

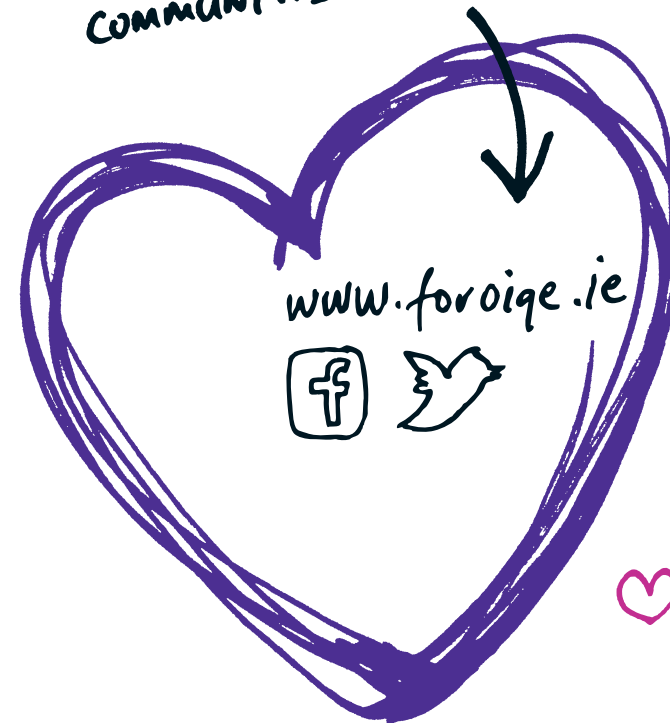
FORÓIGE, DUBLIN 15

Youth Perspectives 2.0

The voice of young
people in Dublin 15



AT THE HEART OF
BUILDING STRONGER
COMMUNITIES IN IRELAND



FORÓIGE, DUBLIN 15

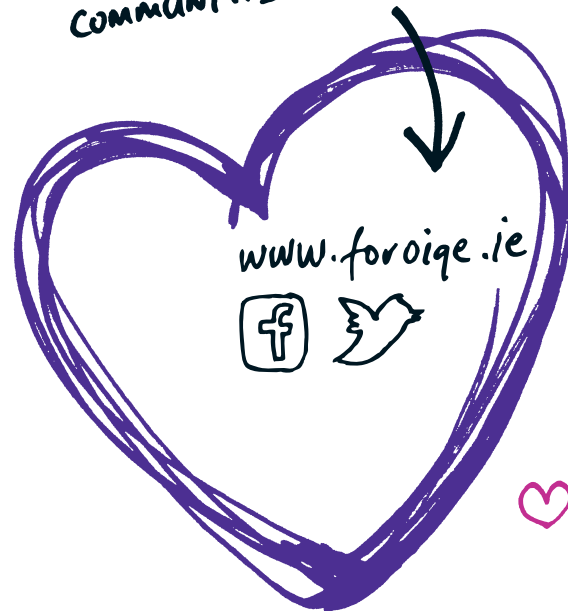
Youth Perspectives 2.0

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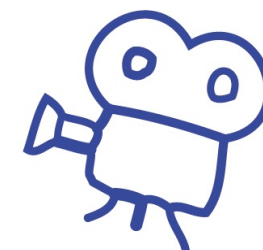
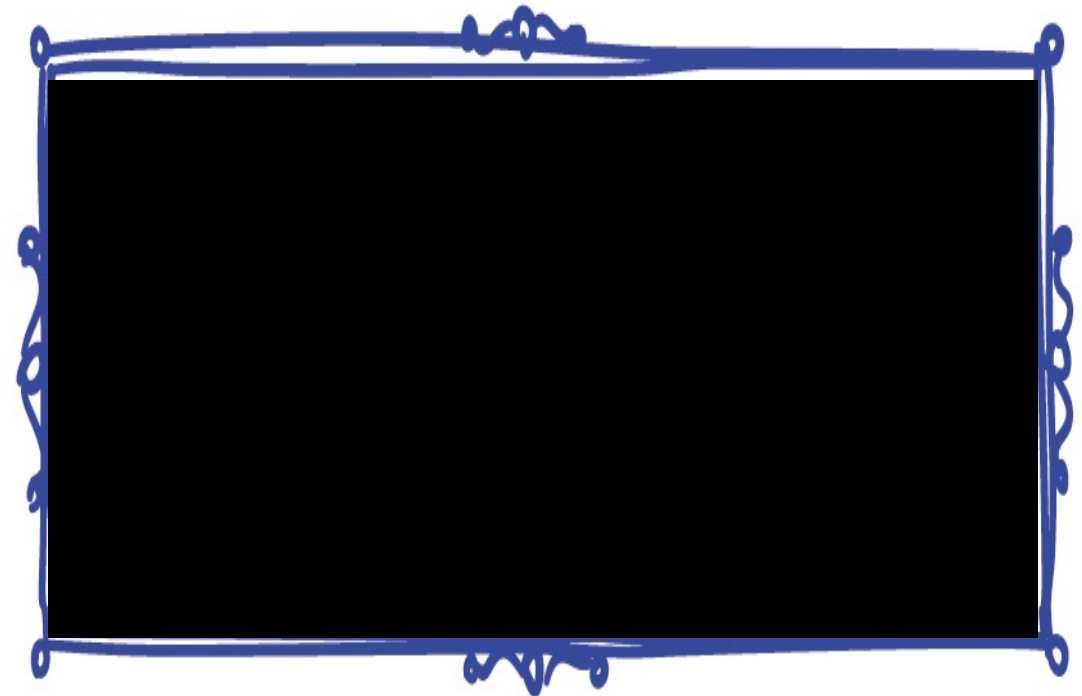
July 2013



