

Chapter 8

SCHOOL, HEALTH AND YOUNG PEOPLE

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Chapter 8

SCHOOL, HEALTH AND YOUNG PEOPLE

The age range 12 to 17 years generally coincides with attendance at high school and the maturation of children through adolescence and into early adulthood. For most young people, attending school regularly and achieving well academically throughout these years can provide a strong educational base, which in turn can expand the life choices and opportunities available to them. This chapter identifies factors associated with academic performance, attendance at school and retention in education of Aboriginal young people in Western Australia.

SUMMARY

WAACHS findings show that, for Aboriginal young people, there is a surprising lack of association between academic performance and many of the factors describing their current life circumstances. Combined with findings from previous chapters showing the early age at which many Aboriginal children fall behind at school, this suggests that patterns of poor school attendance and low academic performance are set during the primary school years.

Based on data from those students aged 12–17 years who also completed a youth self report form, the following findings were made in respect of overall academic performance:

- ◆ Risk of clinically significant emotional or behavioural difficulties was associated with overall academic performance. Students aged 12–17 years at either moderate or high risk of clinically significant emotional or behavioural difficulties were over 3 times as likely to have low academic performance as students at low risk.
- ◆ Students in areas of high and extreme relative isolation were over twice as likely to have low academic performance.
- ◆ Students absent for 26 days or more of the school year were almost twice as likely to have low academic performance as students with more regular attendance.
- ◆ Students who have a primary carer who has never been in paid work were twice as likely to have low academic performance.
- ◆ Students whose primary carer is Aboriginal were over one and a half times as likely to have low academic performance.
- ◆ Self-esteem of students aged 12–17 years was not associated with overall academic performance.

In respect of school attendance the following findings were made:

- ◆ Students at either moderate or high risk of clinically significant emotional or behavioural difficulties were more likely to have below median attendance than students at low risk.
- ◆ Students living outside of the Perth metropolitan area were more likely to have below median attendance than students in Perth.
- ◆ Self-esteem of students aged 12–17 years was not associated with attendance at school.



SUMMARY *(continued)*

- ◆ Students who have ever had sex were over two and a half times as likely to have below median attendance as students who have never had sex.

The vast majority of Aboriginal young people aged under 15 years were still in school. From age 15 years and older, the proportion of Aboriginal young people who no longer attend school was substantially higher, reducing the chances of academic and vocational success beyond the school years.

Based on data for all young people aged 15–17 years for whom a child health questionnaire was completed by their primary carer, the following findings were made in respect of retention in school and education:

- ◆ About 47 per cent of all 15–17 year-olds were no longer going to school.
- ◆ Some 56 per cent of all 15–17 year-olds were still in some form of education.
- ◆ Around 12 per cent of all 15–17 year-olds were working.
- ◆ About 32 per cent of all 15–17 year-olds were neither working nor in any form of education.
- ◆ Young people living in areas of low, high and extreme relative isolation were over twice as likely to no longer be at school.
- ◆ Young people who had drunk alcohol or gotten drunk in the six months prior to the survey were over twice as likely to no longer be at school.
- ◆ Young people who live in households where overuse of alcohol causes problems were over twice as likely to no longer be at school.



INTRODUCTION

Young people aged 12–17 years were asked to independently complete a Youth Self-Report (YSR) questionnaire as part of the WAACHS household survey component. For those young people who completed a YSR and for whom a teacher report was also completed, key academic outcomes have been analysed by a series of demographic and health risk factors.

For all young people who completed a YSR questionnaire, analyses were undertaken to investigate the differences in demographic and health risk factors between those young people still going to school and those no longer attending school.

Finally, a similar analysis was conducted using carer reported data on young people aged 12–17 years from both the Child Health Questionnaire (CHQ) and the primary carer's own questionnaire, looking at the differences between those young people still going to school and those no longer attending.

For more information on the various survey populations used for analysis in this chapter see *Appendix D — Levels of school and student participation*.

PARTICIPATION IN THE YOUTH SELF REPORT

Administering the Youth Self Report

The YSR was developed specifically for 12–17 year-olds and interviewer assistance was available for those young people who required help completing it. Of the 1,480 young people aged 12–17 years in the survey sample, 1,073 (72.5 per cent) completed a YSR questionnaire, 19 per cent of whom received the help of an interviewer. Due to the sensitive nature of some questions, it is possible that the presence of an interviewer may have had some impact on the responses but this could not be measured.

The effects of YSR non-response

Over one quarter of 12–17 year-olds in the survey did not complete the YSR. For many of the non-responding young people, some information was available on the CHQ as reported by the primary carer. Thus it was possible to compare characteristics of respondents and non-respondents to the YSR, by information collected from their carers. Carer reports for 12–17 year-olds were based on 1,399 responses to the CHQ (94.5 per cent of young people in the survey sample). As this represents a much higher proportion of young people than are represented by responses to the YSR, it is beneficial to analyse outcomes for both sets of data where variables are shared. Where variables are not shared, analyses involving young people are undertaken using the data set containing the variable of interest.

Young people responding to the YSR were more likely to be aged 13–15 years and to be living in the Perth metropolitan area, while non-respondents were more likely to live in census collection districts classified to the bottom 5 per cent of socioeconomic disadvantage, to have had contact with police, juvenile justice or

Continued



PARTICIPATION IN THE YOUTH SELF REPORT (*continued*)

courts, or to be at high risk of clinically significant emotional or behavioural difficulties (see *Appendix D* of Volume Two — *Levels of family and youth participation*).¹

In order to generalise observations to the entire population of Western Australian Aboriginal young people, those responding to the survey were weighted by sex, age and Level of Relative Isolation to represent the entire population (see *Appendix B* of Volume One — *Sample design*).² This weighting procedure accounted for the different response rates by sex, age and LORI. However, the distribution of other variables, such as the risk of clinically significant emotional or behavioural difficulties, could not be taken into account in the weighting procedure. This must be borne in mind when interpreting results based on the YSR and when comparing them with results based on carer reports as reported in other chapters in this volume.

YOUNG PEOPLE CURRENTLY AT SCHOOL

There were an estimated 9,100 Aboriginal young people aged 12–17 years in Western Australia in 2001, of which 6,730 were estimated to be attending school (CI: 6,450–6,990). Youth self-reported data was received for 5,220 of these students (CI: 4,740–5,710) (Tables 8.1 and 8.2). This is the group of students analysed in the following sections covering overall academic performance and attendance at school (see *Appendix D*).

OVERALL ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

Overall academic performance by risk of clinically significant emotional or behavioural difficulties

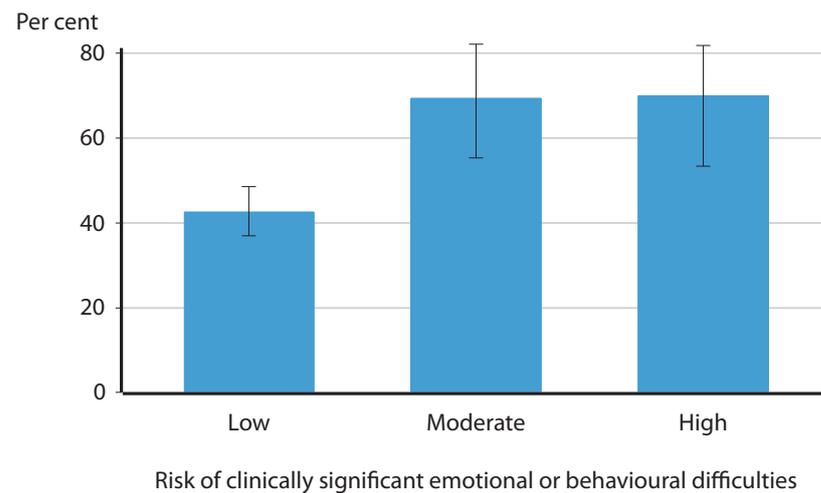
In order to measure students' risk of clinically significant emotional or behavioural difficulties, teachers completed the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) for survey children. They also completed a rating of each student's overall academic performance (see *Chapter 5*). The SDQ comprises twenty-five questions probing five areas of psychological adjustment in children. Based on teacher responses to the SDQ items, a Strengths and Difficulties Total Score that can range from 0–40 was calculated. The risk of clinically significant emotional or behavioural difficulties was then assessed with reference to the SDQ total score. Thus students with a score of 0–11 were identified as having *low risk*, those in the range 12–15 as having *moderate risk*, and those in the range 16–40 as having *high risk* of clinically significant emotional or behavioural difficulties. See *Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire* in the *Glossary* for further details of the SDQ.

Students at moderate or high risk of clinically significant emotional or behavioural difficulties were significantly more likely to have low academic performance. Of those 12–17 year-old students at high risk of clinically significant emotional or behavioural difficulties, 69.9 per cent (CI: 53.4%–81.8%) had low academic performance. This compares with 42.5 per cent (CI: 36.9%–48.5%) of students at low risk who had low academic performance (Figure 8.1).



Factors found to be associated with risk of clinically significant emotional or behavioural difficulties were discussed in detail in *Volume Two — The Social and Emotional Wellbeing of Aboriginal Children and Young People*.¹ The main findings have been summarised in Chapter 5 of this volume in the commentary box entitled *Factors associated with emotional and behavioural difficulties*.

FIGURE 8.1: STUDENTS AGED 12–17 YEARS WHO COMPLETED A YSR FORM — PROPORTION WITH LOW ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE, BY RISK OF CLINICALLY SIGNIFICANT EMOTIONAL OR BEHAVIOURAL DIFFICULTIES



Source: Table 8.2

INDIGENOUS AEROSPACE INITIATIVE

The Indigenous Aerospace Initiative (IAI) commenced in 2005 to provide opportunities for Aboriginal students to undertake initial pilot training and enter the Australian aviation industry. The programme is designed to increase participation by Aboriginal students in the aviation industry, which has a growing demand for Aboriginal pilots.

The IAI is an aspirational programme intended to increase the achievement of Aboriginal students, not only among programme participants but also through their impact as role models for other students. It is anticipated that retention rates for Aboriginal students and the performance of Aboriginal students who meet Year 12 graduation or equivalent will be improved.

The initial trial programme commenced at Swan TAFE, Midland, on 18 July 2005 with the enrolment of three students. The programme is solely funded by the Western Australian Department of Education and Training.

Swan TAFE's College of Aviation has internationally recognised pilot training capabilities and was contracted to deliver the inaugural programme. Theoretical training to meet Civil Aviation Safety Authority (CASA) syllabus requirements is provided by lecturers in Transport, Aviation and Logistics at Swan TAFE and flying training is supplied by a private flying school and air charter company.

Continued



INDIGENOUS AEROSPACE INITIATIVE (continued)

A reference group comprising three representatives each from Swan TAFE and the Department of Education and Training meet monthly to monitor and evaluate the current programme, plan the second intake of students in 2006 and further develop the initiative, including areas of possible collaboration with private sector participants.

On completion of the programme, students will graduate from Swan TAFE with a Diploma in Aeronautics, will hold a Commercial Pilot Licence, will have completed theory examinations toward the CASA Air Transport Pilot Licence qualification and hold other industry certificates. The programme may subsequently expand to up to 20 student pilots each year with an Australia-wide intake.³

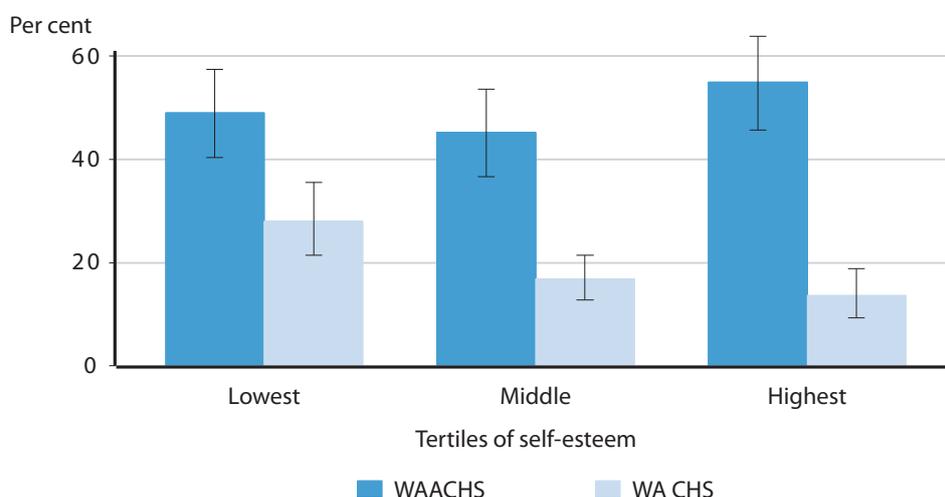
Academic performance and self-esteem

Past research has shown that school performance and self-esteem are positively related. For example, the 1993 *Western Australian Child Health Survey* (WA CHS) found that among non-Aboriginal students there was a clear association between low academic competence and low self-esteem. In the WA CHS, 28 per cent (CI: 21.5%–35.6%) of 12–16 year-olds with self-esteem scores in the lowest third also had low academic competence, while this was true for only 13.7 per cent (CI: 9.3%–18.9%) of those with high self-esteem.⁴

In contrast, for Aboriginal young people in the WAACHS, no association was found between teacher-reported academic performance and student self-esteem (Figure 8.2).

The WA CHS measure for academic performance was identical to that used by the WAACHS, but the self-esteem measure was different. See commentary box entitled *Self-esteem* in this chapter for more information.

