% via a website, 33% by email, 29% by local radio and 19% by text.

Young people's feelings of safety

In all, 27% of respondents reported that they felt very safe, 64% felt safe, 7% felt unsafe and 1.7% felt very unsafe. In the 2000 survey, 23% felt very safe, 59% quite safe and 15% quite unsafe. This shift in perceptions of safety, with 90% of the current sample feeling either safe or very safe, contradicts some current views about crime, neighbourhoods and young people. However, young people's perception of safety challenges the answers they gave to the questions concerning crime and anti-social behaviour (see below).

Among the young white British respondents, 92% felt safe or very safe, with 8% feeling unsafe or very unsafe. Among all other ethnic groups the figures were only slightly lower, with 89% feeling safe and 11% unsafe. Percentages for males and females were again very similar at less than 2% difference, with the girls feeling only slightly less safe.

Young people indicated that the issues that most concerned them were bullying (34%), theft (34%) and vandalism (31%). Gangs at 36% were also a major concern, although they are not necessarily illegal or criminal in nature. It was noticeable that the percentage of young people concerned about a wide range of crimes was much higher than that identified in the 2000 survey.

Experience of crime or anti-social behaviour

While young people were worried about crime, most had no personal experience of it. The most frequently experienced included bullying (9%), gangs (7%), and negative attitudes towards young people from adults (7%). It is interesting that, in addition to youth-on-youth crime, negative adult attitudes are perceived as one of the biggest problems young people face.

With regard to criminal activities, the highest incidence concerned theft (7.5%), mugging, and theft from a vehicle or bike (each with 4%). However, of those who had experienced an incident, only 37% had reported it. Those who did not report an incident gave a variety of reasons: 'it was too much trouble' (36%), 'didn't like the police' (20%), 'were frightened' (16%) and 'thought that the police wouldn't understand' (15%). Other reasons for not reporting incidents included the fact that the

activity, such as graffiti, was not a crime; that the police don't take much notice of little crimes; that they didn't think it was important enough; that someone else had reported it; or that they had informed the school or their parents. Ironically, given the low numbers reporting crime, many young people were satisfied with the way their complaint was handled; specifically, 11% were very satisfied, 53% satisfied, 22% dissatisfied and 14% very dissatisfied.

Safer neighbourhoods

With regard to activities and initiatives that might make their neighbourhood safer, young people preferred Neighbourhood Watch schemes (48%). Other ideas included more Community Support Officers (22%), more Anti-Social Behaviour Orders (ASBOs) (20%), more community initiatives (18%) and more alcohol-free zones (17%). However, 54% were unsure about whether ASBOs were effective.

Community cohesion

Young people were positive about community cohesion; 49% felt that people from different backgrounds got on well, 41% felt that they got on okay and 9.5% felt that they got on badly.

Services and community initiatives

Young people gave satisfaction rates to the following services:

- Education (63%)
- Health (53%)
- Connexions (47%)
- Police (45%)
- Youth Service (31%).

Those who attended youth service provision were more likely to rate the youth service as very good.

One of the reasons why the services received their ranking related to a sense of involvement. Schools were given the accolade of being the most democratic institutions, as 17% always felt able to influence school and 69% felt that they sometimes were. This compares with the overall figures whereby 6% of the young people felt that their opinion was always listened to by services, and 26% thought it never was.

Involvement in voluntary work

A total of 17% of young people were involved in voluntary work contrasting with 26% in 2000. It must be noted that many young people are engaged in groups that, although not specifically 'volunteering organisations', do include an element of voluntary activity. Indeed, 39% stated that they would like to volunteer compared with 26% in 2000 suggesting that opportunities for volunteering have declined. Increased regulations and risk assessments may make it harder for some young people to volunteer.

The most popular areas for volunteering were working with children, working with older people, working with the environment and working with homeless people.

Bournemouth public transport

The majority of young people (76%) were satisfied or very satisfied with Bournemouth public transport, representing a considerable increase in satisfaction since 2000. However, 12% of the sample stated that they never used it.

Alcohol consumption and illegal drug use

In all, 43% of the sample said that they drank alcohol. This included:

- 21% of 13-year-olds
- 36% of 14-year-olds
- 58% of 15-year-olds
- 69% of 16-year-olds
- 63% of 17-year-olds.

A further 5.3% reported taking illegal drugs. This comprised:

- 4% of 13-year-olds
- 5% of 14-year-olds
- 5.5% of 15-year-olds
- 11% of 16-year-olds
- 12.5% of 17-year-olds.

The figures for older teens are less reliable as they are drawn from a smaller sample. The data highlighted that 7% of boys and 5% of girls reported taking drugs.

Sexual activity

Almost a fifth (17.5%) of respondents said they were sexually active, with no difference between male and female respondents. This included:

- 5% of 13-year-olds
- 14% of 14-year-olds
- 24% of 15-year-olds
- 33% of 16-year-olds
- 53% of 17-year-olds.

Between the ages of 13–16 years, sexual activity increases by between 9–10% for each year.

Combined, 19% of teenagers living in BH1 and BH2 were sexually active. In East Cliff and Springbourne wards (BH8), 23% were sexually active (20% when data is aggregated with that from BH1), while the figures were 30% in BH10 (Kinson North) and 10% in BH11 (Kinson South). The reported rate in BH5 (Boscombe West) was 27%, while BH2 and BH3 (Westbourne and West Cliff) combined were 30%. The areas with higher

rates of sexual activity generally correlated with known teenage pregnancy hotspots.

Body image and exercise

When asked about their body image, the data show that 12% said they were very happy, 32% happy and 32% okay with it. However, 17% claimed to be unhappy and 4.5% very unhappy. Young males indicated greater satisfaction with their body image than young females (61% being very happy or happy with their body image compared with 36% of girls), while 10% of boys were unhappy or very unhappy with their body image compared with 29% of girls. A further 55% of respondents exercised regularly while 4.5% reported that they never exercised. The survey discovered that low rates of satisfaction with body image were matched by low numbers of those who exercised regularly.

Happiness with life in Bournemouth

The majority (71%) of those young people surveyed reported that they were either very happy or happy with life in Bournemouth. Interestingly, 27% of boys reported themselves as being very happy with their lives as opposed to 21% of girls.

Introduction

In 2006, Bournemouth Youth Service, Connexions and the Bournemouth Partnership decided to carry out a survey of young people's attitudes, opinions and behaviour so that they could improve the services they provide for young people in Bournemouth. This survey was carried out in conjunction with researchers from Bournemouth University's Community Development, Engagement and Participation Academic Group.

This survey follows two others carried out by Bournemouth Youth Service in 1997 and 2000. Sufficient similarities exist to draw broad comparisons between this data and the findings in 2000, and to gain some sense of how young people's attitudes and behaviours have changed during this time.

Methodology

There are around 12,000 young people of the target age group of 13–19 years in Bournemouth and it would not be feasible to ask all of them to fill in a questionnaire, so approximately 2,700 questionnaires were distributed to a sample of schools and providers of youth facilities. However, the number actually distributed to young people is likely to be lower than this, although it is not known by how many. A total of 730 questionnaires were completed and returned, representing a return rate of at least 27% of those distributed.

Young people were asked a range of questions covering a variety of topics including age, gender, location, spare time activities, membership of youth clubs and youth organisations, perceived power to influence institutions, whether they had experienced crime or were concerned about a particular type of crime and some more personal questions about their behaviour. The questionnaires were filled in anonymously and young people were assured that their answers to all questions would be treated as confidential; both for ethical reasons and to make it more likely that they felt able to answer the questions honestly.

A Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) spreadsheet was then set up and the data from each questionnaire entered on it. The results were then analysed using descriptive statistics and some cross tabulations where appropriate. SPSS was also used to produce the tables and charts in this report.

Report on the Main Findings

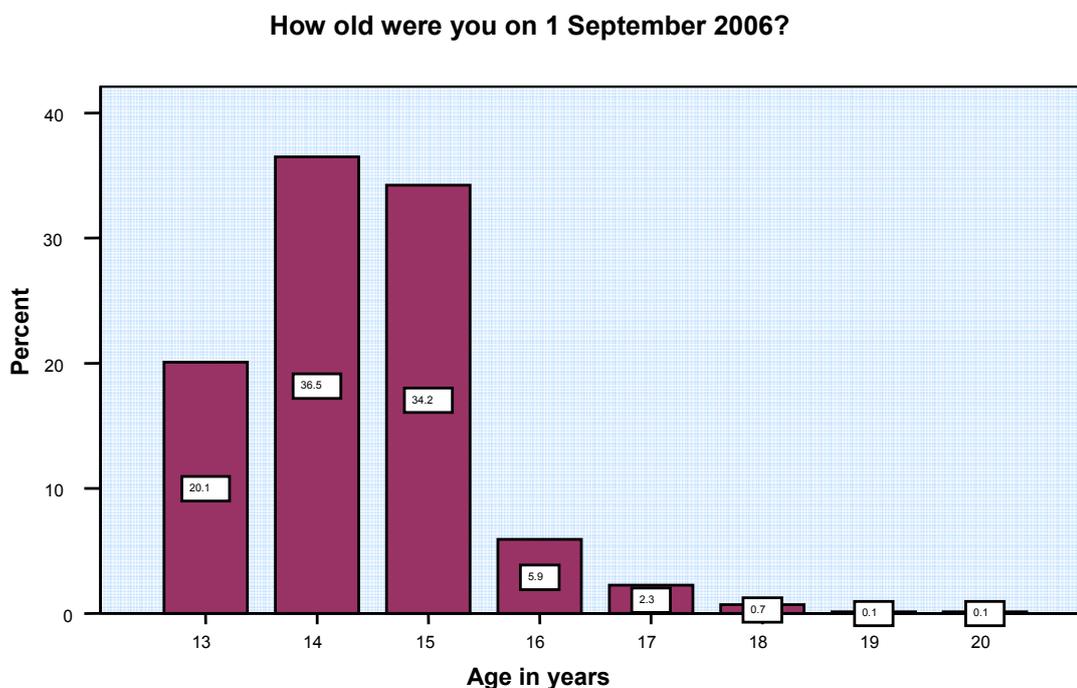
Profile of Respondents

Ages of the young people who responded to the survey

Figure 1 shows that the majority of respondents were aged 13, 14 or 15 on 1 September 2006, with a smaller percentage of 16-year-olds and smaller percentages still of 17, 18, 19 and 20-year-olds. As a consequence, the results of the survey predominately reflect the views and behaviour of 13, 14 and 15-year-olds, i.e. the younger end of the targeted age range. This can be explained by the fact that those are the ages at which young people are most likely to attend youth centres and when school attendance is compulsory, as these were the distribution points for the questionnaires.

Age and gender have subsequently been correlated with the responses to a number of other questions later in the survey to discover how young people's behaviour changes with age and also whether gender affects responses in a systematic way. However, separate responses from teenagers aged 18–20 have not been included in the further analysis of results as this sample size was too small to produce reliable results.

Figure 1. Ages of young people who responded to the survey



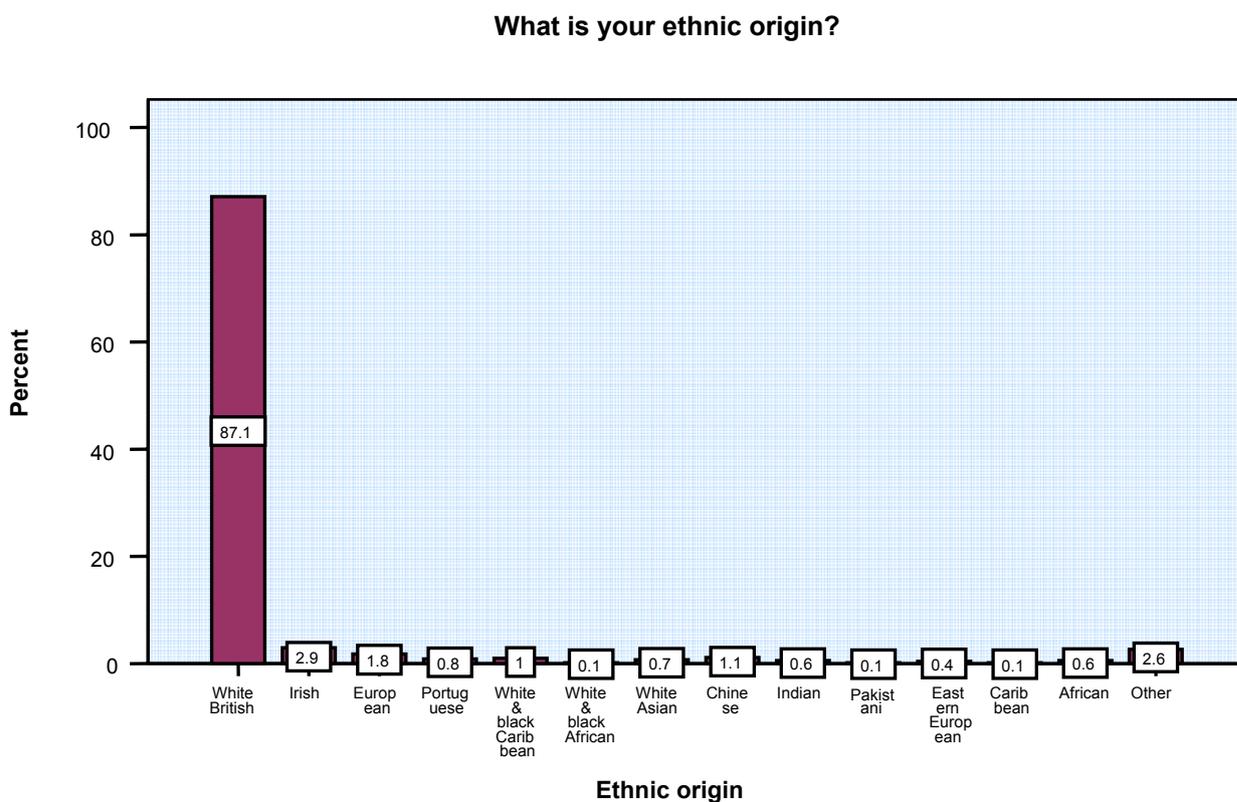
Gender

Just over one third (37%) of respondents were male and 63% were female. This means that 267 boys and 451 girls answered the survey (with 12 people who did not give their gender) providing a total of 730. In 2000, there was also a gender imbalance in favour of females, with males making up 41% of the sample and females 59%. In the current survey, questionnaires were distributed to both single and mixed sex schools so it appears that this gender imbalance in responses was caused by girls being more likely to fill in surveys than boys.

Ethnic origin

Around 87% of respondents described themselves as white British, with Irish and 'other' at 3% (Figure 2). 'Other' includes all ethnic origins not specifically included on the questionnaire, such as South African, mixed British/European and mixed Asian/British making up the majority of responses. European was the next most numerous category with 1.8% followed by Chinese. Other categories made up less than 1% each of the sample.

