

HBSC IRELAND

The Health Behaviour in School-aged Children (HBSC) is a research study conducted by an international network of research teams¹ in collaboration with the World Health Organisation (Europe) and co-ordinated by Professor Candace Currie of the University of St Andrews. This factsheet is based on data collected in 2010 from 12,661 10-17 year olds in Ireland from randomly selected schools throughout the country.

Further information is available at:
<http://www.hbsc.org>
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HEALTH BEHAVIOUR IN
SCHOOL-AGED CHILDREN



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Summary

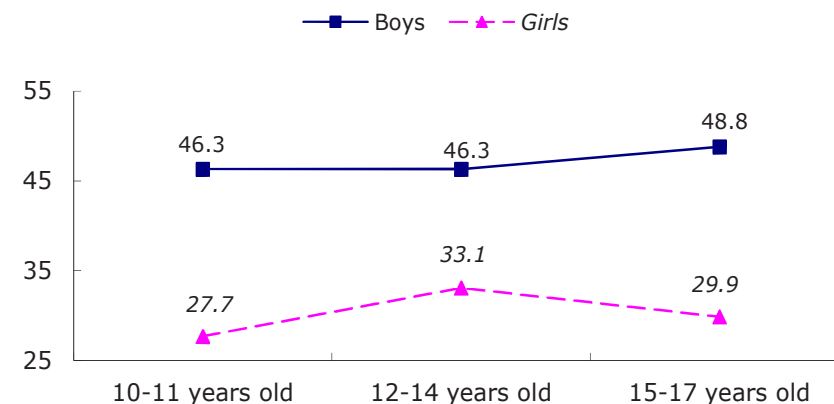
HBSC Ireland 2010 has found that 39.5% of schoolchildren in Ireland report that they were injured and needed medical treatment from a doctor or a nurse once or more in the previous 12 months (47.2% of boys and 31.2% of girls). This figure represents a slight decrease from 42.7% in 2006. Among girls, the highest percentage of reported injuries is in the 12-14 year old age group and among boys is in the 15-17 year old age group. Children who were injured are more likely to report feeling pressured by schoolwork, having been bullied and bullying others and spending four or more evenings per week with friends. They are less likely to report feeling very happy with their lives, living with both parents and liking school. In this factsheet being injured refers to being injured and needing medical attention at least once in the last 12 months.

Why this topic?

Injuries and their consequences are a leading cause of morbidity and mortality among children and adolescents¹. The costs associated with injuries include not only negative physical and psychological effects² but also the expenses associated with treatment, rehabilitation and long-term care³. Unintentional falls account for the majority of hospitalised injuries⁴. Studies have demonstrated a clear link between injury prevalence and certain risk behaviours such as substance use^{2,5} and truancy⁶, making this an important health issue in young people's lives.

Change 2006-2010

There has been a slight decrease in the percentage of children who report that they were injured and treated by a doctor or nurse during the previous 12 months. This decrease is more pronounced among boys (from 51.1% to 47.2%) than girls (from 33.8% to 31.2%) and is most pronounced among children aged 12-14 years (from 44.5% to 39.9%). More boys than girls continue to report that they were injured across all age groups.

