



Public Health
England

Protecting and improving the nation's health

Cyberbullying: An analysis of data from the Health Behaviour in School-aged Children (HBSC) survey for England, 2014

About Public Health England

Public Health England exists to protect and improve the nation's health and wellbeing, and reduce health inequalities. We do this through world-class science, knowledge and intelligence, advocacy, partnerships and the delivery of specialist public health services. We are an executive agency of the Department of Health, and are a distinct delivery organisation with operational autonomy to advise and support government, local authorities and the NHS in a professionally independent manner.

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Executive summary

This report summarises data on cyberbullying informed by an analysis of data from the Health Behaviour in School-aged Children (HBSC) study for England, 2014.¹ The data draws on responses from 5,335 students aged 11-15 years who completed the HBSC survey in England.

This thematic report presents data from the most recent survey and illustrates associations between cyberbullying and demographics and social context. Relationships of importance and relevance which demonstrate considerable differences have been reported – guided by previous work on HBSC which has mapped protective factors across individual, family, school and local community domains.

This report is one of a series of three, the others covering self-harm and the wellbeing of adolescent girls.

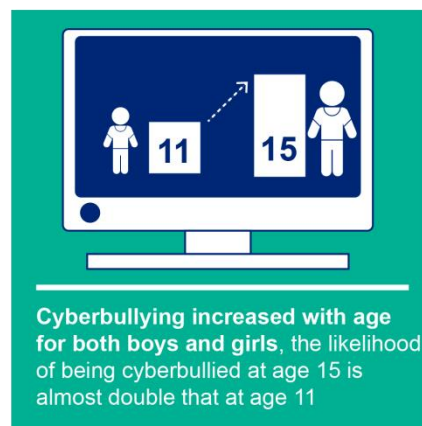
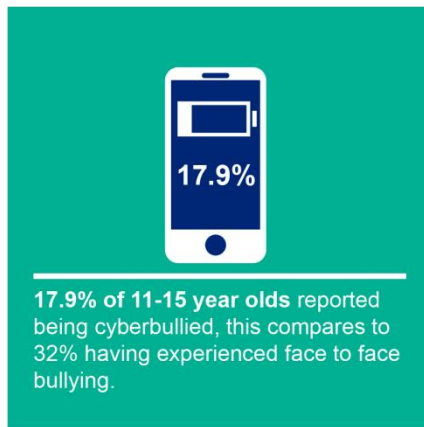
This report is intended for a range of audiences interested in promoting children and young people's mental wellbeing, including for example local public health specialists, school nurses, head teachers and college principals, CCG leads, local councillors, CAMHS leads, mental health strategic clinical networks and local children and young people's mental health commissioners.

Key points:

- in the 2014 HBSC study, 17.9% of 11-15 year olds reported being cyberbullied in the two months prior to being surveyed (Table 1)
- girls were twice as likely as boys to report being cyberbullied (Table 3)
- cyberbullying increased with age for both boys and girls; the reported prevalence rates of cyberbullying at age 15 were almost double those for 11 year olds (Table 1)
- cyberbullying is associated with socio-economic status. Young people from more affluent families were more likely to report being victims of cyberbullying (Table 4)
- young people who reported positive family communication, especially with a father, were less likely to experience cyberbullying (Table 7, Table 8)
- positive perceptions of the school environment were associated with lower levels of cyberbullying (Table 11)
- cyberbullying was associated with feelings of safety in young people's local neighbourhood (Table 13)

¹ For more information about the HBSC study see Appendix 1

Cyberbullying:key stats



Referenced from the Health Behaviour in School Age Children survey <http://www.hbscengland.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/National-Report-2015.pdf>

Introduction

Cyberbullying can be defined as a form of bullying which is carried out using electronic communication, including through the internet, social media and mobile phones.¹ The majority of 12-15 year olds now have access to an internet enabled device, be that a smartphone or tablet,² and as these devices can be accessed 24/7 with a vast audience, the potential exists for cyberbullying to have a wider reach when compared with more traditional forms of bullying.

Defining characteristics of cyberbullying

Bullying can be defined as intentional harmful behaviours carried out repeatedly over time, against an individual with less physical or psychological strength, who cannot defend themselves.³ There are broadly four types of bullying: physical, verbal, relational and cyber.⁴

Cyberbullying can take the form of many behaviours including:

- harmful messages (text, instant, email)
- impersonating another person online
- sharing private messages
- uploading photographs or videos of another person that leads to shame and embarrassment
- creating hate websites/social media pages
- excluding people from online groups.

Traditional forms of bullying and cyberbullying are related, with very few victims of bullying subjected to cyberbullying alone.⁵ However, research has shown cyberbullying to have effects on health outcomes independent of the effects of traditional bullying.⁵ The widespread ownership of both mobile phones and internet enabled devices among 12-15 year olds (62% of 12-15 year olds in the UK have a smartphone, rising to 82% when including non-smartphone mobiles)² means that the opportunity for bullying to take place is not limited by geography, time, or face to face contact. It also widens the net of bystanders being able to view or participate in bullying more widely through online networks. The ease with which cyberbullying can occur in a way that is invisible to others, including supportive peers and adults in the child's life is another aspect that distinguishes it from more traditional forms of bullying. An EU-based study identified smartphones to be associated with more online activity but also fewer parental restrictions and regulation of use than older technologies such as watching TV.⁶

Link between bullying and poor health outcomes

Longitudinal research has demonstrated the causal relationship between experiencing bullying and poorer health and wellbeing outcomes, with potentially long term impacts into adulthood.⁷ The negative effect of bullying has also been demonstrated among the perpetrators of bullying and not just the victims. Moreover, there is often an interaction between being bullied and bullying others; those who are both bullies and victims (bully/victims) are likely to display the worst health and social outcomes.⁸

Data source - the HBSC study

Health Behaviour in School-aged Children (HBSC) is a unique cross-national research study conducted in collaboration with the World Health Organization (WHO) Regional Office for Europe. The study is carried out every four years in over 40 countries across Europe and North America allowing for trends in health and wellbeing to be examined.⁹ It aims to gain new insight into, and increase our understanding of the health and wellbeing and health behaviours of young people (aged 11, 13 and 15) as well as their social context. Further details about the HBSC study can be found in Appendix 1.

