

Leicester Children's Health and Wellbeing Survey



A survey of pupils attending Leicester City Primary, Secondary and Special Schools 2021/22

**Division of Public Health
Leicester City Council**

Introduction

The School Health Education Unit (SHEU) were commissioned by Leicester City Council to undertake a school based survey of Leicester school pupils aged 10 to 15.

All primary, junior, secondary and special schools in Leicester were invited to participate. Children from 26 primaries, 9 secondary schools and 2 special schools completed the survey.

The majority of surveys were completed online in schools during the Autumn and Spring terms in the 2021/22 academic year. Over 3,000 Leicester school pupils completed the survey and responses were collated by SHEU.

The survey sample was weighted against the known school aged population using the Leicester School Census (Spring 2022) to ensure survey responses were representative of the Leicester school population.

Each participating school received a bespoke school level report detailing key health and wellbeing issues for their school.

Contents

Key findings

Changes since the 2016/17 survey

Pupil backgrounds

Healthy eating

Physical activity and active travel

Internet use, leisure and sleep

Health and use of services (Oral health & COVID-19)

Emotional wellbeing

Alcohol, smoking and drugs

Bullying

Safety (including online safety)

Relationships and sexual health

Your school and pupil voice

Summary tables and correlations

Our presentation today...

- A day in the life of Leicester children - Headlines
- Leicester children and their environment - Headlines
- Emotional wellbeing of Leicester children
- Conclusions

A day in the life of Leicester children...

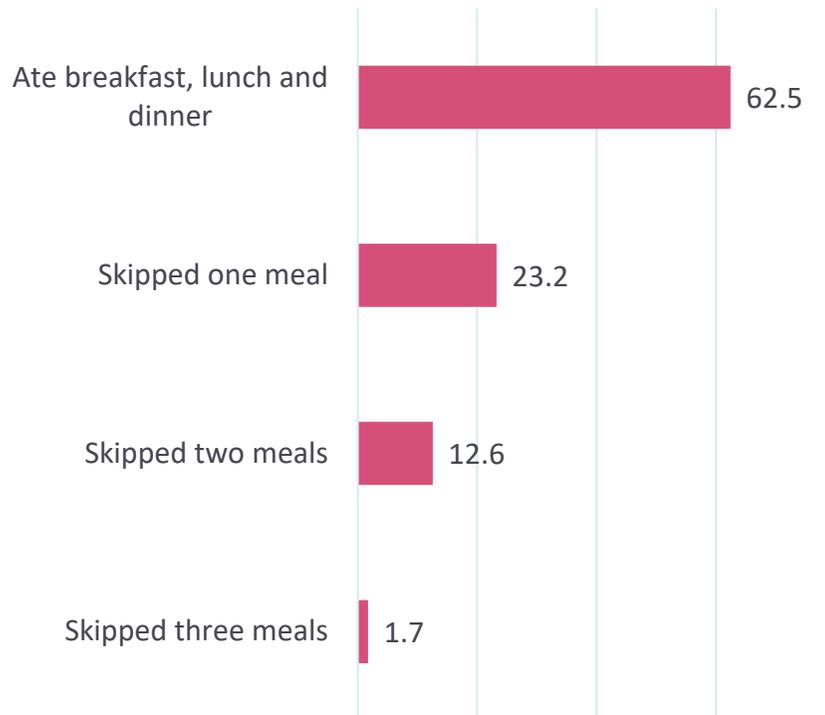
- **Healthy eating:** Three out of five children had breakfast, lunch and dinner the day before the survey. About two in five (37.5%) children skipped at least one meal.
- **Breakfast:** Nearly one in three children (31%) had nothing to eat for breakfast on the day of the survey.
- **Fruit and Veg:** Four out of five children (81%) are not eating the recommended 5 or more portions of fruit and vegetables a day, with only one in five (19%) children stating they have five or more portions.
- **Physical activity:** About half of children have completed at least 30 minutes of physical activity.
- **Leisure activities – Screen time:** The most popular after school activities include screen time activities such as watching tv, playing screen based games, and texting on a phone. Over a quarter (27.1%) of 10-15 year olds spent five or more hours yesterday looking at a screen.
- **Leisure activities:** Children are also involved in a range of activities including doing homework, listening to music, sports, reading, pet care, and caring for family.
- **Sleep:** Many children (39%) are sleeping late (11pm or later) and are at risk of not getting enough sleep.
- **Active travel:** About six out of ten children (59%) actively travel to school by walking, scooting or cycling.
- **Sanitary products:** About two in five secondary aged females could not access sanitary products all of the time.

Three out of five children had breakfast, lunch and dinner the day before the survey. About two in five (37.5%) children skipped at least one meal. The most common meal to skip was breakfast (29%), followed by lunch (15%), and then evening meal (10%).

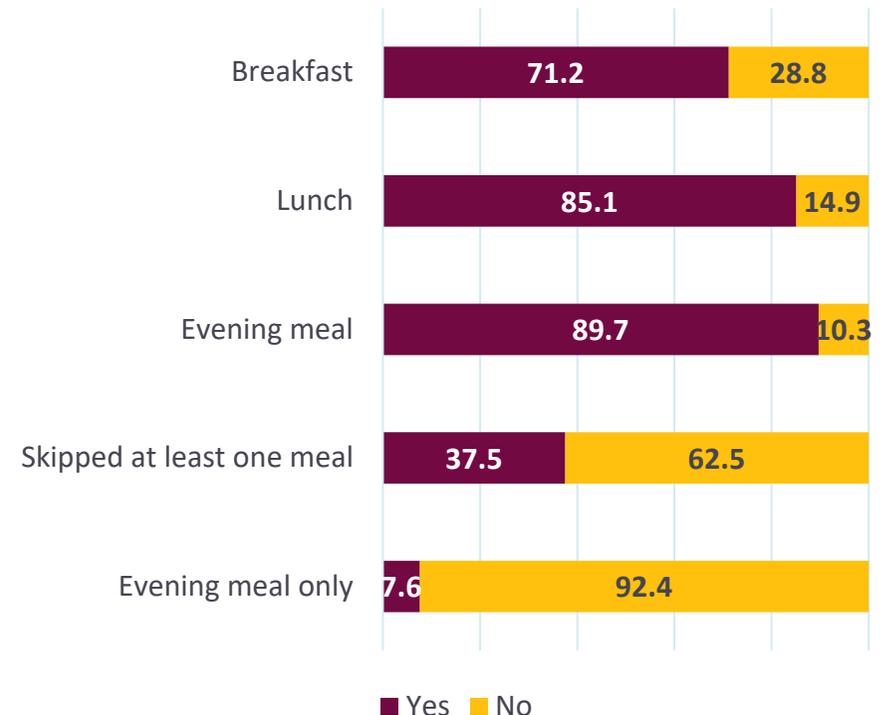
22. What meals did you have yesterday?

There is a minority of children (8%) who only had an evening meal the day before the survey. About a quarter (23%) of children skipped one meal, just over one in ten (13%) skipped two meals, and a small minority stated they skipped all meals (2%).

