

# MY WORLD SURVEY 2

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## REPORT ON YOUNG PEOPLE WITH PHYSICAL AND SENSORY DISABILITIES

Report compiled by Anna Hanlon

**JIGSAW**  
Young people's  
health in mind



Thank you...

Data were collected in 2018/2019.

\*Sections with \* include questions only presented to young people in Senior Cycle.

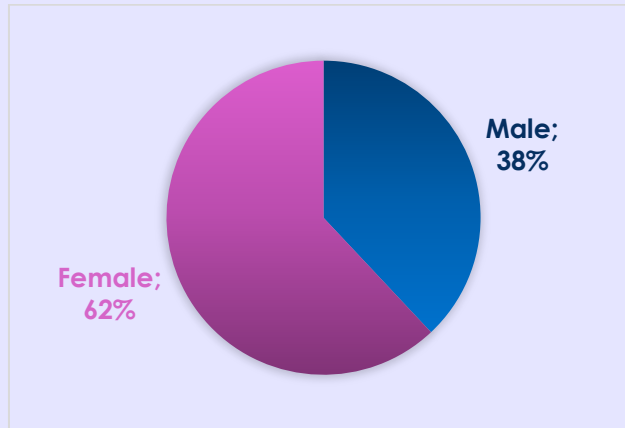
**National sample** refers to combined data on matched young people (12-25 years) at second-level and post-second level.

# 1. Demographics and Characteristics of Sample

In total, the physical and sensory disabilities group consisted of 52 young people. This group included wheelchair users, young people living with deafness or hearing loss and young people who are visually impaired.

Of this group, 96% of young people reported that they had a long-term health difficulty or disability. Approximately 58% reported that they were deaf or hard of hearing.

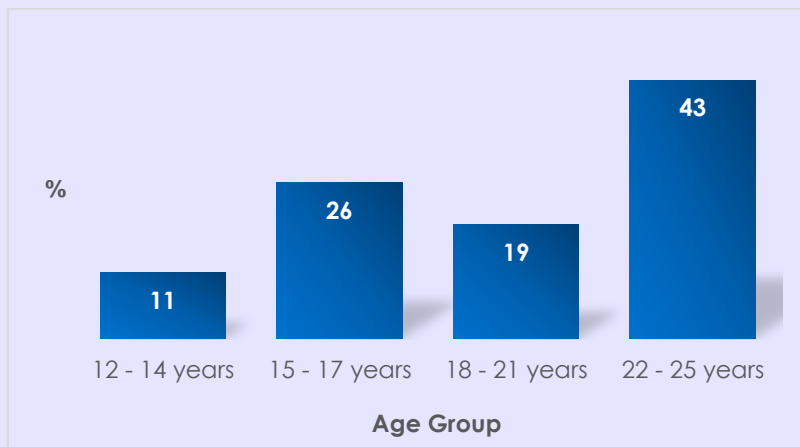
As displayed in Figure 1, 62% of young people identified as female and 38% as male.



**Figure 1. Gender breakdown: physical and sensory disabilities group.**

## 1.1. Age

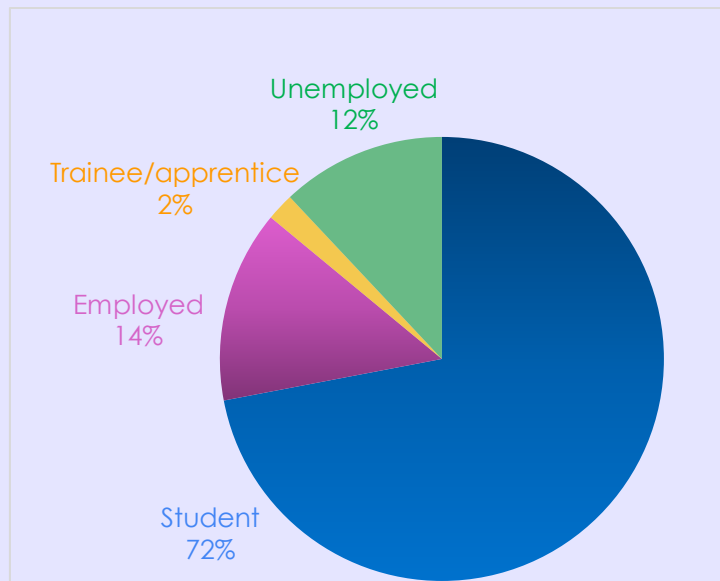
The participants were young people aged between 12 and 25 years. The average age of a young person in this group was 19 years.



**Figure 2. Percentage age breakdown of young people.**

## 1.2. Occupation

Approximately 72% of young people in this group were students, 14% employed, 12% unemployed, and 2% a trainee/apprentice (see Figure 3).



**Figure 3. Occupation breakdown.**

### 1.3. Ethnicity

The majority of participants in this group identified as White Irish (94%), 4% as any white background other than Irish, and 2% indicated they would prefer not to say.

### 1.4. Sexual Orientation

When asked about their sexual orientation, 84% of young people in this group identified as heterosexual. Additionally, 5% were not sure/questioning, 8% indicated prefer not to say, and 2% other.

### 1.5. Family Composition

The majority of young people in the physical and sensory disabilities group reported living at home with their mother (79%) or father (64%). Additionally, 8% reported living with their grandparents, 4% reported living with a partner/spouse, and 2% with foster parents. Finally, 20% indicated other than the given answers (for example, siblings).

### 1.6. Religion

Almost three quarters of young people in this group identified as Roman Catholic (70%). Approximately, 28% of the sample identified as No Religion/Atheist and 2% as Christian.

## 2. Personal Well-Being and Lifestyle Factors

### 2.1. Enjoying Family Life

Approximately 84% of participants reported enjoying family life, whereas only 53% of young people in the national sample reported the same. The remaining 16% of young people with a in this group stated that they sometimes enjoy family life.

## 2.2. Anger

A total of 54% of participants reported that they somewhat feel angry, 33% said they do not feel angry a lot, and 13% reported feeling angry a lot. The percentage of young people who felt angry a lot in the national sample was 15%.

## 2.3. Unpaid Carers

Approximately 4% of young people in this group reported providing unpaid personal help for a family member with a long-term illness, health problem, or disability.

