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Short Report:

HBSC IRELAND 2018: HEALTH AND WELL-BEING OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN DONEGAL

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30 June 2020

CONTENTS

| | |
|--|----|
| INTRODUCTION..... | 2 |
| FOCUS OF THIS REPORT | 2 |
| METHOD..... | 2 |
| RESULTS | 3 |
| 1. Sociodemographic characteristics | 3 |
| 2. Eating habits..... | 4 |
| 3. Physical activity..... | 5 |
| 4. Tobacco, alcohol, and cannabis | 5 |
| 5. School experiences | 6 |
| 6. Health and well-being | 7 |
| 7. Bullying..... | 8 |
| 8. Family relationships and pet ownership..... | 9 |
| 9. Your local area | 10 |
| 10. Friendships | 10 |
| 11. Sexual behaviour..... | 12 |
| REFERENCES..... | 13 |
| ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS..... | 13 |



INTRODUCTION

The Health Behaviour in School-aged Children (HBSC) study is a cross-national research study conducted in collaboration with the World Health Organisation (WHO) Regional Office for Europe and runs on a four-year cycle. In 2018, Ireland participated for the sixth time in the HBSC study (www.nuigalway.ie/hbsc). The overall aims of the HBSC study are to gain new insight into and increase our understanding of young people's health and well-being, health behaviours and their social context. HBSC collects data on key indicators of health, health attitudes, and health behaviours, as well as the context of health for young people. The study is a school-based survey with information collected from students through self-completion questionnaires in classrooms. HBSC Ireland 2018 was funded by the Department of Health. Further information on the HBSC Ireland can be found at www.nuigalway.ie/hbsc or at www.hbsc.org, the International HBSC website.

The most recent HBSC Ireland study was conducted in 2018 and included 15,557 school children from 3rd class in primary school to 5th year in post-primary school. Collectively, 255 primary and post-primary schools across Ireland participated in this study. The methods employed comply with the International HBSC protocol (Inchley et al., 2018) and are detailed in the Irish national report from the 2018 survey (Költő et al., 2020).

FOCUS OF THIS REPORT

This short report presents indicators of health and well-being in young people from Donegal, compared to the same findings from other counties of Republic of Ireland (ROI). The indicators included in this analysis are the same as those used in the *Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures: The National Policy Framework for Children and Young People, 2014-2020* (DCYA, 2017) and the *State of the Nation's Children* (DCYA, 2016) national frameworks.

METHOD

The data are presented in the same format as in the HBSC 2018 Ireland National Report (Költő et al. 2020), overall and in age group breakdown. Children aged between 10-17 years and providing valid gender response were included in this analysis. Within tables showing overall findings and those broken down to age groups, prevalence data are presented for young people from Donegal ($n = 414$, 3.52%) compared to national data, Donegal included ($n = 11,758$). In interpreting the data presented below, it is important to recognise that the sample was drawn to be representative at a national level and not a county level.

RESULTS

1. Sociodemographic characteristics

Tables 1, 2, and 3 present gender, age group, and social class distribution of the sample in Donegal versus the rest of ROI, respectively.

Table 1. Gender distribution in Donegal and the national sample

| | Donegal | | National sample | |
|--------------|-----------|---------|-----------------|---------|
| | Frequency | Percent | Frequency | Percent |
| Boys | 204 | 49.3 | 5619 | 47.8 |
| Girls | 210 | 50.7 | 6139 | 52.2 |

(n = 11,758)

Table 2. Age group distribution in Donegal and the national sample

| | Donegal | | National sample | |
|--------------|-----------|---------|-----------------|---------|
| | Frequency | Percent | Frequency | Percent |
| 10-14 | 212 | 51.2 | 7879 | 67.0 |
| 15-17 | 202 | 48.8 | 3879 | 33.0 |

(n = 11,758)

Table 3. Social class distribution in Donegal and the national sample

| | Donegal | | National sample | |
|--------------|-----------|------------|-----------------|------------|
| | Frequency | Percentage | Frequency | Percentage |
| SC1-2 | 157 | 44.5 | 5550 | 54.0 |
| SC3-4 | 146 | 41.4 | 3621 | 35.3 |
| SC5-6 | 50 | 14.2 | 1100 | 10.7 |

(n = 10,271)

2. Eating habits

In this section, data are presented for not having breakfast on weekdays (Table 4), not having breakfast at weekends (Table 5) and consumption of soft drinks (Table 6), overall and by age.