What meals did you eat yesterday? (%)



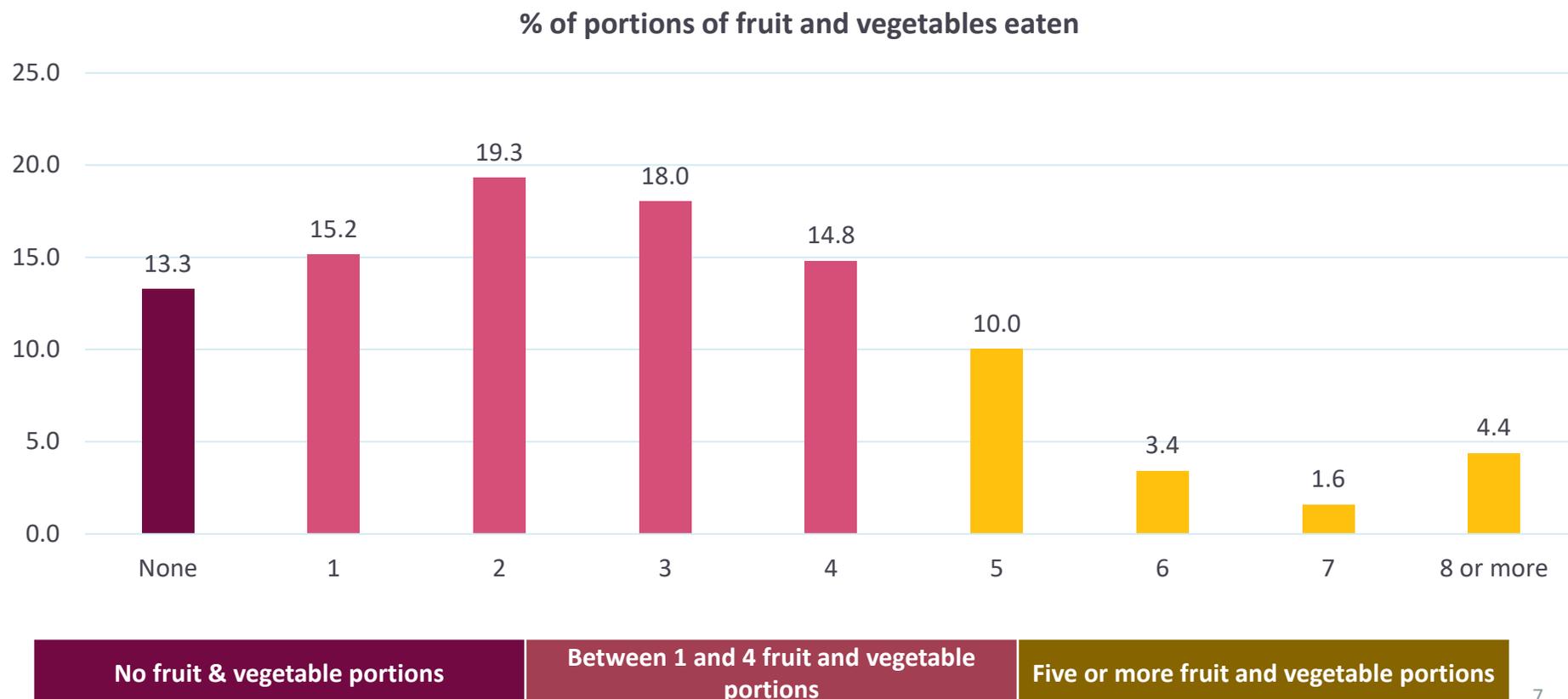
What meals did you have yesterday? (%)



One in five (19%) children are eating the recommended 5 or more portions of fruit and vegetables a day, four out of five children (81%) are not.

28. How many portions of fruit and vegetables did you eat yesterday?

Over one in ten (13%) children had no fruit and vegetable portions the day before the survey. A further two thirds (67%) of children had between 1 and 4 portions.



The most popular after school activities include screen time activities such as watching tv, playing screen based games, and texting on a phone. However, children are involved in a range of activities including doing homework, listening to music, sports, reading, pet care, and caring for family. Younger children are significantly more likely to read for pleasure compared to older children.

36. Did you spend any time doing any of these things after school yesterday?

Leisure Activity	All	10-11 year olds	12-13 year olds	14-15 year olds
Watching TV/film (live, online, catch-up)	76.0	83.3	71.0	72.7
Playing games on a phone, computer, tablet or console (e.g. Xbox, DS, etc.)	67.0	73.5	67.1	59.9
Talking/texting on the 'phone	59.5	47.1	62.5	70.5
Listened to music	49.2	47.4	48.5	51.9
Doing homework	47.1	48.3	51.6	41.6
Sport/physical activity	40.3	47.7	42.6	29.8
Read a book for pleasure	32.6	50.7	25.7	19.3
Talking/messaging online e.g. Facebook, Twitter	26.7	18.5	28.0	34.5
Met with friends	26.1	24.3	25.8	28.3
Cared for pets	25.7	29.3	27.5	19.9
Used a computer for school work	24.2	22.5	26.7	23.9
Cared for family members (babysitting, minding grandparents, etc.)	19.3	23.0	16.6	17.9
Helping and volunteering outside the home	8.2	12.9	7.3	3.8
Played a musical instrument	7.8	10.6	8.0	4.7
Extra lessons/tutoring	6.8	8.6	5.2	6.3
Other	6.2	5.9	6.9	5.8
None of these	0.5	0.3	0.7	0.6