FIGURE 8.2: STUDENTS AGED 12–17 YEARS WHO COMPLETED A YSR FORM — PROPORTION WITH LOW ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE, BY SELF-ESTEEM, WAACHS COMPARED WITH WA CHS



Source: Table 8.3 & 1993 *Western Australian Child Health Survey*



SELF-ESTEEM

Self-esteem refers to a favourable or unfavourable attitude towards the self and has been variously understood to include an internalised self-image and feelings of self-worth.^{4,5}

Six items specifically designed for the WAACHS were used to measure self-esteem in young people participating in the survey (see *Appendix C* of Volume Two — *Measures derived from multiple responses and scales*).¹ In this chapter there are comparisons made with self-esteem among non-Aboriginal children from the 1993 WA CHS, which is based on a different self-esteem measure.⁶ Self-esteem in the WA CHS was derived from Marsh's Self-Description Questionnaire which uses a 32-item instrument.⁷

There are several reasons why doing well in school and feeling good about oneself might not show any association. Firstly, minority status (or stigma), identity and cultural differences in self-concept may all play a role in modifying levels of individual self-esteem.⁸ Thus, there are theoretical and practical mechanisms that could link levels of self-esteem to experienced stigma (e.g. racism), the development of racial identity, and expectations about individual versus collective behaviour.

Secondly, extensive reviews support a general conclusion that self-esteem is culturally constructed.⁹ Thus, the extent to which cultural groups value collectivism as opposed to individualism is likely to produce differences in personal self-concept and personal self-esteem.¹⁰ Aboriginal culture, for example, places considerable value on family and community obligations where individuals are members of groups, bands and communities. These social structures bring with them specific obligations on the part of individuals to others.

Thirdly, longitudinal studies employing statistical techniques of causal modelling show little evidence that improvements in self-esteem result in better educational outcomes.¹¹ Instead, these studies generally support the 'achievement' model of self-esteem which suggests that self-esteem is more of an outcome than a cause of academic and/or other success.¹²

Given the low academic performance of Aboriginal children from the early primary school years onwards, it is hardly surprising that self-esteem and school performance show no association. Experiences of self-esteem are not likely to be based in the experience of school and are more likely to lie elsewhere.



Factors associated with low academic performance – Modelled outcomes for students aged 12–17 years

Multivariate logistic regression modelling (see *Glossary*) was undertaken to examine the association between demographic and youth risk factors and low academic performance (Table 8.4). Independently of all other variables in the model it was found that the following factors were associated with low academic performance:

Sex. Male students were 1.84 times (CI: 1.48–2.29) as likely to have low academic performance as female students.

Age. Young people still at school aged 15–17 years were 35 per cent less likely (Odds Ratio 0.65; CI: 0.43–1.00) to have low academic performance relative to those aged 12–14 years.

Level of Relative Isolation (LORI). Students living in more isolated areas were performing less well relative to those living in the Perth metropolitan area. Young people living in areas of high relative isolation were twice as likely (Odds Ratio 2.07; CI: 1.23–3.48) to have low academic performance, and young people in areas of extreme isolation were almost three times more likely (Odds Ratio 2.95; CI: 1.61–5.42) to have low academic performance than those young people living in the Perth metropolitan area.

Below median school attendance. Young people absent from school for 26 days or more in the school year were 1.68 times (CI: 1.34–2.12) more likely to have low academic performance than students absent less than 26 days in the school year.

Teacher reported risk of clinically significant emotional or behavioural difficulties. Students at moderate risk were 3.46 times (CI: 2.45–4.87) more likely and students at high risk were 3.35 times (CI: 2.37–4.74) more likely to have low academic performance compared with those at low risk.

Aboriginal status of the primary carer. As described in Volume One,² almost all non-Aboriginal primary carers are actually the natural birth mothers of the Aboriginal children in their care. Students with an Aboriginal primary carer were 1.69 times (CI: 1.26–2.28) more likely to have low academic performance relative to students whose primary carer identified as non-Aboriginal.

Whether the primary carer had ever been in paid work. Students whose primary carer had never worked in a job where they got paid were almost twice as likely (Odds Ratio 1.97; CI: 1.35–2.86) to have low academic performance relative to students whose primary carer had worked in paid employment.

Factors that were not independently associated with low academic performance among young people aged 12–17 years included:

- ◆ self-esteem
- ◆ racism and bullying
- ◆ religion and spirituality
- ◆ whether the student had been in a physical fight in the past six months
- ◆ whether the student had been in a family violence situation
- ◆ educational encouragement from parents
- ◆ regular marijuana use



- ◆ whether the student had ever had sex
- ◆ student reported alcohol problems in the house
- ◆ student reported parental drug use
- ◆ having someone to yarn to if the student has a problem
- ◆ having a special friend or mate
- ◆ primary carer's educational attainment
- ◆ primary carer's current employment status
- ◆ whether the primary carer was forcibly separated from their natural family by a mission, the government or welfare
- ◆ whether the primary carer suffers from a long term limiting health condition
- ◆ family financial strain
- ◆ family functioning
- ◆ number of life stress events occurring in the past 12 months
- ◆ quality of parenting
- ◆ whether the student had undertaken strenuous exercise in the past seven days.



FOLLOW THE DREAM

*Follow the Dream*¹³ is a secondary school level aspirations strategy overseen by the Western Australian Department of Education and Training (DET) designed to substantially increase the proportion of Aboriginal students who complete Year 12 with a Western Australian Certificate of Education, allowing entry into Technical and Further Education (TAFE) courses, or achieve a high enough Tertiary Entrance Ranking (TER) to gain entry into University.

DET is working on delivering *Follow the Dream* in conjunction with several partners, including the Australian Government Department of Education, Science and Training (DEST), the Polly Farmer Foundation, the Red Cross, The Smith Family, The University of Western Australia and the West Australian Office of Equal Employment Opportunity (OEEO). Each partner has a specific and important role to play in ensuring the success of the strategy — between them they cover all aspects of education including within school learning, out of school tutoring, vocational education, industry support, employment opportunities, family support and overall project management.

The *Follow the Dream* strategy is currently accessed through 36 government and 20 non-government senior high schools and colleges spread throughout Western Australia. It does not operate at the primary school level.

Follow the Dream works by first identifying those Aboriginal students for whom academic performance is at or above the Western Australian Literacy and Numeracy Assessment (WALNA) Year 7 benchmarks. These students are then invited to voluntarily participate in *Follow the Dream* from within participating secondary schools. Participating students then receive comprehensive support and mentoring for their academic pursuits from Year 8 through to Year 12 to ensure the best possible chance of graduation and access to higher education or employment.

While *Follow the Dream* is designed to operate in various parts of the state, each location has its own unique circumstances, including different local industries, different facilities and different educational options. The strategy aims to engender strong community support by having a steering committee at the local level responsible for the direction of the programme in each local community, including the development of training and employment opportunities in local industries, so that *Follow the Dream* can be relevant to students wherever it is implemented.

Bearing in mind retention issues, in 2001 there were 770 Aboriginal students enrolled in Year 11 in Western Australia, and by completion of the 2002 school year there were a total of 202 Year 12 Certificates issued to Aboriginal students.¹⁴ In 2003, of students enrolled in government schools, 18 Aboriginal students achieved the minimum TER for entry to a public university in Western Australia.³ By 2008 *Follow the Dream* aims to have at least 100 Aboriginal students per year achieving high enough TERs to gain direct entry to University and 1,000 Aboriginal students per year achieving a Western Australian Certificate of Education. If these ambitious goals are achieved, it will represent a substantial improvement for Aboriginal students in Western Australia.



SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

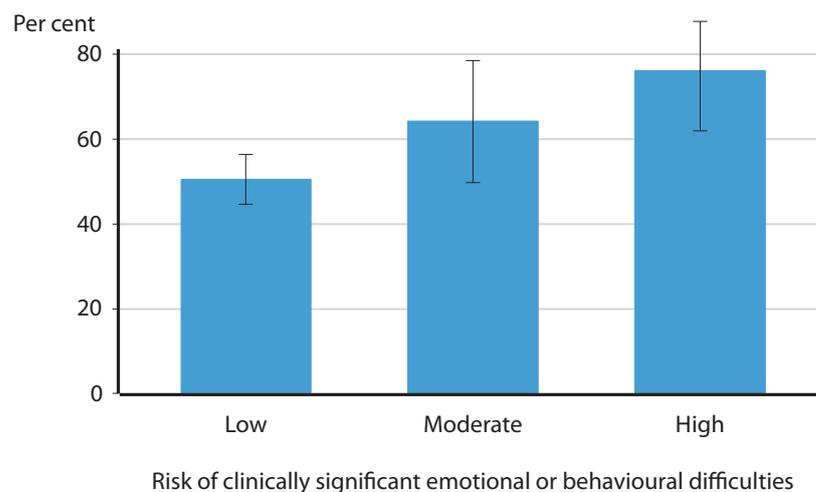
Attendance at school and risk of clinically significant emotional or behavioural difficulties

The association between student emotional or behavioural difficulties and school attendance have been explored based on information collected from teachers on their students using the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ). See *Glossary* for further details of the SDQ.

Students at high risk of clinically significant emotional or behavioural difficulties were more likely to be absent from school. Of those 12–17 year-old students at high risk of clinically significant emotional or behavioural difficulties, 76.2 per cent (CI: 62.0%–87.7%) were absent from school for 26 days or more during the school year compared with 50.6 per cent (CI: 44.7%–56.4%) of children at low risk (Figure 8.3).

Factors associated with high risk of clinically significant emotional or behavioural difficulties were discussed in detail in *Volume Two — The Social and Emotional Wellbeing of Aboriginal Children and Young People*.¹ These findings are also summarised in Chapter 5 of this volume.

FIGURE 8.3: STUDENTS AGED 12–17 YEARS WHO COMPLETED A YSR FORM — PROPORTION ABSENT FROM SCHOOL FOR 26 DAYS OR MORE, BY RISK OF CLINICALLY SIGNIFICANT EMOTIONAL OR BEHAVIOURAL DIFFICULTIES



Source: Table 8.5

School attendance and problems with alcohol at home

Young people were asked ‘Does alcohol cause problems at your house?’ Of those students from households where alcohol caused problems, 69.0 per cent (CI: 58.5%–79.0%) were absent from school for 26 days or more during the school year. For students from households where alcohol did not cause problems, 51.6 per cent (CI: 45.4%–57.5%) were absent from school for 26 days or more (Table 8.6).

Attendance at school and self-esteem

No association was found between attendance at school and low self-esteem for students aged 12–17 years. However there was a non-significant trend suggesting that lower self-esteem may be related to poor attendance. For those students in the lowest third of self-



esteem, 64.5 per cent (CI: 55.8%–72.2%) were absent from school for 26 days or more during the school year whereas, for students in the highest third of self-esteem, 47.8 per cent (CI: 38.6%–57.9%) were absent from school for 26 days or more (Table 8.7).

YOUTH HEALTH RISK BEHAVIOURS AND SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL WELLBEING

There are a variety of physical and mental health risk factors impacting on the lives of Aboriginal young people, some of which exhibit no direct relationship with either academic performance or school attendance, but which remain of considerable interest to the education sector. An extensive analysis of these issues was undertaken in *Volume Two — The Social and Emotional Wellbeing of Aboriginal Children and Young People*,¹ where one chapter was devoted to health risk behaviours and another to the relationship between these behaviours and social and emotional wellbeing.

The key findings of those chapters are summarised here, and readers who are particularly interested in these areas are encouraged to read Volume Two, which is available in hard copy or can be downloaded free-of-charge at www.ichr.uwa.edu.au/waachs.

Physical activity

- ◆ More than one quarter of young people (28 per cent) had not done strenuous physical exercise in the week prior to the survey. One in five males (20 per cent) and more than one in three females (36 per cent) had not done strenuous exercise in the previous week.
- ◆ Almost half of all 17 year-old females (49 per cent) had not done strenuous exercise in the week prior to the survey compared with only 8 per cent of 17 year-old males.
- ◆ Young people no longer attending school were half as likely to have exercised strenuously in the week prior to the survey as young people still attending school.
- ◆ Young people who have smoked cigarettes were less likely to have exercised strenuously in the past seven days.

Sexual knowledge and experience

- ◆ Adjusted for age, young people aged 12–17 years who were no longer attending school were six times more likely to have ever had sex than young people still at school.
- ◆ About 28 per cent of young people have had sex. Among 17 year-olds, three quarters (75 per cent) have had sex.
- ◆ Almost half (49 per cent) of 17 year-olds first had sex before the age of 16 years.
- ◆ Compared with young people of the same age and sex, a greater proportion of young people who had left school, used marijuana daily, smoked cigarettes regularly or drank alcohol have had sex.

Continued . . .



YOUTH HEALTH RISK BEHAVIOURS AND SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL WELLBEING *(continued)*

- ◆ One in eight young people (13 per cent) who have had sex had not received any sexual education.
- ◆ School was a source of sexual education for 60 per cent of young people and the sole source for 41 per cent.

Bullying and racism

- ◆ Almost one third of young people (31 per cent) who were still attending school have been bullied. Young people who had smoked cigarettes regularly were over twice as likely to have been bullied.
- ◆ Over one in five young people (22 per cent) had been refused service or treated badly because they were Aboriginal.

Cigarette smoking

- ◆ Over one third of all 12–17 year-old young people (35 per cent) have smoked cigarettes regularly. Over half of 17 year-olds (58 per cent) have smoked regularly.
- ◆ Young people not attending school were over one and a half times more likely to have smoked cigarettes regularly compared with young people of the same age still in school.
- ◆ Young people who have at least one parent who smokes were almost twice as likely to have smoked cigarettes regularly as young people whose parents do not smoke.

Alcohol

- ◆ Just over one quarter of all young people (27 per cent) drank alcohol. At 17 years of age, 61 per cent of males and 43 per cent of females were drinking alcohol.
- ◆ Almost one in five young people (19 per cent) had been in a car with a drunk driver in the six months prior to the survey.

