



# Hampshire, Isle of Wight, Portsmouth, and Southampton

## #BeeWell Headline Findings Survey 2023

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# INTRODUCTION TO #BEEWELL

## LISTEN

#BeeWell has listened to the voices of over 22,000 young people in Hampshire, Isle of Wight, Portsmouth and Southampton (HIPS).

In the autumn of 2023, Year 8 and 10 pupils from 103 mainstream, special and independent schools, and alternative provision sites, told us what is important to them and what impacts their wellbeing. This represents 53% of all young people in those year groups in the area.

## ACT

Young people themselves are leading the response to the data through the #BeeWell youth steering group and through participation groups facilitated by nine local voluntary sector organisations. Twenty-six Year 10 pupils are also participating in a Young Researchers Programme with The University of Manchester, helping to interpret the survey responses and identify future areas of research.

Every school participating in the #BeeWell programme has received a bespoke data dashboard providing insights into the strengths and needs of their pupils and will be supported to identify priorities for improvement based on their individual findings.

The findings are already informing activity across the region, with schools, voluntary sector organisations, and Children's Services working closely with young people to interpret and act on the results.

An interactive public dashboard, to be published at the end of March 2024, will show more detailed results and insights into young people's wellbeing across different neighbourhoods in the region.

## CELEBRATE YOUNG PEOPLE'S WELLBEING

# Summary of headline findings

## Overall wellbeing

The key findings of the survey show that young people in the region feel generally satisfied with their life, with overall wellbeing scores in line with other large studies that use similar measures.

However, there are noteworthy inequalities in wellbeing across both gender and sexuality. Findings show that girls are more likely to experience emotional difficulties and lower mental wellbeing than boys. The greatest disparities for both mental wellbeing and emotional difficulties were observed for those identifying as Trans- or Gender-Diverse (TGD). Bi/pansexual and gay/lesbian young people have considerably lower mental wellbeing scores and higher chances of experiencing emotional difficulties than their heterosexual peers.



## Health and Routines

The overall picture for physical health is positive with the vast majority, eight in ten young people, saying they feel they have good, very good or excellent physical health. We also know that seven out of ten young people report taking part in sports/exercise/other physical activities at least once a week outside of school.

However, only four in ten young people in HIPS are reaching the recommended levels of physical activity of an average of one hour per day<sup>1</sup>. This falls to three in ten for girls and is lower still for young people who identify as LGBTQ+.

Use of e-cigarettes and alcohol is much more commonplace than other substances such as cannabis. Peer pressure is seen to be an influence on patterns of substance use, with young people who have experienced higher levels of peer pressure more likely to use e-cigarettes or drink alcohol.



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<sup>1</sup> Recommended by the UK Government's Chief Medical Officer.

## **Relationships**

Young people are generally positive about relationships with their family and friends, in particular, high scores are seen for the support young people received from adults at home.

Despite this, one in ten young people in HIPS reported that they ‘often’ or ‘always’ feel lonely, almost double the national average seen in similar studies.

Just under half of young people reported experiencing discrimination on account of their gender, sexuality, race, ethnicity, where they were born, disability and/or faith.



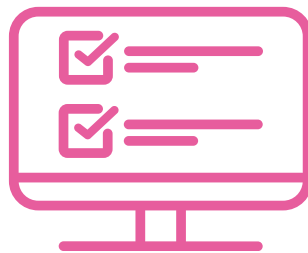
## **Local area**

In 2023, over eight out of ten young people surveyed feel ‘fairly safe’ or ‘very safe’ in their local area and six out of ten young people agree that there are good places to spend free time in their local area.



## **Non-mainstream school findings**

Young people in non-mainstream schools were able to complete a short or symbol version of the survey.



# Next steps

## ***Continuing the conversation with young people***

#BeeWell's youth centred approach seeks to ensure young people are at the centre of our response to the data.

Nine voluntary and community sector organisations in HIPS have set up #BeeWell participation groups, gathering insights and feedback from young people to help shape the #BeeWell programme. These groups have helped the team establish the #BeeWell youth steering group and plan a #BeeWell day in April 2024. Now, the groups will help to interpret the data, telling us what is most important and what needs to be done to improve young people's wellbeing.

The #BeeWell Youth Steering Group, made up of young people across HIPS, will have a budget to commission activities in response to the #BeeWell findings.

Twenty-six Year 10 pupils from HIPS are participating in the Young Researchers Programme to develop their research knowledge and skills, working with the #BeeWell team and the University of Manchester to interpret the survey responses and identify future areas of research.

A priority for 2024/25 is to develop a version of the #BeeWell survey suitable for young people in HIPS who are educated at home.