## 2.4. Days Absent

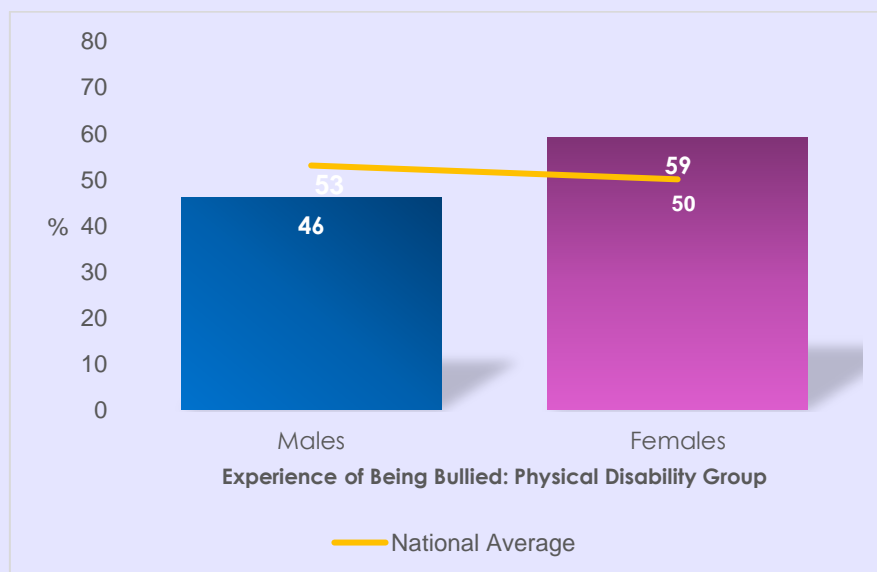
Approximately 8% of young people reported absence from school/work in the previous month, with 4% of these being in excess of 5 days, and 4% between 1-2 days of absence.

## 2.5. Bullying

Overall, 53% of young people in the physical and sensory disabilities group reported that they have been bullied at some point, while 51% of young people in the national sample reported the same. Fewer males (46%) participants reported instances of bullying when compared with males in the national sample (53%). However, females (59%) were more likely to report bullying than females (50%) in the national sample (see Figure 3).

Where young people in the physical and sensory disabilities reported bullying, 50% had experienced bullying within the last 4-5 years, 25% within the last year, 10% within the last 2-3 years, and 15% reported being bullied during a timeframe other than the given answers.

In terms of mode, 75% were bullied verbally, 70% emotionally, and 25% physically. Regarding where young people in this group were most frequently bullied, similar to the national sample, 70% indicated that they were bullied in school, 5% at home, 5% via text, 5% in college, 5% in the workplace and 10% said elsewhere.

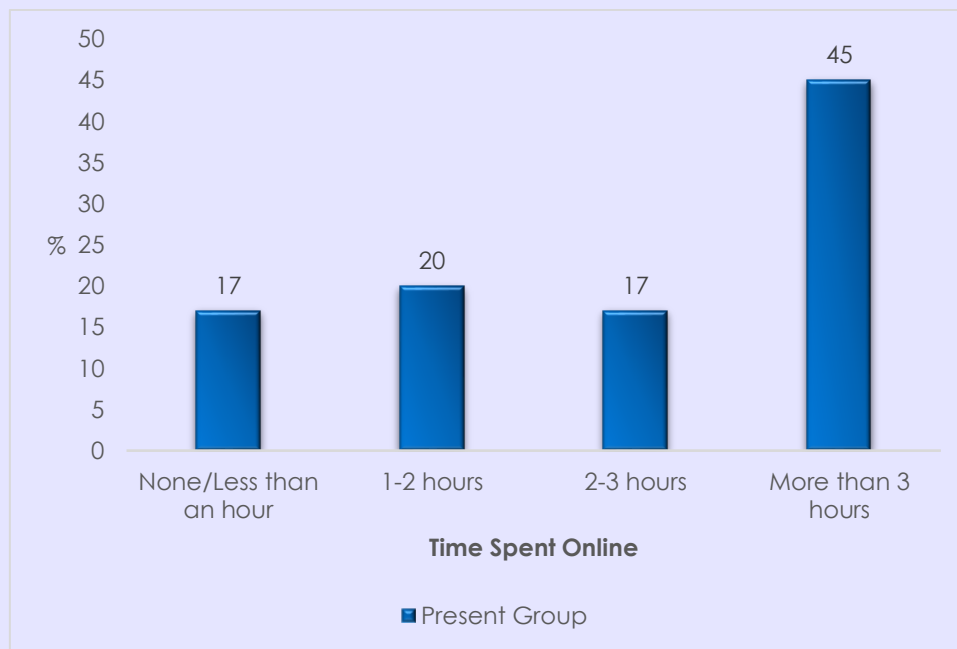


**Figure 3. Young People that have experienced being bullied.**

## 2.6. Social Media Use

Over 94% of young people in this group reported having a social media profile or account. Of those, 83% reported having Snapchat, 74% Instagram, 71% Facebook, 31% Twitter, 3% had a Dating App and 14% another other social media profile/account.

Of the young people who had a social media profile, 45% reported spending more than three hours a day on social media, 20% spend 1-2 hours a day, 17% 2-3 hours a day, and 17% no time/less than an hour.



**Figure 4. Time spent online.**

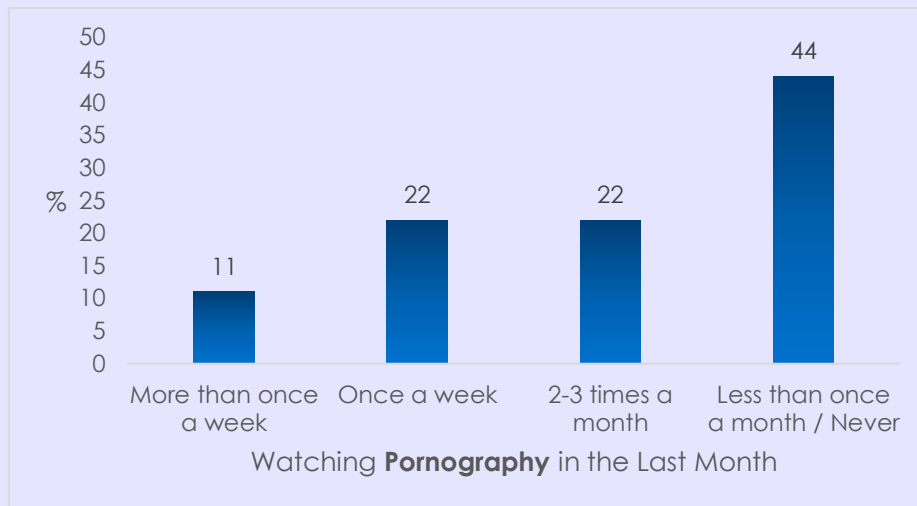
In relation to profile privacy, 63% reported having their profile on the social media site they use most often set to private, 20% set to partially private, 14% to public, and 3% did not know their privacy settings.