Table 4. Percentage of children who report not having breakfast on weekdays, in Donegal and the national sample

| | Donegal | | National sample | |
|--------------------|-----------|------------|-----------------|------------|
| | Frequency | Percentage | Frequency | Percentage |
| Overall | 66 | 16.1 | 1431 | 12.3 |
| 10-14 years | 25 | 11.9 | 745 | 9.6 |
| 15-17 years | 41 | 20.5 | 686 | 17.8 |

(n = 11,638)

Table 5. Percentage of children who report not having breakfast on weekends, in Donegal and the national sample

| | Donegal | | National sample | |
|--------------------|-----------|------------|-----------------|------------|
| | Frequency | Percentage | Frequency | Percentage |
| Overall | 42 | 10.3 | 739 | 6.4 |
| 10-14 years | 20 | 9.6 | 422 | 5.5 |
| 15-17 years | 22 | 11.1 | 317 | 8.3 |

(n = 11,560)

Table 6. Percentage of children who report drinking soft drinks daily or more, in Donegal and the national sample

| | Donegal | | National sample | |
|--------------------|-----------|------------|-----------------|------------|
| | Frequency | Percentage | Frequency | Percentage |
| Overall | 22 | 5.4 | 759 | 6.6 |
| 10-14 years | 10 | 4.8 | 490 | 6.3 |
| 15-17 years | 12 | 6.1 | 269 | 7.0 |

(n = 11,556)

3. Physical activity

In this section, data are presented for vigorous physical activity four or more times per week (Table 7), overall and by age.

Table 7. Percentage of children who report participating in vigorous exercise four or more times per week, in Donegal and the national sample

| | Donegal | | National sample | |
|--------------------|-----------|------------|-----------------|------------|
| | Frequency | Percentage | Frequency | Percentage |
| Overall | 168 | 42.9 | 5321 | 49.3 |
| 10-14 years | 103 | 52.3 | 3924 | 54.6 |
| 15-17 years | 65 | 33.3 | 1397 | 38.7 |

(n = 10,787)

4. Tobacco, alcohol, and cannabis

In this section, data are presented for lifetime smoking tobacco (Table 8), smoking at present (Table 9), never having had an alcoholic drink (Table 10), lifetime drunkenness (Table 11), and cannabis use in the last 12 months (Table 12), overall and by age.

Table 8. Percentage of children who report ever smoking tobacco, in Donegal and the national sample

| | Donegal | | National sample | |
|--------------------|-----------|------------|-----------------|------------|
| | Frequency | Percentage | Frequency | Percentage |
| Overall | 32 | 7.9 | 1234 | 10.6 |
| 10-14 years | 5 | 2.4 | 322 | 4.1 |
| 15-17 years | 27 | 13.6 | 912 | 23.9 |

(n = 11,611)

Table 9. Percentage of children who report they are current smokers, in Donegal and the national sample

| | Donegal | | National sample | |
|--------------------|-----------|------------|-----------------|------------|
| | Frequency | Percentage | Frequency | Percentage |
| Overall | 20 | 4.9 | 613 | 5.2 |
| 10-14 years | 4 | 1.9 | 166 | 2.1 |
| 15-17 years | 16 | 8.0 | 447 | 11.6 |

(n = 11,681)

Table 10. Percentage of children who report never having had an alcoholic drink, in Donegal and the national sample

| | Donegal | | National sample | |
|--------------------|-----------|------------|-----------------|------------|
| | Frequency | Percentage | Frequency | Percentage |
| Overall | 292 | 72.8 | 8033 | 69.4 |
| 10-14 years | 186 | 90.3 | 6622 | 85.1 |
| 15-17 years | 106 | 54.4 | 1411 | 37.3 |

(n = 11,568)