In 2013/14, 5,335 young people aged 11, 13, and 15 years participated in the survey in England; with results published in October 2015.² Time trends in adolescent health and health behaviours in England can be calculated since 2002. This report presents data from the most recent HBSC survey conducted in England from the 2013/14 survey cycle.¹⁰ Young people were asked about both traditional bullying and cyberbullying. Details of the measures used and methodology can be found in Appendices 2 and 3.

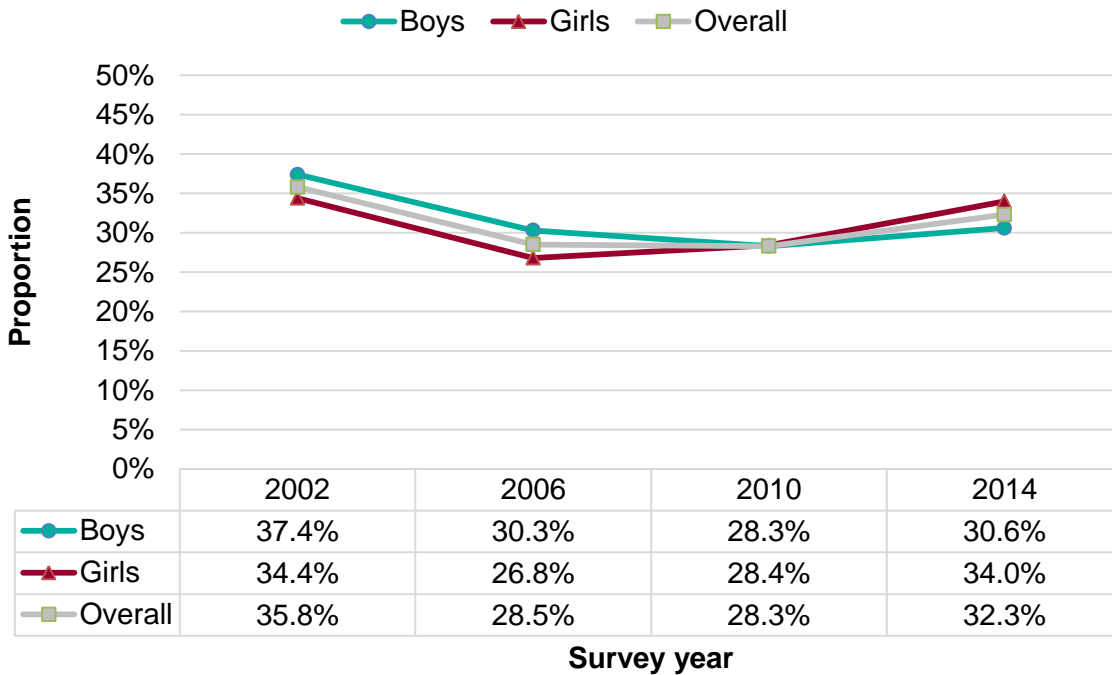
² The full report is available at: <http://www.hbsc.org/>

Key findings

Prevalence

The latest (2013/14) HBSC survey found that one in three 11-15 year olds in England had experienced what can be considered to be traditional forms of bullying via direct interpersonal interactions in the past two months (32.3%). Comparing this most recent data to previous years (Figure 1) reveals a slight increase in bullying reported by both boys and girls since 2010, although it is too early to determine if this is an emerging trend.

Figure 1. Proportion of 11-15 year olds in England reporting traditional bullying, 2002-2014



Source: WHO Health Behaviour in School-aged Children (HBSC) survey

Young people³ were asked how often they had experienced two forms of cyberbullying in the past two months (see Box 2, Appendix 2): cyberbullying via written text (for example, mean instant messages and wall posting) and cyberbullying through photographs (such as uploading inappropriate/unflattering photos without victim’s consent).

³ Throughout the report tables and figures ‘young people’ refers to those aged 11, 13 and 15 as surveyed in the HBSC study.

Overall, 17.9% of young people reported they had experienced some form of cyberbullying in the past two months (Table 1). Receiving mean messages (including text, instant message, email) was slightly more common than being cyberbullied through images: 12.7% compared with 10%. Among those who were cyberbullied, the majority reported they were targeted by only one form, either messages (44.9%) or pictures (30.2%), with 24.9% experiencing both forms of cyberbullying.

The HBSC survey cannot identify trends in cyberbullying as it was measured for the first time in 2014.⁴ However, the EU Kids Online study identified a moderate increase in cyberbullying among a similar age group: 8% in 2010 compared with 12% in 2014.¹¹

Individual factors

Age

Cyberbullying, both through messages and images, was found to increase with age (Table 1). The likelihood of being cyberbullied at age 15 is almost double that at age 11.

Table 1. Prevalence of cyberbullying in the previous two months, by age

| Cyberbullying by | Proportion of young people | | | Total |
|------------------------------|----------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| | 11 year olds | 13 year olds | 15 year olds | |
| Messages | 9.9% | 13.1% | 15.9% | 12.7% |
| Images | 5.8% | 11.7% | 13.6% | 10.0% |
| Overall (messages & images)* | 12.6% | 19.3% | 23.4% | 17.9% |

* A proportion of young people report experiencing cyberbullying through both pictures and messages, thus overall cyberbullying is not equivalent to the sum of cyberbullying by messages and images.