Figure 2. Ethnic origin of young people who responded to the survey



The 2001 census on the ethnicity of the British population as a whole found that 92% described themselves as white British, 7.9% were from a variety of non-white ethnic groups and 1% were white Irish. Findings from Population Estimates by Ethnic Group published in 2006 by the Office of National Statistics suggest that both the white British and white Irish populations have decreased in size since 2001 while black African and other white groups have made the largest contribution to the growth of ethnic minorities in the population as a whole. These findings indicate that the sample of young people in Bournemouth is broadly typical of the country as a whole in its ethnic composition.

Disability

A total of 3% of the sample reported that they had a disability and 1.4% that they were registered disabled.

Areas that young people reported they live in

When the young people were asked which areas they lived in, Southbourne with 13% was the most common choice. Other areas representing more than 4% of the total sample were: Ensbury Park and Christchurch each with 4%, and Winton, Moordown, Boscombe and Springbourne each with 5%. 'Bournemouth' scored 12% but it is not known if this was because a large number of students live in the town centre or because they chose a more general area to describe where they live. Altogether, 68 local neighbourhoods were used by respondents to describe where they live, showing the broad geographic area the young people who answered the survey came from.

Postcodes

The largest single area in which young people lived was BH9 (Winton) at just under 17%, followed by BH6 (Southbourne) on 12.5% (Table 1), with 10% of young people living in each of the BH8, BH10 and BH11 postcodes. The table below gives all postcodes in which 1% or more of the sample of young people lived as well as their description of the area in which they lived.

The profile of the young person most likely to have responded to this questionnaire is thus a 14-year-old girl living in the BH9 postcode area.

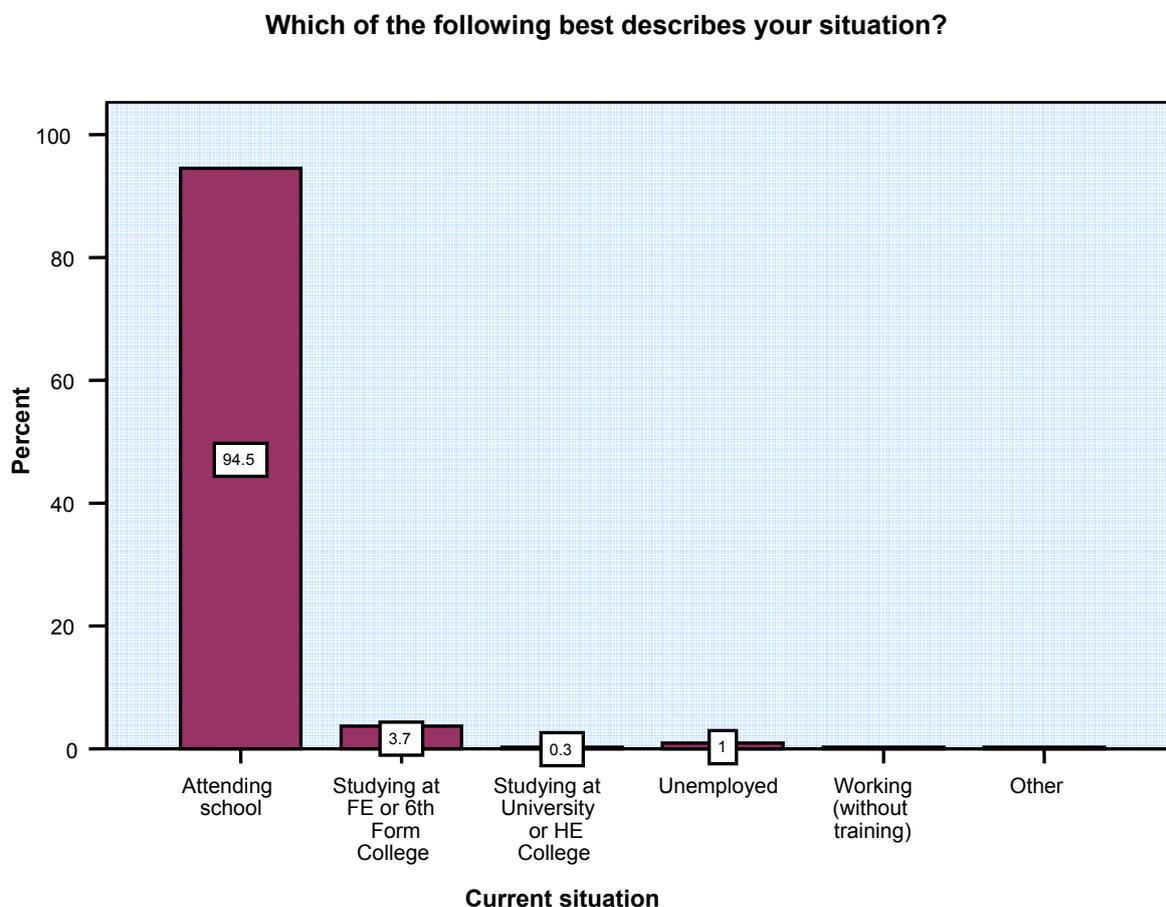
Table 1. Areas where the young people who responded to the survey lived

Postcode	Home area	%	No.
BH1	Springbourne/ Boscombe	7.5	55
BH3	Springbourne	2.2	16
BH5	Tuckton/Pokesdown	3.6	26
BH6	Southbourne/Tuckton Boscombe East	12.5	91
BH7	Littledown/Pokesdown Iford	6.7	49
BH8	Queen's Park Townsend Castlepoint	9.7	71
BH9	Winton/Moordown Charminster/Muscliffe	16.6	121
BH10	Ensburry Park Northbourne/Kinson/ West Howe	10.3	75
BH11	Bear Cross/Kinson/ West Howe	9.9	72
BH12	Branksome/Parkstone	2.5	18
BH21	Wimborne	1.0	7
BH22	Ferndown	1.2	9
BH23	Christchurch/Highcliffe	6.2	45
BH25	New Milton/Barton on Sea	1.0	7
SO41	Lymington	1.2	9

Educational status

The majority (95%) of young people were attending school, which would be expected given the age of the respondents (Figure 3). Almost 4% were in further education/sixth form college and the other categories represented less than 1% of responses each. In 2000, 90% of respondents were at school and 9% in further education or sixth form college, suggesting that the 2006 sample is younger than that of 2000.

Figure 3. Educational status of the young people who responded to the survey



Living arrangements

Most of the teenagers (97%) lived with their parents and 1.6% with relatives. Any other arrangements such as being homeless or living with friends formed less than 0.5% of the sample. This is likely to be a reflection of the age profile and life stage of those who took part, i.e. predominantly under-16s who would be much less likely to leave home than older teenagers. We therefore recommend that targeted research be carried out with 16–19-year-olds to gain similar information to that requested here. This will help establish a more complete picture of how young people's accommodation needs develop through their teenage years.

The survey found that 75% of young people lived with their families in owner-occupied accommodation. This is a reduction from 85% in 2000, perhaps reflecting the recent rapid rise in house prices which incomes in the area have not kept pace with, resulting in fewer local families buying their own home. The majority (60%) of those who rented in 2006 did so from the local authority or a housing association, while 28% rented from a private landlord and 12% had other arrangements.