Marijuana

- ◆ Thirty per cent of young people have used marijuana at some time in their lives. Marijuana was used at least weekly by 45 per cent of 17 year-old males and 21 per cent of 17 year-old females.
- ◆ Three quarters of young people (75 per cent) who drank alcohol and smoked cigarettes also used marijuana, compared with only 8 per cent of young people who neither drank alcohol or smoked cigarettes.
- ◆ Adjusted for age, young people who were no longer going to school were significantly more likely to have tried marijuana, and to use it at least weekly, compared with those who were still attending school.

Continued . . .

YOUTH HEALTH RISK BEHAVIOURS AND SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL WELLBEING *(continued)*

Self-esteem

- ◆ Low self-esteem was associated with a high risk of clinically significant emotional or behavioural difficulties and with health risk behaviours.
- ◆ Self-esteem was lower for females, 32 per cent of whom had low self-esteem compared with 21 per cent of males.
- ◆ Self-esteem did not change with age in males but declined with age in females – 20 per cent of 12 year-old females had low self-esteem compared with 40 per cent of 17 year-old females.
- ◆ Young people who were more physically active or took part in organised sport had better self-esteem. Over a third of young people who had not exercised strenuously in the seven days prior to the survey had low self-esteem compared with 24 per cent who had exercised strenuously.

Emotional or behavioural difficulties

- ◆ One in nine young people (11 per cent) were at high risk of clinically significant emotional or behavioural difficulties.
- ◆ The proportion of females at high risk of clinically significant emotional symptoms was more than double that of males (15 per cent compared with 6 per cent).
- ◆ About 23 per cent of young people were at high risk of clinically significant conduct problems and 15 per cent were at high risk of clinically significant hyperactivity.
- ◆ About forty per cent of young people whose carers' parenting style was poor were at high risk of clinically significant conduct problems, compared with 26 per cent of young people whose carers' parenting style was sub-optimal and 15 per cent of young people whose carers' parenting style was adequate.

Associations with health risk behaviours

- ◆ About 18 per cent of young people who smoked cigarettes were at high risk of clinically significant emotional or behavioural difficulties compared with 7 per cent of non-smokers. This association was most pronounced in females (22 per cent compared with 7 per cent).
- ◆ Over one quarter (29 per cent) of young people who used marijuana daily were at high risk of clinically significant emotional or behavioural difficulties compared with 9 per cent of young people who had never used marijuana.
- ◆ Of young people who did not participate in organised sport, 16 per cent were at high risk of clinically significant emotional or behavioural difficulties compared with 8 per cent of young people who did.

Continued . . .



YOUTH HEALTH RISK BEHAVIOURS AND SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL WELLBEING *(continued)*

- ◆ Almost one in five (19 per cent) young people who had experienced racism in the past six months were at high risk of clinically significant emotional or behavioural difficulties, compared with 9 per cent of those who had not.

Suicidal behaviour

- ◆ About 16 per cent of young people aged 12–17 years had seriously thought about ending their own life during the 12 months prior to the survey. Suicidal thoughts were less common in males (12 per cent) than in females (20 per cent).
- ◆ Of those who had thought about suicide, 39 per cent had also attempted suicide during the 12 months prior to the survey.
- ◆ Approximately 21 per cent of males in the lowest quartile of self-esteem had thought about suicide compared with 5 per cent of males in the highest quartile.
- ◆ A much larger proportion of young people at high risk of clinically significant emotional or behavioural difficulties had thought about suicide (37 per cent) or had attempted suicide (21 per cent) in the 12 months prior to the survey than young people at low risk of clinically significant emotional or behavioural difficulties (10 per cent and 3 per cent respectively).
- ◆ A significantly higher proportion of young people who had used marijuana within the last year, smoked cigarettes regularly or drunk alcohol to excess had seriously thought about ending their own life in the 12 months prior to the survey than those who had not.
- ◆ About 22 per cent of young people exposed to family violence had thought about suicide compared with 9 per cent who had not been exposed to family violence.
- ◆ Almost one quarter (24 per cent) of females with friends or people known to them who had recently attempted suicide had themselves attempted suicide compared with 5 per cent who had no acquaintances who had recently attempted suicide.

Even though most of these items show no direct association with either academic performance or school attendance, these factors still have significant impacts on the lives of Aboriginal young people. Schools occupy a powerful position of influence over the children in their care. As the majority of young people now attend school until at least 16 years of age, the school environment is an ideal place to teach young people about the impacts of these health risk behaviours on life outcomes — for example, how taking regular physical exercise can benefit long term health; how to avoid unwanted pregnancies and sexually transmitted diseases; and the damage that tobacco, alcohol and marijuana use can inflict on the individual, the family and the community.



Factors associated with poor school attendance – Modelled outcomes for students aged 12–17 years

Multivariate logistic regression modelling (see *Glossary*) was undertaken to examine the association between demographic and youth risk factors and below median attendance at school (absences of 26 days or more in the school year) (Table 8.8). Independently of all other variables in the model, it was found that the following factors were associated with below median attendance:

Age. Young people aged 15–17 years who were still at school were 38 per cent less likely (Odds Ratio 0.62; CI: 0.39–0.98) to have below median attendance compared with students aged 12–14 years.

Level of Relative Isolation (LORI). Relative to students aged 12–17 years living in the Perth metropolitan area, young people living outside of the metropolitan area were more likely to have higher levels of absence from school. Students living in areas of low relative isolation were 1.48 times (CI: 1.06–2.08) as likely to have below median attendance, students living in areas of moderate relative isolation were 3.25 times (CI: 2.09–5.06) as likely, students living in areas of high relative isolation were 4.08 times (CI: 2.30–7.23) as likely, and those in areas of extreme relative isolation were 2.97 times (CI: 1.57–5.62) as likely to have below median attendance.

Teacher reported risk of clinically significant emotional or behavioural difficulties. Students at moderate risk of clinically significant emotional or behavioural difficulties were 1.57 times (CI: 1.15–2.14) as likely and those at high risk were 2.35 times (CI: 1.72–3.21) as likely to have below median school attendance compared with those at low risk.

Ever had sex. Students who had ever had sex were 2.61 times (CI: 1.12–6.06) more likely to have below median school attendance compared with those who had never had sex.

Factors that were not independently associated with below median school attendance among young people aged 12–17 years included:

- ◆ self-esteem
- ◆ racism and bullying
- ◆ religion and spirituality
- ◆ whether student had been in a physical fight in the past six months
- ◆ whether student had been in a family violence situation
- ◆ educational encouragement from parents
- ◆ regular marijuana use (see note below list)
- ◆ having someone to yarn to if student has a problem
- ◆ having a special friend or mate
- ◆ primary carer's educational attainment
- ◆ primary carer's current or historical employment status
- ◆ primary carer's Aboriginal status
- ◆ whether the primary carer was forcibly separated from their natural family by a mission, the government or welfare
- ◆ whether the primary carer suffers from a long term limiting health condition



- ◆ family financial strain
- ◆ family functioning
- ◆ number of life stress events occurring in the past 12 months
- ◆ quality of parenting
- ◆ whether the student had undertaken strenuous exercise in the past seven days.

Although the association between marijuana use and below median attendance was not statistically significant, it was very close to significance. Because of the high odds ratio of 2.98 (CI: 0.94–9.41) and the marginal statistical significance of this finding, this variable was left in the final model.

FOUNDATIONS FOR SUCCESS IN HIGH SCHOOL

As described in Chapter 5, the average level of academic performance of Aboriginal children falls behind that of non-Aboriginal children during the first years of school, and is maintained at a consistently low level throughout the remaining school years. Added to the disadvantage of beginning school already behind their non-Aboriginal peers, the decline in academic performance from early to late primary school is steeper for Aboriginal students. This means that, as Aboriginal children progress through primary school, their performance falls further behind the academic performance of non-Aboriginal students.

This chapter presents analyses of the academic performance and attendance of young people aged 12–17 years for whom school details and a Youth Self-Report were received. Many of the findings and associations shown mirror those from earlier chapters that also looked at all children aged 4–17 years. For example, the median number of days absent from school in a school year was 26 days for Aboriginal students compared with a much lower 8 days for non-Aboriginal students (see *Chapter 4*). This pattern of much lower levels of attendance at school for Aboriginal students was evident from the earliest years of primary school where the foundations for educational success are laid.

The poor achievement levels observed in the analyses of school performance in young Aboriginal people aged 12–17 years have their origins early in primary school. The survey findings suggest the need for a combination of pre-school and early primary school programmes designed specifically to bring Aboriginal children up to the same average levels as the equivalent non-Aboriginal age-cohorts. It is unlikely that aspirational programmes aimed at the high school years will achieve the same level of success as interventions aimed at improving the readiness of Aboriginal children to start school and supporting children through the primary school years.



STUDENT SELF-ASSESSMENT OF SCHOOL WORK PERFORMANCE COMPARED WITH SCHOOL TEACHER RATINGS

Aboriginal young people aged 12–17 years were asked to independently answer a Youth Self Report (YSR) questionnaire (see *Appendix D*) covering a range of activities and behaviours, including aspects of their schooling and of family support and encouragement for their education.

This section briefly examines how 12–17 year-old Aboriginal students who responded to the YSR questionnaire consider they are doing at school and compares this with the teacher's assessment of their academic performance. Several factors are examined for their strength of association with the propensity for students to differ from teachers in rating their performance at school. The smaller sample size of 12–17 year-old students who completed a Youth Self Report has meant that associations analysed in this section are less likely to achieve statistical significance than those reported in Chapter 7.

STUDENT RATINGS OF HOW THEY ARE DOING AT SCHOOL

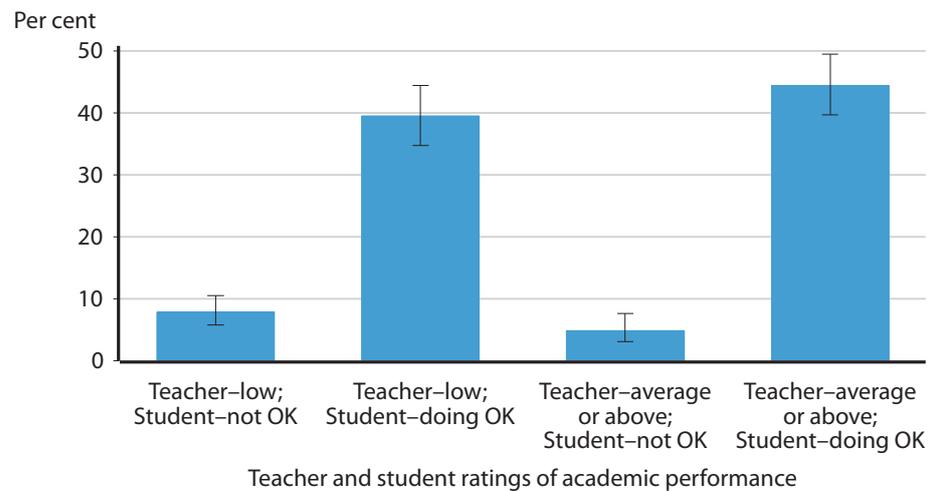
Aboriginal students aged 12–17 years were asked 'Are you doing OK at school?' ('Yes' or 'No'). Most young people (83.9 per cent; CI: 80.2%–87.3%) reported that they were doing OK, a proportion not dissimilar to the proportion reported by their primary carers to be doing OK at school work (88.0 per cent; CI: 85.0%–90.6%) (Table 8.9). There was no statistically significant variation in the student's ratings across areas of isolation, proportions ranging from 83.8 per cent (CI: 76.7%–89.9%) in the Perth metropolitan area (no isolation) to 89.9 per cent (CI: 75.0%–98.0%) in areas of high and extreme relative isolation (Table 8.10).

COMPARING STUDENT AND SCHOOL TEACHER RATINGS OF SCHOOL WORK PERFORMANCE

To enable a comparison of student ratings with teacher ratings of school performance, a student response that they were 'doing OK at school' was assumed to be an indication of how well they were performing with school work and to indicate that their school work performance was at least comparable with the teacher category 'At age level' academic performance. (The same assumption was used for primary carer ratings of the student's school work performance – see commentary box entitled *Rating student school work performance* in Chapter 7).

When the school performance ratings of teachers and students were compared, two in five students (39.4 per cent; CI: 34.6%–44.3%) aged 12–17 years rated themselves as doing OK at school yet were rated by their teachers as having low academic performance (Figure 8.4). Although this is a markedly high level of discrepancy, the proportion was significantly below that derived from comparing primary carer ratings with teacher ratings (49.3 per cent; CI: 46.6%–52.1%) in Chapter 7. Another 44.5 per cent (CI: 39.7%–49.5%) of students reported doing OK at school, an assessment supported by teacher ratings of average or above average academic performance.



FIGURE 8.4: STUDENTS AGED 12–17 YEARS WHO COMPLETED A YSR FORM — SCHOOL TEACHER AND STUDENT RATINGS OF ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

Source: Table 8.11

For purposes of further analysis, the four categories of teacher and student rating comparisons have been condensed into the following two categories (as was done with the teacher/carer comparisons in Chapter 7):

- ◆ Teacher – low academic performance; Student – doing OK (teachers and students differ);
- ◆ All other students. Included in this category are the 4.9 per cent (CI: 3.1%–7.7%) of students rated by their teachers as having average or above average academic performance yet rated by themselves as not doing OK.

As with the carer comparison analysis in Chapter 7, the following analysis uses the teacher’s rating as the benchmark measure of academic performance.

FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH DIFFERENCES IN STUDENT AND TEACHER RATINGS OF SCHOOL WORK PERFORMANCE

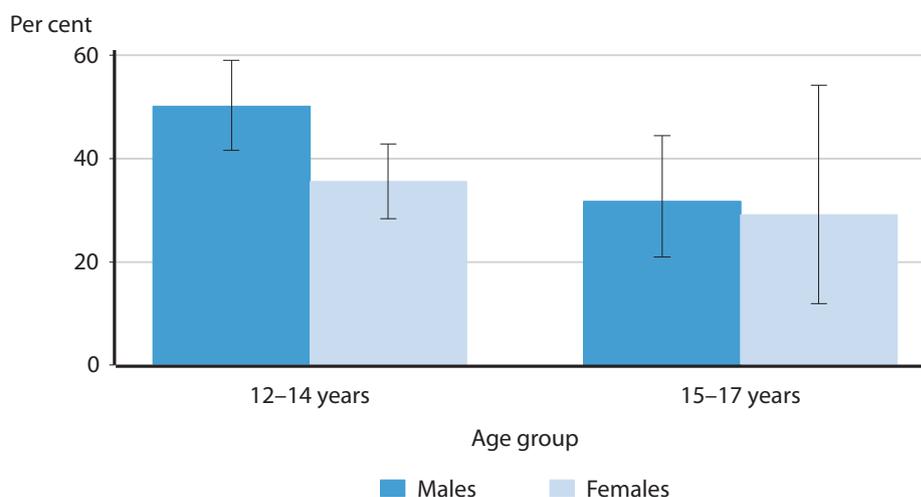
The smaller sample size of 12–17 year-old students who completed a Youth Self Report questionnaire has meant that associations are less likely to achieve statistical significance. Associations meeting this description are reported below and qualified where necessary.

Sex and age

An estimated 45.3 per cent (CI: 38.6%–52.5%) of male students aged 12–17 years were in discrepancy with teachers about their school work performance compared with an estimated 34.0 per cent (CI: 26.5%–41.6%) of female students. This difference, though not statistically significant, was principally due to the self-assessment of 12–14 year-old male students, of whom half (50.2 per cent; CI: 41.6%–59.1%) were in discrepancy with their teachers (Figure 8.5).



FIGURE 8.5: STUDENTS AGED 12–17 YEARS WHO COMPLETED A YSR FORM— PROPORTION FOR WHOM THERE WAS A DISCREPANCY WITH TEACHERS ABOUT THEIR SCHOOL WORK PERFORMANCE, BY AGE GROUP AND SEX

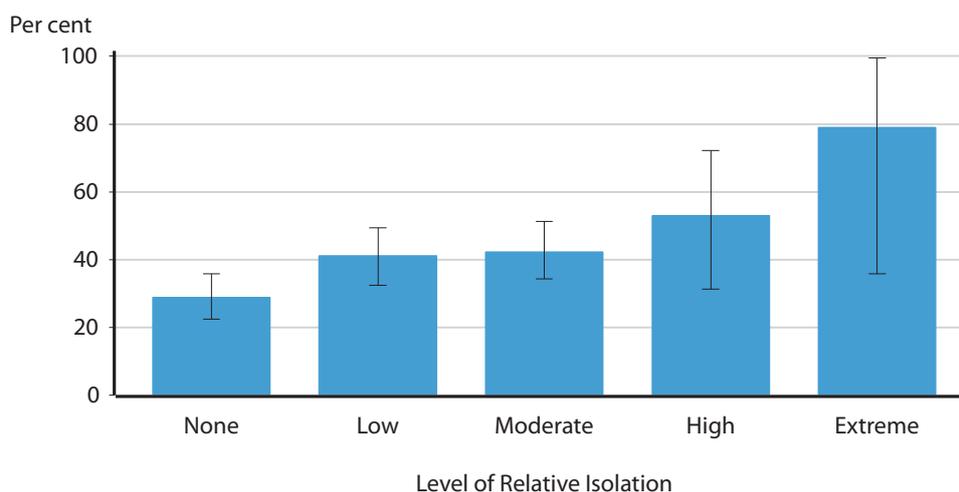


Source: Table 8.12

Level of Relative Isolation

The level of discrepancy between student and teacher ratings of school performance was lowest for students in the Perth metropolitan area (28.8 per cent; CI: 22.4%–35.8%) and trended higher with increasing isolation (Figure 8.6).

FIGURE 8.6: STUDENTS AGED 12–17 YEARS WHO COMPLETED A YSR FORM — PROPORTION FOR WHOM THERE WAS A DISCREPANCY WITH TEACHERS ABOUT THEIR SCHOOL WORK PERFORMANCE, BY LEVEL OF RELATIVE ISOLATION



Source: Table 8.13



Student speaks an Aboriginal language

Less than one in ten students aged 12–17 years – an estimated 460 (CI: 270–700) out of 5,220 – were conversant in an Aboriginal language. More than six in ten (62.7 per cent; CI: 44.8%–77.5%) of these students rated themselves as doing OK at school yet were rated by their teachers as having low academic performance. This proportion was significantly higher than for students who could speak a few words of an Aboriginal language (37.3 per cent; CI: 31.6%–43.3%) and higher compared with students who did not speak an Aboriginal language (36.6 per cent; CI: 26.3%–47.6%) (Table 8.14).

Emotional and behavioural wellbeing of the student

Teachers provided an independent rating of the student's risk of clinically significant emotional or behavioural difficulties (see *Glossary*). One third of students (33.9 per cent; CI: 28.1%–40.0%) rated at low risk reported that they were doing OK at school yet were rated by their teachers as having low academic performance. For students rated as being at either moderate or high risk of clinically significant emotional or behavioural difficulties, the proportion for whom there was a discrepancy with their teacher's academic rating increased to over half – 56.4 per cent (CI: 42.3%–70.2%) for those at moderate risk and 52.5 per cent (CI: 38.1%–67.9%) for those at high risk (Table 8.15).

Other factors not found to be independently associated with differences in student and teacher ratings of the student's academic performance

The following factors were analysed and found not to be significantly associated:

- ◆ category of school attended
- ◆ days of absence from school
- ◆ how much the student knows about Aboriginal culture and heritage
- ◆ how much is taught about Aboriginal culture and heritage in the student's school
- ◆ student participation in organised sports over the 12 months prior to the survey
- ◆ the importance to the student of having good marks at school
- ◆ the importance to the student of attending school regularly
- ◆ the importance to the student of finishing Year 12
- ◆ how much encouragement from parents/family to have good marks at school
- ◆ how much encouragement from parents/family to attend school regularly
- ◆ how much encouragement from parents/family to finish Year 12.



STUDENT AND TEACHER RATINGS OF SCHOOL WORK PERFORMANCE

Results found in this section are in general agreement with those shown in Chapter 7. When comparing carer and teacher ratings of student academic performance, it was clear that carers had a perception of higher academic performance for their children than the performance observed by their teachers or measured on independent tests. While most carers were happy with the schools their children were attending, and felt the schools were approachable, most carers believed their children were doing well at school. This was in stark contrast to the teachers' ratings, the students' performance on the WALNA tests, and the results of the word definitions test.

The findings in this section clearly show that most students aged 12–17 years have a similarly positive impression of their performance at school, in contrast to the evidence from teachers and the standardised tests. Students' perceptions are likely to be influenced by messages they receive in both the school environment and the family environment. These findings suggest that students' expectations are generally similar to those of their carers. This may imply an inter-generational transfer of the legacy of poor school experiences and attitudes towards schooling from the past.

These findings add extra urgency to the need for schools to proactively engage the families and communities they serve to help change previous generations' views on what school is and can be, to promote the positive value of school education in providing pathways to greater life choices, to provide carers themselves with opportunities to obtain positive educational experiences, and to develop a shared school and community sense of values and standards for educational outcomes for Aboriginal children.

YOUNG PEOPLE NO LONGER GOING TO SCHOOL

Overall, an estimated 24.5 per cent (CI: 21.8%–27.4%) or 2,230 out of a total 9,100 young people aged 12–17 years were no longer going to school (see *Appendix D* for more information). Viewed by age group, this equates to around 240 of all 12–14 year-olds (5.0 per cent; CI: 3.1%–7.7%) and an estimated 1,980 of all 15–17 year-olds (47.3 per cent; CI: 43.0%–51.7%) no longer going to school (Table 8.16).

Due to the very small number of 12–14 year-olds no longer going to school the modelled analyses have concentrated on those young people aged 15–17 years.

Of the total population of 15–17 year-olds, some 56.3 per cent (CI: 51.8%–60.6%) were still in some form of education (school or post-school based), while 12.2 per cent (CI: 9.8%–14.8%) were reported to be working and 31.5 per cent (CI: 27.3%–36.1%) were neither in education nor work (Table 8.17).

Of those 15–17 year-olds no longer going to school, 7.6 per cent (CI: 4.2%–11.9%) were estimated to be in some form of post-school education (e.g. TAFE), while 25.7 per cent (CI: 20.6%–31.2%) were estimated to be in some form of work, although the nature or duration of that work was not ascertained. Two-thirds (66.7 per cent; CI: 60.6%–72.4%) were estimated to be in neither education nor work (Table 8.17).



Viewed from a purely educational perspective, this means that 92.4 per cent (CI: 88.1%–95.8%) of 15–17 year old young people that have left school are not in any recognised form of education (Table 8.18).

Starting from 2006, the period of compulsory education for all Western Australian young people will extend until the end of the year they turn 16, rising to 17 years by 2008. Previously young people had to remain in school until the end of the year they turned 15. For more information on these changes to the Western Australian education system see Chapter 2.

FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH YOUNG PEOPLE NO LONGER ATTENDING SCHOOL

Two factors, self-esteem and whether the young person has ever had sex, were taken from the YSR questionnaire and thus reported by the young people themselves. Other factors were taken from the carer reported CHQ and the carer's own report — whether the young person had drunk alcohol or gotten drunk in the past six months; used drugs other than alcohol; whether overuse of alcohol causes problems in the household; and whether the carer has ever worked in paid employment.

The CHQ provides a more representative sample of both 15–17 year-olds and young people with behavioural problems. The CHQ also contains several questions on these issues that were not included in the YSR. For more information, see the commentary box entitled *Participation in the Youth Self-Report* at the beginning of this chapter.

Self-esteem

All young people who completed a YSR questionnaire were asked whether they still went to school. No association was found between whether a young person still goes to school and their self-esteem (Table 8.19).

Whether ever had sex

All young people who completed a YSR questionnaire were asked whether they had ever had sex. Of those aged 12–14 years who were still attending school, 7.7 per cent (CI: 5.3%–10.7%) had ever had sex compared with 33.3 per cent (CI: 13.3%–59.0%) of those no longer attending school. The pattern was similar for 15–17 year-olds, with 32.2 per cent (CI: 25.5%–39.8%) of those still attending school having ever had sex, compared with 68.2 per cent (CI: 62.0%–73.8%) who were no longer going to school (Table 8.20). See Volume Two for a more complete analysis of young people who have ever had sex.¹

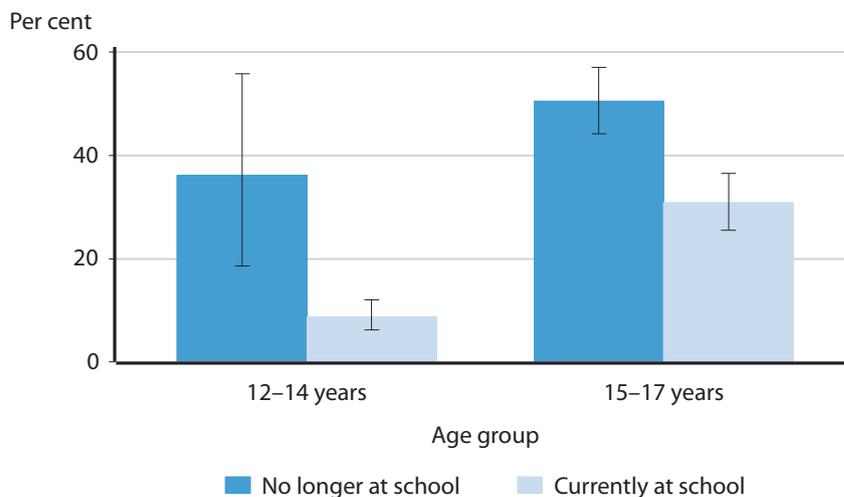
Drunk alcohol or gotten drunk

Primary carers were asked if any of their children had drunk alcohol or gotten drunk in the six months prior to the survey. For young people aged 12–14 years who were no longer going to school, 36.2 per cent (CI: 18.6%–55.9%) had drunk alcohol or gotten drunk in the previous six months compared with 8.7 per cent (CI: 6.2%–12.0%) of 12–14 year-olds who were still attending school (Figure 8.7).

For young people aged 15–17 years, the difference was less pronounced but still evident. For those 15–17 year-olds no longer in school, 50.5 per cent (CI: 44.2%–57.1%) had drunk alcohol or gotten drunk in the previous six months compared with 30.8 per cent (CI: 25.5%–36.5%) of 15–17 year-olds who were still attending school (Figure 8.7).



FIGURE 8.7: YOUNG PEOPLE AGED 12–17 YEARS, CARER REPORT — PROPORTION WHO HAVE DRUNK ALCOHOL OR GOTTEN DRUNK IN THE PAST SIX MONTHS, BY WHETHER STILL AT SCHOOL AND AGE GROUP



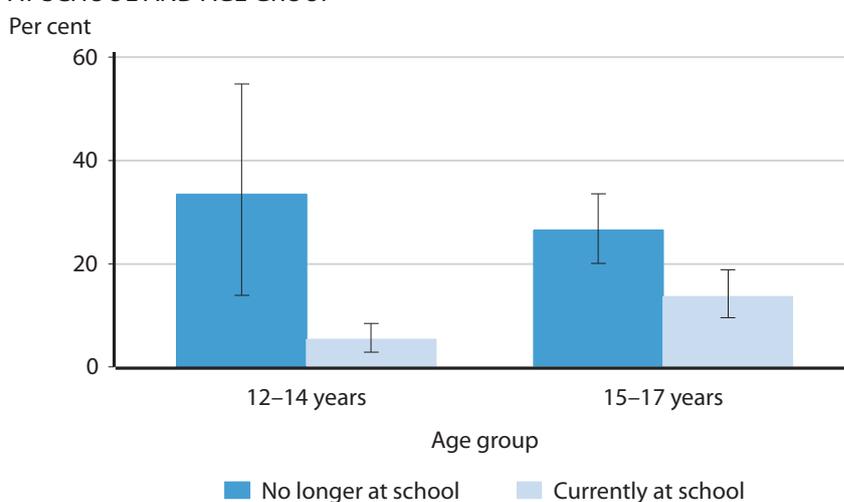
Source: Table 8.21

Use of drugs other than alcohol

Carers were asked if any of their children had used drugs other than alcohol in the six months prior to the survey. For young people aged 12–14 years who were no longer going to school, 33.4 per cent (CI: 13.9%–54.9%) had used drugs other than alcohol in the previous six months compared with 5.3 per cent (CI: 2.9%–8.4%) of 12–14 year-olds who were still attending school (Figure 8.8).