Source: WHO Health Behaviour in School-aged Children (HBSC) 2014 survey for England¹⁰

Table 2 presents data comparing frequency of daily texting and computer use across 11, 13 and 15 year olds. Older adolescents were much more likely to report texting their friends frequently. Computer use of more than two hours a day, exceeding the Department of Health's recommended level of screen time,¹² also increased with age. As young people move into mid-adolescence their access to electronic media increases and becomes less restricted, with more private use of the internet (such as in own bedrooms or public spaces on handheld devices) likely resulting in less parental surveillance of leisure activities and monitoring of screen time.¹³ Moreover, young people's online activities shift with age, moving towards increasing use of electronic media for communication purposes with wider groups of peers and an increasing range

⁴ the scope of the survey did not explore the potential positive opportunities social media provides for enhancing mental literacy

of online communication tools such as instant messaging and social networking sites. All of these may increase the risk and exposure to being cyberbullied.

Table 2. Electronic media use by age

| Media use | Proportion of young people | | | Total |
|--|----------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| | 11 year olds | 13 year olds | 15 year olds | |
| Texting friends daily | 39.9% | 53.3% | 60.8% | 50.5% |
| More than 2 hours computer use on weekdays | 25.7% | 44.7% | 52.7% | 40.1% |

Source: WHO Health Behaviour in School-aged Children (HBSC) 2014 survey for England¹⁰

Gender

Girls were more than twice as likely to report being a victim of cyberbullying than boys (24.2% and 11.9% respectively;

Table 3). A similar gender pattern among 15 year olds was identified in the What about YOUth? study for England,¹⁴ with 19% of girls reporting cyberbullying compared with 10% of boys.

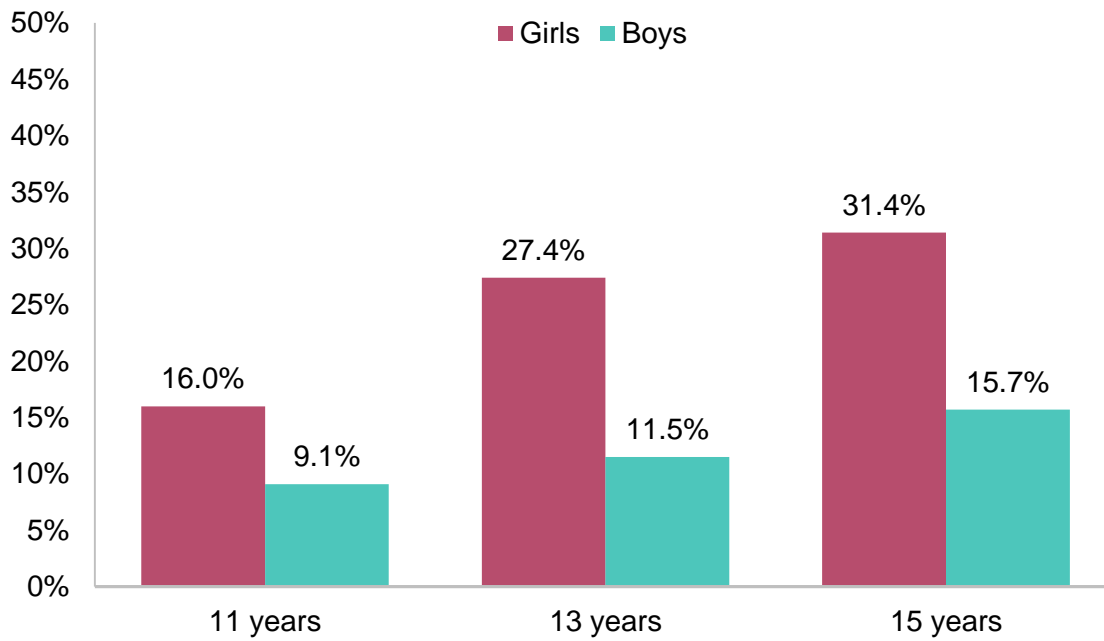
Table 3. Prevalence of cyberbullying in the previous two months, by gender

| Cyberbullied by | Proportions of young people | | Total |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-------|--------------|
| | Boys | Girls | |
| Messages | 8.5% | 17.0% | 12.7% |
| Images | 6.6% | 13.4% | 10.0% |
| Overall (messages & images) | 11.9% | 24.2% | 17.9% |

Source: WHO Health Behaviour in School-aged Children (HBSC) 2014 survey for England¹⁰

Figure 2 illustrates overall cyberbullying by both age and gender. Across all age categories, girls were more likely to report being a victim of cyberbullying, however being a victim of cyberbullying increased with age for both sexes.

Figure 2. Proportion of young people experiencing cyberbullying in previous two months, by age and gender



Source: WHO Health Behaviour in School-aged Children (HBSC) 2014 survey for England¹⁰

Social inequalities

The likelihood of being a victim of cyberbullying varied by socio-economic status (SES), as measured by the HBSC Family Affluence Scale (FAS)⁵ and free school meal eligibility. Overall, cyberbullying appeared to increase with family affluence; young people who reported high family affluence were most likely to say they had been cyberbullied in the previous two months (Table 4). Similarly, those young people receiving free school meals were slightly less likely to report being a victim of cyberbullying (Table 5).