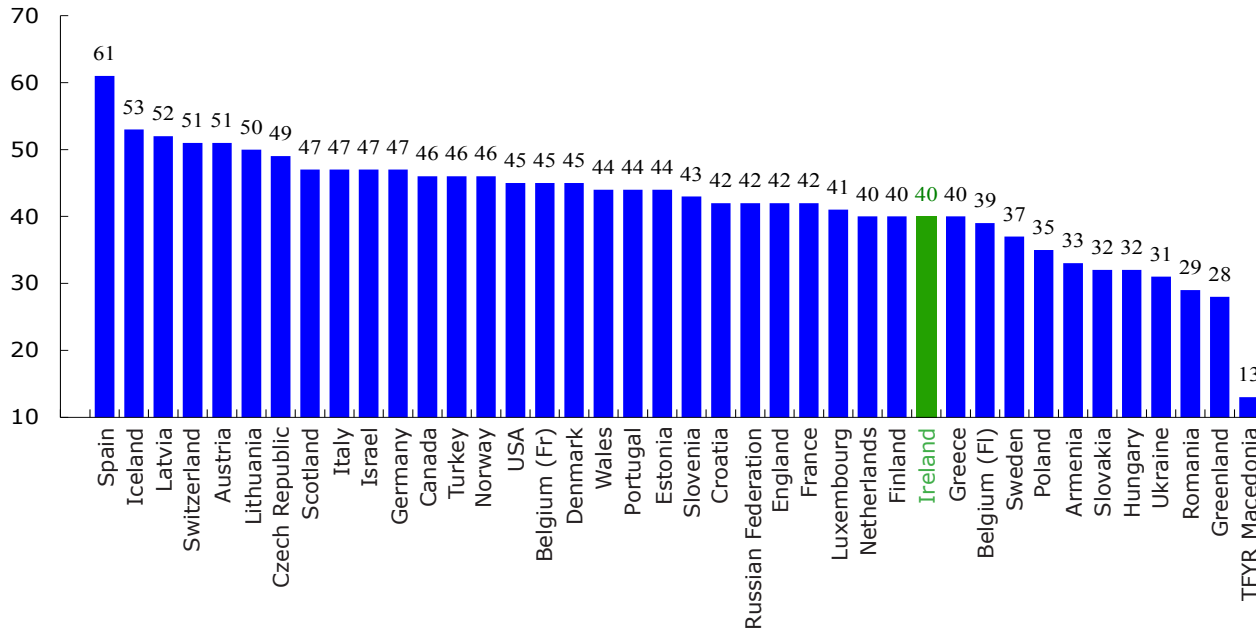


Percentage of injuries, by age and gender

Injury in context

- More children from the middle social classes report medically attended injuries than those from higher or lower social classes (social classes 1-2; 38.1%, social classes 3-4; 40.6%, social classes 5-6; 38.2%).
- Children who have been injured are more likely to report having been drunk (33.4% vs. 24.6%) and current smoking (13.9% vs. 10.0%) than those who have not.
- Children who have been injured are less likely to report feeling very happy with their lives compared to those who have not (48.3% vs. 51.7%).
- Children who have been injured are less likely to report living with both parents than those who have not (73.9% vs. 76.5%).
- Children who have been injured are more likely to report feeling pressured by schoolwork (41.7% vs. 36.5%) and less likely to report liking school (65.3% vs. 74.6%) than those who have not.

...Injuries among schoolchildren in Ireland



Percentage of 15 year old children reporting they were injured and needed medical attention in the last 12 months, by country

- Children who have been injured are more likely to have been bullied (27.5% vs. 22.1%) and are also more likely to have bullied others than those who have not been injured (20.9% vs. 13.6%).

International

Fifteen year old Irish schoolchildren (boys and girls together) are ranked 29th out of 40 countries in Europe and North America with 40% reporting having been injured and needing medical attention. Overall 35% of 11 year olds in Ireland (rank 32nd) and 39% of 13 year olds in Ireland (rank 30th) report having been injured at least once in the previous 12 months.

Implications

The percentage of young people in Ireland reporting that they were injured and treated by a doctor or a nurse at least once during the previous 12 months has slightly

decreased since 2006 from 42.7% to 39.5%. With the rising cost of healthcare in Ireland, this figure may under-represent the true scale of the problem as many families may not be able to afford the costs associated with being treated by a doctor or a nurse. Findings illustrated here suggest that injuries during adolescence are associated with negative health outcomes such as being more likely to be bullied and more likely to engage in negative health behaviours such as smoking, drinking alcohol and bullying others. Understanding the factors associated with injury prevalence is an important step towards informing and targeting injury intervention and prevention programmes.

References

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All factsheets and other HBSC publications and reports can be downloaded from our website: <http://www.nuigalway.ie/hbsc>

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