For young people aged 15–17 years the difference was less pronounced but still evident. For those 15–17 year-olds no longer in school, 26.5 per cent (CI: 20.1%–33.6%) had used drugs other than alcohol in the previous six months compared with 13.7 per cent (CI: 9.5%–18.9%) of 15–17 year-olds who were still attending school (Figure 8.8).

FIGURE 8.8: YOUNG PEOPLE AGED 12–17 YEARS, CARER REPORT — PROPORTION WHO HAD USED DRUGS OTHER THAN ALCOHOL IN THE PAST SIX MONTHS, BY WHETHER STILL AT SCHOOL AND AGE GROUP



Source: Table 8.22



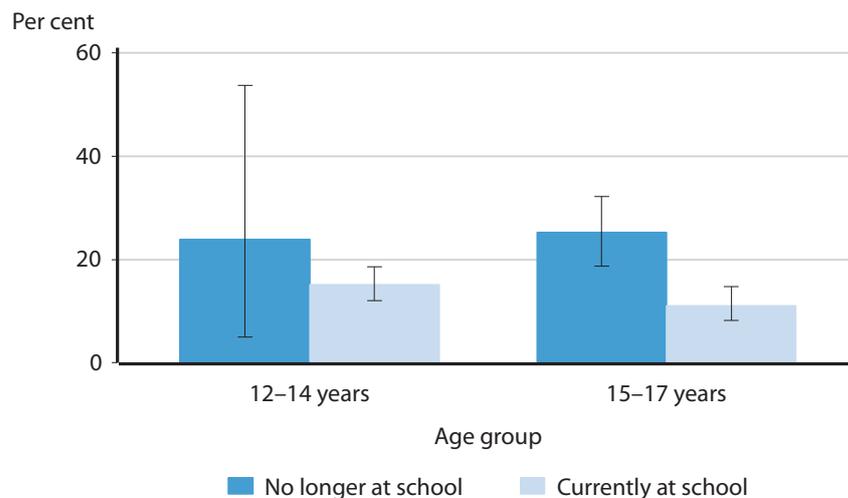
Carer ever in paid employment

Carers were asked if they had ever worked in a job where they got paid. For young people aged 12–17 years who were going to school, 86.6 per cent (CI: 83.8%–89.0%) had a primary carer who had ever worked in a paid job. For young people who were not going to school, 77.9 per cent (CI: 71.6%–83.6%) had a primary carer who had ever worked in a paid job. Significant differences were not found within age groups, but were in the direction of the 12–17 year-old finding (Table 8.23).

Overuse of alcohol causes problems in the household

Carers were asked if overuse of alcohol caused problems in the household. For young people aged 12–17 years who were no longer going to school, 25.1 per cent (CI: 18.9%–32.0%) were living in a household in which alcohol caused problems compared with 13.8 per cent (CI: 11.3%–16.4%) of 12–17 year-olds who were still attending school. No significant differences were found in young people aged 12–14 years, but in young people aged 15–17 years, 25.3 per cent (CI: 18.7%–32.2%) who were no longer going to school were living in households where alcohol caused problems, compared with 11.1 per cent (CI: 8.2%–14.7%) of 15–17 year-olds still going to school (Figure 8.9).

FIGURE 8.9: YOUNG PEOPLE AGED 12–17 YEARS, CARER REPORT — PROPORTION FOR WHOM OVERUSE OF ALCOHOL CAUSES PROBLEMS IN THE HOUSEHOLD, BY WHETHER STILL AT SCHOOL AND AGE GROUP



Source: Table 8.24

FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH NO LONGER GOING TO SCHOOL – MODELLED OUTCOMES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE AGED 15–17 YEARS

Multivariate logistic regression modelling (see *Glossary*) was undertaken to examine the association between demographic, carer and carer reported youth risk factors and the likelihood that a young person no longer goes to school (Table 8.25). Independently of all other variables in the model, it was found that the following factors were associated with 15–17 year-olds no longer going to school:

Level of Relative Isolation (LORI). Increasing relative isolation was associated with a lower proportion of young people aged 15–17 years still going to school. Young people aged 15–17 years living in areas of low relative isolation were 2.43 times (CI: 1.45–4.08) more likely, young people living in areas of high relative isolation were 2.13 times



(CI: 1.09–4.15) more likely, and young people living in areas of extreme relative isolation were 2.75 times (CI: 1.24–6.06) more likely to be no longer going to school.

Overuse of alcohol causes problems in the household. Young people aged 15–17 years living in households where alcohol was reported by their carer to cause problems were 2.43 times (CI: 1.36–4.34) more likely to be no longer going to school than those living in households where overuse of alcohol was not reported to cause problems.

Alcohol use by young people. Young people aged 15–17 years who were reported by their carer to have drunk alcohol or gotten drunk in the six months prior to the survey were 2.30 times (CI: 1.55–3.40) more likely to be no longer going to school than those young people not reported to have drunk alcohol.

Factors that were found not to be independently associated with young people aged 15–17 years no longer going to school included:

- ◆ self-esteem
- ◆ young person's use of drugs other than alcohol
- ◆ primary carer reported risk of clinically significant emotional or behavioural difficulties
- ◆ primary carer's educational attainment
- ◆ primary carer's current or historical employment status
- ◆ whether the primary carer was forcibly separated from their natural family by a mission, the government or welfare
- ◆ whether primary carer suffers from a long term limiting health condition
- ◆ family financial strain
- ◆ family functioning
- ◆ number of life stress events occurring in the past 12 months
- ◆ quality of parenting.

TIME FOR CHANGE

The survey has shown that Aboriginal students do less well in school than non-Aboriginal children from the beginning of formal schooling onwards. Aboriginal children also have far lower retention rates into upper high school than non-Aboriginal children. A large proportion of 15–17 year-old Aboriginal young people who no longer attend school are not in any form of education.

It is clear from the survey findings that, while there are Aboriginal children who do perform at age level or above, who attend school regularly, and who do stay on into upper high school or post-school education, the great majority do not. This outcome can only help serve to perpetuate the long-standing high levels of disadvantage experienced by Aboriginal people relative to the rest of Australian society. At what point should educators step in to address these issues such that they will have the greatest long-term positive impact on the education outcomes for Aboriginal children?

Continued . . .



TIME FOR CHANGE *(continued)*

International longitudinal research has shown a link between pre-school and early education intervention and a series of positive life outcomes for children from low socio-economic backgrounds. One study showed that children who were subject to pre-school intervention for 1–2 years were more likely to complete high school, have lower rates of juvenile arrest and a lower rate of school drop-out. When the intervention was continued into the second or third grade, even greater benefits were recorded.¹⁵

The Perry Preschool Study has tracked 123 African-American children from low-income families since 1962, analysing data for participants annually from age 3 to 11 years, and then at ages 14, 15, 19, 27 and most recently 40 years. While all 123 children were assessed as being at high risk of school failure, 58 children were randomly selected to receive a pre-school intervention programme at ages 3 and 4 years, and 65 children received no educational intervention.¹⁶ The differences in life outcomes between the two groups have been marked. Those who received the intervention did significantly better on IQ tests at age 5 years, outperformed non-programme children on intellectual and language tests from pre-school through to age 7 years, did better on school achievement tests from age 9–14 years and did better on literacy tests at age 19 and 27 years. On top of this, as adults those who received the intervention did better economically with better employment, higher earnings, higher levels of home ownership and less use of social services. By the age of 40 years, the group who received the intervention had sustained fewer lifetime arrests and had served significantly less time in prison.

It has been demonstrated by Juel (1988) that if a child starts school as a good reader then they are highly likely to still be a good reader by grade four, but if a child starts school as a poor reader then they are most likely to still be a poor reader by grade four.¹⁷ Francis *et al* (1996) showed that over the period grade one to grade nine, low achieving and reading disabled-discrepant students never caught up to their non reading-impaired peers.¹⁸ This study also supported Juel's earlier finding that students beginning school as poor readers tended to remain poor readers in later years of schooling. Whilst all three ability level groups improved their reading steadily from grade one through to grade six, reading development slowed thereafter, re-enforcing the theory that early intervention may give educators the greatest return on their investment.

Results of this kind are not isolated to just these studies, but they are used to illustrate the current thinking in some academic circles about the importance of early educational intervention in shaping life outcomes for people from disadvantaged backgrounds. The survey has illustrated the extent of the academic performance deficit with which most Aboriginal children start school in comparison to the non-Aboriginal population, and at each subsequent age bracket a similar or greater gap is found. As shown by the examples above, without the existence of an early intervention education programme targeting pre-school through early primary school children, this depressing trend is likely to continue for generations. It is time to take action to address this situation.



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DETAILED TABLES

YOUNG PEOPLE CURRENTLY AT SCHOOL

TABLE 8.1: YOUNG PEOPLE AGED 12–17 YEARS — WHETHER STILL GOING TO SCHOOL, BY AGE

<i>Still going to school?</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>95% CI</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>95% CI</i>
12 years				
No	50	(10 - 130)	3.1	(0.6 - 7.6)
Yes	1 610	(1 380 - 1 860)	96.9	(92.4 - 99.4)
Total	1 660	(1 430 - 1 910)	100.0	
13 years				
No	100	(60 - 160)	5.8	(3.1 - 9.4)
Yes	1 550	(1 310 - 1 820)	94.2	(90.7 - 96.9)
Total	1 650	(1 410 - 1 920)	100.0	
14 years				
No	160	(90 - 270)	10.3	(5.6 - 16.9)
Yes	1 430	(1 210 - 1 670)	89.7	(83.1 - 94.4)
Total	1 600	(1 360 - 1 840)	100.0	
15 years				
No	340	(230 - 490)	23.1	(15.6 - 31.9)
Yes	1 120	(910 - 1 340)	76.9	(68.1 - 84.4)
Total	1 450	(1 220 - 1 700)	100.0	
16 years				
No	760	(630 - 910)	53.5	(45.1 - 61.2)
Yes	660	(510 - 840)	46.5	(38.8 - 54.9)
Total	1 420	(1 220 - 1 650)	100.0	
17 years				
No	960	(790 - 1 150)	72.9	(63.4 - 80.8)
Yes	360	(240 - 510)	27.1	(19.2 - 36.6)
Total	1 320	(1 120 - 1 550)	100.0	
Total				
No	2 370	(2 110 - 2 650)	26.0	(23.2 - 29.1)
Yes	6 730	(6 450 - 6 990)	74.0	(70.9 - 76.8)
Total	9 100	(9 050 - 9 100)	100.0	



TABLE 8.2: STUDENTS AGED 12–17 YEARS WHO HAVE COMPLETED A YSR FORM — OVERALL ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE, BY RISK OF CLINICALLY SIGNIFICANT EMOTIONAL OR BEHAVIOURAL DIFFICULTIES

<i>Academic performance</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>95% CI</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>95% CI</i>
Low				
Low	1 620	(1 340 - 1 920)	42.5	(36.9 - 48.5)
Average or above average	2 190	(1 890 - 2 520)	57.5	(51.5 - 63.1)
Total	3 800	(3 400 - 4 230)	100.0	
Moderate				
Low	430	(310 - 590)	69.4	(55.4 - 82.1)
Average or above average	190	(110 - 310)	30.6	(17.9 - 44.6)
Total	620	(460 - 800)	100.0	
High				
Low	560	(400 - 770)	69.9	(53.4 - 81.8)
Average or above average	240	(140 - 410)	30.1	(18.2 - 46.6)
Total	800	(600 - 1 040)	100.0	
Total				
Low	2 600	(2 260 - 2 980)	49.9	(44.9 - 54.9)
Average or above average	2 620	(2 290 - 2 980)	50.1	(45.1 - 55.1)
Total	5 220	(4 740 - 5 710)	100.0	

TABLE 8.3: STUDENTS AGED 12–17 YEARS WHO HAVE COMPLETED A YSR FORM — OVERALL ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE, BY TERTILES OF SELF-ESTEEM

<i>Academic performance</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>95% CI</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>95% CI</i>
Lowest third				
Low	820	(650 - 1 030)	49.1	(40.4 - 57.5)
Average or above average	850	(660 - 1 080)	50.9	(42.5 - 59.6)
Total	1 670	(1 410 - 1 960)	100.0	
Middle third				
Low	780	(610 - 990)	45.2	(36.7 - 53.6)
Average or above average	950	(740 - 1 190)	54.8	(46.4 - 63.3)
Total	1 740	(1 460 - 2 030)	100.0	
Highest third				
Low	990	(730 - 1 300)	55.0	(45.7 - 63.8)
Average or above average	810	(650 - 1 020)	45.0	(36.2 - 54.3)
Total	1 810	(1 490 - 2 180)	100.0	
Total				
Low	2 600	(2 260 - 2 980)	49.9	(44.9 - 54.9)
Average or above average	2 620	(2 290 - 2 980)	50.1	(45.1 - 55.1)
Total	5 220	(4 740 - 5 710)	100.0	



