Summary of Results

2016 Young Life and Times Survey

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 16-year-olds from all parts of Northern Ireland to tell us about their experiences of school, and their views on politics, community relations and other social issues. In 2016, 1,009 young people responded.

This leaflet provides a summary of the key findings of the 2016 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.

Many participants of the survey suggested a range of subjects that could be asked in future. Some of these questions will be included in the 2017 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 Ulster University.

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Education

78% of YLT respondents said that, on the whole, they were happy in school. Males were just as likely to be happy in school as females, and there was no difference in happiness of pupils between different school types attended.

The vast majority of respondents had received information on alcohol and drugs (Figure 5).

Figure 5: Respondents saying they had lessons on... (%)
Who took part in the 2016 YLT survey?

All young people living in Northern Ireland who celebrated their 16th birthday in February and March 2016 were invited to take part in the survey. Of the 1,009 16-year olds that responded:

- 42% were male and 57% were female.
- 21% said they lived in a big city or its outskirts, 40% lived in a small town and 38% lived in a village or in the countryside.
- 55% attended a grammar school, 35% attended a secondary school, 7% attended a planned integrated school and 4% attended some other type of school.
- Around 1 in 2 respondents said they would consider studying (49%) or working (52%) abroad whilst around 1 in 3 (31%) said they would consider doing an apprenticeship abroad.
- 76% lived with both their parents, 18% lived only with their mother and 2% lived only with their father. 3% lived with their mother some time and their father some time.
- 13% of respondents said they had a long-standing physical or mental health condition.
- 70% regarded themselves as belonging to a particular religion, 30% said they did not.
- 37% of 16 year olds identified as Irish, 36% as Northern Irish, 21% as British and 6% had a different national identity.
- 8% of males and 16% of females had been sexually attracted to a person of the same sex at least once.
- 34% of respondents said their families were financially either very well-off or well-off. 15% said their families were not at all well-off or not well-off. About half (51%) of respondents described their family’s financial situation as average.

Sense of Belonging and Respect

Nearly three quarters (75%) of 16-year olds said they had a sense of belonging to the neighbourhood in which they lived; however, only 11% of 16-year olds felt that they had some influence in local decisions.

Over seven in ten (72%) 16-year olds also expressed a sense of belonging to Northern Ireland, but only 8% felt that they had any influence on decisions in Northern Ireland.

18% of 16-year olds agreed that people in NI respected each other, 44% disagreed (Figure 3).

**Figure 3: Northern Ireland is a place where people respect each other (%)**

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Experience of Sport and Culture

The word cloud below illustrates what 16-year olds think of when they hear the word ‘culture’. The larger the word, the more often it was mentioned.

**Figure 4: What respondents think of when they hear the word ‘culture’**

Table 1 shows what proportion of YLT respondents thought they expressed their culture in these ways

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How do you express your culture?</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In what you wear</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In the activities you take part in</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In your religious beliefs and practice</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In the language you speak</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In what you eat</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In who you hang about</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In the music you hear and films you watch</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Something else</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Not having enough time was the single most important reason why respondents said they did not engage in more sport (65%) or cultural activities (69%).

Only 5% of respondents were physically active at the recommended level, i.e. at least one hour every day of the week. 12% said they were not active for 60 minutes any day of the week. The most likely response (33%) was that 16-year olds were active for one hour 2-3 times per week.