## ***Neighbourhood results***

By the end of March, the University of Manchester will publish a neighbourhood dashboard providing insights into how wellbeing domains and drivers vary across HIPS' 46 #BeeWell neighbourhoods.

The publicly available [dashboard](#), which can be filtered by age, gender, SEND status and Free School Meal eligibility, will show variation in wellbeing across different communities, as well as insights into the key drivers of young people's wellbeing.

## ***Support for schools***

All participating schools have already received a bespoke data dashboard providing insights into the strengths and needs of their pupils, with the ability to explore trends by gender, free school meal (FSM) eligibility, age, and special educational needs (SEN).

All schools have been invited to an introductory webinar on using their dashboards and have been offered one-to-one follow up support sessions with Anna Freud to interpret their data and identify actions to improve their students' wellbeing.

The #BeeWell team have launched a competition for schools, with five prizes of £2,000 each to be won for the best action plan to improve their students' wellbeing. The action plans will be co-created with students in response to the school's data dashboard. A young people's panel will judge the entries and the winners will be announced in June 2024.

## ***Whole system response***

Thirty six local coalition partners in Hampshire, Isle of Wight, Portsmouth and Southampton (HIPS), and a further 70 national organisations, have signed up to committing to act on the results of the #BeeWell survey.

MAKING YOUNG PEOPLE'S WELLBEING  
EVERYBODY'S BUSINESS

# Emerging key findings

## Overall wellbeing

Overall wellbeing scores are consistent with what we know from other large studies that have used one or more of the measures included in the #BeeWell Survey.

The average mental wellbeing score of young people across HIPS is 20.9. Possible scores range from 7-35, with higher scores indicating better mental wellbeing.

This average mental wellbeing score is measured by young people rating themselves against positively worded statements such as ‘I’ve been feeling optimistic about the future, I’ve been feeling useful, I’ve been feeling relaxed<sup>2</sup>.’

Young people were asked ‘Overall, how satisfied are you with your life nowadays?’. The average score is 7.6 out of a possible 10, with higher scores representing higher levels of satisfaction with life. This is identical to The Children’s Society weighted average for 10-17-year-olds in 2023.

17% of young people responding to the Me and My Feelings measure reported a high level of emotional difficulties e.g. worrying a lot, feeling unhappy, having problems sleeping. These thresholds do not represent a clinical diagnosis but indicate young people scoring in this range may require additional, preventative support. This overall figure is consistent with our previous findings in other areas<sup>3</sup>.

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<sup>2</sup> Short Warwick Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale - developed to enable the monitoring of mental wellbeing in the general population and the evaluation of projects, programmes and policies which aim to improve mental wellbeing. It uses statements about thoughts and feelings, which relate more to functioning than feelings and so offer a slightly different perspective on mental wellbeing. The seven statements are positively worded with five response categories from ‘none of the time’ to ‘all of the time’.

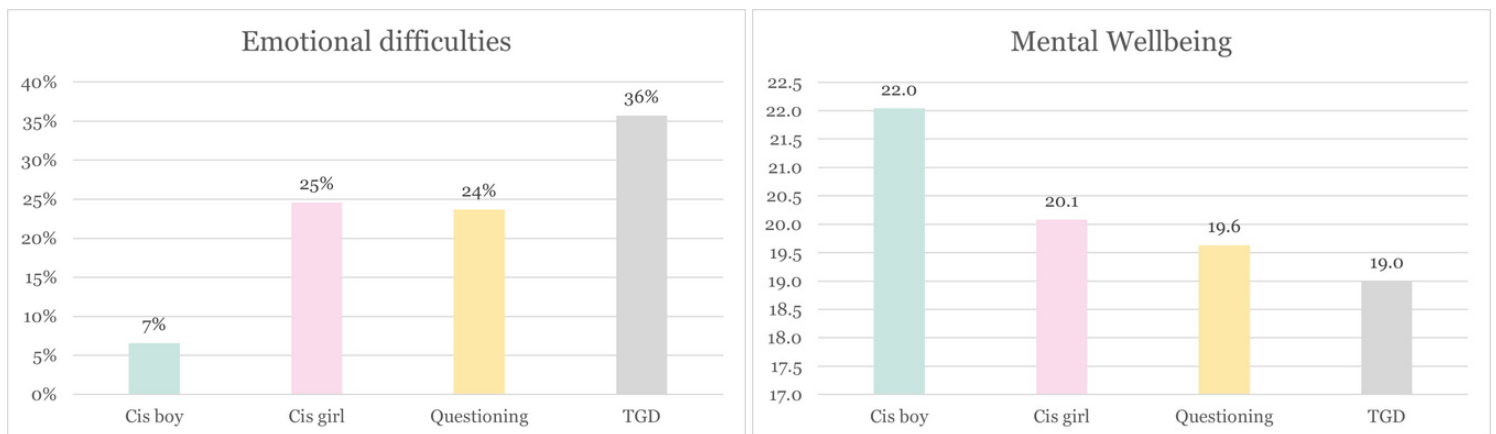
<sup>3</sup> #BeeWell 2021 survey findings from Greater Manchester: [BeeWell-overview-briefing-2021.pdf](#) ([beewellprogramme.org](#)).