In terms of how young people spent time online, 60% reported that they never meet people online for social interaction that they have not met in real life. When asked about being sent mean messages online, 76% reported that they have never experienced this, and 24% reported that this happened to them once. Furthermore, 89% reported that they had never experienced someone taking nasty photographs of them and posting them online.

## 2.7. Pornography\*

Young people from Senior Cycle onwards (i.e., 4<sup>th</sup> year at second-level) were asked about pornography. Here, 72% reported that they had not watched pornography. Of the 28% who watched pornography, 17% reported that they had searched for a website themselves while 2% had received an email or clicked on a link and viewed pictures of sex that they did not want to see.

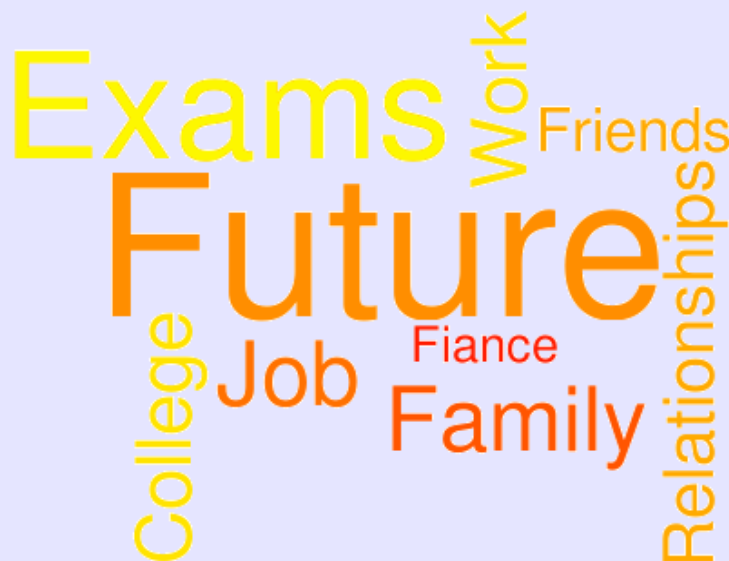
When asked about viewing sexual content in the previous month, 22% reported watching pornography 2-3 times a month, 22% once a week, 11% more than once a week, with 44% starting they had not viewed pornography in the previous month (see Figure 7).



**Figure 7. Watching pornography.**

## 2.8. Top Stressors

The three stressors most commonly reported by young people in the physical and sensory disabilities group were the future (70%), exams (52%), and family (30%).



**Figure 6. Top stressors for young people.**

## 2.9. Coping with Problems

Approximately, 32% of participants felt they generally coped well with problems. Further, 61% indicated that they were somewhat able to cope with problems, and 7% felt they did not cope well with problems. In the national sample of young people a larger proportion (49%) indicated they generally coped well with problems while 42% sometimes coped well, and 9% did not cope well.

## 2.10. Top Coping Strategies

The top three coping strategies reported by young people in the physical and sensory disabilities group were friends (55%), music (50%), and talking (48%).



**Figure 7. Top coping strategies in young people.**

## 2.11. Parents' Mental Health

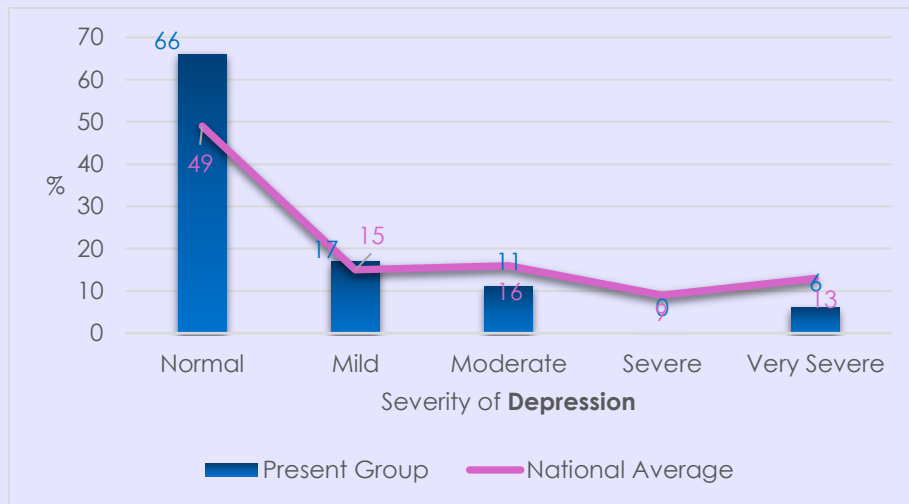
Approximately 18% of participants reported having at least one parent/guardian who had a mental health problem, while in the national sample of young people 28% reported the same. In addition, 20% of participants reported that their mother, father or guardian had a long-term alcohol/drug addiction while 12% of young people reported this in the national sample.

## 3. Negative Domains

### 3.1. Depression

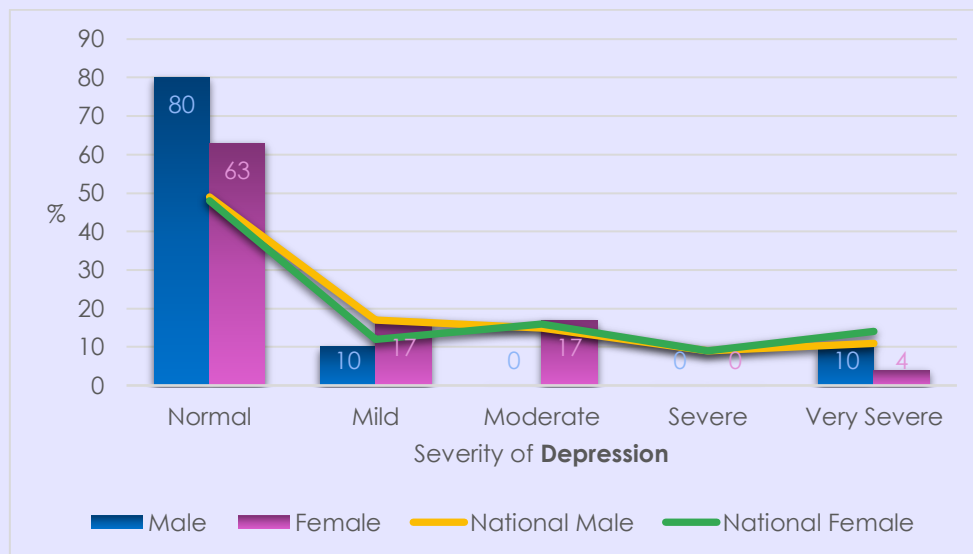
The majority of participants (66%) fell within the normal range with when looking at levels of depression, this was higher than the national sample where 49% were categorised within the normal range.