Table 11. Percentage of children who report who report ever having been 'really drunk', in Donegal and the national sample

| | Donegal | | National sample | |
|--------------------|-----------|------------|-----------------|------------|
| | Frequency | Percentage | Frequency | Percentage |
| Overall | 72 | 17.6 | 1917 | 16.5 |
| 10-14 years | 7 | 3.3 | 365 | 4.7 |
| 15-17 years | 65 | 32.7 | 1552 | 40.7 |

(n = 11,618)

Table 12. Percentage of children who report reporting cannabis use in the last 12 months, in Donegal and the national sample

| | Donegal | | National sample | |
|--------------------|-----------|------------|-----------------|------------|
| | Frequency | Percentage | Frequency | Percentage |
| Overall | 23 | 6.2 | 788 | 7.2 |
| 10-14 years | 2 | 1.0 | 141 | 1.9 |
| 15-17 years | 21 | 11.6 | 647 | 17.8 |

(n = 10,934)

5. School experiences

In this section, data are presented for liking school (Table 13), feeling pressured by schoolwork (Table 14), and agreeing that students in their school take part in making the rules (Table 15), overall and by age.

Table 13. Percentage of children who report liking their school a lot, in Donegal and the national sample

| | Donegal | | National sample | |
|--------------------|-----------|------------|-----------------|------------|
| | Frequency | Percentage | Frequency | Percentage |
| Overall | 295 | 72.1 | 8244 | 70.7 |
| 10-14 years | 152 | 73.4 | 5820 | 74.6 |
| 15-17 years | 143 | 70.8 | 2424 | 62.8 |

(n = 11,660)

Table 14. Percentage of children who feel pressured by schoolwork, in Donegal and the national sample

| | Donegal | | National sample | |
|--------------------|-----------|------------|-----------------|------------|
| | Frequency | Percentage | Frequency | Percentage |
| Overall | 178 | 44.0 | 5081 | 43.6 |
| 10-14 years | 77 | 37.6 | 2935 | 37.6 |
| 15-17 years | 101 | 50.5 | 2146 | 55.8 |

(n = 11,663)

Table 15. Percentage of children who agree that in their school children take part in making the rules, in Donegal and the national sample

| | Donegal | | National sample | |
|--------------------|-----------|------------|-----------------|------------|
| | Frequency | Percentage | Frequency | Percentage |
| Overall | 86 | 21.4 | 3313 | 28.5 |
| 10-14 years | 53 | 26.1 | 2709 | 34.8 |
| 15-17 years | 33 | 16.6 | 604 | 15.7 |

(n = 11,629)

6. Health and well-being

In this section, data are presented for feeling happy about life (Table 16), having high life satisfaction (Table 17), being happy with self (Table 18), having a disability or chronic illness (Table 19), and thinking that their body is too thin or too fat (Table 20), overall and by age.

Table 16. Percentage of children who report being happy about their life, in Donegal and the national sample

| | Donegal | | National sample | |
|--------------------|-----------|------------|-----------------|------------|
| | Frequency | Percentage | Frequency | Percentage |
| Overall | 168 | 41.2 | 4998 | 43.0 |
| 10-14 years | 117 | 56.3 | 3871 | 49.8 |
| 15-17 years | 51 | 25.5 | 1127 | 29.4 |

(n = 11,610)

Table 17. Percentage of children who report high life satisfaction, in Donegal and the national sample

| | Donegal | | National sample | |
|--------------------|-----------|------------|-----------------|------------|
| | Frequency | Percentage | Frequency | Percentage |
| Overall | 303 | 75.0 | 8357 | 73.3 |
| 10-14 years | 172 | 83.9 | 5961 | 78.2 |
| 15-17 years | 131 | 65.8 | 2396 | 63.5 |

(n = 11,398)

Table 18. Percentage of children who report being happy with themselves, in Donegal and the national sample

| | Donegal | | National sample | |
|--------------------|-----------|------------|-----------------|------------|
| | Frequency | Percentage | Frequency | Percentage |
| Overall | 201 | 49.8 | 6125 | 52.9 |
| 10-14 years | 122 | 59.2 | 4586 | 59.3 |
| 15-17 years | 79 | 39.9 | 1539 | 40.1 |

(n = 11,571)