Table 4. Prevalence of cyberbullying in the previous two months, by Family Affluence Scale and Free School Meal eligibility*

| | | Proportion of young people cyberbullied by | | |
|------------------------------|---------------|--|--------------|-----------------------------|
| | | Messages | Images | Overall (messages & images) |
| Family Affluence scale (FAS) | Low | 13.7% | 8.9% | 16.5% |
| | Medium | 11.9% | 9.7% | 17.6% |
| | High | 14.0% | 12.1% | 20.5% |
| | Total | 12.8% | 10.2% | 18.2% |
| Free school meals | Receiving | 13.1% | 8.4% | 16.4% |
| | Not receiving | 12.6% | 10.2% | 18.2% |
| | Total | 12.7% | 10.0% | 17.9% |

* Proportions of young people cyberbullied may vary compared with previous analyses due to missing responses

Source: WHO Health Behaviour in School-aged Children (HBSC) 2014 survey for England¹⁰

Comparison of cyberbullying and traditional bullying by FAS illustrates a contrasting pattern of responses. Unlike cyberbullying, traditional bullying behaviours are most common among young people who report low FAS (Table 5).

Table 5. Prevalence of traditional bullying in the previous two months, by Family Affluence Scale

| | Family Affluence Scale | | | Total |
|--|------------------------|--------|-------|--------------|
| | Low | Medium | High | |
| Proportions of young people who experienced traditional bullying | 37.0% | 30.3% | 34.1% | 32.4% |

Source: WHO Health Behaviour in School-aged Children (HBSC) 2014 survey for England¹⁰

It has often been assumed that young people from high socio-economic backgrounds are more likely to have access to the internet.¹⁵ Moreover, young people from wealthy families are more likely to access the internet via handheld devices and in their own

⁵ FAS is a proxy measure of SES suitable for young people. It assesses family wealth via six items measuring the number of cars, holidays, PCs, bedrooms and bathrooms in a household, as well as dishwasher ownership. FAS generates an overall score and categorises young people into low, medium and high FAS.

room which may result in more unsupervised internet activities.¹³ The association between SES and cyberbullying may be explained by the increase of access to electronic media through which cyberbullying is conducted; the data from HBSC England supports this in part (Table 6). Young people with high family affluence were considerably more likely to have daily contact with friends through texting, however computer use did not vary by family affluence. If the link between SES and cyberbullying is determined primarily from increased ownership of electronic media tools, we can expect to see the association between family affluence and cyberbullying diminish as technology becomes more widely available. The 2013 Ofcom report² illustrated that the technology gap between socio-economic groups was narrowing.

Table 6. Electronic media use, by Family Affluence Scale

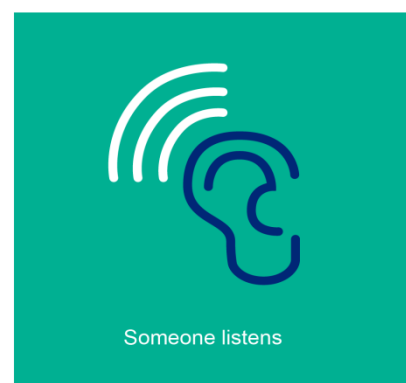
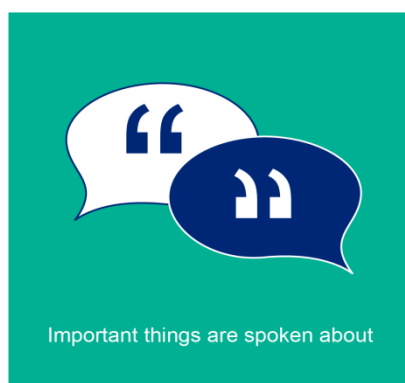
| Electronic media use | Family Affluence Scale | | | Total |
|--|------------------------|--------|-------|--------------|
| | Low | Medium | High | |
| Texting friends daily | 40.4% | 51.5% | 58.1% | 51.1% |
| More than 2 hours computer use on weekdays | 41.0% | 40.4% | 39.3% | 40.2% |

Source: WHO Health Behaviour in School-aged Children (HBSC) 2014 survey for England¹⁰

Family

Positive family relationships have been found to be associated with the health and wellbeing of young people,¹⁶ with the quality of family communication in particular being an important protective factor during adolescence. Young people who have good quality communication with their parents are likely to have better health and social outcomes and be better equipped to navigate adolescence and early adulthood.¹⁷ The 2014 HBSC England study asked young people about family dynamics, including how easy it is to communicate with their parents. Importantly, family communication appears to have a potential link with bullying victimisation as young people who report they could easily talk to both their parents were less likely to be a victim of cyberbullying compared with those who said it was more difficult to talk to their parents (Table 7 and Table 8). A study by Chester et al. (2016) identified that fathering may play a distinct role in protecting young people against cyberbullying; those reporting easy communication with their father have statistically lower odds of being cyberbullied than peers who report it is difficult to talk to their father.¹⁸

Protective factors: family



Young people who felt the important things were spoken about in their family and that someone listened to them when they spoke were less likely to say they have experienced cyberbullying in the past two months (Table 9).

Table 7. Communication with father by cyberbullying involvement*

| Cyberbullied by | Proportion of young people who find communication with father | | Total |
|-----------------------------|---|-----------|--------------|
| | Easy | Difficult | |
| Messages | 9.2% | 20.4% | 12.4% |
| Images | 7.9% | 14.8% | 9.8% |
| Overall (messages & images) | 14.0% | 27.0% | 17.7% |

* Proportions of young people cyberbullied may vary compared with previous analyses due to missing responses
Source: WHO Health Behaviour in School-aged Children (HBSC) 2014 survey for England¹⁰

Table 8. Communication with mother by cyberbullying involvement*

| Cyberbullied by | Proportion of young people who find communication with mother | | Total |
|-----------------------------|---|-----------|--------------|
| | Easy | Difficult | |
| Messages | 11.0% | 21.6% | 12.6% |
| Images | 8.7% | 15.2% | 9.7% |
| Overall (messages & images) | 16.0% | 27.2% | 17.7% |

* Proportions of young people cyberbullied may vary compared with previous analyses due to missing responses
Source: WHO Health Behaviour in School-aged Children (HBSC) 2014 survey for England¹⁰