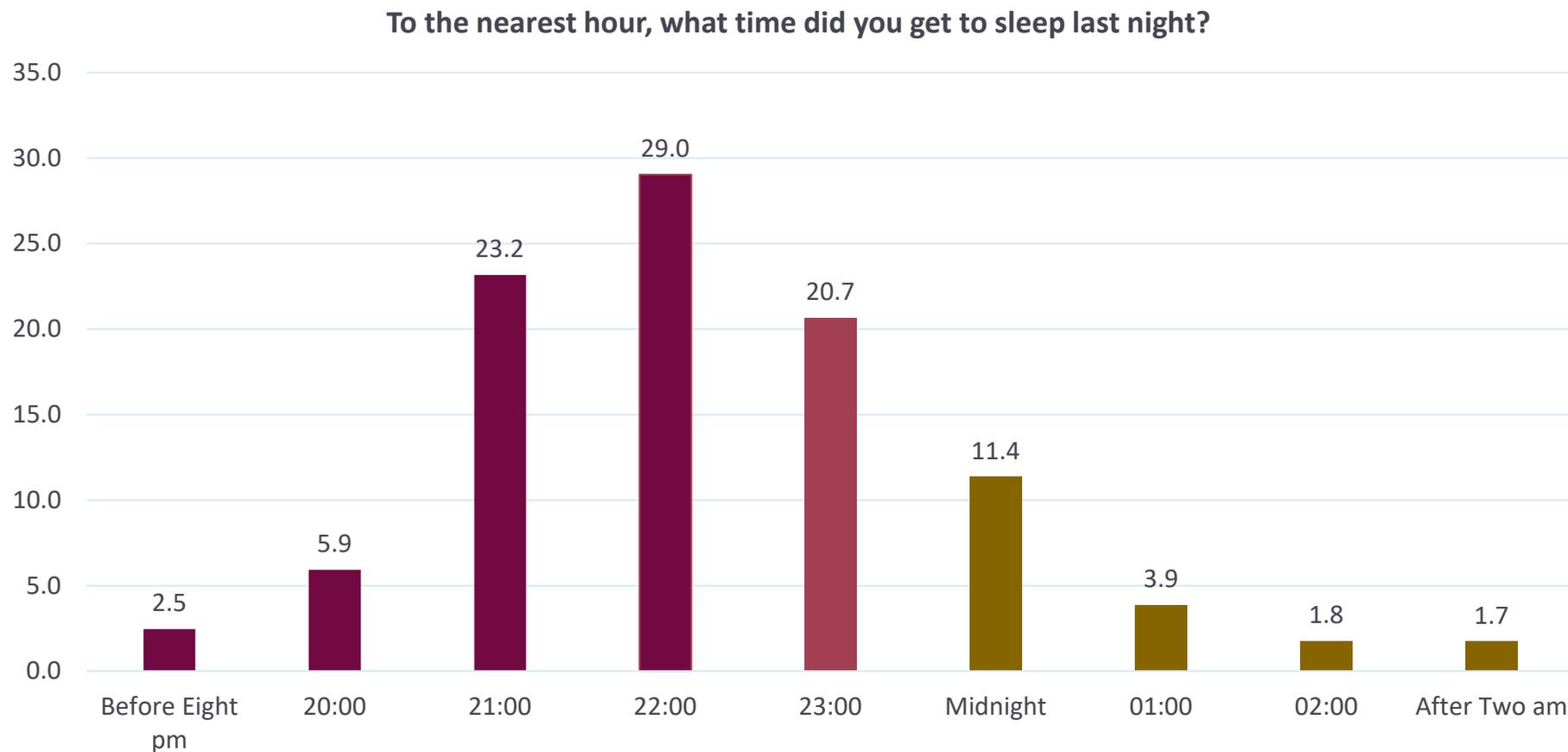
Significantly Higher than Leicester

Similar

Significantly Lower than Leicester

The NHS recommends that children require 9 to 13 hours sleep. Children will be waking by at least 8 to attend school. Therefore to have the minimum recommended amount of sleep children should be asleep by 11pm. Many children (39%) are sleeping late (11pm or later) and are at risk of not getting enough sleep.

38. To the nearest hour, what time did you get to sleep last night?



Likely to have recommended sleep

At risk of not having recommended sleep

Unlikely to have recommended sleep

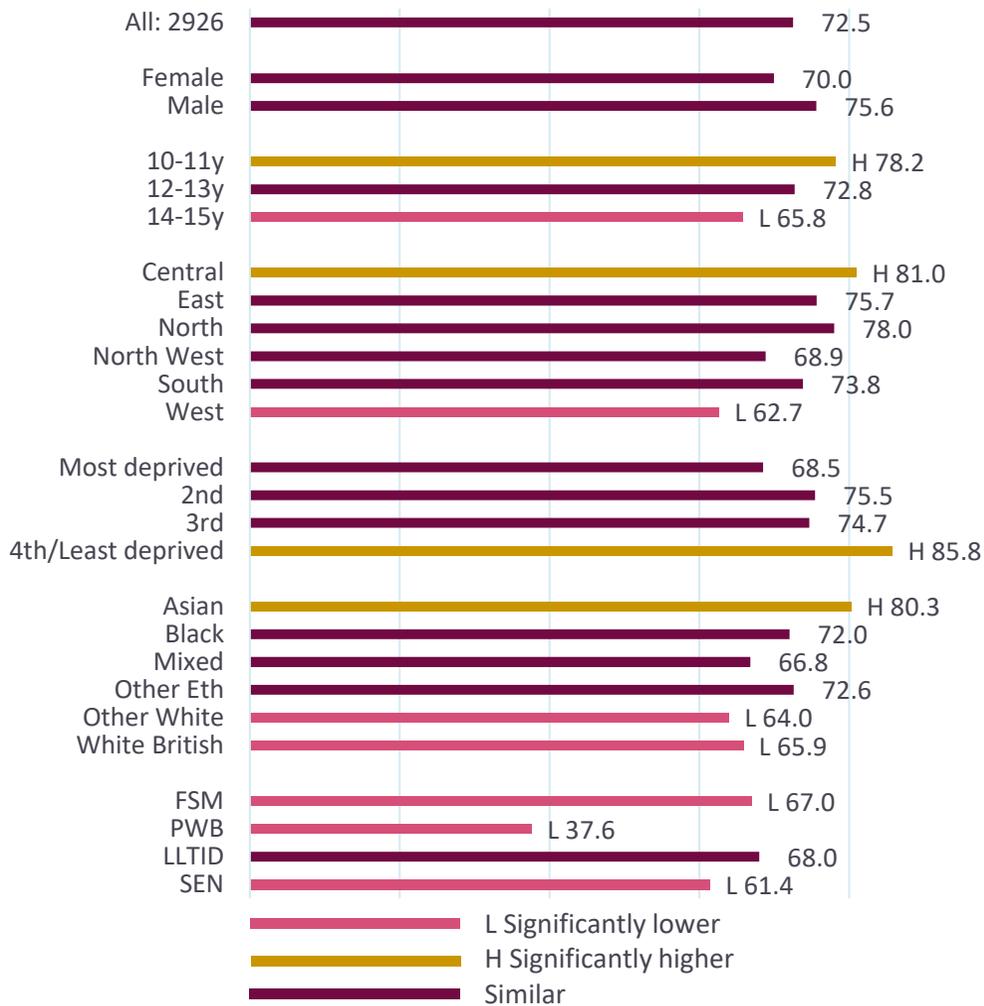
Leicester children, their environment and experiences...

- **Local area:** Around seven in ten children (73%) reported being happy with their local area. Children largely felt safe in their local area (95%), and felt safest travelling to and from school, at school, and at home.
- **Home living:** The majority of Leicester children live with their mum or dad. Over a quarter of Leicester children also live with adult siblings. One in ten live with grandparents.
- **Internet access:** 99% of children have access to the internet at home.
- **Smoking:** Around a third of children reported that their parents/carers smoke. Children who have parent/carers who smoke are more likely to have tried smoking.
- **Drugs:** Around one in ten secondary aged children reported that they have been offered drugs.
- **Bullying:** Almost one quarter of children (24%) reported that they had been bullied in the last twelve months.
- **Services:** About half or more of Leicester children have visited their dentist, doctor, pharmacy, optician, and COVID-19 test centre in the last 12 months.

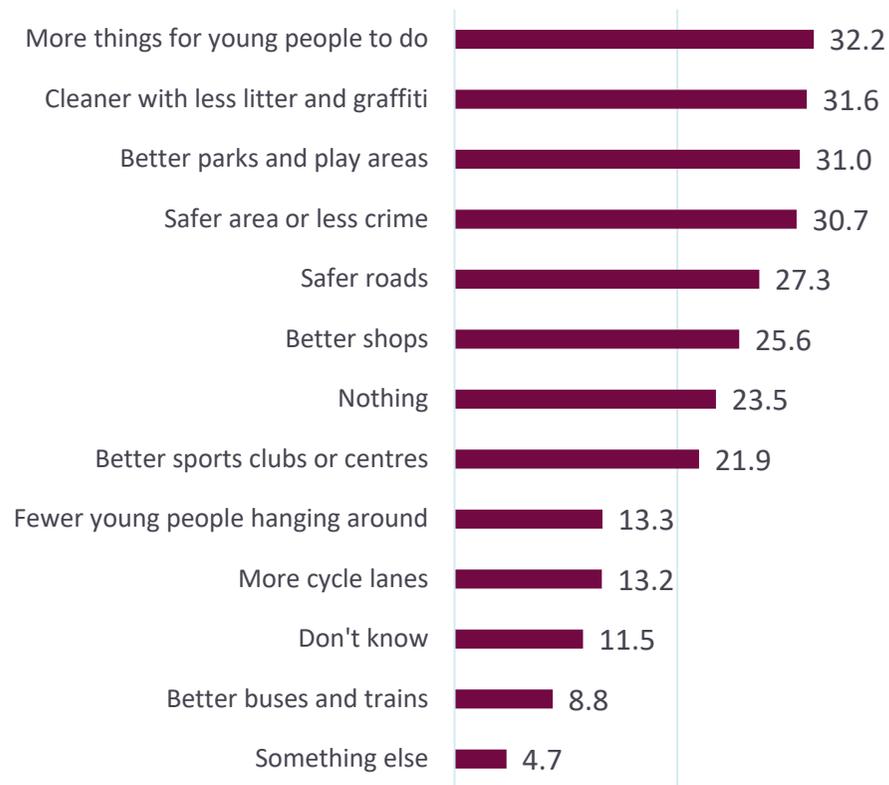
Around 7 in 10 children (73%) reported being happy with their local area, however there are differences by group. Children reported that more things for young people to do, a cleaner local area with less litter and graffiti, and better parks and play areas would improve their area.