Table 19. Percentage of children who report having a disability or chronic condition, in Donegal and the national sample

| | Donegal | | National sample | |
|--------------------|-----------|------------|-----------------|------------|
| | Frequency | Percentage | Frequency | Percentage |
| Overall | 98 | 24.6 | 2425 | 21.1 |
| 10-14 years | 51 | 25.4 | 1567 | 20.4 |
| 15-17 years | 47 | 23.9 | 858 | 22.5 |

(n = 11,505)

Table 20. Percentage of children who feel that their body is too thin or too fat, in Donegal and the national sample

| | Donegal | | National sample | |
|--------------------|-----------|------------|-----------------|------------|
| | Frequency | Percentage | Frequency | Percentage |
| Overall | 191 | 48.2 | 4946 | 43.3 |
| 10-14 years | 85 | 42.3 | 2989 | 39.1 |
| 15-17 years | 106 | 54.4 | 1957 | 51.5 |

(n = 11,434)

7. Bullying

In this section, data are presented for ever having bullied others (Table 21) and ever being bullied by others (Table 22), overall and by age.

Table 21. Percentage of children who report ever bullying others at school in the past couple of months, in Donegal and the national sample

| | Donegal | | National sample | |
|--------------------|-----------|------------|-----------------|------------|
| | Frequency | Percentage | Frequency | Percentage |
| Overall | 51 | 12.8 | 1502 | 13.2 |
| 10-14 years | 24 | 12.0 | 964 | 12.7 |
| 15-17 years | 27 | 13.7 | 538 | 14.1 |

(n = 11,417)

Table 22. Percentage of children who report ever being bullied at school in the past couple of months, in Donegal and the national sample

| | Donegal | | National sample | |
|--------------------|-----------|------------|-----------------|------------|
| | Frequency | Percentage | Frequency | Percentage |
| Overall | 109 | 27.5 | 3436 | 30.0 |
| 10-14 years | 57 | 28.5 | 2349 | 30.8 |
| 15-17 years | 52 | 26.5 | 1087 | 28.5 |

(n = 11,441)

8. Family relationships and pet ownership

In this section, data are presented for respondents finding it easy to discuss problems with their father (Table 23) and their mother (Table 24), and having a pet (Table 25), overall and by age.

Table 23. Percentage of children who find it easy to discuss their problems with their father, in Donegal and the national sample

| | Donegal | | National sample | |
|--------------------|-----------|------------|-----------------|------------|
| | Frequency | Percentage | Frequency | Percentage |
| Overall | 252 | 69.4 | 7434 | 70.5 |
| 10-14 years | 145 | 76.7 | 5288 | 74.2 |
| 15-17 years | 107 | 61.5 | 2146 | 62.8 |

(n = 10,547)

Table 24. Percentage of children who find it easy to discuss their problems with their mother, in Donegal and the national sample

| | Donegal | | National sample | |
|--------------------|-----------|------------|-----------------|------------|
| | Frequency | Percentage | Frequency | Percentage |
| Overall | 334 | 85.2 | 9375 | 84.0 |
| 10-14 years | 179 | 89.5 | 6444 | 86.5 |
| 15-17 years | 155 | 80.7 | 2931 | 78.9 |

(n = 11,160)

Table 25. Percentage of children who report having an own or a family pet, in Donegal and the national sample

| | Donegal | | National sample | |
|--------------------|-----------|------------|-----------------|------------|
| | Frequency | Percentage | Frequency | Percentage |
| Overall | 282 | 72.3 | 7701 | 71.8 |
| 10-14 years | 140 | 71.1 | 5105 | 71.4 |
| 15-17 years | 142 | 73.6 | 2596 | 72.5 |

(n = 10,728)

9. Your local area

In this section, data are presented for respondents reporting that they feel safe in the area where they live (Table 26) and feeling that there are good places to spend free time in the area (Table 27), overall and by age.