Table 9. Perception of family communication by cyberbullying involvement*

| Family communication | Cyberbullied by | Proportion of young people | | | |
|---|-----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------|--------------|
| | | Agree | Neither agree nor disagree | Disagree | Total |
| In my family, I think the important things are talked about | Messages | 10.3% | 17.5% | 28.7% | 12.7% |
| | Images | 8.4% | 13.4% | 18.7% | 9.9% |
| | Overall (messages & images) | 15.2% | 23.5% | 35.2% | 17.9% |
| In my family, when I speak someone listens to what I say | Messages | 10.0% | 18.6% | 28.0% | 12.7% |
| | Images | 8.3% | 13.1% | 19.6% | 9.9% |
| | Overall (messages & images) | 14.8% | 24.7% | 35.3% | 17.9% |

* Proportions of young people cyberbullied may vary compared with previous analyses due to missing responses

Source: WHO Health Behaviour in School-aged Children (HBSC) 2014 survey for England ¹⁰

School

A supportive school culture and ethos has been associated with positive health and wellbeing outcomes for young people.^{19,20} School culture is created and reinforced via a range of factors including how much students feel connected to their school and their relationships with their teachers. In particular, students overall sense of belonging to their school and their perception of safety within their school appear to be important factors associated with levels of bullying, including cyberbullying.

The HBSC England data on the school environment allows for comparisons across levels of cyberbullying involvement (Table 10). Overall, young people who disagreed with the statements addressing aspects of the school environment (including safety, belonging, care and trust) were more likely to be a victim of cyberbullying than those who agreed with the statement. The largest difference concerned feeling safe, with a difference of 30 percentage points noted between those who agree they feel safe at school and those who disagree.

Peers are also an important element of the school environment. Analysis of data from the HBSC England survey demonstrates lower levels of cyberbullying among young people who held positive perceptions about their peer relationships at school (Table 11).

Protective factors: learning environment

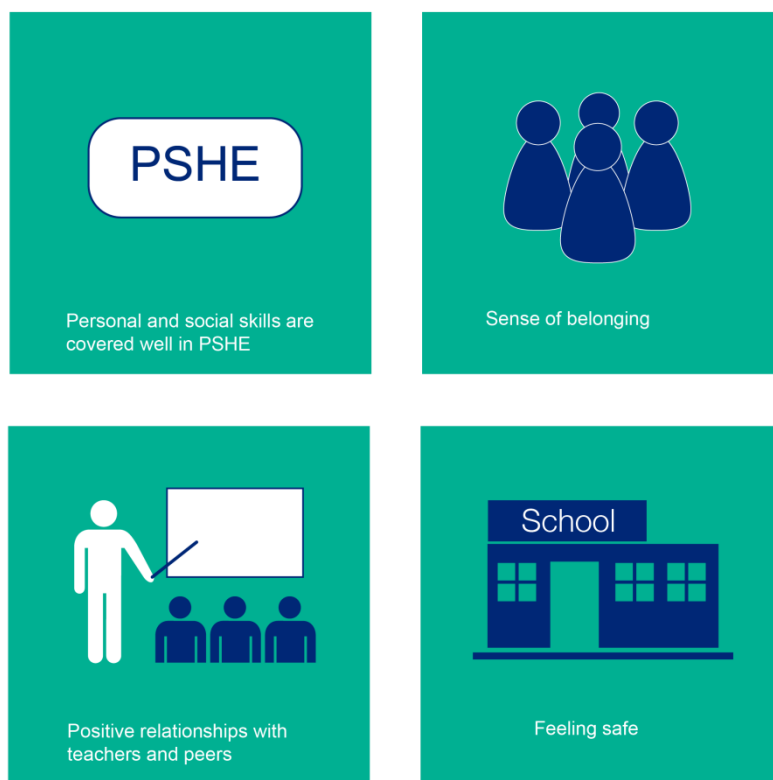


Table 10. Perception of school environment by cyberbullying involvement*

| School environment | Cyberbullied by | Proportion of young people who | | | Total |
|---|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------|----------|--------------|
| | | Agree | Neither agree nor disagree | Disagree | |
| "I feel safe in this school" | Messages | 10.0% | 21.1% | 38.7% | 12.8% |
| | Images | 8.8% | 13.1% | 23.2% | 10.0% |
| | Overall (messages & images) | 15.1% | 26.6% | 45.7% | 18.0% |
| "I feel like I belong in this school" | Messages | 9.6% | 17.8% | 31.7% | 12.8% |
| | Images | 8.3% | 12.2% | 20.7% | 10.0% |
| | Overall (messages & images) | 14.5% | 23.8% | 38.0% | 18.0% |
| "I feel that my teachers care about me as a person" | Messages | 10.5% | 15.3% | 26.5% | 12.8% |
| | Images | 8.0% | 11.8% | 22.6% | 10.0% |
| | Overall (messages & images) | 14.7% | 21.5% | 37.4% | 18.0% |
| "I feel there is a lot of trust in my teachers" | Messages | 10.2% | 14.0% | 24.8% | 12.8% |
| | Images | 7.8% | 11.8% | 18.3% | 9.9% |
| | Overall (messages & images) | 14.6% | 20.3% | 32.4% | 18.0% |

* Proportions of young people cyberbullied may vary compared with previous analyses due to missing responses.