**Figure 8. Severity of depression.**

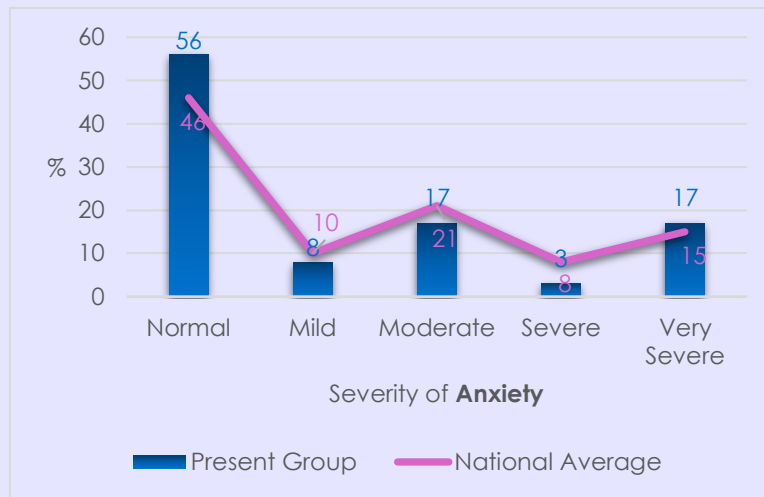
As Figure 9 shows, more male participants (80%) were classified within the normal range for depression than females (63%). In addition, 17% of female participants fell within the moderate category for depression in comparison to 0% of males. Approximately 10% of males and 4% of females in this group were classified as very severe with regard to depression. These figures are slightly lower than the national sample where 11% of males and 14% of females were in the severe category.



**Figure 9. Severity of depression by gender.**

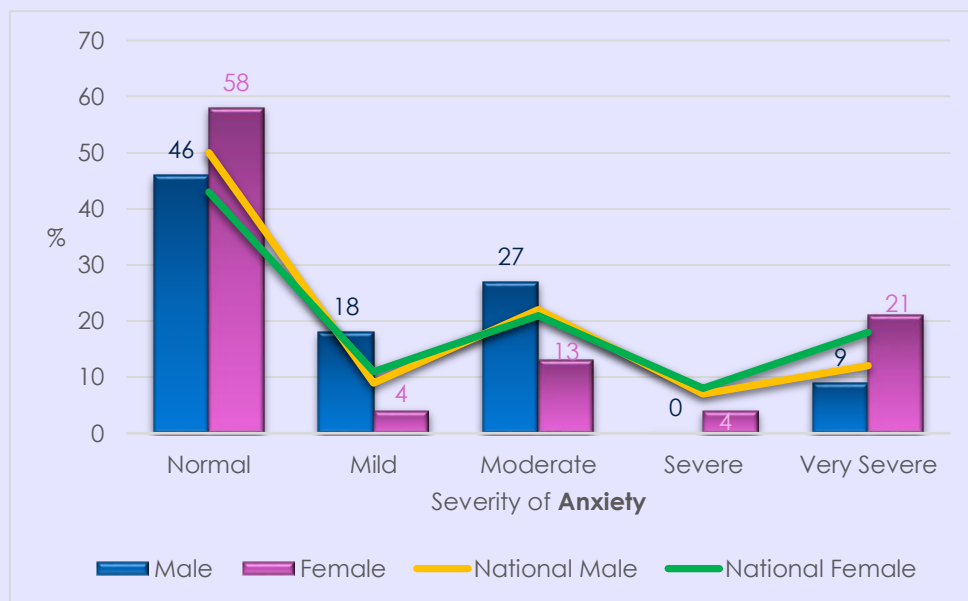
### 3.2. Anxiety

Over half of the participants (56%) in this group fell within the normal range with regard to anxiety, while 46% of young people in the national sample reported the same (see Figure 10).



**Figure 10. Severity of anxiety.**

As Figure 11 shows, more female participants (58%) fell within the normal range for anxiety when compared with males (46%). That being said, more females than males fell into the severe (4% versus 0%), and very severe (21% versus 9%) range for anxiety.

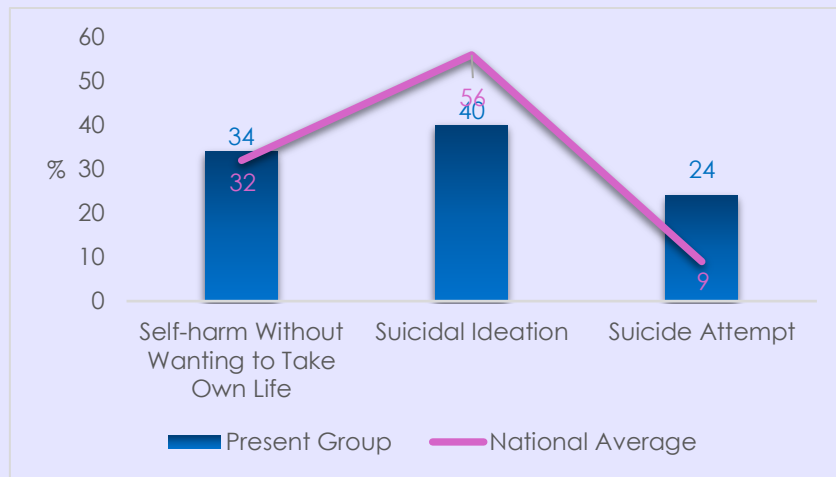


**Figure 11. Severity anxiety by gender.**

### 3.3. Suicidality

Overall, 66% of young people in the physical and sensory disabilities group reported that they had never engaged in deliberately hurting themselves without wanting to take their own life.