66. Overall, how happy or unhappy are you with your local area as a place to live? 67. What would make your area a better place for you to live in?

% Happy with local area as a place to live



% answering what would make your area a better place for you to live in

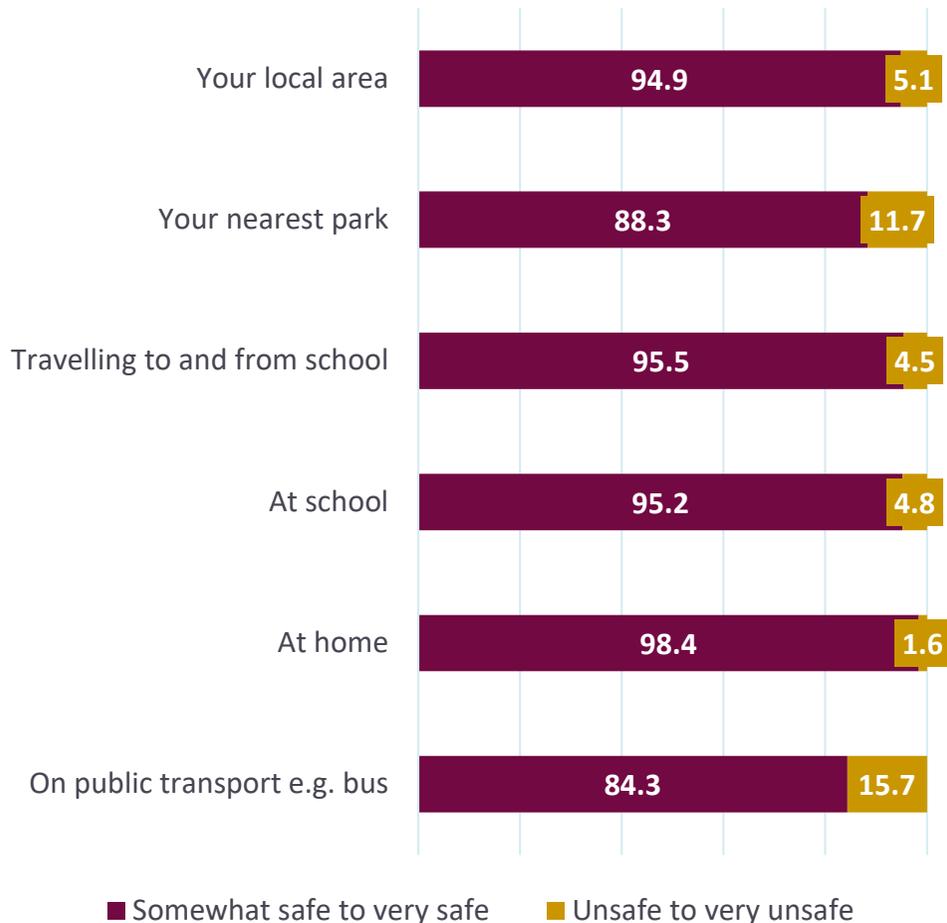


Deprivation Quintiles: Most deprived (Living in 20% most deprived areas nationally and 4th/Least deprived (living in the 40% least deprived areas nationally)
Additional groups: FSM- Free School Meals, PWB – Poor Wellbeing, LLTID – Long term limiting illness or disability, SEN Special Educational Need

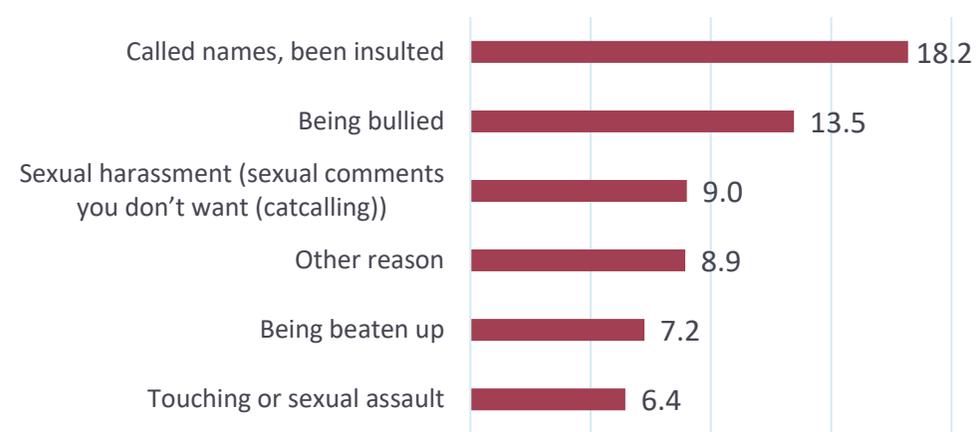
Children largely felt safe in their local area (95%), and felt safest travelling to and from school, at school, and at home. Children felt least safe on public transport and in their nearest park, with over 1 in 10 children reporting they feel unsafe in these areas.

