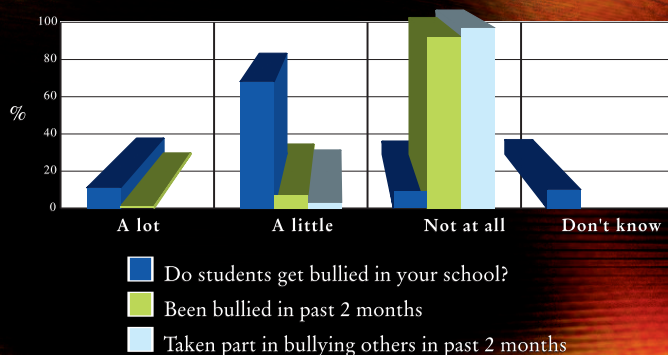


BULLYING IN SCHOOL

The 2005 YLT survey asked a range of questions on experiences of bullying in school. Almost one third (30%) of respondents said they had been bullied in school, and 7% of respondents said they had taken part in bullying other students.

The graph below shows how much respondents said bullying occurred in their school and how much bullying they had experienced themselves in the past 2 months.



Two thirds (67%) of respondents said that their school had staff whose job it was to deal with bullying. However, only 16% of respondents from these schools said they would go and talk to these members of staff, whilst a further 60% said that it depended on the circumstances whether they would or not.

The table below shows that only 36% of respondents who went to schools where students got bullied a lot felt school provided real help to victims of bullying compared to 82% from schools where students did not get bullied.

| | Students get bullied in school: | | | |
|------------|---------------------------------|----------|------------|------------|
| | A lot | A little | Not at all | Don't know |
| Real help | 36 | 54 | 82 | 56 |
| No help | 49 | 26 | 8 | 10 |
| Don't know | 12 | 17 | 9 | 32 |

BACKGROUND OF THE YLT SURVEY

All too often the opinions of young people are ignored when decisions are made about many of the issues involving them.

Every year the Young Life and Times (YLT) survey invites around 2,000 16 year olds from all parts in Northern Ireland to tell us about their experiences of school, and their views on politics, sectarianism and other social issues. In 2005, 819 young people responded.

This leaflet provides a summary of key findings of the 2005 YLT survey.

More detailed results on specific issues as well as research updates are freely available on the YLT website at www.ark.ac.uk/ylt.

As in the previous year, many participants commented that taking part in the survey gave them a good opportunity to express their views on issues that affected them. They suggested a range of subjects that could be asked in future surveys. Some of these questions will be included in the 2006 YLT survey.

Comments on the YLT survey are welcome any time and can be submitted via the YLT website.

ARK is a joint resource between Queen's University Belfast and the University of Ulster.

For further information contact:

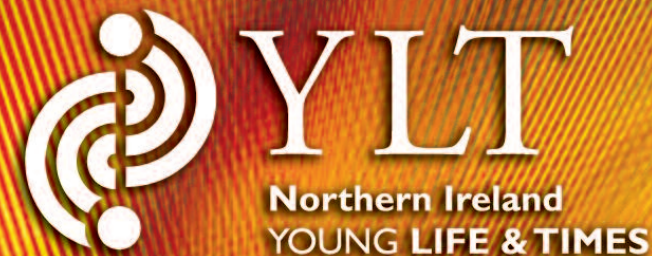
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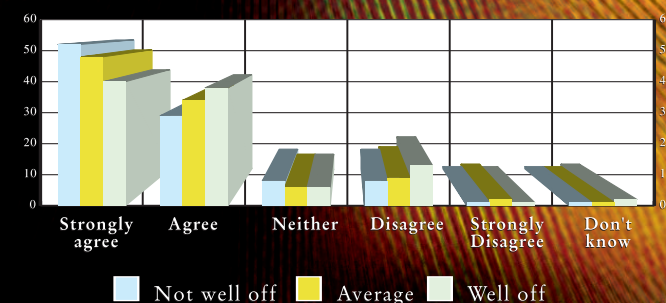


2005 YOUNG LIFE AND TIMES SURVEY SUMMARY OF RESULTS

'THE SCHOOL EDUCATION SYSTEM PUTS TOO MUCH PRESSURES ON PUPILS AT TOO YOUNG AN AGE. MOST PEOPLE I KNOW FIND THIS APPALLING. AT 16 WE ARE FORCED TO DO GCSE'S AND IF WE DON'T DO WELL WE CAN'T EVEN CONTINUE AT THAT SAME SCHOOL.'