# Mind the gap: wellbeing inequalities

Inequalities persist in wellbeing scores, particularly across gender and sexual orientation.

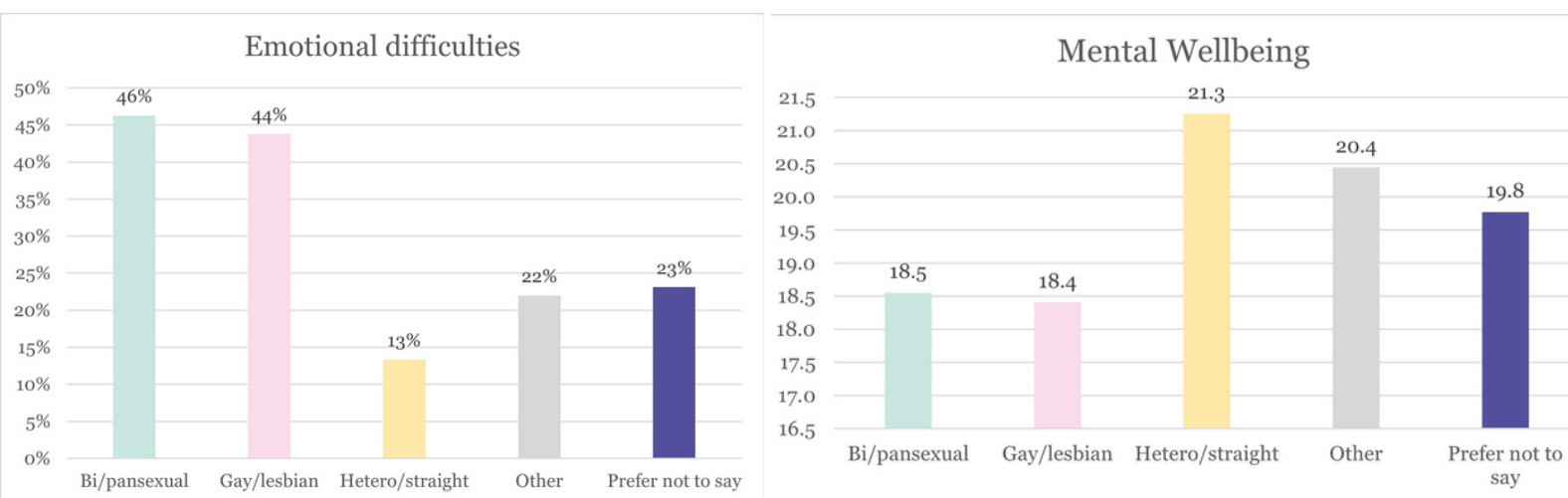
In their feedback, 25% of girls reported substantial emotional difficulties compared with 7% of boys. Girls also have lower mental wellbeing scores than boys (20.1 compared to 22.0, in a possible range of 7-35)

The greatest disparity in terms of gender are observed for those who identify as trans or gender diverse, with emotional difficulties reported by 36% of this cohort.