68. How safe do you feel in these places? 69. Why have you felt unsafe in your local area?

% feelings of safety by area



% reasons why you have felt unsafe in local area*



**Note: Only Secondary aged children were asked to respond to this follow up question*

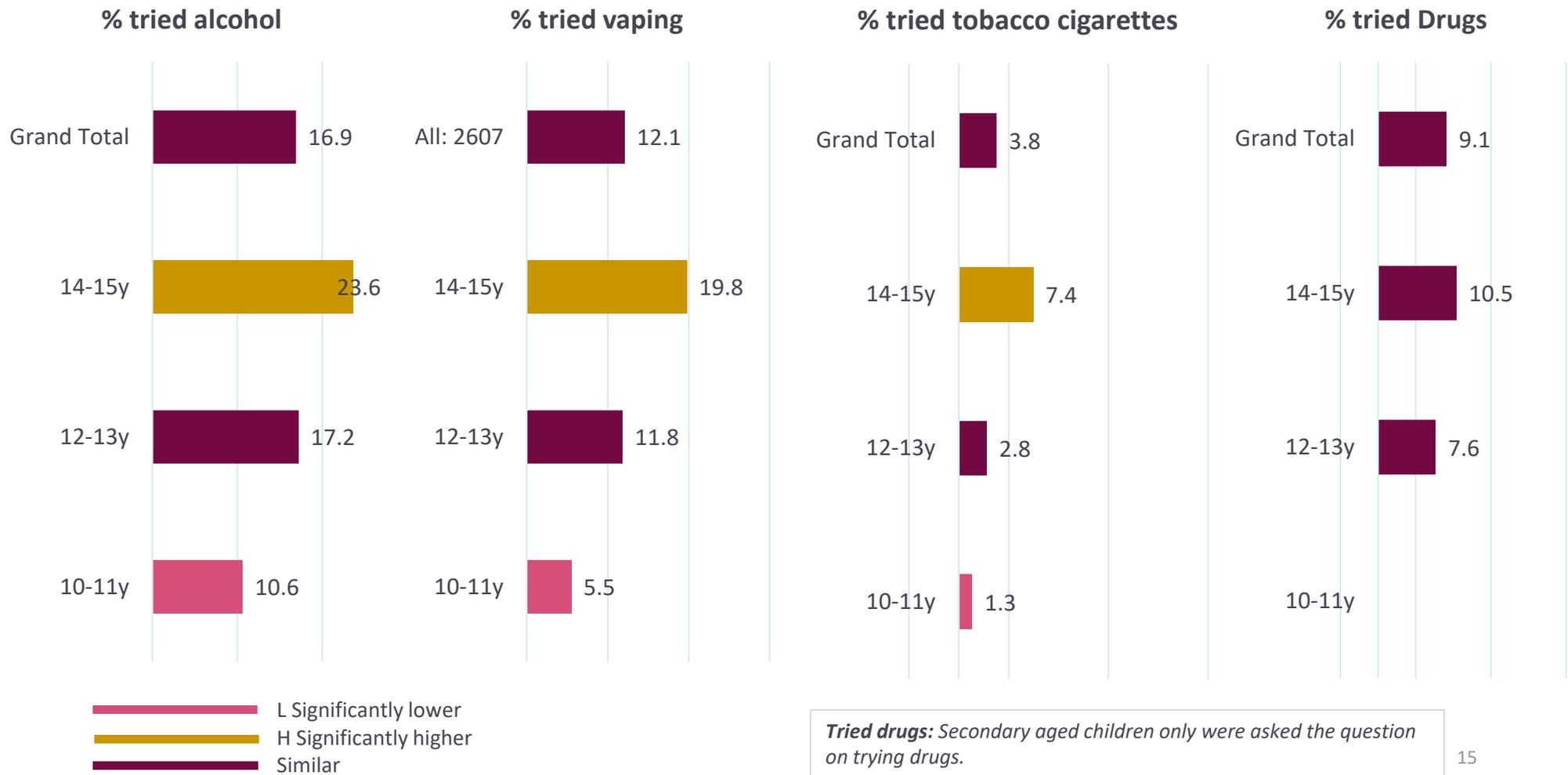
The main reasons for secondary aged children feeling unsafe in their local area include being called names and/or being insulted, and being bullied.

About one in ten (9%) children report experiencing sexual harassment and unwanted sexual comments. For females it was 17% who experienced sexual harassment.

Physical assault, inappropriate touching and/or sexual assault were the least common reasons.

Children and young people were asked if they had tried alcohol, tobacco, vaping and drugs. Older children were more likely to have experimented with alcohol, tobacco, vaping or drugs compared to younger children.

55, 59 & 61 Have you tried any of the following? (Alcohol, E-cigarettes, Tobacco Cigarettes, Drugs) - by age group



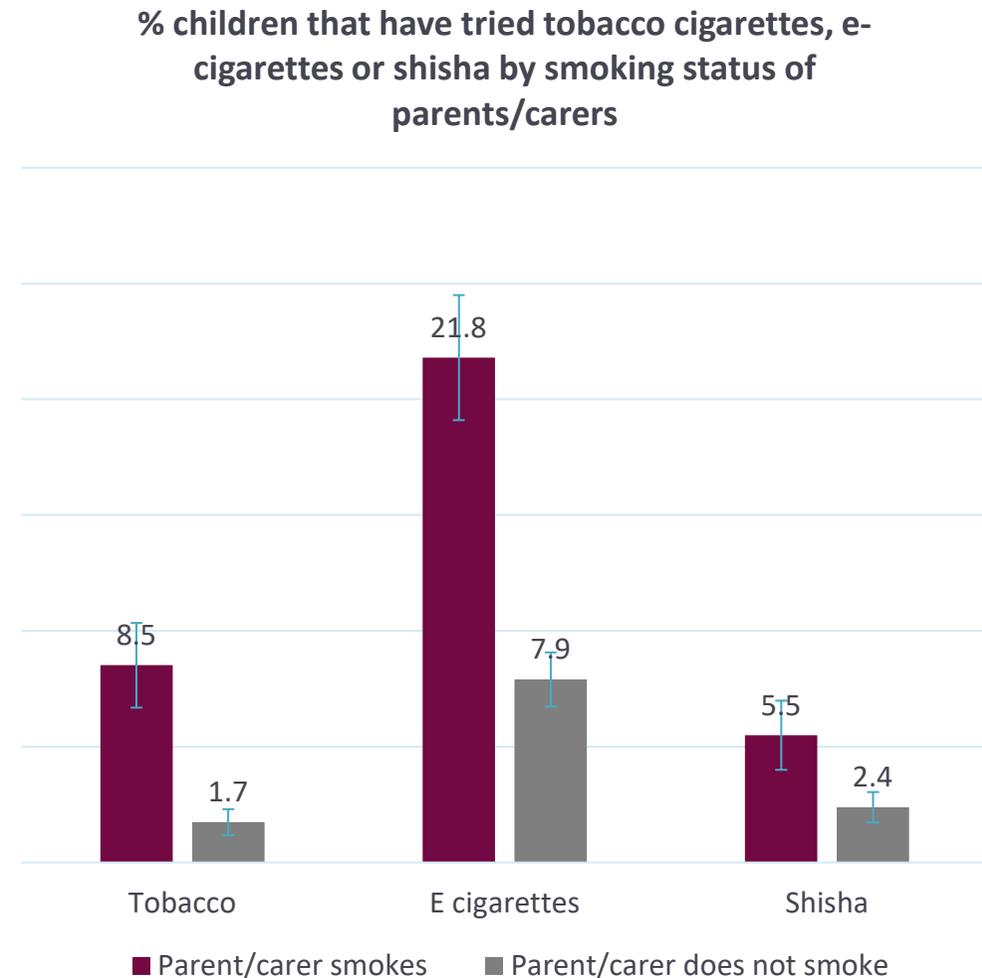
The smoking status of a parent/carer has a strong influence on whether children have tried smoking/vaping. Children who have parent/carers who smoke are more likely to have tried tobacco cigarettes, e-cigarettes or shisha.

58 and 59. Have you tried any of the following? (Tobacco cigarettes, shisha waterpipe, e-cigarettes) - by smoking status of parents/carers

The proportion of children reporting that they have tried tobacco cigarettes, e-cigarettes or shisha was significantly higher in those whose parents/carers smoke than those whose parents/carers do not smoke.

Over one in five (22%) children with parents/carers who smoke have tried e-cigarettes (vaping).

Nearly one in ten (9%) children with parents/carers who smoke have tried tobacco cigarettes, and around one in twenty (6%) have tried shisha.