TABLE 8.4: STUDENTS AGED 12–17 YEARS WHO HAVE COMPLETED A YSR FORM — LIKELIHOOD OF LOW ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE ASSOCIATED WITH DEMOGRAPHIC AND YOUTH RISK FACTORS

Low academic performance			
Parameter	Significance (<i>p</i> value)	Odds Ratio	95% CI
Sex			
Male	< 0.001	1.84	(1.48 - 2.29)
Female		1.00	
Age group			
12–14 years		1.00	
15–17 years	0.049	0.65	(0.43 - 1.00)
Level of Relative Isolation			
None		1.00	
Low	0.174	0.82	(0.61 - 1.09)
Moderate	0.867	1.03	(0.71 - 1.51)
High	0.006	2.07	(1.23 - 3.48)
Extreme	< 0.001	2.95	(1.61 - 5.42)
Days absent from school			
26 days or more	< 0.001	1.68	(1.34 - 2.12)
Less than 26 days		1.00	
Aboriginal status of primary carer			
Aboriginal	< 0.001	1.69	(1.26 - 2.28)
Non-Aboriginal		1.00	
Not stated	0.938	1.05	(0.28 - 3.99)
Primary carer ever in paid work			
No	< 0.001	1.97	(1.35 - 2.86)
Yes		1.00	
Not stated	0.842	1.11	(0.40 - 3.08)
Teacher assessed risk of clinically significant emotional or behavioural difficulties			
Low		1.00	
Moderate	< 0.001	3.46	(2.45 - 4.87)
High	< 0.001	3.35	(2.37 - 4.74)

TABLE 8.5: STUDENTS AGED 12–17 YEARS WHO HAVE COMPLETED A YSR FORM — DAYS ABSENT FROM SCHOOL, BY TEACHER ASSESSED RISK OF CLINICALLY SIGNIFICANT EMOTIONAL OR BEHAVIOURAL DIFFICULTIES

Days absent from school	Number	95% CI	%	95% CI
Low				
26 days or more	1 920	(1 670 - 2 190)	50.6	(44.7 - 56.4)
Less than 26 days	1 880	(1 560 - 2 240)	49.4	(43.6 - 55.3)
Total	3 800	(3 400 - 4 230)	100.0	
Moderate				
26 days or more	400	(280 - 530)	64.2	(49.8 - 78.6)
Less than 26 days	220	(120 - 360)	35.8	(21.4 - 50.2)
Total	620	(460 - 800)	100.0	
High				
26 days or more	610	(430 - 810)	76.2	(62.0 - 87.7)
Less than 26 days	190	(100 - 340)	23.8	(12.3 - 38.0)
Total	800	(600 - 1 040)	100.0	
Total				
26 days or more	2 930	(2 600 - 3 280)	56.1	(50.7 - 61.4)
Less than 26 days	2 290	(1 930 - 2 710)	43.9	(38.6 - 49.3)
Total	5 220	(4 740 - 5 710)	100.0	



TABLE 8.6: STUDENTS AGED 12–17 YEARS WHO HAVE COMPLETED A YSR FORM — DAYS ABSENT FROM SCHOOL, BY WHETHER ALCOHOL CAUSES PROBLEMS AT THEIR HOUSE

<i>Days absent from school</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>95% CI</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>95% CI</i>
Alcohol does not cause problems at the house				
26 days or more	1 990	(1 700 - 2 310)	51.6	(45.4 - 57.5)
Less than 26 days	1 870	(1 550 - 2 230)	48.4	(42.5 - 54.6)
Total	3 860	(3 420 - 4 310)	100.0	
Alcohol causes problems at the house				
26 days or more	940	(760 - 1 160)	69.0	(58.5 - 79.0)
Less than 26 days	420	(270 - 630)	31.0	(21.0 - 41.5)
Total	1 360	(1 120 - 1 630)	100.0	
Total				
26 days or more	2 930	(2 600 - 3 280)	56.1	(50.7 - 61.4)
Less than 26 days	2 290	(1 930 - 2 710)	43.9	(38.6 - 49.3)
Total	5 220	(4 740 - 5 710)	100.0	

TABLE 8.7: STUDENTS AGED 12–17 YEARS WHO HAVE COMPLETED A YSR FORM — DAYS ABSENT FROM SCHOOL, BY TERTILES OF SELF-ESTEEM

<i>Days absent from school</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>95% CI</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>95% CI</i>
Lowest third				
26 days or more	1 080	(870 - 1 310)	64.5	(55.8 - 72.2)
Less than 26 days	590	(450 - 780)	35.5	(27.8 - 44.2)
Total	1 670	(1 410 - 1 960)	100.0	
Middle third				
26 days or more	980	(800 - 1 200)	56.7	(48.2 - 65.2)
Less than 26 days	750	(570 - 990)	43.3	(34.8 - 51.8)
Total	1 740	(1 460 - 2 030)	100.0	
Highest third				
26 days or more	860	(680 - 1 090)	47.8	(38.6 - 57.9)
Less than 26 days	940	(690 - 1 250)	52.2	(42.1 - 61.4)
Total	1 810	(1 490 - 2 180)	100.0	
Total				
26 days or more	2 930	(2 600 - 3 280)	56.1	(50.7 - 61.4)
Less than 26 days	2 290	(1 930 - 2 710)	43.9	(38.6 - 49.3)
Total	5 220	(4 740 - 5 710)	100.0	



TABLE 8.8: STUDENTS AGED 12–17 YEARS WHO HAVE COMPLETED A YSR FORM — LIKELIHOOD OF BELOW MEDIAN ATTENDANCE AT SCHOOL ASSOCIATED WITH DEMOGRAPHIC AND YOUTH RISK FACTORS

Below median attendance at school			
<i>Parameter</i>	<i>Significance (p value)</i>	<i>Odds Ratio</i>	<i>95% CI</i>
Sex			
Male	0.298	0.89	(0.71 - 1.11)
Female		1.00	
Age group			
12–14 years		1.00	
15–17 years	0.040	0.62	(0.39 - 0.98)
Level of Relative Isolation			
None		1.00	
Low	0.023	1.48	(1.06 - 2.08)
Moderate	< 0.001	3.25	(2.09 - 5.06)
High	< 0.001	4.08	(2.30 - 7.23)
Extreme	< 0.001	2.97	(1.57 - 5.62)
Frequency of marijuana use			
Never		1.00	
Less than monthly	0.730	1.14	(0.54 - 2.41)
About weekly or more often	0.063	2.98	(0.94 - 9.41)
Not stated	0.655	0.98	(0.88 - 1.09)
Teacher assessed risk of clinically significant emotional or behavioural difficulties			
Low		1.00	
Moderate	0.005	1.57	(1.15 - 2.14)
High	< 0.001	2.35	(1.72 - 3.21)
Whether ever had sex			
No		1.00	
Yes	0.026	2.61	(1.12 - 6.06)
Not stated	0.655	0.98	(0.88 - 1.09)



STUDENT SELF-ASSESSMENT OF SCHOOL WORK PERFORMANCE COMPARED WITH SCHOOL TEACHER RATINGS
TABLE 8.9: STUDENTS AGED 12–17 YEARS — STUDENT AND PRIMARY CARER ASSESSMENT OF HOW THE STUDENT IS DOING AT SCHOOL, BY AGE GROUP

Age group	Whether doing OK at school	Number	95% CI	%	95% CI
Student – Whether doing OK at school					
12–14 years	No	460	(330 - 610)	11.7	(8.7 - 15.4)
	Yes	3 380	(3 010 - 3 780)	86.7	(83.0 - 90.0)
	Not stated	60	(20 - 120)	1.6	(0.6 - 3.2)
	Total	3 900	(3 510 - 4 320)	100.0	
15–17 years	No	220	(120 - 360)	16.3	(9.5 - 26.7)
	Yes	1 000	(770 - 1 260)	75.7	(65.5 - 84.4)
	Not stated	110	(50 - 200)	8.0	(3.4 - 14.7)
	Total	1 320	(1 070 - 1 610)	100.0	
12–17 years	No	670	(510 - 870)	12.9	(9.9 - 16.4)
	Yes	4 380	(3 940 - 4 850)	83.9	(80.2 - 87.3)
	Not stated	170	(90 - 270)	3.2	(1.8 - 5.3)
	Total	5 220	(4 740 - 5 710)	100.0	
Primary carer – Whether student doing OK at school work					
12–17 years	No	800	(620 - 1 010)	11.8	(9.2 - 14.9)
	Yes	6 000	(5 500 - 6 520)	88.0	(85.0 - 90.6)
	Not stated	20	(10 - 40)	0.3	(0.1 - 0.6)
	Total	6 820	(6 300 - 7 340)	100.0	

TABLE 8.10: STUDENTS AGED 12–17 YEARS WHO HAVE COMPLETED A YSR FORM — SCHOOL PERFORMANCE SELF-ASSESSMENT, BY LEVEL OF RELATIVE ISOLATION (LORI)

Whether doing OK at school	Number	95% CI	%	95% CI
LORI — None				
No	280	(170 - 430)	14.8	(9.4 - 22.3)
Yes	1 600	(1 330 - 1 910)	83.8	(76.7 - 89.9)
Not stated	30	(0 - 110)	1.5	(0.2 - 5.6)
Total	1 920	(1 620 - 2 240)	100.0	
LORI — Low				
No	180	(120 - 260)	12.9	(8.5 - 18.2)
Yes	1 200	(980 - 1 440)	84.7	(78.9 - 89.6)
Not stated	30	(10 - 120)	2.4	(0.6 - 8.0)
Total	1 410	(1 180 - 1 670)	100.0	
LORI — Moderate				
No	170	(100 - 280)	13.5	(8.3 - 21.4)
Yes	990	(780 - 1 230)	80.0	(71.7 - 86.5)
Not stated	80	(40 - 160)	6.5	(2.6 - 12.7)
Total	1 230	(990 - 1 510)	100.0	
LORI — High/Extreme				
No	40	(0 - 160)	6.3	(1.0 - 26.0)
Yes	590	(330 - 930)	89.9	(75.0 - 98.0)
Not stated	30	(10 - 60)	3.8	(1.1 - 9.9)
Total	660	(380 - 1 040)	100.0	



TABLE 8.11: STUDENTS AGED 12–17 YEARS WHO HAVE COMPLETED A YSR FORM — DISCREPANCIES IN TEACHER AND STUDENT RATINGS OF THE STUDENT'S SCHOOL PERFORMANCE

<i>Teacher and student ratings of academic performance</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>95% CI</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>95% CI</i>
Teacher – low; Student – not OK	410	(300 - 560)	7.9	(5.8 - 10.5)
Teacher – low; Student – OK	2 060	(1 750 - 2 410)	39.4	(34.6 - 44.3)
Teacher – average or above average; Student – not OK	260	(160 - 400)	4.9	(3.1 - 7.7)
Teacher – average or above average; Student – OK	2 320	(2 000 - 2 670)	44.5	(39.7 - 49.5)
Not stated	170	(90 - 270)	3.2	(1.8 - 5.3)
Total	5 220	(4 740 - 5 710)	100.0	

TABLE 8.12: STUDENTS AGED 12–17 YEARS WHO HAVE COMPLETED A YSR FORM — DISCREPANCIES IN TEACHER AND STUDENT RATINGS OF THE STUDENT'S SCHOOL PERFORMANCE, BY SEX AND AGE GROUP

<i>Age group</i>	<i>Teacher and student ratings of academic performance</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>95% CI</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>95% CI</i>
Males					
12–14 years	Teacher below age level; Student OK	920	(730 - 1 150)	50.2	(41.6 - 59.1)
	All other students	920	(710 - 1 180)	49.8	(40.9 - 58.4)
	Total	1 840	(1 550 - 2 170)	100.0	
15–17 years	Teacher below age level; Student OK	210	(140 - 300)	31.7	(20.9 - 44.4)
	All other students	450	(310 - 640)	68.3	(55.6 - 79.1)
	Total	650	(490 - 850)	100.0	
Total	Teacher below age level; Student OK	1 130	(920 - 1 380)	45.3	(38.6 - 52.5)
	All other students	1 360	(1 100 - 1 670)	54.7	(47.5 - 61.4)
	Total	2 500	(2 130 - 2 880)	100.0	
Females					
12–14 years	Teacher below age level; Student OK	730	(560 - 940)	35.5	(28.4 - 42.9)
	All other students	1 330	(1 130 - 1 560)	64.5	(57.1 - 71.6)
	Total	2 060	(1 790 - 2 340)	100.0	
15–17 years	Teacher below age level; Student OK	190	(70 - 460)	29.1	(11.9 - 54.3)
	All other students	470	(350 - 610)	70.9	(45.7 - 88.1)
	Total	670	(480 - 910)	100.0	
Total	Teacher below age level; Student OK	920	(690 - 1 220)	34.0	(26.5 - 41.6)
	All other students	1 800	(1 550 - 2 060)	66.0	(58.4 - 73.5)
	Total	2 720	(2 390 - 3 080)	100.0	
Total					
12–14 years	Teacher below age level; Student OK	1 650	(1 400 - 1 950)	42.4	(37.1 - 48.2)
	All other students	2 240	(1 930 - 2 580)	57.6	(51.8 - 62.9)
	Total	3 900	(3 510 - 4 320)	100.0	
15–17 years	Teacher below age level; Student OK	400	(240 - 640)	30.4	(19.6 - 42.9)
	All other students	920	(730 - 1 130)	69.6	(57.1 - 80.4)
	Total	1 320	(1 070 - 1 610)	100.0	
Total	Teacher below age level; Student OK	2 060	(1 750 - 2 410)	39.4	(34.6 - 44.3)
	All other students	3 160	(2 800 - 3 550)	60.6	(55.7 - 65.4)
	Total	5 220	(4 740 - 5 710)	100.0	