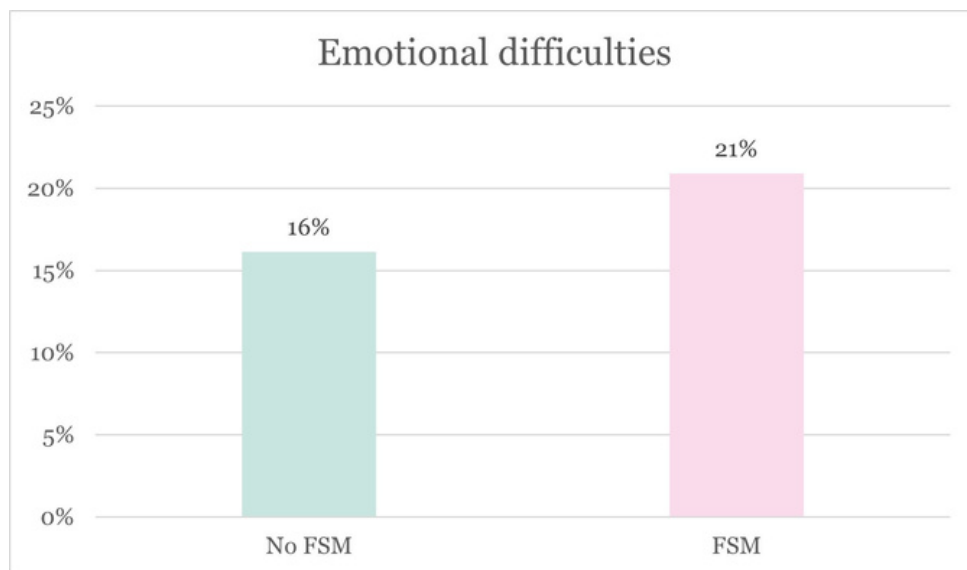
*NB - Cis (short for cisgender) describes a person whose gender identity corresponds to their sex assigned at birth*

There are similar trends in terms of sexuality. 44% of young people who identify as lesbian or gay report substantial emotional difficulties, rising to 46% of those who identify as bisexual or pansexual. This is compared with 13% of heterosexual young people.





Young people eligible for free school meals reported higher levels of emotional difficulties than their peers, 21% compared to 16%.



There is also evidence that wellbeing varies by place. For example, the proportion of young people reporting high levels of emotional difficulties ranges from 8% to 23% across the 46 HIPS neighbourhoods<sup>4</sup>



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<sup>4</sup> However, it is important to note that comparing neighbourhoods can over-emphasise differences given the comparison is between the highest and lowest scoring areas (that is, there may be little variation among the neighbourhoods in between).

# Health and routines: selected findings

## Physical activity

Across HIPS, only four in ten young people (39%) are reaching the recommended levels of physical activity set by the UK Government's Chief Medical Officer of an average of one hour per day.

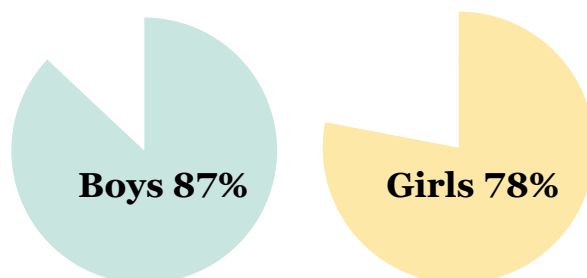
This falls to three in ten girls; 2.7 in ten gay/lesbian young people and 2.5 in ten bi/pansexual young people; and two in ten Chinese young people.



**4 in 10 young people reach the recommended levels of physical activity**

## Physical health

Around eight in ten of young people say they feel they have 'good, very good or excellent' physical health across HIPS. A higher percentage of boys than girls rated their health as 'good, very good or excellent' (87% compared to 78%). Young people who are not eligible for free school meals are more positive about their physical health than young people who are eligible for free school meals, with 84% compared to 76% rating their health as 'good, very good or excellent'.



**Rated their health as 'good, very good or excellent'**

## Spare time

Young people in HIPS feel positive about how often they can do things they like in their spare time, although disparity across gender is evident with 80% of boys compared to 68% of girls reporting 'almost always' or 'often.' We do know that seven out of ten young people take part in sports/exercise/other physical activities at least once a week outside of school.