Spare Time Activities

Membership of youth organisations

A third (33%) of the young people responding were members of a youth club or took part in organised activities for young people. This compares with 38% in 2000 and does not include sports or arts clubs. The contact ratio for the youth service in 2006/07, as measured by the Electronic Youth Service Database, was 35% of the 13–19 age group, 10% above the government set target of 25%. The current membership or attendance was much wider than youth clubs/centres alone and it is not known how many actually attended such a centre. Approximately 60 young people (8% of the total) said they attended one of the Bournemouth Youth Service-run youth clubs, the Urbie bus or Urban Detached Team or were a member of Bournemouth Youth Council. However, this figure is likely to be an underestimate because the young people were asked to write which facility they attended and not all did so.

Other activities enjoyed by the young people encompassed a wide range but one in which sports clubs, particularly football, predominated. These activities included ten football clubs, four youth army groups, scouts and guides, a variety of church youth groups, Duke of Edinburgh award schemes and a number of different sports clubs including those dedicated to sailing, cricket and rugby. A much smaller number of young people, around ten, reported attending arts, dance and drama groups.

When participation was analysed by postcode, a considerable variation between postcodes was found as shown in Table 2 of all postcodes in which more than 7 (or 1%) of the young people lived. The highest rate for engagement with youth provision was BH3 with 53% and the lowest was BH12 with 12%. However, neither of these were areas in which many of the young people who responded to the survey lived, representing only eight young people in BH3 and two in BH12. In the two postcodes in which the majority of young people lived, variation was also found, with 46 (38%) of young people in BH9 engaging with youth provision, while only 22 (24%) in BH6 did so.

Table 2. Cross tabulation comparison of membership of youth organisation with postcode

What is your postcode?	Are you a member of any youth centre or youth organisation?		Total
	Number responding Yes	Number responding No	
BH1	21	34	55
BH3	8	7	15
BH5	5	20	25
BH6	22	69	91
BH7	16	33	49
BH8	26	44	70
BH9	46	74	120
BH10	20	54	74
BH11	29	42	71
BH12	2	15	17
BH21	4	3	7
BH22	5	4	9
BH23	15	27	42
SO41	2	7	9
BH25	2	5	7
Total	233	454	687

Reasons given for not attending youth provision

The most common reason given by those young people who did not attend any youth provision was that they preferred to do their own thing, which was cited by 246 young people or 34% of the group. The fact that they did not have the time was cited by 20% of that group, that youth provision was not their scene by 19%, and that their friends didn't go was cited by 16%. In their qualitative responses, some also said that they didn't know where they might go. These results are similar to those found in the 2000 survey where these reasons were also the most frequently chosen.

Young people's current spare time activities

The most common spare time activities were meeting friends with 84% and listening to music with 70%; 64% watched TV, 53% did their homework and 49% went to the cinema. Sports were enjoyed by 45% and playing video and computer games by 41%. School activities and doing art both scored 20%. When asked to supply their own categories for what they did in their spare time, the most popular activity given by

the young people was dancing with 23 responses, followed by shopping with 8, looking after/riding my horse with 7, reading and drinking/hanging round with friends both with 6, and working with 5 responses.

What young people would like to do in their spare time

Top of the list of what young people would like to do but might not have the time, money or opportunity to do at present was listen to music (51%), followed by doing sports (48%), going on a foreign exchange visit (33%), clubbing (29%) and making music (25%), with drama, being involved in arts and culture, and outdoor pursuits all on 22%. Thus, although the interest in sport might be expected, there is also a demand for foreign exchange and artistic activities.

Further analysis in some cases showed unexpected gender differences in what young people would like to do while in others there was no difference between the genders. This information may be important to those planning future activities for young people, either in targeting them to better meet existing demand or in considering how to make these activities equally attractive to both genders.

Going clubbing was chosen by 22% of boys and 34% of girls, perhaps indicating that girls tend to adopt young adult behaviours at a younger age than boys. There was no difference between the genders in the wish to take part in outdoor pursuits or make music. However, 42% of girls said they would like to go on foreign exchange visits compared with 26% of boys, and 26% of girls would like to be involved in arts and culture compared with 15% of boys; 29% of girls compared with 10% of boys wanted to do drama. Conversely, more boys (62%) than girls (43%) in our sample wanted to engage in sports in their spare time although, because the sample included more girls than boys, the absolute numbers were 156 boys and 191 girls wanting to engage in sports.

When asked to write what they would be interested in doing, dancing was again the top choice with nine young people choosing this. All other activities were only cited by one person and covered a wide range, from activity clubs through ceramics to free running. One person commented rather plaintively that they would be interested in doing 'everything but have no money'.

Financial Situation

Young people in Bournemouth appear to be quite affluent, with only 11% saying that they had money worries which prevented them leading the life they wanted; 40% said they sometimes worried about money and 49% said that they had no money worries.

Main topic areas young people would like information about

The two principal topics that young people said they would like more information about were areas that directly concerned their immediate future: further and higher education and the job market. These were selected by 41% and 43% respectively and were chosen more than any other issue. This high level of demand suggests that currently such information may not be readily available to young people at an early enough age. In the 2000 survey, these figures were 17% and 10% respectively. Although in that survey respondents were asked to pick their top five, this difference should not affect the highest rated topics significantly, and may suggest an awareness of increasing competition for the best higher education places and jobs. Young people may also feel increasing pressure in these areas to make the 'right' decision. The marked and recent predominance of these issues also suggests that other issues may be being pushed out of young people's consciousness and that a more individualistic culture is emerging, as many commentators have suggested.

The next most popular choices were shown by a cluster of interest around health topics. Healthy eating was chosen by 25% followed by the broad topic of health, chosen by 22%. There was also some interest in eating disorders at 13%. This was followed by a second cluster of interest around sexual health issues with 18% wanting more information about pregnancy, 15% about sexually transmitted infections, 13% about HIV/AIDS and 12% about sexuality. The most popular among the other topics were bullying, with 17% of the young people wanting more information, and IT (14%).

Some interesting findings emerged following analysis of information needs according to gender. There was a substantial gap between the genders regarding healthy eating, where only 15% of boys compared with 56% of girls wanted more information. Eating disorders showed a similar pattern, with 6% of boys and 24% of girls wanting more information. This shows both the positive and negative aspects of girls' greater engagement and interest in food issues, as well as the difficulty of engaging boys in healthy nutrition, which is an important topic for their future health and well-being. Conversely, more boys than girls wanted information about IT (24% versus 11%).

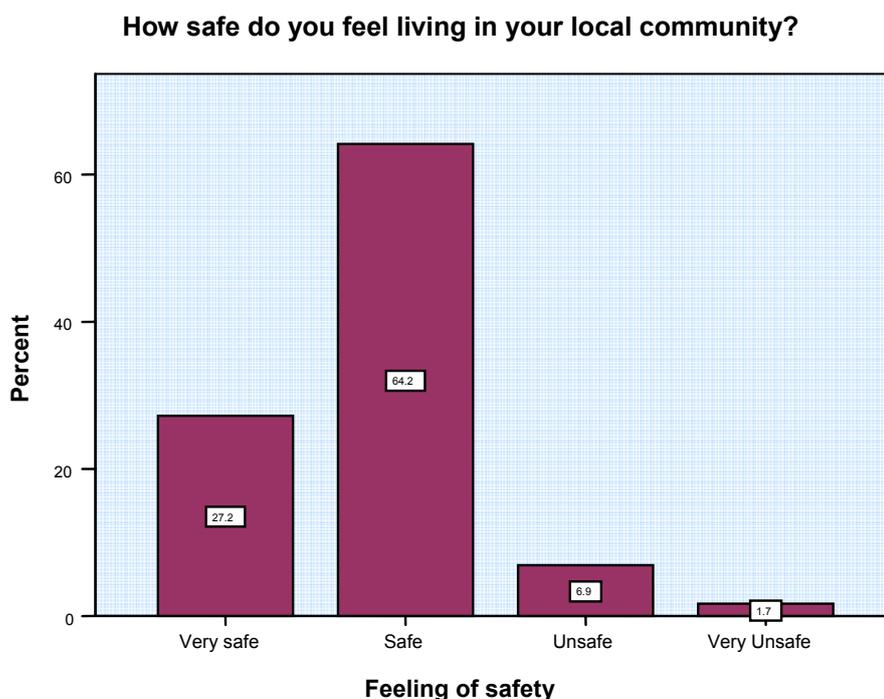
The implications of young people wanting more information about these topics also need to be considered – it may imply that such information will be acted on and used to change behaviour, particularly if it is available at an appropriate time in young people's personal and social development.