Figure 12 provides information regarding those participants who reported that they had deliberately hurt themselves without wanting to take their own life (34%). Here, 23% did so within the last year, 23% within the last six months, and 8% within the last month. Further, 46% stated that they did so at a time other than those specified (such as a few years ago).

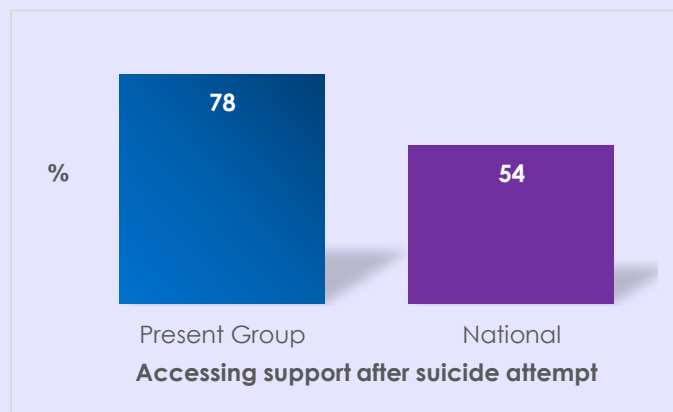


**Figure 12. Self-harm and suicidal behaviour.**

In relation to suicidal thoughts, 40% of young people in this group had thought about taking their own life even though they would not do it. Here, 36% had thought about this within the last year, 14% within the last month, and 7% within the last 6 months. A further 43% had thought about this in a timeframe other than those specified (typically, over two years ago).

It was observed that 24% of participants reported having made a suicide attempt, which is higher than the national average (9%) of young people. Of these, 67% indicated it was within the last year, 22% within the last six months, and 11% at another time.

Of the young people who had made an attempt to take their life, 78% accessed help or support. This is considerably higher than the national sample where only 54% accessed help or support following a suicide attempt (see Figure 13).



**Figure 13. Support after Suicide Attempt.**

### 3.4. Alcohol Behaviour

Overall, 33% of young people in this group reported never drinking alcohol, 31% drank less than monthly, 26% monthly, and 10% weekly.

Of those who reported drinking alcohol, 57% fell in the low risk category for alcohol behaviour, 21% in the problematic drinking range, 14% in the harmful and hazardous drinking range, and

7% in the possible alcohol dependence range. There was no difference in alcohol behaviour between young people in this group and the national sample of young people.

### 3.5. Cannabis Use

Approximately 24% of participants said that they had smoked cannabis, while 39% of young people in national sample stated the same. While more males (47%) than females (32%) reported cannabis use in the national sample, the reverse was true for young people in the physical and sensory disabilities group where more females (32%) reported cannabis use than males (13%).

### 3.6. Stressful Life Events

Similar to the national sample, the most commonly listed stressful life events for young people in the physical and sensory disabilities group were having someone close die (83%), moving house within Ireland (40%), conflict between parents (34%), and serious injury or illness of a friend (23%). Smaller numbers reported experiencing of domestic violence in a romantic relationship (11%), moving country (9%), domestic violence in the home (6%), and having their house broken into (3%).

## 4. POSITIVE DOMAINS

### 4.1. Self-esteem

Self-esteem scores for participants lay around the midpoint of 25 indicating average levels of self-esteem. Young people in this group scored higher on the self-esteem measure ( $M = 28.44$ ,  $SD = 5.16$ ) in comparison to the national sample of young people ( $M = 26.21$ ,  $SD = 6.24$ ).

As seen in Figure 14, male participants ( $M = 30.46$ ,  $SD = 4.94$ ) displayed higher levels of self-esteem than female participants ( $M = 27.46$ ,  $SD = 5.15$ ).

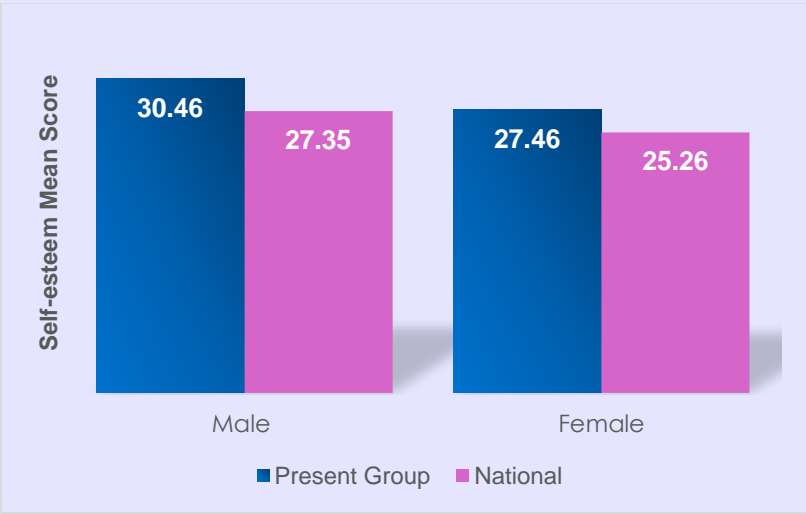
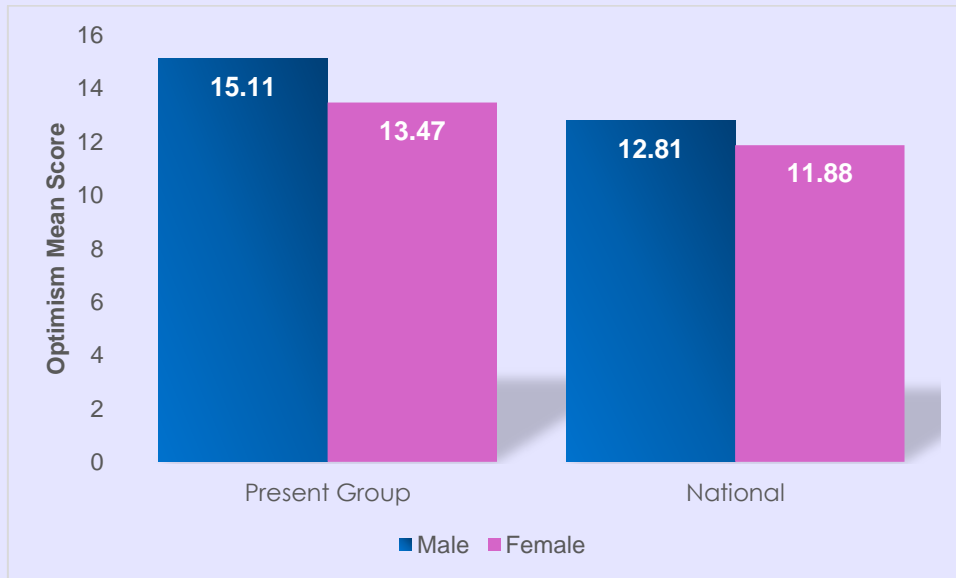


Figure 14. Self-esteem by gender.