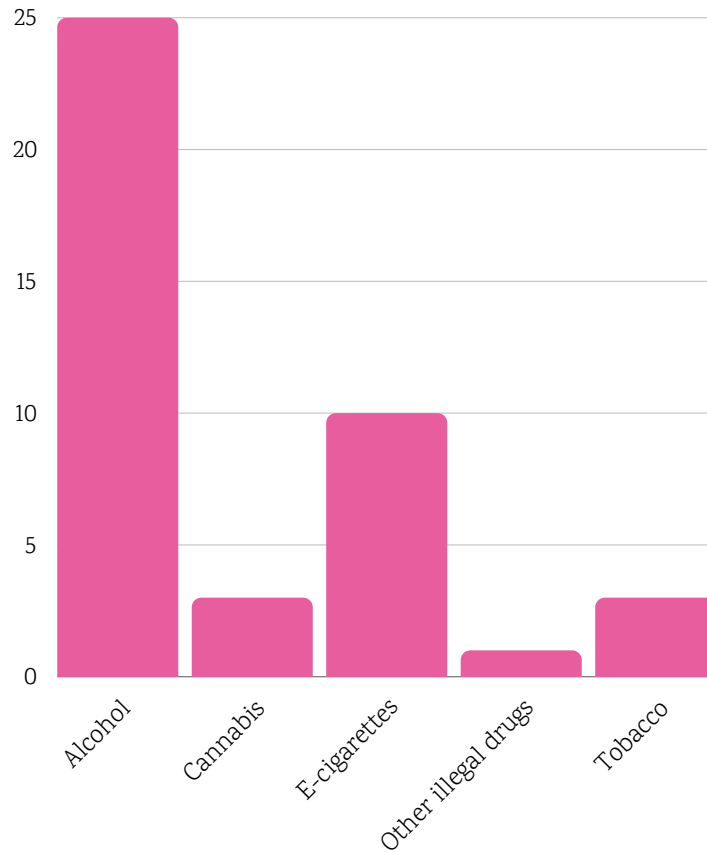
## Sleep

Just under half (44%) of young people said they do not normally get enough sleep to feel awake and concentrate on their schoolwork during the day. This score is higher for girls (50%) compared to boys (37%) and is marginally higher for young people eligible for free school meals than their peers, and for young people in Year 10 than in Year 8.

## Substance Use

The #BeeWell survey also asks young people about their use of substances such as alcohol, cigarettes, e-cigarettes and drugs<sup>5</sup>. Use of e-cigarettes and alcohol is much more commonplace than other substances such as cannabis. The figures in the chart below show current users (last 30 days) combined with previous users (used but not in the last 30 days).

25% of young people report currently or previously using alcohol, and 10% report currently or previously using e-cigarettes. This is compared with just 3% for both cannabis and tobacco, and 1% for other illegal drugs.



Young people experiencing higher levels of peer pressure are more likely to use both e-cigarettes and alcohol.

Young people who use e-cigarettes are more likely to be older, eligible for free school meals, girls, trans and gender diverse, or questioning their gender identity.

Those who drink alcohol are significantly more likely to be trans and gender diverse and older pupils. Young people from all ethnic minority groups are less likely to drink alcohol compared to White young people.

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<sup>5</sup> We included an item about a fake substance, Semeron, in the survey. Data shown above are for the 98% of young people who reported never having tried this substance.

## Dental hygiene

In terms of dental hygiene, nearly nine out of ten young people reported having visited the dentist in the last 12 months. The vast majority (84%) of young people in HIPS brush their teeth the NHS-recommended twice per day.

17% said that they have had pain in their teeth or mouth ‘sometimes, often or very often’ in the last three months.

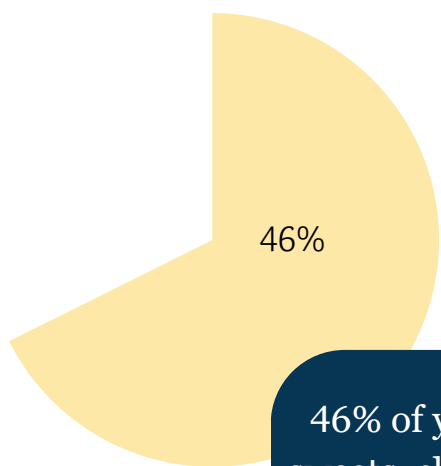
There is some evidence that dental hygiene varies by place: the proportion of young people reporting they visited the dentist in the last 12 months ranges from 69% to 96% across the 46 HIPS neighbourhoods.



Over 8 out of 10 young people brush their teeth twice a day

## Nutrition

#BeeWell asks young people about their nutrition. 90% reported regularly eating fruit and vegetables (2-4 days a week or more). Young people eligible for FSM eat fruit and vegetables slightly less frequently than their peers who are not eligible for FSM (83% compared to 91% of their peers.)



46% of young people reported eating unhealthy snacks such as sweets, chocolate, crisps or fizzy drinks 5-6 days a week or more.

# Relationships

Young people in HIPS are generally positive about relationships with their family and friends.

The survey asked questions about the support young people received from adults at home, for example, 'At home there is an adult who believes I will be a success.' The average score is nearly 17, out of a possible range of 4 to 20 with higher scores indicating higher levels of support. In response to questions about the support young people received from their peers, the average score is 15, also on a scale of 4 to 20.



However, one in ten young people in HIPS report that they often or always feel lonely. This ranges from 5% to 14% across HIPS neighbourhoods. This is almost double the national average where 5.5% of 11-16 year-olds in England say they often or always feel lonely (NHS Digital, 2023).