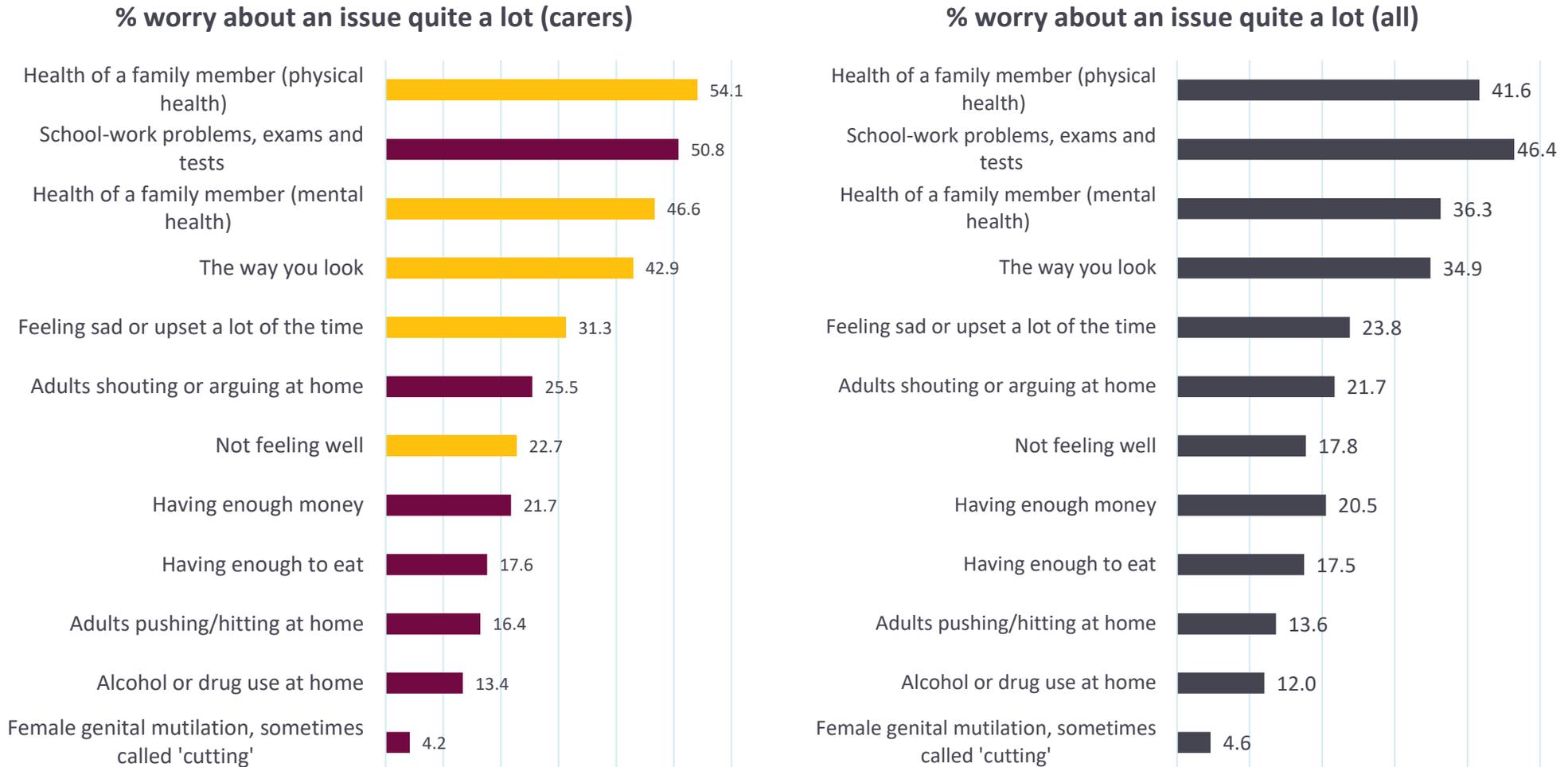


Emotional wellbeing of Leicester children...

- **Worries:** It is normal for children to worry, four out of five children worry about at least one issue quite a lot. The biggest worries include school work, health of a family member (physical and mental) and the way they look. About one in five children worry about having enough money or enough to eat.
- **Mental wellbeing:** One in ten Leicester children have a poor mental wellbeing score.
- **Adult confidant:** One in ten (10.1%) Leicester children do not have a trusted adult confidant.
- **Resilience:** Children with no adult confidant find it more difficult to deal with issues when something goes wrong and show signs of poorer resilience.
- **Reaction to worries:** A minority of children sometimes react to worries and stress by drinking alcohol or smoking cigarettes. A larger 15% of secondary aged children will react by cutting or harming themselves.

It is normal for children to worry, four out of five children worry about at least one issue quite a lot. The biggest worries include school work, health of a family member (physical and mental) and the way they look. About one in five children worry about having enough money or enough to eat. About one in five children worry about having enough money or enough to eat.

50-52. How much do you worry about the issues listed below? Young carer comparison

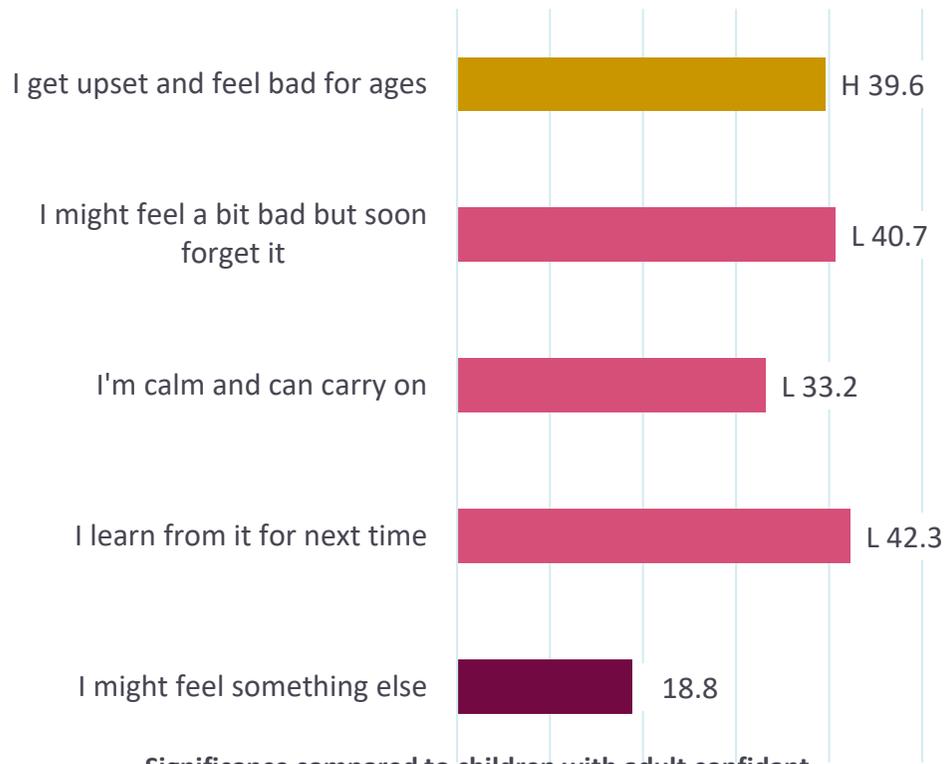


Significance: L Significantly lower (pink bar), H Significantly higher (yellow bar), Similar (dark red bar)

Children with no adult confidant (10%) find it more difficult to deal with issues when something goes wrong and show signs of poorer resilience.

48. If something goes wrong... (resilience) & 49. do you know an adult you trust?

% If something goes wrong children with no adult confidant always/usually...



% If something goes wrong children with an adult confidant always/usually...