## 4.2. Optimism

Overall, participants in the physical and sensory disabilities group scored above the midpoint of 12 on the optimism measure ( $M = 14.00$ ,  $SD = 3.76$ ), while young people in the national sample scored lower ( $M = 12.30$ ,  $SD = 5.26$ ).

As displayed in Figure 15, males ( $M = 15.11$ ,  $SD = 3.62$ ) scored higher for optimism than females ( $M = 13.47$ ,  $SD = 3.93$ ); a similar trend was observed in the national sample.



**Figure 15. Optimism by gender.**

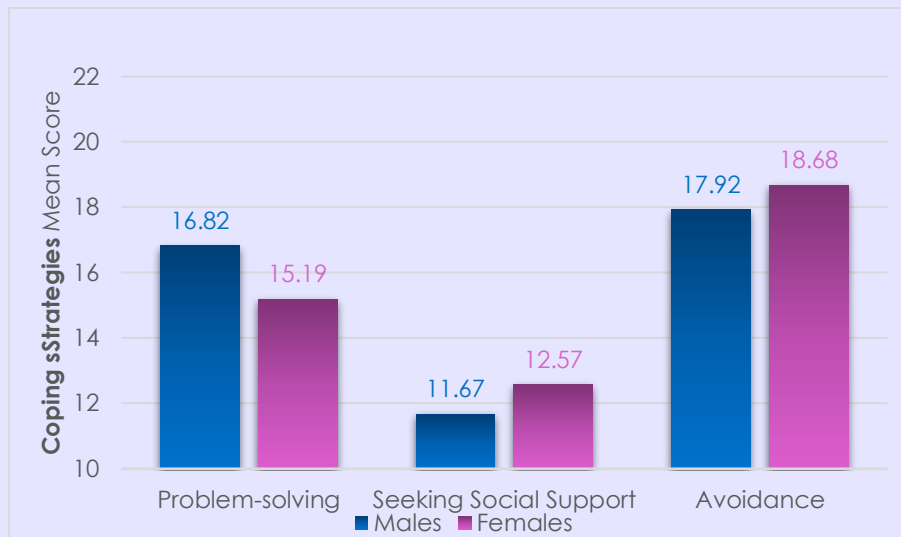
## 4.3. Coping Strategies

Three fundamental coping strategies were assessed: problem-solving, seeking social support, and avoidance. High scores on problem-solving and seeking social support and low scores on avoidance coping factors indicate well-adjusted coping strategies.

### Problem-solving

Young people in the physical and sensory disabilities group scored below the midpoint of 17.5 in their use of problem-solving as a means of coping ( $M = 15.66$ ,  $SD = 5.58$ ). Young people in the national sample also scored below the midpoint of 17.5 in their use of problem-solving ( $M = 16.57$ ,  $SD = 4.85$ ).

As seen in Figure 16, males ( $M = 16.82$ ,  $SD = 7.44$ ) more often reported that they used problem-solving as a means of coping than females ( $M = 15.91$ ,  $SD = 4.57$ ).



**Figure 16. Use of different coping strategies in males and females.**

### Seeking Social Support

Participants scored below the midpoint of 14 ( $M = 12.21$ ,  $SD = 5.03$ ) in relation to seeking social support. Scores were slightly higher in the national sample of young people ( $M = 13.15$ ,  $SD = 4.92$ ).

As Figure 16 shows, females ( $M = 12.57$ ,  $SD = 5.01$ ) showed a greater tendency to use social support as a coping strategy than males ( $M = 11.67$ ,  $SD = 5.45$ ).

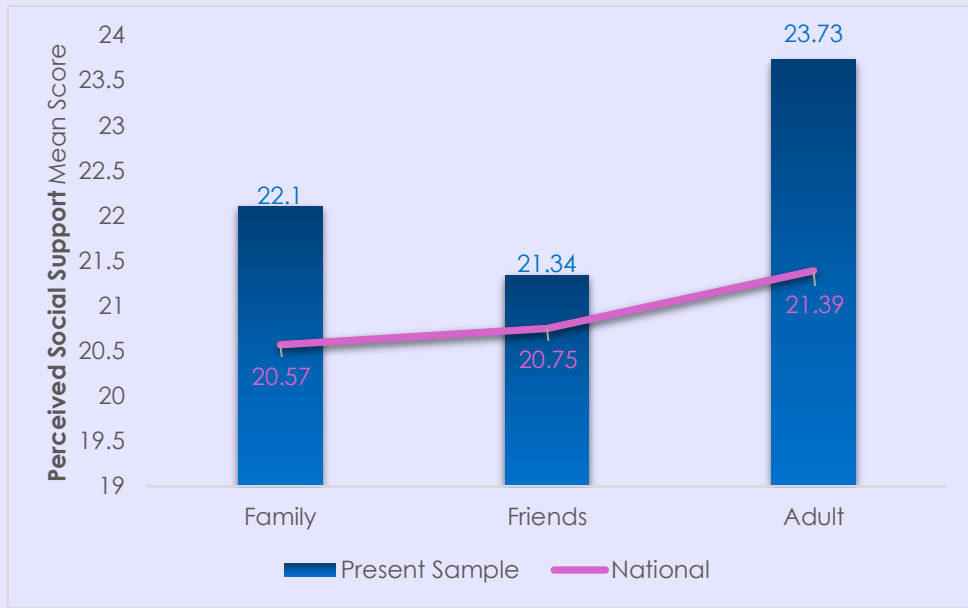
### Avoidance Coping

Participants also scored below the midpoint of 21 for avoidant-based coping ( $M = 18.40$ ,  $SD = 6.09$ ). Scores for avoidance based coping are similar to that of the national sample ( $M = 18.32$ ,  $SD = 6.02$ ).