**1 in 10 say they often or always feel lonely.**



## Information and advice

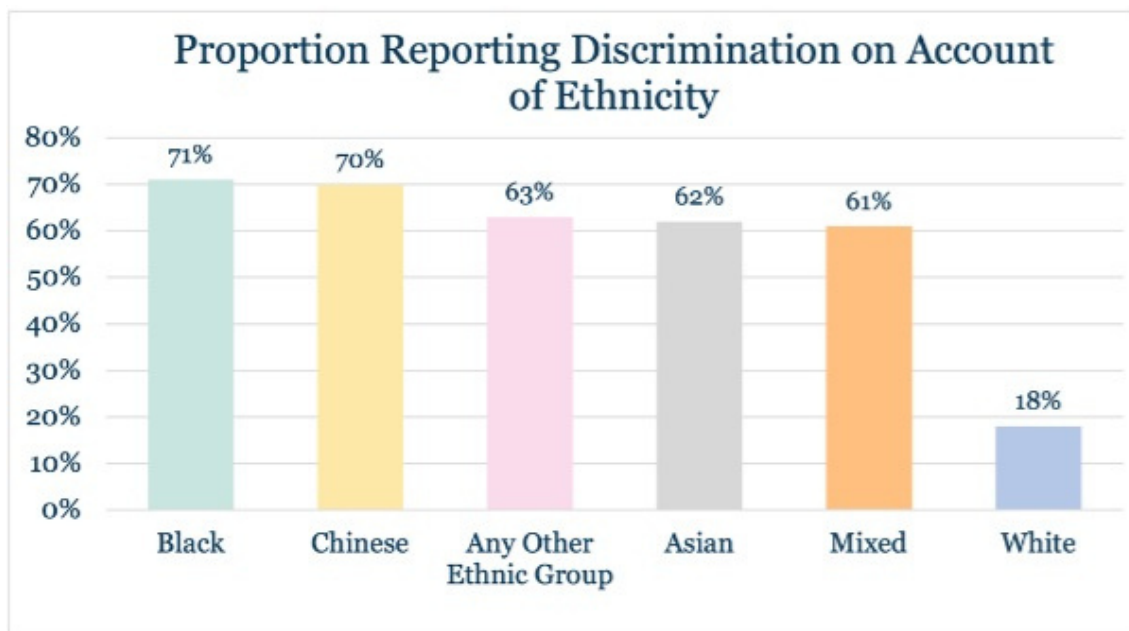
Over half of the young people said they sought information and advice about mental health from someone in their family or from close friends 'sometimes', 'often' or 'always'. Girls are more likely than boys to seek information and advice from both friends and family. Frequent use of telephone helplines and online sources and websites is significantly lower, at 12% and 15%.

# Discrimination

The #BeeWell survey asks young people how often people make them feel bad because of their race, skin colour or where you were born; gender; sexuality; disability; or their religion/faith?’<sup>6</sup>

In total, just under half (44%)<sup>7</sup> of young people reported experiencing discrimination in at least one of these areas. Specifically, a quarter of pupils (24%) reported discrimination due to race, skin colour, or where they were born, 21% due to their gender, 14% due to their sexuality, 15% due to their disability and 11% due to their faith.

Discrimination on the grounds of race is most prevalent in the experience of Black (closely followed by Chinese) young people, with seven in ten reporting they have experienced discrimination in the past.

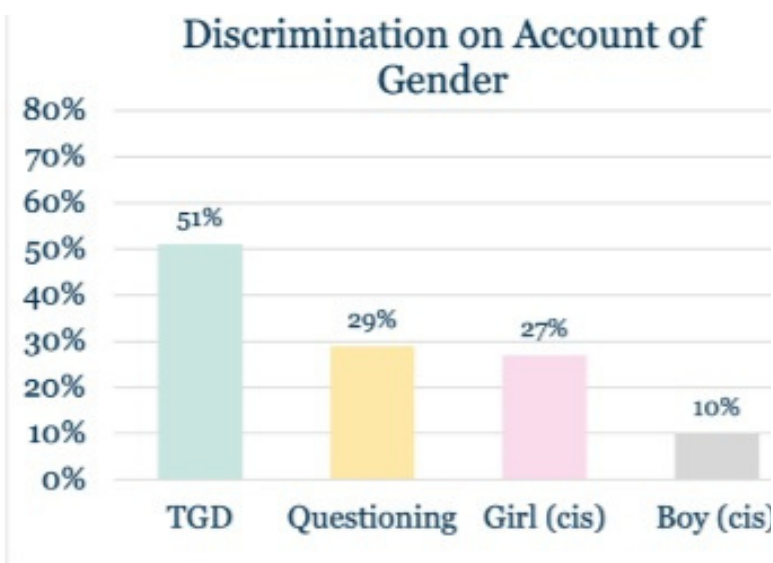
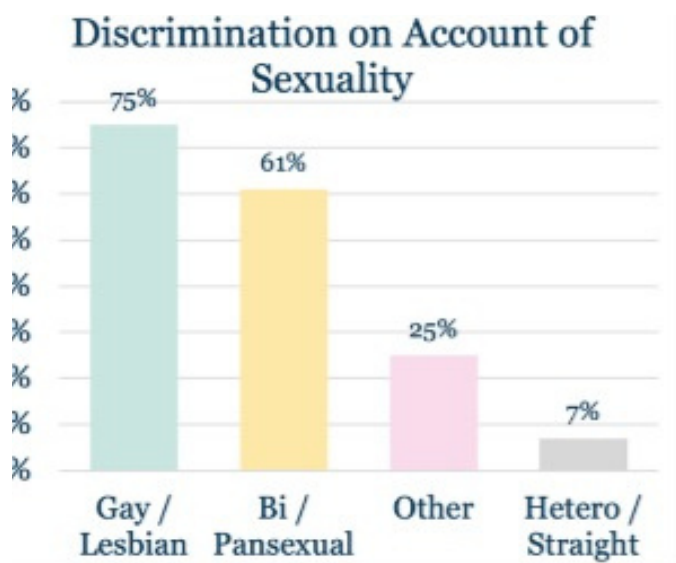