Source: WHO Health Behaviour in School-aged Children (HBSC) 2014 survey for England¹⁰

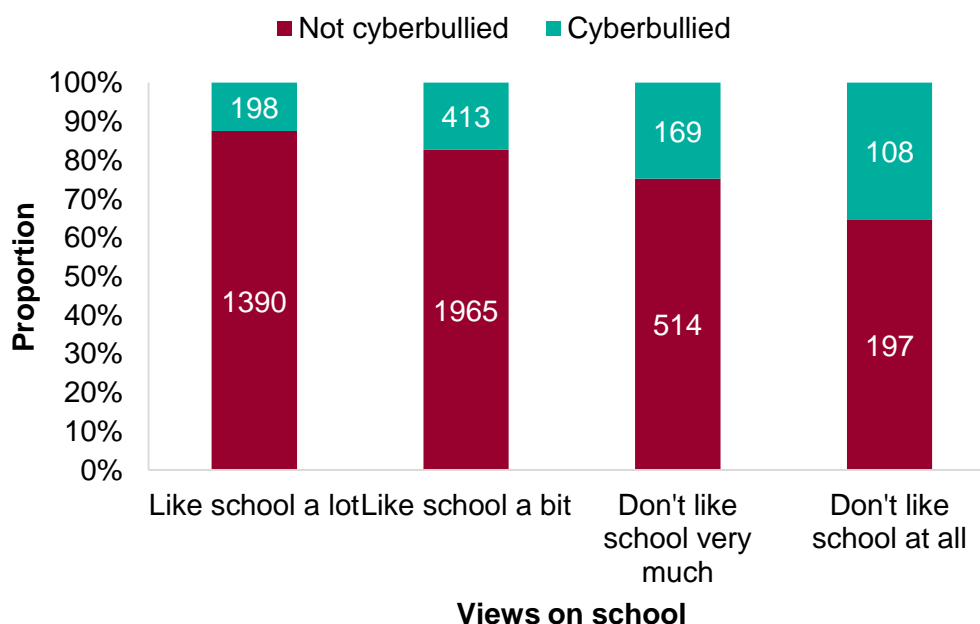
Table 11. Perception of peers by cyberbullying involvement*

| Perception of peers | Cyberbullied by | Proportion of young people who | | | Total |
|---|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------|----------|--------------|
| | | Agree | Neither agree nor disagree | Disagree | |
| “Other students accept me as I am” | Messages | 9.2% | 16.8% | 32.8% | 12.7% |
| | Images | 8.2% | 11.8% | 20.7% | 10.0% |
| | Overall (messages & images) | 13.9% | 23.6% | 40.0% | 18.0% |
| “The students in my class enjoy being together” | Messages | 10.6% | 15.0% | 25.6% | 12.7% |
| | Images | 8.8% | 11.3% | 16.5% | 10.0% |
| | Overall (messages & images) | 15.7% | 20.7% | 30.8% | 18.0% |
| “Most of the students in my classes are kind and helpful” | Messages | 9.5% | 16.5% | 26.2% | 12.7% |
| | Images | 8.1% | 12.6% | 16.9% | 10.0% |
| | Overall (messages & images) | 14.1% | 23.3% | 32.3% | 17.9% |

* Proportions of young people cyberbullied may vary compared with previous analyses due to missing responses
 Source: WHO Health Behaviour in School-aged Children (HBSC) 2014 survey for England ¹⁰

The HBSC survey asks young people whether they like school. Students who were cyberbullied were more likely to hold negative views about school, with cyberbullied students making up a larger proportion of those who reported they “don’t like school at all” (Figure 3).

Figure 3. Cyberbullying and views about school



Source: WHO Health Behaviour in School-aged Children (HBSC) 2014 survey for England ¹⁰
 Research conducted by Ofsted²¹ evaluating effective strategies for tackling bullying in school, highlighted the role that personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education can play in creating a positive school environment and preventing bullying. Ofsted recommends PSHE education should address individual differences, is adaptable to bullying in the school and is linked across other subject areas.

A recent Cochrane Review²² identified health promoting lessons such as PSHE education were associated with a reduction in students reporting bullying. The HBSC England study asks young people about the provision of PSHE education at their school, including their perception of how well PSHE lessons cover a number of topics outlined by Ofsted.²³ Of those who reported receiving PSHE education, a higher proportion of young people who said the topic of personal and social skills was poorly covered reported experiencing cyberbullying compared with those who felt the topic was well covered at school (Table 12). Examination of HBSC England data suggests PSHE education may function as a protective asset by fostering positive relationships within the school environment.²⁴

Table 12. Perception of PSHE education provision by cyberbullying involvement*

| Proportions of young people cyberbullied by | Personal and social skills covered... | | Total |
|---|---------------------------------------|-------------------|--------------|
| | ...well in PSHE | ...poorly in PSHE | |
| Messages | 11.9% | 16.0% | 13.4% |
| Images | 8.7% | 13.6% | 10.5% |
| Overall (messages & images) | 16.7% | 22.9% | 18.9% |

*82% of the sample said they had attended PSHE lessons at school and were included in this analysis, and those who did not attend were excluded, thus total proportions of young people cyberbullied may vary compared with previous analyses. Source: WHO Health Behaviour in School-aged Children (HBSC) 2014 survey for England ¹⁰

Local neighbourhood

Research has demonstrated that the community environment where young people live can have a significant impact on health and wellbeing,²⁵ especially as young people transition from childhood to more unsupervised time in their communities. The HBSC England study asks young people whether they agree or disagree with a number of statements about their neighbourhood. Young people with a positive perception of their neighbourhood were less likely to report being cyberbullied compared with those who held a negative opinion (Table 13). The largest difference relates to perception of safety, with a 16 percentage point difference between those who agreed they felt safe in the area they lived (15.6%) and those that did not (31.6%). Further analysis of HBSC England data identified young people who possessed a high sense of neighbourhood belonging were half as likely as those with low neighbourhood belonging to experience cyberbullying.¹⁸

All ecological environments (such as school, family and neighbourhood) of the young person intersect to influence young peoples' lives. For example, Ofsted²¹ highlighted the importance of school, families, and the wider neighbourhood sharing a common approach on bullying as a key means to reduce bullying victimisation in schools, with very positive outcomes achieved when schools work closely with members of the community, including parents/carers.