Crime and Anti-social Behaviour

Safety

As Figure 4 demonstrates, 27% of the young people who answered this question reported that they felt very safe, while 64% felt safe, 7% unsafe and 1.7% very unsafe. A few reported that they felt safe during the day but not at night. These figures compare with the 2000 survey in which 23% felt very safe, 59% quite safe and 15% quite unsafe. This small increase in perceptions of safety, with 90% of the current sample feeling either safe or very safe, is at odds with the popular view expounded in the press that neighbourhoods in general and young people in particular are becoming less safe. However, this perception somewhat contradicts the answers young people gave later to the questions about their concerns with and experience of crime and anti-social behaviour.

Figure 4. Young people's feelings of safety



Feeling safe: ethnic origin and gender

The majority (92%) of the young white British respondents felt safe or very safe, with 8% feeling unsafe or very unsafe. Among all other ethnic groups, the figures were only slightly different, with 89% feeling safe and 11% unsafe. Percentages for males and females were again similar (less than 2% difference between the genders), with girls feeling only slightly less safe than boys. These figures demonstrate that factors such as gender and ethnic origin make little difference to teenagers' feelings of safety in their neighbourhood.

Concerns about crime and anti-social behaviour

Young people were asked a number of questions about aspects of life in their community that might give them cause for concern. This included criminal activities as well as anti-social behaviour that may not be criminal in itself and interpersonal behaviours such as bullying.

Young people indicated that the issues they were most concerned about were vandalism (31%) and theft (34%). A number of questions were asked in this section of the survey about different sorts of theft e.g. of a mobile phone, from a vehicle, burglary or generally, so added together this represented a major concern. Drink driving, sexual assault and abduction were each indicated as concerns by around 21% of the sample.

Of the activities that were not necessarily classed as criminal, gangs at 36% and bullying at 34% were the main issues. Concern about graffiti was expressed by around 20% of the young people. Other issues mentioned were 'chavs' and 'driving too fast'. It was noticeable that, when compared with the 2000 survey, the percentage of young people who were concerned about a wide range of crimes was much higher.

Experience of anti-social behaviour

The number of young people who had actually experienced crime or anti-social behaviour was considerably lower than for those who were concerned about such behaviours. This lends some support to the theory that fear of crime is disproportionate to the likelihood of experiencing it.

It was noticeable that there were a few young people who had experienced many different types of criminal and anti-social behaviour while many others reported no adverse experiences at all. Since the percentages and numbers given below represent incidents rather than individuals, it is not possible to say how many individuals in total have been affected by crime or anti-social behaviour.

The highest rates for young people's experience of these activities were for bullying (9%) and gangs and negative attitudes towards young people from adults both 7%. Three of the highest reported rates are thus for non-criminal activity and it is interesting that negative adult attitudes are perceived by young people as one of their biggest problems. Being a member of a gang is not a criminal offence although it may make committing, being involved in or even being unjustly accused of a criminal offence, more likely. Adults and young people alike may find certain groups of young people threatening even when they do not constitute a gang in any meaningful sense of the word.

Harassment, experienced by 36 or 5% of young people, and graffiti, by 29 or 4%, also fall into the broad category of anti-social behaviour that

can make living in an area much more challenging for all residents, including young people.

Experience of criminal activities

Of the clearly criminal activities, the highest reported incidence was for theft, with 55 (7.5%) young people reporting this. There were 30 reported instances each of mugging and theft from a vehicle or bike, which is 4% of the young people who answered the questionnaire. In the 2000 survey, 13% of the sample reported that in the past 12 months they had been a victim of crime which they had reported, and a further 10% had been a victim and not reported it.

Numbers who reported the incident to the police

The figures for this question are somewhat difficult to interpret, but of the 368 young people who said they had experienced an incident, 137 or 37% said they had reported it and 231 or 63% said they had not. However, as will become clearer in the answers young people gave to the next question, some of these incidents would not be covered by criminal law and so reporting them to the police might not be appropriate.

Reasons given by young people for not reporting the incident

Of those 231 young people who had experienced an incident but did not report it to the police, the main reasons given are shown in Table 3

Table 3. Reasons given for not reporting incidents to the police

Response	%	No.
It was too much trouble	36%	79
They didn't like the police	20%	43
They were frightened	16%	35
The police wouldn't understand	15%	33
They didn't know where to go	10%	21
There was pressure from others not to	7%	16
They'd had a bad experience before	6%	14

N.B. The young people could tick as many as they wished of the options presented so percentages may add up to more than 100.

Other reasons for not reporting incidents were cited by 36% of those who had experienced an incident. These included the fact that the activity, such as graffiti, was not a crime (or not perceived as a crime; graffiti may be classified legally as criminal damage); that the police don't take much notice of little crimes; that they didn't think it was important enough; that someone else had reported it; or that they had informed the school or their parents.

Satisfaction with the way the complaint was dealt with by the police

As we have seen, 37% of the young people who had experienced an incident said they had reported it to the police. Of these, 11% said they were very satisfied, 53% satisfied, 22% dissatisfied and 14% very dissatisfied with the way their complaint was dealt with.

Safer neighbourhoods

The preference among young people for activities and initiatives that would make their neighbourhood safer was for Neighbourhood Watch schemes, which were chosen by 48% or 352 young people. Since young people support these schemes, it might be helpful if police and families could involve young people in them more actively. However, the other options were also chosen by a substantial number of the young people who responded to the survey, including 22% who wanted more Community Support Officers, 20% who wanted more ASBOs, 18% who wanted more community initiatives and 17% who wanted more alcohol-free zones, showing that these would also receive substantial support.

The effectiveness of ASBOs in treating anti-social behaviour

The majority (54%) of young people were unsure about whether ASBOs were effective, while 24% thought they were effective or very effective and 21% thought they were ineffective or very ineffective. This is not a resounding vote of confidence from young people themselves about this well-publicised Home Office initiative.

Community and Services

Community cohesion

Around half (49%) of the respondents felt that people from different backgrounds got on well in their community, 41% thought they got on okay and 9.5% thought they got on badly. Respondents may have interpreted the term 'different backgrounds' used in the question in various ways to indicate differences in class, race or membership of a particular youth subculture, but it is encouraging that less than 10% felt that any of these different groups got on badly.