Of those with Special Education Needs, one in three (33%) report having experienced discrimination because of their disability, compared with roughly one in ten (12%) of pupils who do not have Special Educational Needs.

6 This question is adapted from the “Harmful or abusive relationships, interactions and experiences (Adapted from Determinants of Adolescent Social Wellbeing and Health Study & Harvard Measuring Discrimination Resource). The team worked with young people in Greater Manchester pathfinder schools, the #BeeWell young peer reviewers and Questionnaire Advisory Group to adapt the items.

7 This figure includes all 5 types of discrimination and any frequency other than ‘never’.

Less than one in ten (7%) of heterosexual/straight young people have experienced discrimination account of their sexuality. In comparison, six in ten bi/pansexual young people report discrimination, which rises to over seven in ten for gay/lesbian young people. On the basis of their gender, half of trans and gender diverse young people report having experienced discrimination in the past.



## Local Environment: Feeling safe and good places to go

In 2023, 84% of young people surveyed feel fairly safe or very safe in their local area (within 5 minutes walking distance of home). This ranged from 67% to 93% across HIPS neighbourhoods. Boys report feeling marginally safer than girls, and young people who do not have SEN report feeling marginally safer than those with SEN. The greatest disparity in feelings of safety is between those young people eligible for free school meals (79%) compared with their peers who are not eligible (85%).

**63%** of young people in Hampshire, Isle of Wight, Portsmouth, and Southampton agree that there are **good places to spend free time** in their local area