Table 26. Percentage of children who think the area in which they live is safe, in Donegal and the national sample

| | Donegal | | National sample | |
|--------------------|-----------|------------|-----------------|------------|
| | Frequency | Percentage | Frequency | Percentage |
| Overall | 383 | 94.8 | 10158 | 89.4 |
| 10-14 years | 199 | 96.6 | 6862 | 90.3 |
| 15-17 years | 184 | 92.9 | 3296 | 87.7 |

(n = 11,360)

Table 27. Percentage of children who think that there are good places to spend free time in the area in which they live, in Donegal and the national sample

| | Donegal | | National sample | |
|--------------------|-----------|------------|-----------------|------------|
| | Frequency | Percentage | Frequency | Percentage |
| Overall | 208 | 52.1 | 7202 | 63.9 |
| 10-14 years | 129 | 63.2 | 5279 | 70.2 |
| 15-17 years | 79 | 40.5 | 1923 | 51.4 |

(n = 11,262)

10. Friendships

In this section, data are presented for having three or more friends of the same sex (Table 28), for respondents reporting that they can count on their friends (Table 29), that their friends try to help them (Table 30), that they can share their joys and sorrows with their friends (Table 31), and that they can talk about their problems with their friends (Table 32), overall and by age.

Table 28. Percentage of children who have three or more friends of the same sex, in Donegal and the national sample

| | Donegal | | National sample | |
|--------------------|-----------|------------|-----------------|------------|
| | Frequency | Percentage | Frequency | Percentage |
| Overall | 349 | 87.0 | 10029 | 89.0 |
| 10-14 years | 184 | 89.8 | 6855 | 91.1 |
| 15-17 years | 165 | 84.2 | 3174 | 85.0 |

(n = 11,264)

Table 29. Percentage of children who report that they can count on their friends, in Donegal and the national sample

| | Donegal | | National sample | |
|--------------------|-----------|------------|-----------------|------------|
| | Frequency | Percentage | Frequency | Percentage |
| Overall | 268 | 67.3 | 7984 | 71.2 |
| 10-14 years | 142 | 69.6 | 5382 | 71.8 |
| 15-17 years | 126 | 64.9 | 2602 | 70.2 |

(n = 11,207)

Table 30. Percentage of children who report that that their friends try to help them, in Donegal and the national sample

| | Donegal | | National sample | |
|--------------------|-----------|------------|-----------------|------------|
| | Frequency | Percentage | Frequency | Percentage |
| Overall | 262 | 65.3 | 7955 | 70.9 |
| 10-14 years | 140 | 68.6 | 5377 | 71.6 |
| 15-17 years | 122 | 61.9 | 2578 | 69.3 |

(n = 11,227)

Table 31. Percentage of children who report that they can share their joys and sorrows with their friends, in Donegal and the national sample

| | Donegal | | National sample | |
|--------------------|-----------|------------|-----------------|------------|
| | Frequency | Percentage | Frequency | Percentage |
| Overall | 277 | 69.6 | 8350 | 74.8 |
| 10-14 years | 143 | 70.1 | 5568 | 74.7 |
| 15-17 years | 134 | 69.1 | 2782 | 75.1 |

(n = 11,160)

Table 32. Percentage of children who report that they can talk about their problems with their friends, in Donegal and the national sample

| | Donegal | | National sample | |
|--------------------|-----------|------------|-----------------|------------|
| | Frequency | Percentage | Frequency | Percentage |
| Overall | 266 | 66.5 | 7789 | 69.6 |
| 10-14 years | 143 | 70.1 | 5185 | 69.3 |
| 15-17 years | 123 | 62.8 | 2604 | 70.2 |

(n = 11,187)

11. Sexual behaviour

In this section, data are presented for 15-17 year olds reporting being comfortable with talking about their sexuality and reporting having had sexual intercourse (Table 33).

Table 33. Percentage of 15-17 year olds who report that they are comfortable with talking about their sexuality and report that they have had sexual intercourse, in Donegal and the national sample

| | Donegal | | National sample | |
|--|-----------|------------|-----------------|------------|
| | Frequency | Percentage | Frequency | Percentage |
| Comfortable with talking about their sexuality | 142 | 73.2 | 2872 | 80.8 |
| Having had sexual intercourse | 40 | 21.1 | 877 | 25.0 |

(Comfortable with talking about sexuality: $n = 3,554$; having had sexual intercourse: $n = 3,502$)

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