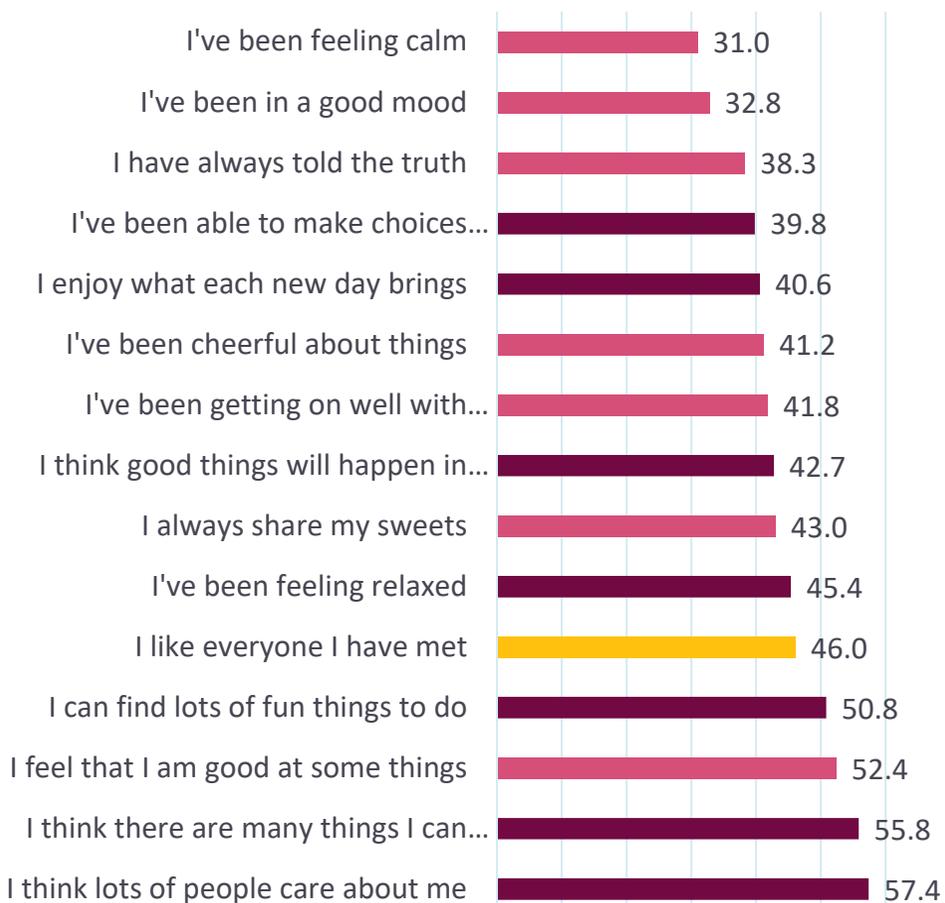
Significance compared to children with adult confidant

- L Significantly lower
- H Significantly higher
- Similar

Children with special educational need are significantly less likely to always/most of the time... enjoy what new days bring, feel calm, be cheerful about things, be in a good mood, and get on well with people compared to children with no long term illness or disability.

47. The Stirling Children's Wellbeing Scale. SEN statement breakdown.

% SEN children



% Non SEN children

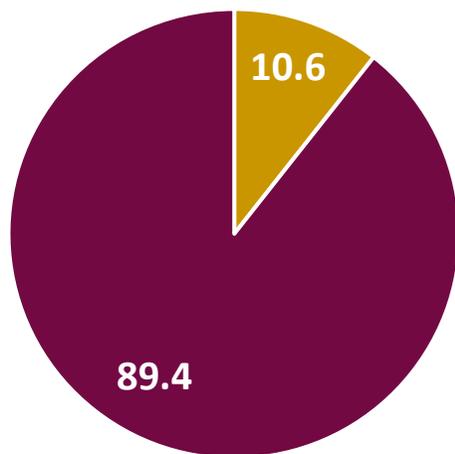


█ Significantly higher than non SEN children
█ Significantly lower than non SEN children

One in ten Leicester children have a poor mental wellbeing score. Girls are more likely to have a poor wellbeing score. Children with a disability or long term illness and children with special education needs also report higher poor mental wellbeing scores.

47. The Stirling Children's Wellbeing Scale. Scoring indicates poor mental wellbeing

Stirling Health and Wellbeing Scale Score (%)



- 12-30: Indicative of poor mental health
- 31-60: Not indicative of poor mental health

Deprivation Quintiles: Most deprived (Living in 20% most deprived areas nationally and 4th/Least deprived (living in the 40% least deprived areas nationally)

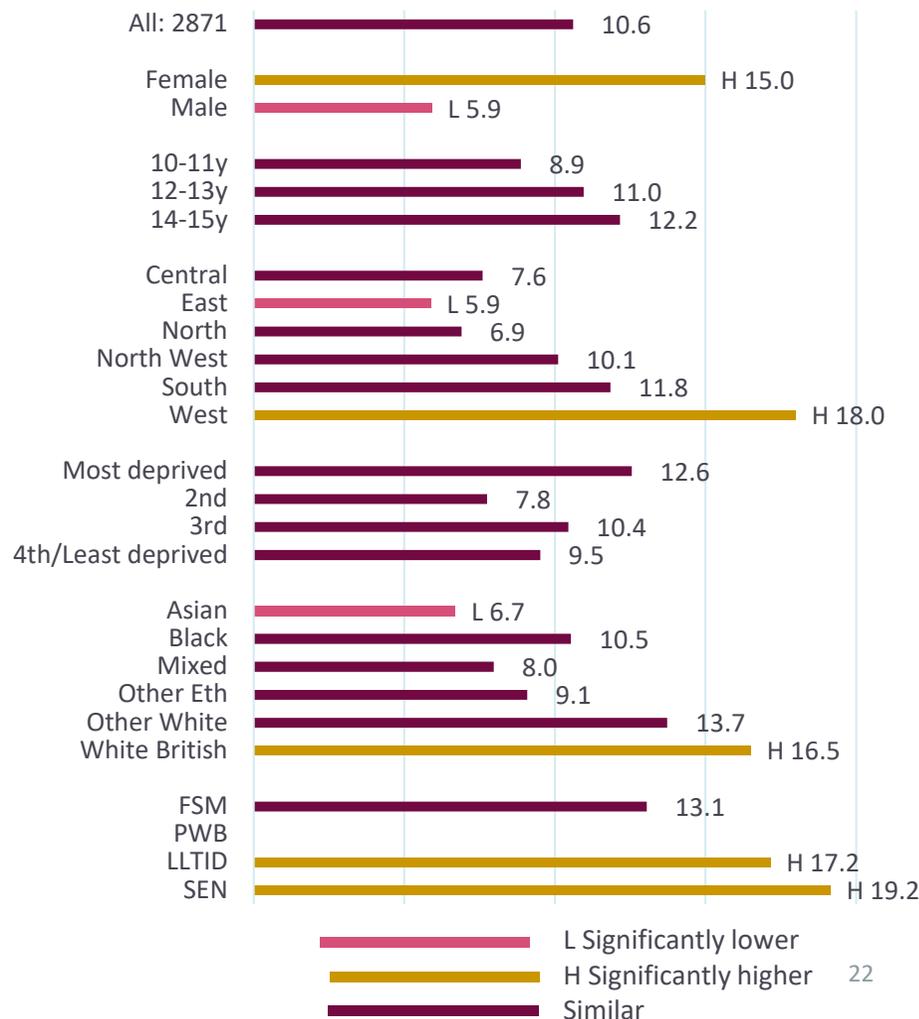
Additional groups: FSM- Free School Meals