Females ( $M = 18.68$ ,  $SD = 6.36$ ) showed a greater tendency to use avoidance as a coping strategy than males ( $M = 17.92$ ,  $SD = 6.10$ ) as shown in Figure 16.

## 4.4. Social Support

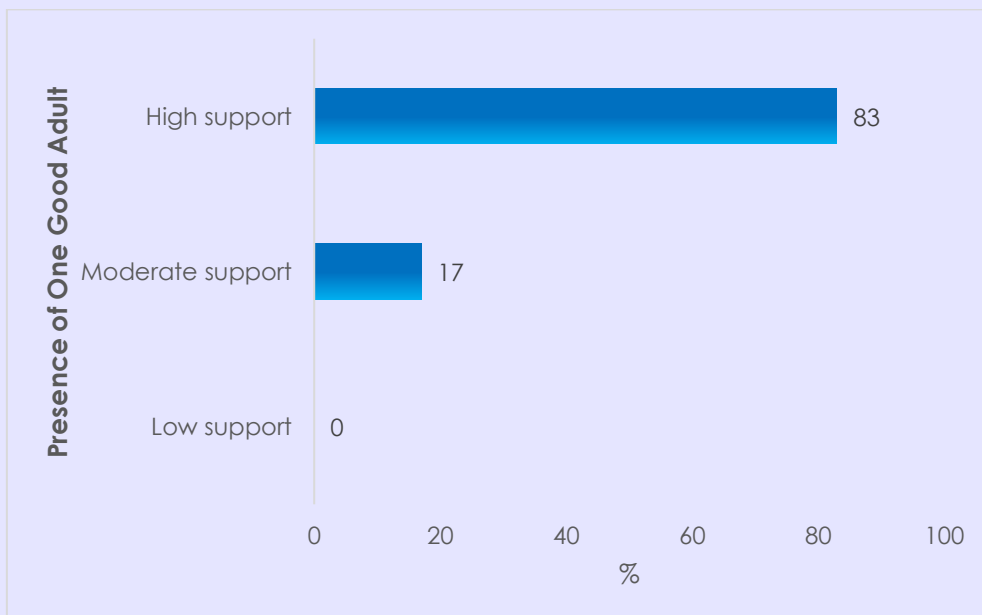
Overall, as Figure 17 shows, young people in the physical and sensory disabilities group had a higher degree of perceived social support from family ( $M = 22.10$ ,  $SD = 4.54$ ), friends ( $M = 21.34$ ,  $SD = 5.18$ ) and a special adult ( $M = 23.73$ ,  $SD = 3.56$ ) when compared with those in the national sample.



**Figure 17. Perceived social support from family, friends, and a special adult.**

#### 4.5. One Good Adult®

Participants were less likely than the national sample to report the absence of One Good Adult®, which is a positive finding. Overall, 83% of young people in this group reported that they have a high level of support from a special adult in their lives, and 17% reporting a moderate level of support from a special adult. In the national sample, 76% reported a high level of support from a special adult, 9% reported moderate support, and 15% low levels of support.



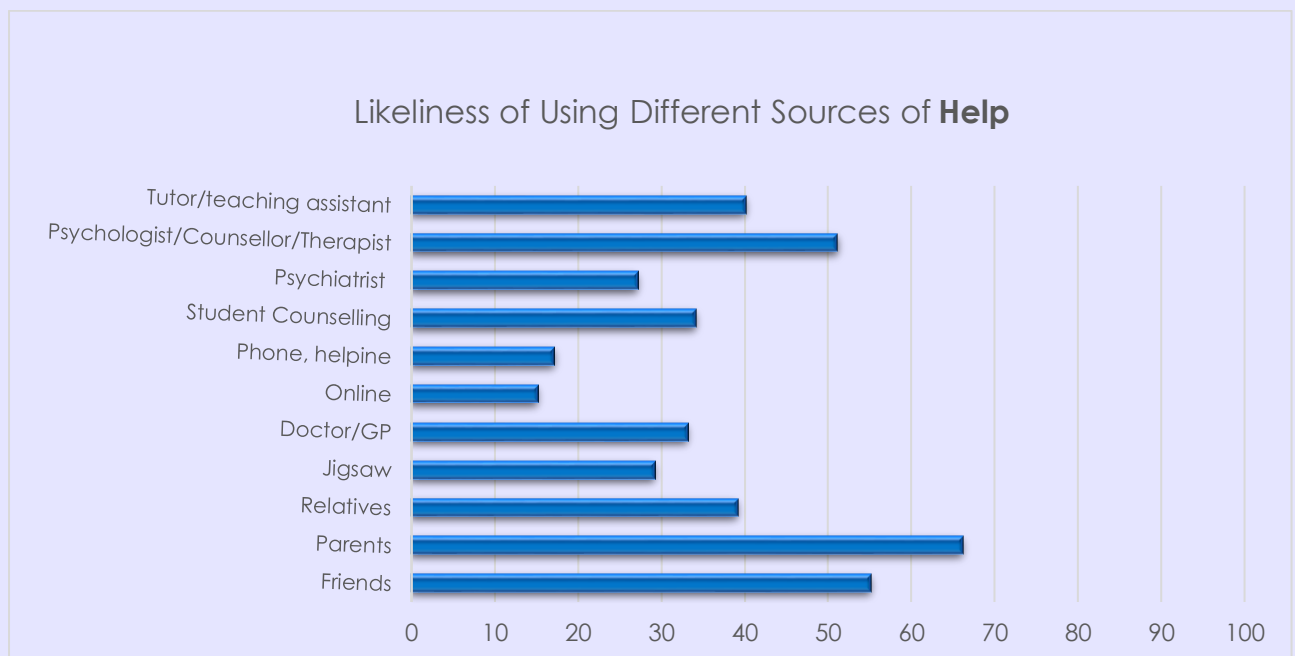
**Figure 18. Presence of One Good Adult.**

## 4.6. Help-seeking

### Sources of Support

Young people were asked how likely they would be to use a variety of sources to obtain information or support about their mental health and wellbeing. The most commonly reported informal sources were parents (66%), and friends (55%), followed by relatives (39%) and phone helpline (17%).

Psychologist/Counsellor/Therapist was the most likely source of formal support with 51% reporting this. This was followed by student counselling (34%), Doctor/GP (33%), and Jigsaw (29%). In addition, 40% of young people would turn to a tutor/teaching assistant for support about their mental health and wellbeing.