TABLE 8.13: STUDENTS AGED 12–17 YEARS WHO HAVE COMPLETED A YSR FORM — DISCREPANCIES IN TEACHER AND STUDENT RATINGS OF THE STUDENT'S SCHOOL PERFORMANCE, BY LEVEL OF RELATIVE ISOLATION (LORI)

<i>Teacher and student ratings of academic performance</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>95% CI</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>95% CI</i>
LORI — None				
Teacher below age level; Student OK	550	(420 - 710)	28.8	(22.4 - 35.8)
All other students	1 360	(1 120 - 1 650)	71.2	(64.2 - 77.6)
Total	1 920	(1 620 - 2 240)	100.0	
LORI — Low				
Teacher below age level; Student OK	580	(450 - 730)	41.1	(32.4 - 49.5)
All other students	830	(640 - 1 060)	58.9	(50.5 - 67.6)
Total	1 410	(1 180 - 1 670)	100.0	
LORI — Moderate				
Teacher below age level; Student OK	520	(380 - 690)	42.3	(34.3 - 51.2)
All other students	710	(550 - 910)	57.7	(48.8 - 65.7)
Total	1 230	(990 - 1 510)	100.0	
LORI — High				
Teacher below age level; Student OK	240	(100 - 450)	52.9	(31.3 - 72.2)
All other students	210	(140 - 300)	47.1	(27.8 - 68.7)
Total	450	(280 - 670)	100.0	
LORI — Extreme				
Teacher below age level; Student OK	170	(20 - 500)	78.9	(35.9 - 99.6)
All other students	50	(0 - 290)	21.1	(0.4 - 64.1)
Total	210	(20 - 660)	100.0	

TABLE 8.14: STUDENTS AGED 12–17 YEARS WHO HAVE COMPLETED A YSR FORM — DISCREPANCIES IN TEACHER AND STUDENT RATINGS OF THE STUDENT'S SCHOOL PERFORMANCE, BY WHETHER THE STUDENT SPEAKS AN ABORIGINAL LANGUAGE

<i>Teacher and student ratings of academic performance</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>95% CI</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>95% CI</i>
No				
Teacher below age level; Student OK	420	(300 - 600)	36.6	(26.3 - 47.6)
All other students	740	(540 - 970)	63.4	(52.4 - 73.7)
Total	1 160	(920 - 1 440)	100.0	
A few words				
Teacher below age level; Student OK	1 340	(1 080 - 1 640)	37.3	(31.6 - 43.3)
All other students	2 260	(1 950 - 2 590)	62.7	(56.7 - 68.4)
Total	3 600	(3 190 - 4 050)	100.0	
A conversation				
Teacher below age level; Student OK	290	(160 - 500)	62.7	(44.8 - 77.5)
All other students	170	(90 - 290)	37.3	(22.5 - 55.2)
Total	460	(270 - 700)	100.0	
Total				
Teacher below age level; Student OK	2 060	(1 750 - 2 410)	39.4	(34.6 - 44.3)
All other students	3 160	(2 800 - 3 550)	60.6	(55.7 - 65.4)
Total	5 220	(4 740 - 5 710)	100.0	



TABLE 8.15: STUDENTS AGED 12–17 YEARS WHO HAVE COMPLETED A YSR FORM — DISCREPANCIES IN TEACHER AND STUDENT RATINGS OF THE STUDENT'S SCHOOL PERFORMANCE, BY TEACHER ASSESSED RISK OF CLINICALLY SIGNIFICANT EMOTIONAL OR BEHAVIOURAL DIFFICULTIES

<i>Teacher and student ratings of academic performance</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>95% CI</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>95% CI</i>
Low				
Teacher below age level; Student OK	1 290	(1 030 - 1 600)	33.9	(28.1 - 40.0)
All other students	2 510	(2 200 - 2 860)	66.1	(60.0 - 71.9)
Total	3 800	(3 400 - 4 230)	100.0	
Moderate				
Teacher below age level; Student OK	350	(240 - 500)	56.4	(42.3 - 70.2)
All other students	270	(180 - 400)	43.6	(29.8 - 57.7)
Total	620	(460 - 800)	100.0	
High				
Teacher below age level; Student OK	420	(290 - 600)	52.5	(38.1 - 67.9)
All other students	380	(240 - 580)	47.5	(32.1 - 61.9)
Total	800	(600 - 1 040)	100.0	
Total				
Teacher below age level; Student OK	2 060	(1 750 - 2 410)	39.4	(34.6 - 44.3)
All other students	3 160	(2 800 - 3 550)	60.6	(55.7 - 65.4)
Total	5 220	(4 740 - 5 710)	100.0	

YOUNG PEOPLE NO LONGER GOING TO SCHOOL

TABLE 8.16: YOUNG PEOPLE AGED 12–17 YEARS, CARER REPORT — WHETHER STILL GOING TO SCHOOL, BY AGE GROUP

<i>Still going to school</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>95% CI</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>95% CI</i>
12–14 years				
No	240	(150 - 370)	5.0	(3.1 - 7.7)
Yes	4 660	(4 300 - 5 040)	95.0	(92.3 - 96.9)
Total	4 910	(4 540 - 5 290)	100.0	
15–17 years				
No	1 980	(1 740 - 2 240)	47.3	(43.0 - 51.7)
Yes	2 210	(1 980 - 2 450)	52.7	(48.3 - 57.0)
Total	4 200	(3 880 - 4 540)	100.0	
Total				
No	2 230	(1 960 - 2 520)	24.5	(21.8 - 27.4)
Yes	6 870	(6 460 - 7 300)	75.5	(72.6 - 78.2)
Total	9 100	(8 660 - 9 560)	100.0	



TABLE 8.17: YOUNG PEOPLE AGED 15–17 YEARS, CARER REPORT — WHETHER STILL IN EDUCATION OR WORK, BY WHETHER STILL GOING TO SCHOOL

<i>In education (school or other) or work</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>95% CI</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>95% CI</i>
No longer going to school				
In education	150	(90 - 250)	7.6	(4.2 - 11.9)
Working	510	(410 - 630)	25.7	(20.6 - 31.2)
Neither in education or work	1 320	(1 110 - 1 560)	66.7	(60.6 - 72.4)
Total	1 980	(1 740 - 2 240)	100.0	
Still going to school				
In education	2 210	(1 980 - 2 450)	100.0	(97.5 - 100.0)
Working	0	(0 - 60)	0.0	(0.0 - 2.5)
Neither in education or work	0	(0 - 60)	0.0	(0.0 - 2.5)
Total	2 210	(1 980 - 2 450)	100.0	
Total				
In education	2 360	(2 130 - 2 620)	56.3	(51.8 - 60.6)
Working	510	(410 - 630)	12.2	(9.8 - 14.8)
Neither in education or work	1 320	(1 110 - 1 560)	31.5	(27.3 - 36.1)
Total	4 200	(3 880 - 4 540)	100.0	

TABLE 8.18: YOUNG PEOPLE AGED 15–17 YEARS, CARER REPORT — WHETHER STILL ENGAGED IN SCHOOL OR NON-SCHOOL EDUCATION, BY WHETHER STILL GOING TO SCHOOL

<i>In education (school or other)</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>95% CI</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>95% CI</i>
No longer going to school				
In education	150	(90 - 250)	7.6	(4.2 - 11.9)
Not in education	1 830	(1 600 - 2 090)	92.4	(88.1 - 95.8)
Total	1 980	(1 740 - 2 240)	100.0	
Still going to school				
In education	2 210	(1 980 - 2 450)	100.0	(97.5 - 100.0)
Not in education	0	(0 - 60)	0.0	(0.0 - 2.5)
Total	2 210	(1 980 - 2 450)	100.0	
Total				
In education	2 360	(2 130 - 2 620)	56.3	(51.8 - 60.6)
Not in education	1 830	(1 600 - 2 090)	43.7	(39.4 - 48.2)
Total	4 200	(3 880 - 4 540)	100.0	



TABLE 8.19: YOUNG PEOPLE AGED 12–17 YEARS WHO HAVE COMPLETED A YSR FORM — WHETHER STILL GOING TO SCHOOL, BY TERTILES OF SELF-ESTEEM AND AGE GROUP

<i>Tertiles of self-esteem</i>	<i>Still going to school</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>95% CI</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>95% CI</i>
12–14 years					
Lowest third	No	100	(60 - 150)	6.4	(3.8 - 9.9)
	Yes	1 410	(1 200 - 1 640)	93.6	(90.1 - 96.2)
	Total	1 500	(1 300 - 1 740)	100.0	
Middle third	No	70	(20 - 160)	4.4	(1.2 - 10.5)
	Yes	1 450	(1 210 - 1 730)	95.6	(89.5 - 98.8)
	Total	1 520	(1 270 - 1 790)	100.0	
Highest third	No	150	(70 - 280)	7.9	(3.9 - 14.3)
	Yes	1 740	(1 490 - 2 000)	92.1	(85.7 - 96.1)
	Total	1 880	(1 630 - 2 160)	100.0	
Total	No	310	(200 - 450)	6.3	(4.1 - 9.2)
	Yes	4 600	(4 280 - 4 900)	93.7	(90.8 - 95.9)
	Total	4 910	(4 600 - 5 220)	100.0	
15–17 years					
Lowest third	No	780	(640 - 960)	51.4	(42.8 - 60.0)
	Yes	740	(570 - 930)	48.6	(40.0 - 57.2)
	Total	1 520	(1 310 - 1 760)	100.0	
Middle third	No	570	(420 - 750)	42.0	(32.5 - 51.6)
	Yes	780	(610 - 990)	58.0	(48.4 - 67.5)
	Total	1 350	(1 120 - 1 600)	100.0	
Highest third	No	710	(590 - 840)	53.7	(45.7 - 61.6)
	Yes	610	(460 - 780)	46.3	(38.4 - 54.3)
	Total	1 320	(1 130 - 1 530)	100.0	
Total	No	2 060	(1 810 - 2 320)	49.1	(43.9 - 54.0)
	Yes	2 140	(1 880 - 2 420)	50.9	(46.0 - 56.1)
	Total	4 200	(3 890 - 4 500)	100.0	
Total					
Lowest third	No	880	(730 - 1 060)	29.0	(24.2 - 34.4)
	Yes	2 150	(1 880 - 2 430)	71.0	(65.6 - 75.8)
	Total	3 030	(2 750 - 3 330)	100.0	
Middle third	No	630	(470 - 820)	22.1	(16.7 - 28.0)
	Yes	2 240	(1 950 - 2 540)	77.9	(72.0 - 83.3)
	Total	2 870	(2 560 - 3 190)	100.0	
Highest third	No	860	(710 - 1 020)	26.8	(22.4 - 31.7)
	Yes	2 350	(2 070 - 2 640)	73.2	(68.3 - 77.6)
	Total	3 200	(2 910 - 3 500)	100.0	
Total	No	2 370	(2 110 - 2 650)	26.0	(23.2 - 29.1)
	Yes	6 730	(6 450 - 6 990)	74.0	(70.9 - 76.8)
	Total	9 100	(9 050 - 9 100)	100.0	



TABLE 8.20: YOUNG PEOPLE AGED 12–17 YEARS WHO HAVE COMPLETED A YSR FORM — WHETHER EVER HAD SEX, BY WHETHER STILL GOING TO SCHOOL AND AGE GROUP

<i>Still going to school</i>	<i>Ever had sex</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>95% CI</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>95% CI</i>
12–14 years					
No	No	210	(130 - 310)	66.7	(41.0 - 86.7)
	Yes	100	(40 - 240)	33.3	(13.3 - 59.0)
	Total	310	(200 - 450)	100.0	
Yes	No	4 240	(3 920 - 4 550)	92.3	(89.3 - 94.7)
	Yes	360	(250 - 500)	7.7	(5.3 - 10.7)
	Total	4 600	(4 280 - 4 900)	100.0	
Total	No	4 450	(4 140 - 4 750)	90.6	(87.2 - 93.2)
	Yes	460	(320 - 620)	9.4	(6.8 - 12.8)
	Total	4 910	(4 600 - 5 220)	100.0	
15–17 years					
No	No	650	(530 - 800)	31.8	(26.2 - 38.0)
	Yes	1 400	(1 190 - 1 640)	68.2	(62.0 - 73.8)
	Total	2 060	(1 810 - 2 320)	100.0	
Yes	No	1 450	(1 230 - 1 680)	67.8	(60.2 - 74.5)
	Yes	690	(520 - 890)	32.2	(25.5 - 39.8)
	Total	2 140	(1 880 - 2 420)	100.0	
Total	No	2 100	(1 860 - 2 350)	50.1	(45.0 - 55.0)
	Yes	2 090	(1 830 - 2 370)	49.9	(45.0 - 55.0)
	Total	4 200	(3 890 - 4 500)	100.0	
Total					
No	No	860	(700 - 1 040)	36.4	(30.3 - 42.4)
	Yes	1 510	(1 290 - 1 760)	63.6	(57.6 - 69.7)
	Total	2 370	(2 110 - 2 650)	100.0	
Yes	No	5 690	(5 380 - 6 000)	84.5	(81.2 - 87.5)
	Yes	1 040	(840 - 1 270)	15.5	(12.5 - 18.8)
	Total	6 730	(6 450 - 6 990)	100.0	
Total	No	6 550	(6 250 - 6 830)	72.0	(68.6 - 75.0)
	Yes	2 550	(2 270 - 2 850)	28.0	(25.0 - 31.4)
	Total	9 100	(9 050 - 9 100)	100.0	