Protective factors: community

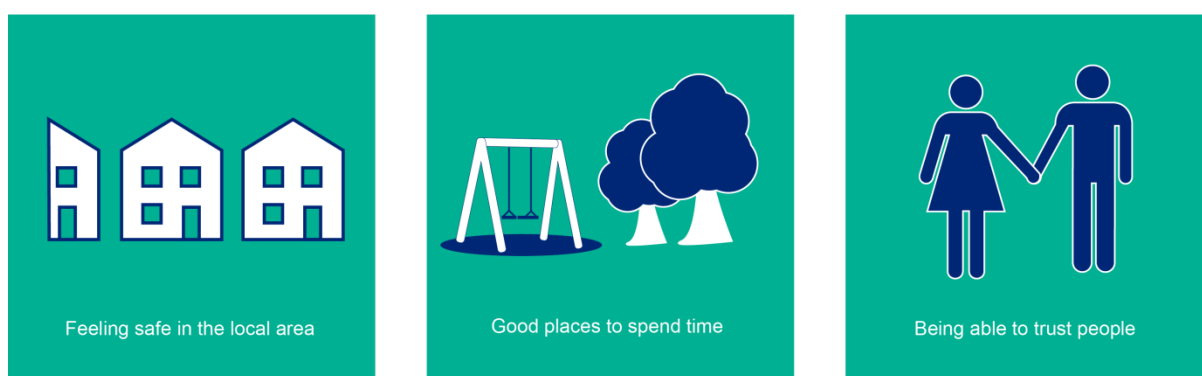


Table 13. Perception of neighbourhood by cyberbullying involvement*

| | Cyberbullied by | Proportion of young people who | | | Total |
|--|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------|----------|--------------|
| | | Agree | Neither agree nor disagree | Disagree | |
| “I feel safe in the area where I live” | Messages | 11.1% | 17.0% | 21.2% | 12.8% |
| | Images | 8.4% | 13.9% | 19.1% | 10.1% |
| | Overall (messages & images) | 15.6% | 23.7% | 31.6% | 18.0% |
| “It is safe for younger children to play outside during the day” | Messages | 11.5% | 14.3% | 18.8% | 12.7% |
| | Images | 9.1% | 10.6% | 14.4% | 9.9% |
| | Overall (messages & images) | 16.5% | 19.0% | 25.9% | 18.0% |
| “You can trust people around here” | Messages | 10.2% | 14.5% | 18.1% | 12.6% |
| | Images | 8.4% | 11.3% | 13.5% | 10.0% |
| | Overall (messages & images) | 14.9% | 20.4% | 24.3% | 17.9% |
| “There are good places to spend your free time eg leisure centres, parks, shops” | Messages | 11.3% | 12.1% | 19.9% | 12.7% |
| | Images | 8.3% | 11.3% | 16.4% | 10.0% |
| | Overall (messages & images) | 15.6% | 19.1% | 27.5% | 18.0% |

* Proportions of young people cyberbullied may vary compared with previous analyses due to missing responses
Source: WHO Health Behaviour in School-aged Children (HBSC) 2014 survey for England ¹⁰

Conclusion

This report highlights key findings from the HBSC study carried out in England in 2013/14 in relation to cyberbullying. The report identifies that 17.9% of all young people surveyed aged 11-15 years had experienced cyberbullying in the two months before the survey. Girls appeared to be at a significantly greater risk of cyberbullying, as distinct from more traditional types of bullying, and the risk of being a victim of cyberbullying appears to increase with age for both boys and girls. The analysis also examined associations between cyberbullying and factors from different domains of the young person's life including the family, school and neighbourhood. The cross-sectional nature of the HBSC survey means we cannot assume cause and effect, however these analyses identify potentially protective factors from the key domains of young people's environment (family, school and neighbourhood) which need to be considered when developing strategies to prevent cyberbullying. The interaction between all three domains also needs to be considered, suggesting that multifactorial and multi-domain interventions could offer the most effective preventive or harm reduction strategies for cyberbullying.



Resources and further information

Public Health England (PHE)

Improving young people's health and wellbeing: A framework for public health

www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/399391/20150128_YP_HW_Framework_FINAL_WP_3.pdf

Measuring and monitoring children and young people's mental wellbeing: A toolkit for schools and colleges

www.annafreud.org/media/4612/mwb-toolki-final-draft-4.pdf

Children's and Young People's Mental Health and Wellbeing Profiles: a data tool on risk, prevalence and the range of health, social care and education services that support children with, or vulnerable to, mental illness

fingertips.phe.org.uk/profile-group/mental-health/profile/cypmh

Child and adolescent mental health services needs assessments and service snapshots for local authorities and CCGs

atlas.chimat.org.uk/IAS/profiles/aboutdynamicreports

Protecting children and young people's emotional health and wellbeing: A whole school and college approach

cypmhc.org.uk/sites/cypmhc.org.uk/files/Promoting%20CYP%20Emotional%20Health%20and%20Wellbeing%20Whole%20School%20Approach.pdf

Public Health England's National Child and Maternal Health Intelligence Network produce a number of eBulletins on Child and Maternal Health which you can sign up to

public.govdelivery.com/accounts/UKHPA/subscribers/new

Rise Above

A digital hub for young people, to help delay or prevent them from risky behaviours and build resilience by driving conversations across multiple topics that matter to young people and sign post where and how they can get help

www.riseabove.org.uk

Department for Education (DfE)

Longitudinal study of young people in England cohort 2: health and wellbeing at wave 2

www.gov.uk/government/publications/longitudinal-study-of-young-people-in-england-cohort-2-wave-2