**Figure 20. Likelihood of using different sources of help.**

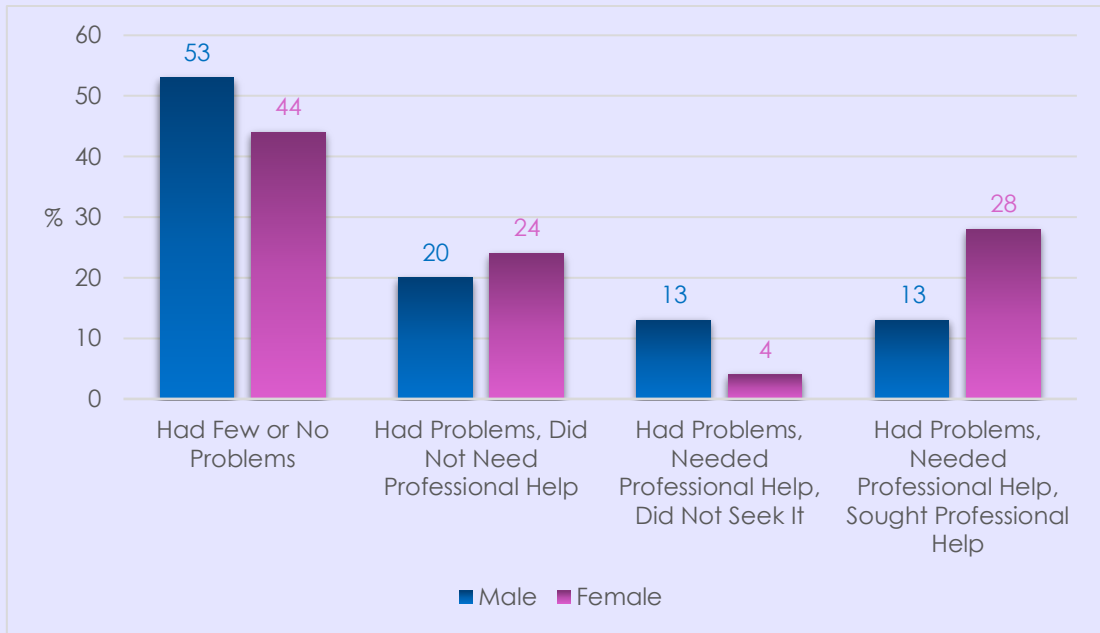
### Experiencing Problems

Overall, 46% participants reported few or no problems in the past year, while 27% of young people in the national sample reported the same.

Additionally, 22% of participants reported problems but had felt they did not need professional help, while 7% reported that they had problems but did not seek professional help even though they felt they needed it.

Finally, 24% reported that they had problems and had sought professional help (see Figure 21).

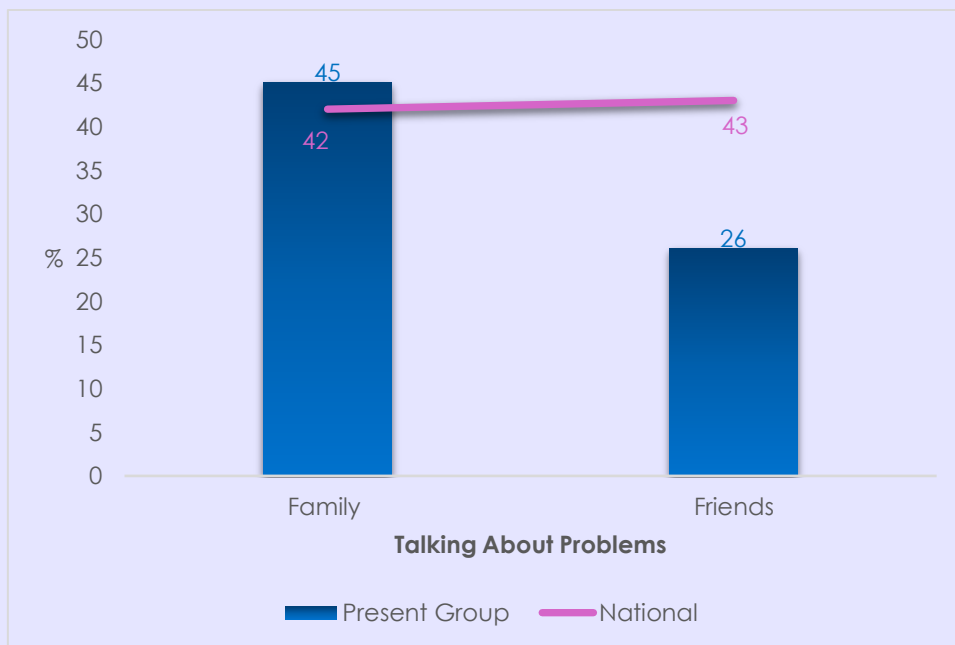




**Figure 21. Experiencing problems in the past year.**

### Talking About Problems

Approximately 76% of participants reported that they would talk about their problems. Of these, 45% would talk to family, 26% to friends, and 29% to other sources (for example boyfriend/girlfriend). Young people in the national sample were more likely to report talking about personal problems with friends (43%).



**Figure 22. Talking about personal problems to family and friends.**

## 5.0. CONCLUSION

This report summarised the findings from the My World Survey 2 report with regard to young people with a physical or sensory disability. It is important to note that these findings should be considered in the context of convenience sampling methods and a small sample size within the group, which limits the potential to generalise beyond those who participated. Despite this, this report presents a snapshot into both risk and protective factors for this group of young people.

More young people in this group reported normal levels of depression (66%) and anxiety (56%) than those in the national sample. However, suicide attempt was higher than the national average. Of those who attempted suicide, a higher proportion of young people (78%) in the physical and sensory disabilities group sought support after suicide than in the national sample (54%). It appears that overall males in the physical and sensory disabilities group demonstrated lower risk on negative domains and had greater protective factors than females in this group.

A greater amount of young people reported enjoying family life (84%) than in the national sample (53%). Moreover, young people in this group reported higher levels of perceived social support from friends, family, and a special adult than those in the national sample. Young people in the physical and sensory disabilities group also reported higher levels of optimism and self-esteem than the national sample.

Most importantly, young people were less likely to report the absence of One Good Adult® which is a positive finding, with 83% reporting that they have a special adult in their lives whom they can turn to in times of need.

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Thank you for taking part...

You can find the full My World Survey 2 report at [myworldsurvey.ie](https://myworldsurvey.ie)