TABLE 8.21: YOUNG PEOPLE AGED 12–17 YEARS, CARER REPORT— YOUNG PERSON HAS DRUNK ALCOHOL OR GOTTEN DRUNK IN THE PAST SIX MONTHS, BY WHETHER YOUNG PERSON STILL GOING TO SCHOOL AND AGE GROUP

<i>Still going to school</i>	<i>Drunk alcohol</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>95% CI</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>95% CI</i>
12–14 years					
No	No	160	(80 - 270)	63.8	(44.1 - 81.4)
	Yes	90	(50 - 150)	36.2	(18.6 - 55.9)
	Too young	0	(0 - 60)	0.0	(0.0 - 20.6)
	Total	240	(150 - 370)	100.0	
Yes	No	4 240	(3 910 - 4 600)	91.0	(87.8 - 93.6)
	Yes	410	(280 - 570)	8.7	(6.2 - 12.0)
	Too young	10	(10 - 30)	0.3	(0.1 - 0.7)
	Total	4 660	(4 300 - 5 040)	100.0	
Total	No	4 400	(4 060 - 4 760)	89.6	(86.5 - 92.2)
	Yes	490	(360 - 660)	10.1	(7.4 - 13.1)
	Too young	10	(10 - 30)	0.3	(0.1 - 0.7)
	Total	4 910	(4 540 - 5 290)	100.0	
15–17 years					
No	No	970	(820 - 1 130)	48.8	(42.6 - 55.4)
	Yes	1 000	(810 - 1 220)	50.5	(44.2 - 57.1)
	Too young	10	(0 - 50)	0.7	(0.1 - 2.3)
	Total	1 980	(1 740 - 2 240)	100.0	
Yes	No	1 530	(1 330 - 1 740)	69.2	(63.5 - 74.5)
	Yes	680	(550 - 830)	30.8	(25.5 - 36.5)
	Too young	0	(0 - 60)	0.0	(0.0 - 2.5)
	Total	2 210	(1 980 - 2 450)	100.0	
Total	No	2 500	(2 250 - 2 760)	59.5	(55.0 - 63.9)
	Yes	1 680	(1 450 - 1 940)	40.1	(35.6 - 44.5)
	Too young	10	(0 - 50)	0.4	(0.0 - 1.1)
	Total	4 200	(3 880 - 4 540)	100.0	
Total					
No	No	1 120	(960 - 1 320)	50.4	(44.3 - 56.8)
	Yes	1 090	(890 - 1 320)	48.9	(42.6 - 55.1)
	Too young	10	(0 - 50)	0.7	(0.1 - 2.1)
	Total	2 230	(1 960 - 2 520)	100.0	
Yes	No	5 770	(5 390 - 6 170)	84.0	(81.2 - 86.5)
	Yes	1 090	(900 - 1 290)	15.8	(13.2 - 18.6)
	Too young	10	(10 - 30)	0.2	(0.1 - 0.5)
	Total	6 870	(6 460 - 7 300)	100.0	
Total	No	6 900	(6 490 - 7 310)	75.8	(72.9 - 78.6)
	Yes	2 180	(1 900 - 2 470)	23.9	(21.2 - 26.8)
	Too young	30	(10 - 60)	0.3	(0.1 - 0.7)
	Total	9 100	(8 660 - 9 560)	100.0	



TABLE 8.22: YOUNG PEOPLE AGED 12–17 YEARS, CARER REPORT — HAS YOUNG PERSON USED DRUGS OTHER THAN ALCOHOL IN THE PAST SIX MONTHS, BY WHETHER YOUNG PERSON STILL GOING TO SCHOOL AND AGE GROUP

<i>Still going to school</i>	<i>Used other drugs</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>95% CI</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>95% CI</i>
12–14 years					
No	No	160	(80 - 280)	66.6	(45.1 - 86.1)
	Yes	80	(40 - 140)	33.4	(13.9 - 54.9)
	Too young	0	(0 - 60)	0.0	(0.0 - 20.6)
	Total	240	(150 - 370)	100.0	
Yes	No	4 410	(4 050 - 4 780)	94.6	(91.3 - 96.9)
	Yes	250	(140 - 400)	5.3	(2.9 - 8.4)
	Too young	0	(0 - 10)	0.1	(0.0 - 0.2)
	Total	4 660	(4 300 - 5 040)	100.0	
Total	No	4 570	(4 210 - 4 940)	93.2	(90.1 - 95.6)
	Yes	330	(220 - 500)	6.7	(4.4 - 10.0)
	Too young	0	(0 - 10)	0.1	(0.0 - 0.2)
	Total	4 910	(4 540 - 5 290)	100.0	
15–17 years					
No	No	1 460	(1 260 - 1 670)	73.5	(66.4 - 79.9)
	Yes	520	(380 - 710)	26.5	(20.1 - 33.6)
	Too young	0	(0 - 60)	0.0	(0.0 - 2.8)
	Total	1 980	(1 740 - 2 240)	100.0	
Yes	No	1 910	(1 700 - 2 140)	86.3	(81.1 - 90.5)
	Yes	300	(210 - 430)	13.7	(9.5 - 18.9)
	Too young	0	(0 - 60)	0.0	(0.0 - 2.5)
	Total	2 210	(1 980 - 2 450)	100.0	
Total	No	3 370	(3 080 - 3 660)	80.3	(76.0 - 84.2)
	Yes	830	(650 - 1 040)	19.7	(15.8 - 24.0)
	Too young	0	(0 - 60)	0.0	(0.0 - 1.3)
	Total	4 200	(3 880 - 4 540)	100.0	
Total					
No	No	1 620	(1 400 - 1 860)	72.8	(66.3 - 79.0)
	Yes	610	(460 - 800)	27.2	(21.0 - 33.7)
	Too young	0	(0 - 60)	0.0	(0.0 - 2.5)
	Total	2 230	(1 960 - 2 520)	100.0	
Yes	No	6 320	(5 910 - 6 730)	91.9	(89.4 - 94.1)
	Yes	550	(410 - 740)	8.0	(5.9 - 10.7)
	Too young	0	(0 - 10)	0.1	(0.0 - 0.1)
	Total	6 870	(6 460 - 7 300)	100.0	
Total	No	7 940	(7 500 - 8 380)	87.2	(84.6 - 89.6)
	Yes	1 160	(940 - 1 420)	12.7	(10.4 - 15.4)
	Too young	0	(0 - 10)	0.0	(0.0 - 0.1)
	Total	9 100	(8 660 - 9 560)	100.0	



TABLE 8.23: YOUNG PEOPLE AGED 12–17 YEARS, CARER REPORT — WHETHER PRIMARY CARER HAS EVER WORKED IN A PAID JOB, BY WHETHER YOUNG PERSON STILL GOING TO SCHOOL AND AGE GROUP

<i>Still going to school</i>	<i>Primary carer ever in paid work</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>95% CI</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>95% CI</i>
12–14 years					
No	No	70	(20 - 170)	29.8	(10.3 - 56.0)
	Yes	170	(100 - 280)	70.2	(44.0 - 89.7)
	Not stated	0	(0 - 60)	0.0	(0.0 - 20.6)
	Total	240	(150 - 370)	100.0	
Yes	No	510	(380 - 670)	10.9	(8.2 - 14.2)
	Yes	4 020	(3 660 - 4 400)	86.2	(82.7 - 89.1)
	Not stated	140	(90 - 200)	2.9	(1.9 - 4.3)
	Total	4 660	(4 300 - 5 040)	100.0	
Total	No	580	(440 - 760)	11.9	(9.0 - 15.3)
	Yes	4 190	(3 830 - 4 560)	85.4	(81.8 - 88.4)
	Not stated	140	(90 - 200)	2.8	(1.8 - 4.1)
	Total	4 910	(4 540 - 5 290)	100.0	
15–17 years					
No	No	350	(250 - 490)	17.7	(12.8 - 24.1)
	Yes	1 560	(1 350 - 1 800)	78.8	(71.9 - 84.4)
	Not stated	70	(10 - 180)	3.4	(0.6 - 8.6)
	Total	1 980	(1 740 - 2 240)	100.0	
Yes	No	230	(160 - 310)	10.3	(7.1 - 14.1)
	Yes	1 930	(1 710 - 2 180)	87.5	(83.5 - 90.8)
	Not stated	50	(30 - 80)	2.3	(1.2 - 3.9)
	Total	2 210	(1 980 - 2 450)	100.0	
Total	No	580	(450 - 740)	13.8	(10.7 - 17.4)
	Yes	3 500	(3 190 - 3 820)	83.4	(79.5 - 86.9)
	Not stated	120	(50 - 230)	2.8	(1.2 - 5.3)
	Total	4 200	(3 880 - 4 540)	100.0	
Total					
No	No	420	(300 - 580)	19.1	(13.8 - 24.8)
	Yes	1 730	(1 510 - 1 990)	77.9	(71.6 - 83.6)
	Not stated	70	(10 - 180)	3.1	(0.6 - 7.7)
	Total	2 230	(1 960 - 2 520)	100.0	
Yes	No	740	(580 - 920)	10.7	(8.4 - 13.3)
	Yes	5 950	(5 540 - 6 380)	86.6	(83.8 - 89.0)
	Not stated	190	(120 - 270)	2.7	(1.8 - 3.9)
	Total	6 870	(6 460 - 7 300)	100.0	
Total	No	1 160	(950 - 1 420)	12.8	(10.4 - 15.4)
	Yes	7 690	(7 240 - 8 150)	84.4	(81.6 - 87.0)
	Not stated	250	(160 - 380)	2.8	(1.8 - 4.2)
	Total	9 100	(8 660 - 9 560)	100.0	



TABLE 8.24: YOUNG PEOPLE AGED 12–17 YEARS, CARER REPORT — WHETHER OVERUSE OF ALCOHOL CAUSES PROBLEMS IN THE HOUSEHOLD, BY WHETHER YOUNG PERSON STILL GOING TO SCHOOL AND AGE GROUP

<i>Still going to school</i>	<i>Overuse of alcohol causes problems</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>95% CI</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>95% CI</i>
12–14 years					
No	No	190	(120 - 290)	76.1	(46.2 - 95.0)
	Yes	60	(10 - 180)	23.9	(5.0 - 53.8)
	Not stated	0	(0 - 60)	0.0	(0.0 - 20.6)
	Total	240	(150 - 370)	100.0	
Yes	No	3 830	(3 460 - 4 210)	82.0	(78.5 - 85.4)
	Yes	700	(560 - 870)	15.1	(12.0 - 18.6)
	Not stated	140	(90 - 200)	2.9	(1.9 - 4.3)
	Total	4 660	(4 300 - 5 040)	100.0	
Total	No	4 010	(3 640 - 4 390)	81.7	(78.0 - 85.0)
	Yes	760	(600 - 940)	15.5	(12.3 - 19.1)
	Not stated	140	(90 - 200)	2.8	(1.8 - 4.1)
	Total	4 910	(4 540 - 5 290)	100.0	
15–17 years					
No	No	1 410	(1 210 - 1 630)	71.3	(63.8 - 78.1)
	Yes	500	(360 - 670)	25.3	(18.7 - 32.2)
	Not stated	70	(10 - 180)	3.4	(0.6 - 8.6)
	Total	1 980	(1 740 - 2 240)	100.0	
Yes	No	1 920	(1 690 - 2 150)	86.7	(83.1 - 89.8)
	Yes	240	(180 - 330)	11.1	(8.2 - 14.7)
	Not stated	50	(30 - 80)	2.3	(1.2 - 3.9)
	Total	2 210	(1 980 - 2 450)	100.0	
Total	No	3 330	(3 030 - 3 640)	79.4	(75.0 - 83.2)
	Yes	750	(590 - 930)	17.8	(14.3 - 21.9)
	Not stated	120	(50 - 230)	2.8	(1.2 - 5.3)
	Total	4 200	(3 880 - 4 540)	100.0	
Total					
No	No	1 600	(1 390 - 1 830)	71.8	(64.3 - 78.1)
	Yes	560	(410 - 760)	25.1	(18.9 - 32.0)
	Not stated	70	(10 - 180)	3.1	(0.6 - 7.7)
	Total	2 230	(1 960 - 2 520)	100.0	
Yes	No	5 740	(5 330 - 6 170)	83.5	(80.7 - 86.1)
	Yes	950	(780 - 1 140)	13.8	(11.3 - 16.4)
	Not stated	190	(120 - 270)	2.7	(1.8 - 3.9)
	Total	6 870	(6 460 - 7 300)	100.0	
Total	No	7 340	(6 890 - 7 810)	80.7	(77.5 - 83.4)
	Yes	1 510	(1 260 - 1 780)	16.5	(13.9 - 19.5)
	Not stated	250	(160 - 380)	2.8	(1.8 - 4.2)
	Total	9 100	(8 660 - 9 560)	100.0	



TABLE 8.25: YOUNG PEOPLE AGED 15–17 YEARS — LIKELIHOOD THAT YOUNG PERSON NO LONGER GOES TO SCHOOL ASSOCIATED WITH DEMOGRAPHIC, CARER AND CARER REPORTED YOUTH RISK FACTORS

No longer goes to school			
<i>Parameter</i>	<i>Significance (p value)</i>	<i>Odds Ratio</i>	<i>95% CI</i>
Sex			
Male	0.112	1.37	(0.93 - 2.03)
Female		1.00	
Level of Relative Isolation			
None		1.00	
Low	< 0.001	2.43	(1.45 - 4.08)
Moderate	0.322	1.33	(0.76 - 2.34)
High	0.026	2.13	(1.09 - 4.15)
Extreme	0.012	2.75	(1.24 - 6.06)
Does overuse of alcohol cause problems in the household?			
No		1.00	
Yes	0.003	2.43	(1.36 - 4.34)
Not stated	0.143	2.37	(0.75 - 7.55)
Drunk alcohol or gotten drunk in last six months?			
No		1.00	
Yes	< 0.001	2.30	(1.55 - 3.40)