Advice for headteachers, staff and governing bodies

www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/444862/Preventing_and_tackling_bullying_advice.pdf

The Children's Society

The good childhood report 2016

www.childrenssociety.org.uk/sites/default/files/pcr090_mainreport_web.pdf

MindEd

MindEd is a free educational resource on children and young people's mental health for adults

www.minded.org.uk/

Association for Young People's Health

A public health approach to promoting young people's resilience: A guide to resources for policy makers, commissioners, and service planners and providers

www.youngpeopleshealth.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/resilience-resource-15-march-version.pdf

Young Minds

Resources for children, young people, parents and professionals on emotional wellbeing and mental health of children and young people

www.youngminds.org.uk/

National Children's Bureau

Gender and children and young people's emotional and mental health: manifestations and responses: A rapid review of the evidence

www.ncb.org.uk/sites/default/files/field/attachment/NCB%20evidence%20review%20-%20gender%20and%20CYP%20mental%20health%20-2.pdf

Anti-Bullying Alliance

The Anti-Bullying Alliance have a range of resources on the issue of cyberbullying

www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/resources/cyberbullying/

Tootoot

A safeguarding app providing 24 hour support to young people who are victims of bullying or online abuse, backed by government investment

tootoot.co.uk/#safeguarding-made-simple

www.gov.uk/government/news/thousands-more-children-to-benefit-from-anti-bullying-app

Childnet

Cyberbullying guidance and practical online safety PSHE toolkit

www.childnet.com/new-for-schools/cyberbullying-guidance-and-practical-toolkit

PSHE Association

Ten Questions about bullying. A resource to explore pupils' understanding of bullying and to share with them the most effective ways of responding to it

www.pshe-association.org.uk/curriculum-and-resources/resources/ten-questions-about-bullying

National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC)

Share Aware Resources. Lesson plans and classroom guidance on online safety

www.nspcc.org.uk/shareaware-schools?dm_t=0,0,0,0,0

Home Office

A guide for professionals who work with young people, to help them understand what constitutes abusive behaviour online, the consequences of that behaviour, and where they can get help

www.gov.uk/government/publications/online-abuse-and-bullying-prevention-guide

Childline

Cyberbullying definitions, resources and support for children and young people

www.childline.org.uk/info-advice/bullying-abuse-safety/types-bullying/online-bullying/

Mind

A guide on how to keep safe online and look after your wellbeing when using the internet for information or support for your mental health

www.mind.org.uk/information-support/tips-for-everyday-living/online-safety-and-support/bullying-and-abuse/#.WI9jfIWLts1

National Crime Agency

Think u know. Education and reporting tool for parents and teachers to protect children from abuse online

www.thinkuknow.co.uk/parents/

Appendices

Appendix 1: The HBSC study

HBSC is the longest running international study examining the health and wellbeing, health behaviours and social determinants of 11-15 year olds. HBSC is a survey-based study, with students completing surveys during class time. The survey is administered to a nationally representative sample of young people in each country. HBSC is repeated every four years allowing for temporal trends in young people's health and wellbeing to be examined.

The HBSC survey includes questions from different domains of a young person's life, for example; family communication, teacher relationships, perception of school environment and feelings of safety.

England has participated in the HBSC study since 1997. In 2013/14, a random sample of English secondary schools, stratified by region and school type (independent and state), resulted in a sample size of 5,335 students. The dataset was weighted to be representative of pupils in England, accounting for deviances in the sample compared with national census data.

For more information about the HBSC study see www.hbsc.org

For more information about the HBSC study for England see

<http://www.hbsc.org/news/index.aspx?ni=3256>

Appendix 2: Measures used to identify bullying

Box 1 illustrates the measure used to identify traditional forms of bullying, which is derived from the Revised Olweus Bullying/Victim Questionnaire.²⁶ The HBSC study for England assessed cyberbullying prevalence for the first time in 2014 and the measure used is presented in Box 2.

Box 1. Measurement tool to assess traditional bullying in the HBSC survey

Here are some questions about bullying. We say a student is BEING BULLIED when another student, or a group of students, say or do nasty and unpleasant things to him or her. It is also bullying when a student is teased repeatedly in a way he or she does not like or when he or she is deliberately left out of things. But it is NOT BULLYING when two students of about the same strength or power argue or fight. It is also not bullying when a student is teased in a friendly and playful way.

How often have you been bullied at school in the past couple of months?

I have not been bullied at school in the past couple of months

It has happened once or twice

2 or 3 times a month

About once a week

Several times a week

Source: WHO Health Behaviour in School-aged Children (HBSC) 2014 survey for England¹⁰

Box 2. Measurement tool to assess cyberbullying in the HBSC survey

How often have you been bullied at school in the past couple of months in the following ways?

| | I have not been bullied in this way in the past couple of months | Once or twice | 2 or 3 times a month | About once a week | Several times a week |
|---|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Someone sent mean instant messages, wall posting, emails and text messages or created a website that made fun of me | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Someone took unflattering or inappropriate pictures of me without permission and posted them online | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Source: WHO Health Behaviour in School-aged Children (HBSC) 2014 survey for England¹⁰

Appendix 3: Methodology

This report is informed by an analysis of data from the Health Behaviour in School Age Children Survey and through cross analysis of survey questions covering spanning individual, family, school and local community domains.

Further detail of the methodology for the HBSC study can be found in the England national reports <http://www.hbsc.org/news/index.aspx?ni=3256> and the full external protocol is available from www.hbsc.org. The HBSC data is hierarchical and students are nested within classes, within schools as such to account for the hierarchical data structure. Multilevel modelling is the most desirable method of analysis and the factsheets refer to existing multilevel modelling of the HBSC dataset when applicable, along with existing research in the field.

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