this leaves over **1 in 3** young people feeling like they don't

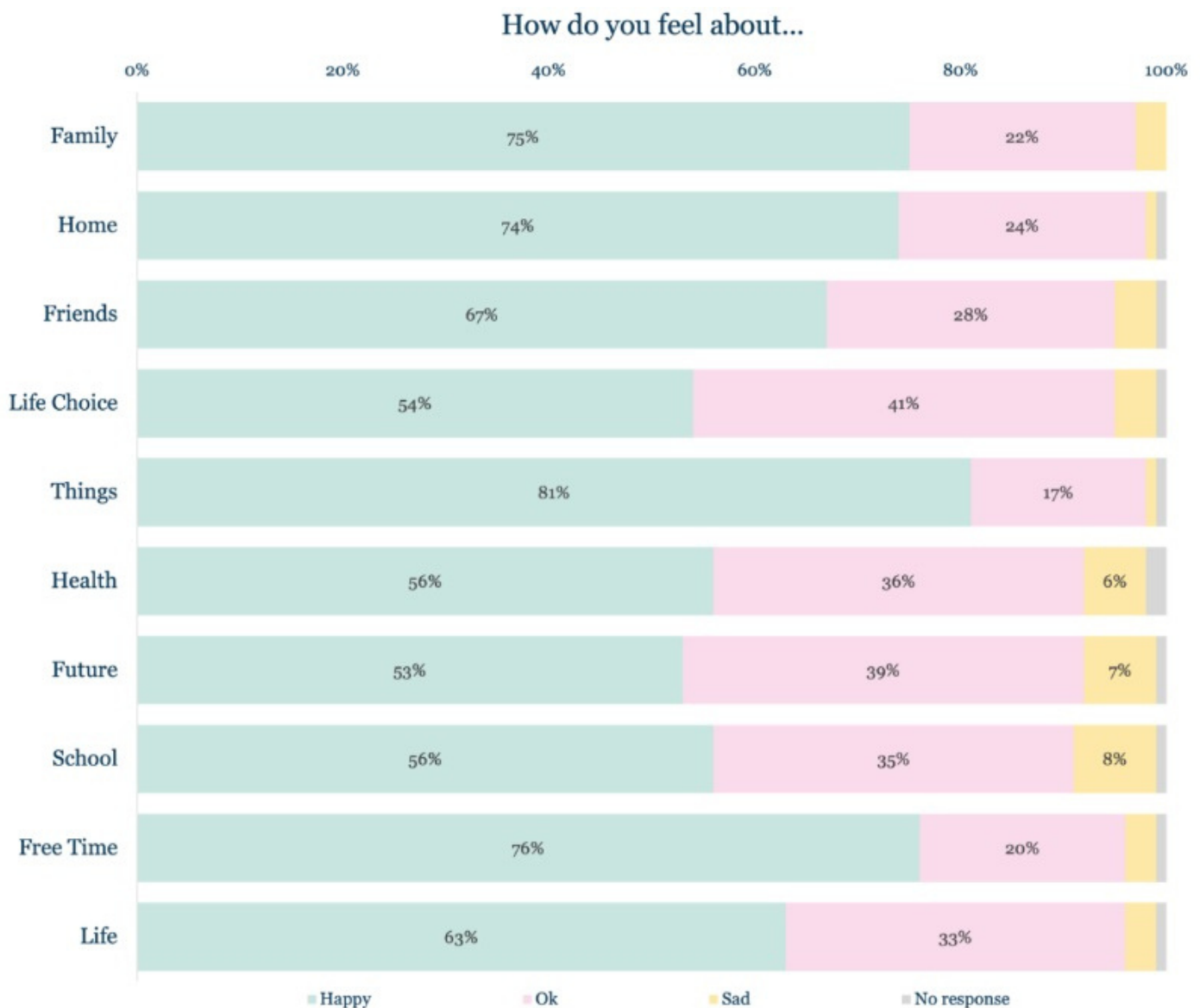
# Non-mainstream school findings

Young people in non-mainstream schools were able to complete a short version of the survey. A symbol-based version of the survey is also available for young people with severe or profound and multiple learning disabilities.

You can access a summary of the findings here :

- [Short survey summary](#)
- [Symbol survey summary](#)

The following graph provides a summary of the data for the 279 pupils who completed the #Beewell Symbol Survey. 76% of young people who completed the survey are happy about their free time and 81% reported feeling happy about the things they have.





# Contact us

We look forward to working with schools, partners and young people to interpret and act on the findings.



**LISTEN**



**ACT**



**CELEBRATE**

If you require further support in relation to the headline findings, the dashboard or require specific data to support your work, please get in touch with the HIPS #BeeWell Project Team.



**[hiow.beewell@hants.gov.uk](mailto:hiow.beewell@hants.gov.uk)**



## Background to #BeeWell

#BeeWell is a collaboration between The University of Manchester, The Gregson Family Foundation and Anna Freud, who, together with the Greater Manchester Combined Authority, launched the programme in 2019. Building on the success of #BeeWell in Greater Manchester, the programme expanded into Hampshire, Isle of Wight, Portsmouth and Southampton (HIPS) in 2023.

#BeeWell believes that young people's wellbeing is as important as their academic attainment. Using a co-designed survey, we listen to the voices of as many young people as possible, publish the results privately to schools and publicly by neighbourhood, and drive action across society to improve young people's wellbeing. #BeeWell's mission is to see this approach implemented nationally by 2030.

## Co-created survey

The #BeeWell survey has been tailored to reflect what is important to young people in HIPS. We listened to the voices of over 200 young people in workshops in 15 pathfinder schools to understand what wellbeing means to them, what factors influence their wellbeing and what makes them thrive. These workshops were combined with inputs from a Questionnaire Advisory Group of mental health<sup>6</sup> professionals, healthcare representatives<sup>7</sup>, education experts, teachers, local authorities, and voluntary sector representatives amongst others, to inform the themes covered in the survey. In parallel, we considered the priorities of professionals working to support young people in the HIPS system (e.g., public health).

## School participation

The #BeeWell team signed up 87% of HIPS mainstream secondary schools in summer 2023, as well as special schools, pupil referral units and alternative provision sites, and independent schools. The first wave of the survey was completed by Year 8 and Year 10 pupils in autumn 2023 in 103 schools, with more than 22,000 young people taking part. This represents 53% of all young people in those year groups in HIPS.