

Smoking, Drinking and Drug Use Among Young People 2009

User Guide

Background and targets

This survey is the latest in a series of surveys of secondary school children in England which provides the national estimates of the proportion of young people aged 11-15 who smoke, drink alcohol or take illegal drugs. The first survey in the series, carried out in 1982, measured the prevalence of smoking among pupils and described their smoking behaviour. Trends in smoking were monitored by similar surveys carried out every two years. Questions on alcohol consumption were added to the survey in 1988; the 1998 survey was the first to include questions on the prevalence of drug use.

Since 1998, surveys have been carried out annually, with a core section of questions included covering the following:

- Pupils' experience of smoking, drinking and drug use;
- Consumption of cigarettes and alcoholic drinks in the last week; and
- Awareness and availability of specific named drugs.

In alternate years the remainder of the questionnaire focuses on either smoking and drinking or on drug taking. The 2004, 2006 and 2008 surveys focussed mainly on smoking and drinking, the 2005, 2007 and 2009 surveys focussed mainly on drugs. This long established series of national surveys acts as an official measure of progress towards targets for reducing smoking and drug use among young people.

Between 1998 and 2010, smoking, drinking alcohol and drug use were each the focus of the then government's policy; in each case there were initiatives aimed specifically at children and young people. At the time of writing (June 2010), the coalition government has yet to publish updated strategic priorities in these areas.¹

Sample Design

The survey was conducted in schools by asking pre-selected groups of pupils to complete a confidential questionnaire. Both schools and pupils were selected randomly so that every eligible child in England had an equal chance of inclusion in the study.

The survey population (that is, the coverage of the survey) is pupils in school years 7-11 in England. Therefore, those taking part are mainly aged 11-15. Schools with any pupils in these school years are eligible for selection, with the exception of special schools, hospital special schools and pupil referral units. All other types, namely comprehensive, secondary modern, grammar and private schools, are included. More detail about the survey design can be found in Appendix A of the main report.

In total, 247 schools agreed to take part in the survey out of the 460 selected, a response rate of 54%. Five schools in the original sample were found to be ineligible. An average of 35 pupils per school were selected to take part from across all classes in years 7 to 11. The response from selected pupils in participating schools was 87%, yielding a total of 7,674

¹ The Coalition's *Programme for government*, published in May 2010, included commitments to allow the police and local authorities to close shops or bars found to be persistently selling alcohol to children, and to double the fine for selling alcohol to young people below the legal age; other proposals refer to alcohol pricing, which could be expected to have an impact on young people's consumption.
http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/media/409088/pfg_coalition.pdf

completed usable questionnaires. The product of the school and pupil rates gave an overall response of 47%. In each participating school, a member of staff was asked to complete a short questionnaire about school policy; 236 completed, usable school policy questionnaires were received.

Documentation

The documentation has been organised into the following sections

- Interview (contains self-completion booklet and policy questionnaire)
- Data (contains the list of variables, documentation of derived variables and marked-up questionnaire)
- Other instructions (contains interviewer and coding & editing instructions)
- Findings (Report and Summary booklet)

Using the data

The data consists of two files.

SDD09 eng archive.sav	7,674 records	Contains data for all pupils who completed a questionnaire
SDD09 policy archive.sav	236 records	Contains data for all schools who completed a policy questionnaire

Variables on the files

Each of the data files contain questionnaire variables (excluding variables used for administrative purposes) and derived variables. The variables included in the individual file are detailed in the “**List of Variables**” document in the data section of the documentation. This document is the best place to look at in order to plan your analysis.

Once you have decided which variables to include in your analysis, you can look up details of the question wording using the interview section documentation (all variables on the data file are given by name in the copy of the interview schedules provided), or use the “**Derived Variables**” document in the data section of the documentation for derived variables.

Weighting variables

There is no weighted variable.

Missing values conventions

- 1 Not applicable: Used to signify that a particular variable did not apply to a given respondent usually because of internal routing.
- 8 Don't know, Can't say.
- 9 No answer/ Refused