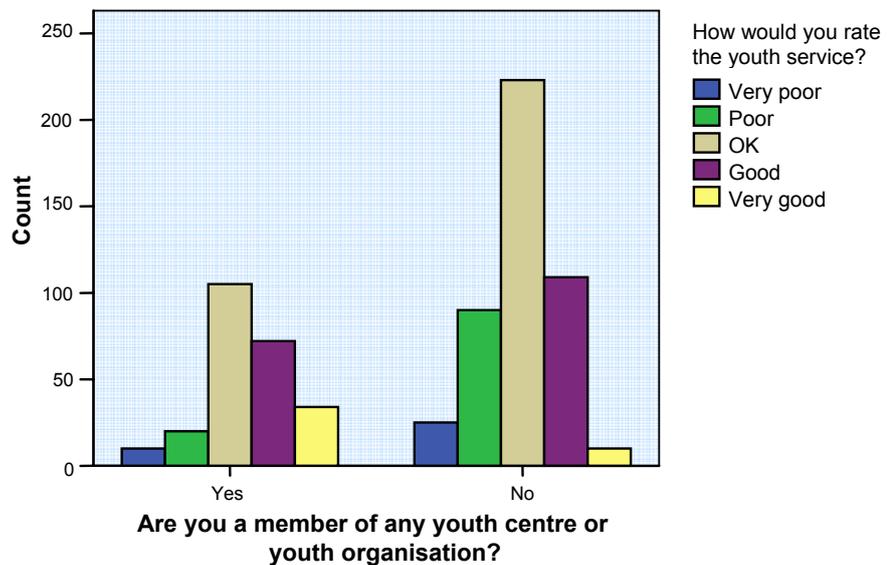
Ratings of services

Education was the service that received the highest satisfaction rating from young people, with 63% rating it as good or very good (referred to here as a positive rating and arrived at by adding the scores for these two categories together); 53% rated health, 47% Connexions, 45% the police, 31% the youth service and 26% rated community initiatives positively.

When the results for those who attended youth provision alone were analysed, a more positive result was obtained. Figure 5 shows that those who actually attended any youth provision were more likely to rate the youth service as very good than those who did not attend. They were

also less likely to rate it as poor or very poor. It appears that those who did not have first-hand knowledge of the youth service provision were likely to rate it in a more neutral way, such as okay or good. Similarly, many young people may not have been involved in any community initiatives if none have taken place in their area and their responses to the question about community involvement or lack of it suggests this may be the case. This may account for the relatively low approval rating given to community initiatives.

Figure 5. Comparison of attendance at youth facilities with ratings of the youth service



N.B. The answers Yes and No in the bar chart above refer to each cluster of five possible ratings and not just the central bar.

Perceived ability of young people to influence services

Only 6% of the young people felt that their opinion was always listened to by the services mentioned above; 64% felt that it was sometimes and 26% thought it never was. A total of 17% always felt able to influence school and 69% felt they were sometimes able to, giving schools the accolade of being the most democratic institutions that young people come into contact with. Figures for being able to influence what happened at work were that 13% felt they always were, 52% felt they sometimes were and 35% that they never were.

Ability of young people to influence their neighbourhood

Only 2% of young people said that they thought they could always influence what happened in their neighbourhood; 15% said they could usually, 35% sometimes and 45% thought they never could. These low figures for perceived influence suggest that ways should be found of

engaging young people with the planning and decision-making processes in their local area and that these processes should become more locally based and accountable. Young people feeling that they have no influence at this stage in their lives is likely to lead to disengagement from their local community and them not bothering to vote in local elections, etc.

Preferences for receiving information about employment, training and education

The most popular method for receiving information about employment, training and education was from schools and colleges, with 75% of young people choosing this option. However, most of the other options suggested also received substantial support, indicating that using a wide variety of sources to communicate such information would be of benefit to young people: 43% would like to receive this information via newsletter, 44% via a website, 34% would like it from Connexions, 33% by email, 29% by local radio and 19% by text.

Current and future involvement in voluntary work

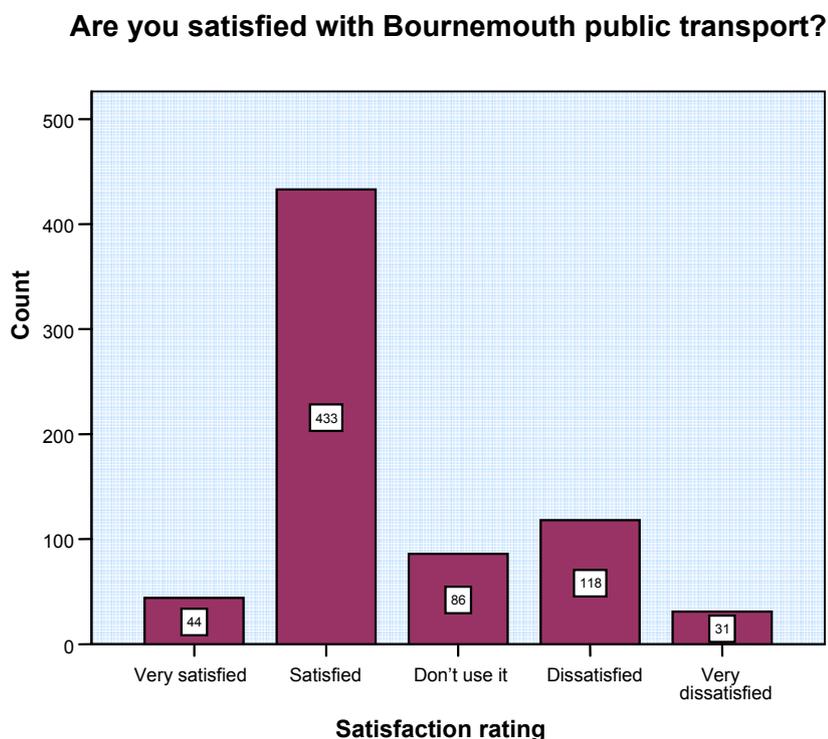
Less than a fifth (17%) of the young people reported that they were currently involved in voluntary work compared with 26% in 2000. However, 39% of the current survey said that they would like to volunteer compared with only 26% in 2000. These figures may suggest that opportunities for volunteering have declined and possibly that increased regulations and risk assessments now make it harder for this under-16 age group to volunteer. There may be other reasons why fewer young people are volunteering, and we can speculate about what these might be. However, there does appear to be considerable untapped demand and the potential to expand and publicise the voluntary opportunities available for younger teenagers, since most government initiatives appear to focus on encouraging volunteering in the post-16 age group.

When analysed by gender, little difference was found between the number of boys who volunteered (16%) and the number of girls who did so (18%). However, an interesting finding was that only 24% of boys would like to volunteer as opposed to 49% of girls. This might be explained by the subsequent finding that the most popular choice for volunteering was working with children, with 40% of our sample choosing this option. It might also be that some interpreted the question as wanting to work with children as a career. Of the other responses, 10% of young people wanted to do voluntary work with elderly people, 17% with the environment and 10% with homeless people.

Satisfaction with Bournemouth public transport

The majority of young people were satisfied with Bournemouth public transport although 12% said they never used it. When these responses were removed, the percentages were that 76% of young people were satisfied or very satisfied and 24% were dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with public transport in Bournemouth. The question in the 2000 survey was posed in a different form but satisfaction appears to have increased considerably since then. Figure 6 gives the numbers of young people and their satisfaction rating.