PWB – Poor Wellbeing

LLTID – Long term limiting illness or disability

SEN Special Educational Need

% Poor Mental Wellbeing



Summary table: Risk factors by demographics and other groups

% of children	Caring for family members	Nothing to eat for breakfast	No fruit and vegetable portions	Less active (under 30 mins a day)	Five or more hours of Screen time	Going to sleep at midnight or later	Poor Resilience	No trusted adult	Worry about having enough to eat	Parent carer smokes	Bullied in the last 12 months
All:	19.3	31.3	13.3	47.9	27.1	18.7	28.0	10.1	17.5	30.2	24.4
Female	23.5	33.4	12.4	53.4	26.6	19.5	35.9	10.8	14.6	29.3	26.3
Male	15.7	29.2	14.0	43.0	26.9	17.8	20.3	9.1	20.0	31.1	22.2
10-11 years	23.0	22.1	9.2	47.9	16.5	7.4	31.6	6.2	25.0	28.2	32.2
12-13 years	16.6	34.5	13.0	42.8	29.7	20.4	26.0	10.5	15.1	31.5	23.9
14-15 years	17.9	39.1	18.2	52.5	36.4	29.0	26.1	14.3	11.3	31.4	16.0
Asian British	18.6	27.0	10.8	50.0	16.0	14.7	26.4	9.6	15.7	14.1	17.7
Black British	18.2	35.7	17.7	48.2	30.8	14.8	28.9	14.0	17.5	19.2	23.8
Mixed Heritage	19.1	34.4	13.9	49.6	29.4	22.2	26.8	11.9	18.3	32.1	21.7
Other Ethnicity	19.3	30.8	10.5	46.4	23.3	17.8	19.5	14.4	23.9	17.6	19.1
Other White	17.9	29.5	13.8	50.7	41.5	30.6	30.4	10.0	17.0	58.7	30.8
White British	20.4	37.3	15.2	40.9	40.1	23.0	31.9	8.1	15.8	54.1	33.9
Free Sch Meals	20.7	33.7	13.1	47.1	34.7	24.0	31.0	10.4	19.6	42.7	29.6
Poor wellbeing	21.6	52.7	28.2	55.8	50.3	38.7	55.3	32.9	20.3	51.2	46.7
Long term ill	21.3	34.2	13.4	46.5	37.2	24.2	29.5	13.8	17.6	41.7	32.3
SEN	20.6	31.7	18.3	50.8	35.6	26.8	39.6	11.5	32.2	45.8	37.5

Significantly higher

No significant differences

Significantly lower

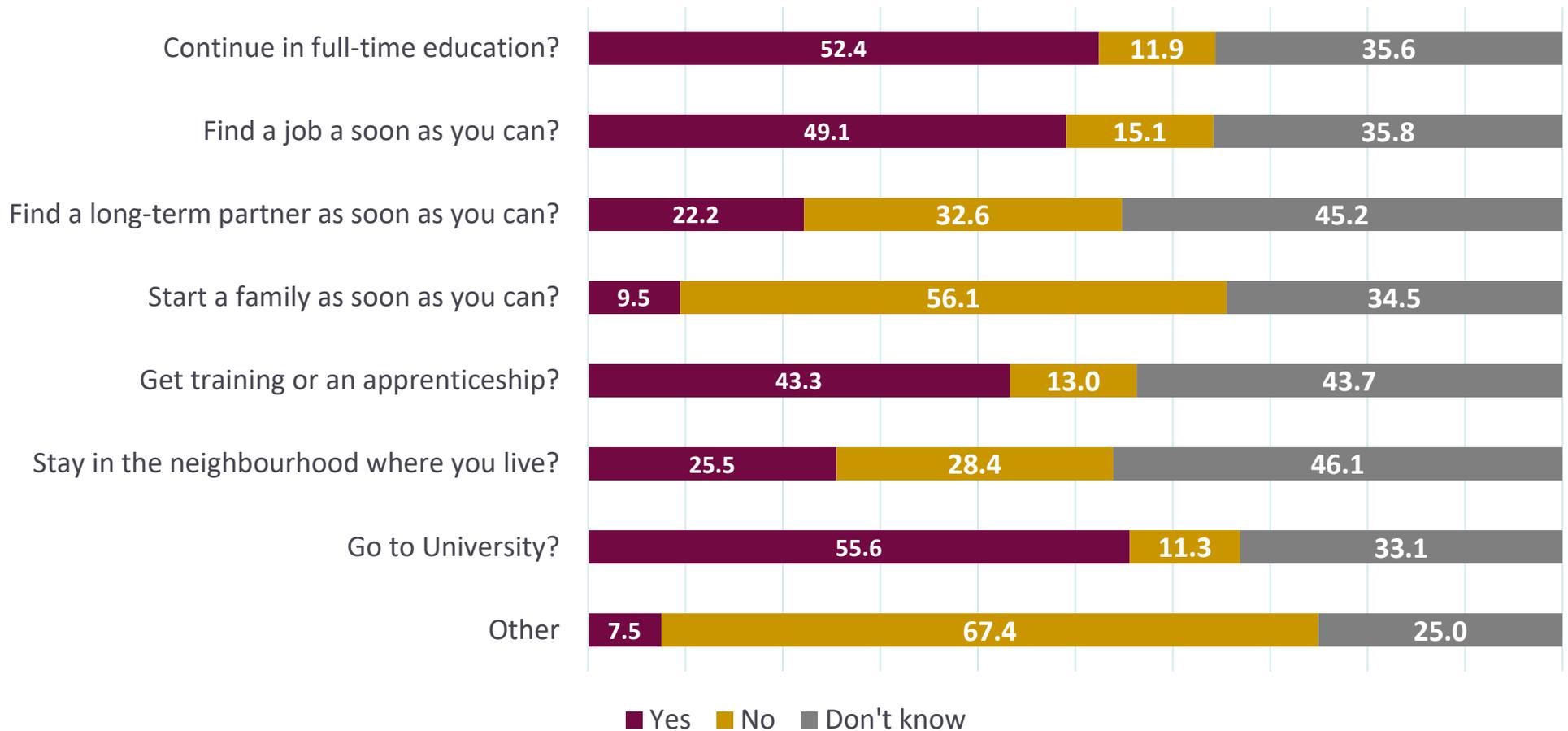
And finally...

- Children's aspirations
- Reflections on changes since 2016/17
- Conclusions
- Next steps

About half of children (52%) would like to continue in full time education after leaving school, and a similar proportion of children would like to go to university (56%). About half of children would like to find a job as soon as they can (49%), and about four in ten children would like an apprenticeship (43%).

80. When you leave school, do you want to...?

% When you leave school do you want to...



Note: Only Secondary aged children were asked to respond to this question

Conclusions

- Overall, the survey paints a picture of children and young people who are positive about life and their prospects, but there are challenges and some Leicester children report significant health and wellbeing issues.
- About one in five children worry about having enough to eat, and for children with a SEN it is closer to one in three.
- Following the pandemic there has been a significant increase in the proportion of children who have caring/babysitting responsibilities (19%).
- Excessive screen time (27%) and poor sleeping habits (39%) is an issue for many children.
- Children with no adult confidant in their lives (10%) showed signs of poorer resilience compared to those with a trusted adult.
- Children with a poor mental wellbeing score (10%) report poor health and wellbeing and are amongst the most vulnerable group of children. Half of these children have reported self harm.

Making use of the results...

- Support the dissemination of results and data.
- Consider the results and findings when commissioning/reviewing services for children and young people in Leicester.
- To inform targeted provision of services.
- This is a unique set of data and many local authorities will not have access to this level of data for this age group. Data from past health and wellbeing surveys have been used in a variety of successful funding bids.
- Get in touch – there is a wealth of data that can be further interrogated.



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[Leicester health and wellbeing surveys](#)

Completed by Leicester City Council, Division of Public Health and the School Health Education Unit

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