'I THINK AMONGST YOUNG PEOPLE THAT I KNOW RELIGIOUS BACKGROUND OR ETHNIC ORIGIN IS IRRELEVANT. IT IS GOOD THAT LOTS OF PEOPLE MY AGE HAVE RESPECT FOR OTHERS FROM DIFFERENT RELIGIOUS COMMUNITIES, BUT ADULTS NEED TO HAVE CROSS-COMMUNITY INTERACTIONS ALSO.'

There are not enough social places for teenagers (by financial family background of respondents)



WHO TOOK PART IN THE 2005 YLT SURVEY?

All young people from Northern Ireland who celebrated their 16th birthday in February 2005 were invited to take part in the survey. Among the 819 16 year olds that responded:

- 42% were male and 58% female.
- 24% said they lived in a big city or its outskirts, 42% lived in a small town and 32% lived in a village or in the countryside.
- 46% attended a grammar school, 46% attended a secondary school, 4% attended planned integrated schools and 1% attended other schools.
- 83% regarded themselves as belonging to a particular religion, 16% said they did not.
- One half of respondents who belonged to a religion were Catholics (50%). 21% were Presbyterians, 14% belonged to the Church of Ireland, 4% were Methodist and 2% were Free Presbyterian. 9% belonged to other churches.
- Over half (58%) of those who belonged to a religion said they attended church at least once a month.
- One quarter (25%) of respondents said their families were financially either very well-off or well-off. 18% said their families were not at all well-off or not well-off. The majority (52%) of respondents described their family's financial situation as average.
- Over one third (36%) of respondents said they intended to leave Northern Ireland, mainly to study or to seek a better future generally. However 53% of these respondents also said they would come back to live in Northern Ireland.

EXPERIENCES OF SCHOOL + EMA

87% of respondents agreed that staying on in full-time education seriously improved career prospects, and about half (51%) of all respondents felt that people who stayed on in education would eventually earn more money.

16% of respondents agreed that there was nothing wrong with relying on benefits after school.

Nine out of ten (89%) respondents had heard about Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA), most of them through school (70%). Almost half (49%) of those who described their family as financially not well-off said that EMA influenced their decision whether to continue education compared to 11% of those who said they were financially well-off, as the table below shows:

Did EMA influence your decision whether to stay on in school or not? (%)

| | Not well off | Average | Well off | All |
|------------|--------------|---------|----------|-----|
| A lot | 12 | 2 | 1 | 3 |
| A little | 37 | 27 | 10 | 25 |
| Not at all | 46 | 65 | 85 | 66 |

Over one quarter (27%) of respondents said they get stressed very often or often. The most frequently identified reasons for feeling stressed related to school, such as the amount of coursework, parents' expectations and exams pressure. One respondent said:

'School used to stress me because of all the work & homework you are forced to do, which I don't think is very fair.'

Despite the stress that school caused to many of the young people who took part in the survey, 87% of respondents said they would continue to attend school or college after their GCSE exams, and three out of four (75%) respondents wanted to continue with third level education in two years' time.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS & IDENTITY

57% of YLT respondents felt that their national identity was important to them and 47% felt that their religious identity was important. Religious and national identity was more important for Catholics than for Protestants.

- 34% of respondents said they were Irish. Over one quarter (27%) said their national identity was Northern Irish. 26% said they were British, whilst 5% of respondents described their national identity as Ulster.
- 41% felt they were part of the Catholic community, 39% said they were Protestant and 18% felt they were part of neither community.

Of those who felt part of the Catholic community:

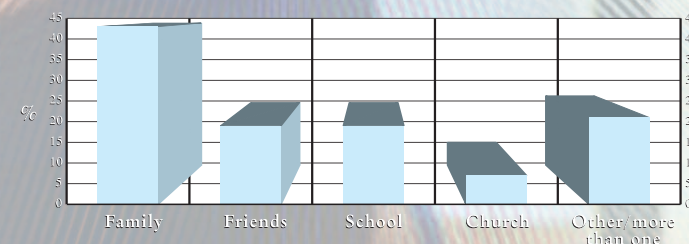
- 81% agreed they were proud of this;
- whilst 16% agreed they were sometimes embarrassed about this.

Of those who felt part of the Protestant community:

- 62% agreed they were proud of this;
- whilst 26% agreed they were sometimes embarrassed about this.

76% of respondents had had contact with young people from other religious communities and 57% had taken part in cross-community projects.

The graph below shows that family was the most frequently identified influence on how respondents felt about the other main religious community.



Only 12% of Protestants felt unfavourable towards Catholics and 6% of Catholics felt unfavourable towards Protestants.