Figure 6. Young people's satisfaction with Bournemouth public transport

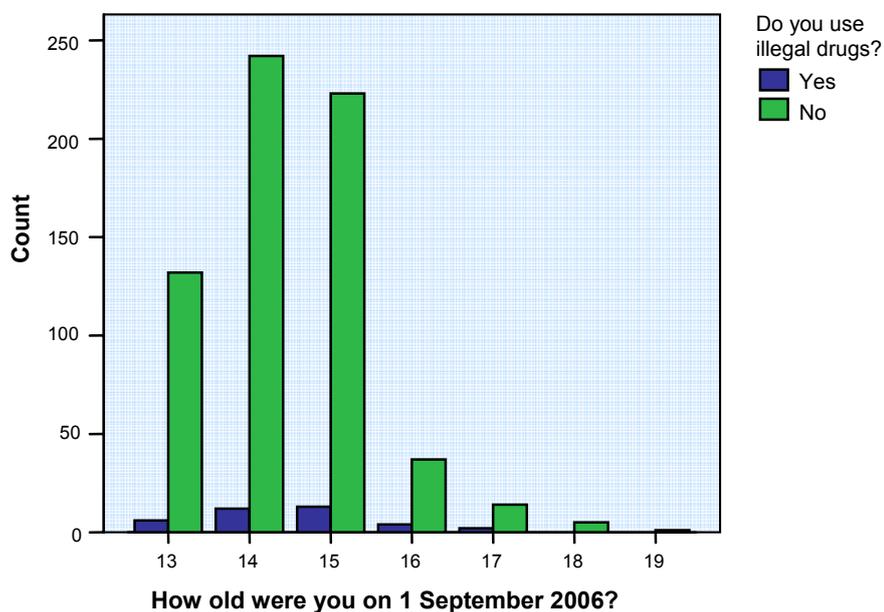


Health and Well-being

Age, gender and illegal drug use

Over 5% of the sample reported that they took illegal drugs. Figure 7 shows the number of teenagers in each age category that took illegal drugs. Only 4% of 13-year-olds, 5% of 14-year-olds and 5.5% of 15-year-olds reported taking illegal drugs. The figures were higher among older teenagers, with 11% of 16-year-olds and 12.5% of 17-year-olds reporting taking illegal drugs. However, these figures for older teens are less reliable because they are drawn from a smaller sample than that for the three younger age groups. It could be that the number of young people who have tried illegal drugs on a one-off basis is higher than these figures suggest.

Figure 7. Use of illegal drugs compared with the ages of the young people who responded to the survey



Little difference was found when the data were analysed by gender, with 7% of boys and 5% of girls reporting taking drugs. However, analysis by postcode found marked differences between areas. BH3 had the highest rate with 19% of those who live in this postcode taking illegal drugs (although this only represented three people out of 16) and in BH5 the figure was 15% (four people out of 26). Conversely, 86 young people lived in BH6, none of whom took drugs. The figures were 2% in BH23 and 4% in BH9 where 121 young people lived. Further details are provided in Table 4 which gives all postcodes in which more than five young people lived.

Table 4. Cross tabulation comparison of postcode with use of illegal drugs

What is your postcode?	Young people who take illegal drugs		Total
	No.	%	
BH1	4	7%	54
BH2	1	17%	6
BH3	3	19%	16
BH4	0	0%	6
BH5	4	15%	26
BH6	0	0%	86
BH7	1	2%	46
BH8	4	6%	70
BH9	5	4%	121
BH10	6	8%	73
BH11	3	4%	70
BH12	0	0%	17
BH21	0	0%	7
BH22	0	0%	9
BH23	1	2%	44
SO41	0	0%	9
BH25	0	0%	7
BH31	0	0%	5
Total	33		682

Age, gender and sexual activity

Just over 17% of the sample said that they were sexually active and there were no differences between male and female responses in this respect. The data showed that 5% of 13-year-olds, 14% of 14-year-olds and 24% of 15-year-olds were sexually active. In the smaller numbers of older teenagers, 33% of 16-year-olds reported they were sexually active and 53% of 17-year-olds. There is therefore a steady increase with age, with an extra 10% of teenagers becoming sexually active for every additional year of age up to 16.

Rates of sexual activity analysed by postcode

Cross tabulations were also carried out relating postcodes to particular responses, including sexual activity, to discover if the results correlate with the wards within Bournemouth which have higher rates of teenage pregnancy. Wards often cover more than one postcode so both are included. When the figures for BH1 and BH2 (central ward) are combined, 19% of teenagers living in those areas said they were sexually active. In East Cliff and Springbourne wards (BH8), the rate was 23%

(20% when the figures are aggregated with those from BH1), 30% in BH10 (Kinson North) but only 10% in BH11 (Kinson South). The reported rate in BH5 (Boscombe West) was 27% while BH2 and BH3 (Westbourne and West Cliff) together were 30%. The finding was that higher reported rates of sexual activity generally correlated with the known teenage pregnancy hotspots.

Age, gender and alcohol consumption

Of the young people who responded to the survey, 40% said they drank alcohol. No gender differences were found between the behaviour of boys and girls. When the figures were analysed according to the age of the respondents, 21% of 13-year-olds, 36% of 14-year-olds, 58% of 15-year-olds, 69% of 16-year-olds and 63% of 17-year-olds reported that they drank alcohol. Thus, when it comes to what are considered the three categories of risky behaviour for under-16s (alcohol use, illegal drugs and sexual activity), alcohol use is by far the most prevalent.

Patterns of alcohol consumption

Most of those young people who said they drank alcohol predominately drank it on Fridays and Saturdays. This represents 30% and 32.5% respectively of the total number of young people who responded to the survey. Sunday was the next most popular day for drinking with 8% of the total, which might have implications for the young people's concentration at school the next day. On other weekdays (Monday to Thursday), only between 3% and 4% of the total number of young people in the survey drank, or between 7% and 9% of those who reported that they drank. However, it is not possible to deduce from the survey findings individual patterns of alcohol consumption so we don't know if some of the same young people who drink at the weekends also drink on week nights, although this would be a reasonable assumption to make.

Happiness with body image

In total, 12% of young people said they were very happy with their body image and 32% happy, while 32% were okay with it, 17% unhappy with it and 4.5% very unhappy.

Body image and gender

When analysed separately for males and females, the data on body image reveal that young males are generally much more satisfied with their body image than young females; 61% of boys said they were very happy or happy with their body image compared with 36% of girls, while 29% of boys and 35% of girls said they were okay with their body image. Only 10% of boys said they were unhappy or very unhappy with their body image while 29% of girls said they were.

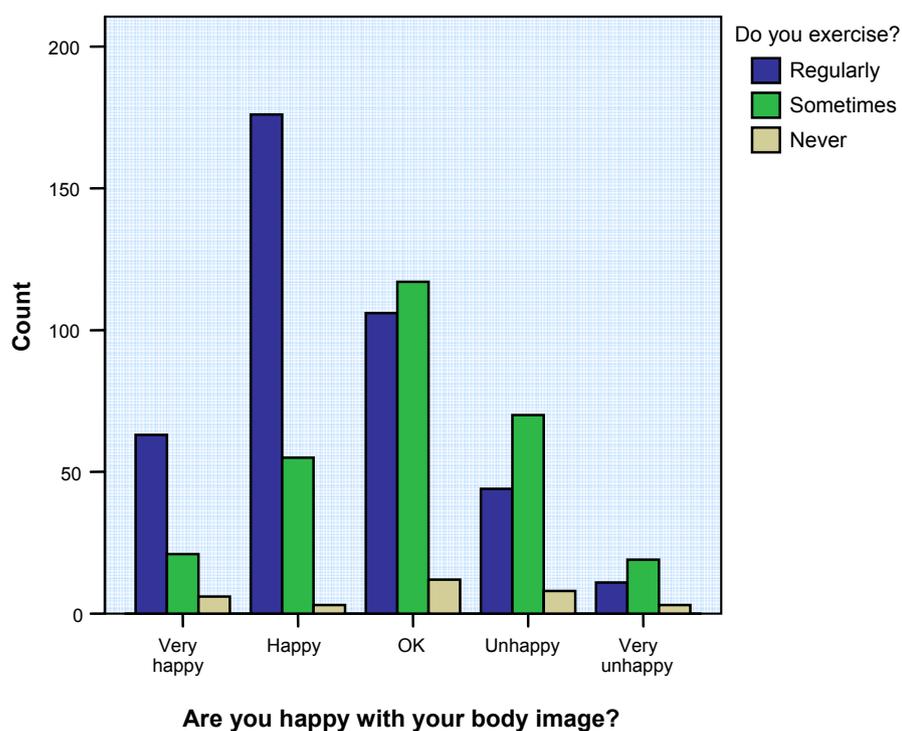
Exercise

In total, 55% of the sample exercised regularly, 39% did so sometimes and only 4.5% reported that they never exercised. However, since most of the sample was still at school, these high levels could be accounted for by compulsory school sports. It is important to consider what facilities are available to young people when they leave school or compulsory sport stops.

Body image and exercise

Figure 8 shows that 70% of those young people who said they were very happy with their body image exercised regularly, as did 75% of those who said they were happy. However, as we move down the scale of satisfaction with body image, the percentage of those who reported that they exercised regularly decreases. Only 45% of those who said they felt okay with their body image exercised regularly while 36% of those who said they were unhappy did and 33% of those who said they were very unhappy with their body image did. These results show that regular exercise is linked to a more positive body image for young people. The most common response of those who reported that they were okay, unhappy or very unhappy with their body image was that they only exercised sometimes, with a much smaller percentage (between 1% and 9%) reporting that they never exercised.

Figure 8. Comparison of young people's happiness with body image with their level of exercise



Happiness with life in Bournemouth

In response to the final question, 23% said they were very happy and 47% happy with their life as a young person in Bournemouth and 24% said that it was okay. Only 3% said they were unhappy and 2% very unhappy. Although this means that the majority (71%) of all young people reported they were very happy or happy, we would assume that most families and professionals would like young people's lives to be better than okay and also wish that ways could be found to target and improve the lives of the 5% who were unhappy.

Perhaps surprisingly, gender differences were also apparent in happiness ratings, with boys being more likely to say they were very happy with their lives than girls (27% versus 21%) and 49% of boys versus 46% of girls said they were happy; 17% of boys and 27% of girls thought their lives were only okay. Although this may reflect the national situation, the reasons why girls were less happy with their lives than boys deserve further investigation.

Recommendations

This survey gives valuable information as to the views and opinions of the young people of Bournemouth. However, the following recommendations are based on the views of those predominantly from the 13–15 year age range. It is recommended that further research is carried out with the 16–19 year age group, particularly those considered to be from disadvantaged or hard-to-reach groups. There are particular concerns over the comparatively high levels of young people in the Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) category (www.dfes.gov.uk) in Bournemouth, so the views and concerns of those in this group, or likely to be in this group, would be a high priority for research.

- | | |
|--|---|
| Living arrangements | The finding that 97% of teenagers lived with their parents is likely to be a reflection of the age profile and life stage of those who took part, i.e. of a younger age group of predominantly under-16s who would be much less likely to leave home than older teenagers. It is recommended that targeted research be carried out with 16–19-year-olds to gain further information that might help to establish a more complete picture of how young people's accommodation needs develop through their teenage years. |
| Engagement with youth services | Given the disparity in attendance between postcodes with regard to young people's engagement with youth services, it is recommended that further research is conducted in areas of low engagement. The purpose would be to find out why young people are not engaging with the services and how those services might be helped to meet young people's needs. It is suggested that such research is undertaken in the form of focus groups and that detached youth services play a part in identifying potential participants. |
| Young people's feelings of safety | The findings regarding young people's perceptions of crime and anti-social behaviour and their experiences of it are interesting and compelling. Further research into young people's notions of safety and experience of it in comparison with local and national media emphasis justifies some analysis. Focus group activity on this topic would be timely. |
| Information needs | The two principal topics that young people said they would like more information about were areas that directly concerned their future: further and higher education and the job market. These were much more popular than any other issue and may reflect a growing awareness of increasing competition for the best education places and jobs. This high level of demand suggests that currently young people are not as aware of |

existing sources of information and the range of media employed to promulgate this information as organisations may think they are. It would seem that better signposting to these resources is required by all agencies and organisations.

Involvement in their neighbourhoods

The preference among young people for activities and initiatives that would make their neighbourhood safer was for Neighbourhood Watch schemes. Since half of the young people in the survey support these schemes, it would be helpful if police and families made efforts to involve young people in them more actively.

The low figures for young people's perceived level of influence in their neighbourhood suggest that ways should be found of engaging them with the planning and decision-making processes in their local area. These processes should also become more locally based and accountable. Young people deserve the opportunity to have their opinions taken into account; feeling they have no influence at this stage in their lives is likely to lead to disengagement from their local community and not bothering to vote in local elections, etc.

Promoting volunteering

The voluntary work opportunities available for younger teenagers, i.e. those under 16, should be expanded and better publicised, since the survey revealed considerable willingness to volunteer among this age group. Most government initiatives appear to focus on encouraging volunteering in the post-16 age group so this initiative could be undertaken locally by schools and youth provision. This is in line with current developments under the Integrated Youth Strategy for Bournemouth and should be achieved by multi-agency working.

Education work on food issues

The survey results show both the positive and negative aspects of girls' greater engagement and interest in food issues. Eating disorders are often linked to a poor or distorted body image and, for girls, may also be linked to low self-esteem and the survey finding that girls are generally less happy with their lives than boys.

More information should be made available to both genders, ideally separately and in an interactive manner, concerning nutrition and eating disorders. This may then influence young people's attitudes and behaviour, particularly if it is available at an appropriate time in their personal and social development. There are voluntary organisations in the area who undertake this type of work and it may be appropriate to work with them.

Working with young people to reduce their alcohol consumption

The pattern of alcohol consumption revealed in the survey suggests that work with the third of young people who drink alcohol at the weekend should aim to make this group safer, i.e. harm reduction strategies. Education work on alcohol use is probably better targeted to those who drink alcohol earlier in the week (Monday–Thursday) when only 3-4% of the total number of young people in the survey drank. It is difficult to work in an educational way when nearly a third of the age group are actually using alcohol on Fridays and Saturdays. The responses of the different age ranges show the scant regard to the legal age limits for the procurement of alcohol for consumption by young people.

An example of good practice in the area of education and alcohol minimisation is the Reduce Project, a partnership between Wareham Youth Centre, Purbeck School and other agencies.

It is recommended that a multi-agency approach is adopted to further research into this aspect of young people's lives to develop a joined-up strategy to combat the negative outcomes of under-age drinking.

Improving girls' body image and self-esteem

Gender differences were apparent in happiness ratings, with boys being more likely to say they were very happy with their lives than girls, and less likely to feel their lives were only okay. Although this may reflect the national situation, the reasons why girls were less happy with their lives than boys should be investigated through specially convened focus groups.

Links between exercise and body image

The survey showed that three quarters of those young people who said they were very happy or happy with their body image exercised regularly. Moving down the scale of satisfaction with body image, the percentage of those who reported they exercised regularly decreased. These results clearly show that regular exercise is linked to a more positive body image for young people in the survey. It is therefore important to promote exercise among young people because of the links, particularly for girls, between regular exercise, body image and happiness.

Promoting exercise

It is important that sport and exercise provision, both in schools and the community, meets young people's needs and is enjoyable. There should be a consideration of location, cost and friendliness to young people of both genders when such facilities are being planned. Ideally, young people should be involved in designing these and making recommendations to management. An example of this approach in practice is the development of the Youth Gym at Littledown Leisure Centre where a squash court has been converted into a gym for young people.

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