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In 2003, Foróige in Blanchardstown undertook a research project, *Youth Perspectives* which engaged young people to determine their views and priorities. Now, ten years later, *Youth Perspectives 2.0* revisits that work. It is intended that the primary focus of this report will influence its work and plans over the next number of years.



1. Introduction

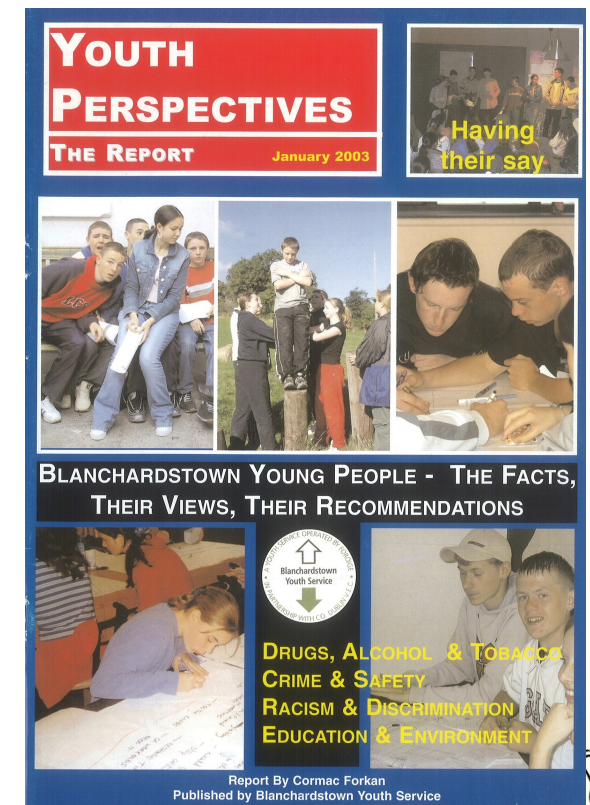
1.1 Context

Blanchardstown Youth Service, Foróige, is the youth service designated to work with young people in Dublin 15. It is operated by Foróige, the National Youth Development Organisation, on behalf of the Dublin and Dún Laoghaire Education and Training Board. Blanchardstown Youth Service was established in 1982, and provides a range of services to young people, primarily aged 12-18 in the Dublin 15 area. This includes: youth clubs and groups, volunteer training and leadership supports, direct work with targeted young people and a range of community based youth projects in designated communities across its catchment area. Over the past thirty years, a number of associated projects were established such as community youth projects and Garda Youth Diversion Projects, which are now collectively known as Foróige, Blanchardstown.

Dublin 15 has one of the highest rates of young people in the country. This is largely as a result of the rapid growth of the area over the past twenty years. Figures analysed from Census 2011, highlights that:

- The population of Dublin 15 was 101,032.
- Three of the top five Electoral Divisions in Ireland whose population is under 15 years are in Dublin 15.
- Over a quarter or 26% of the overall population of Dublin 15 is under 15 years of age.
- 23.5% of the resident population are non-Irish nationals. This figure rises to 46% in one Dublin 15 area.

Over the past decade Dublin 15 has become increasingly diverse. People from all around the world now live there and the area exhibits higher than national average levels of ethnic diversity. This growing youth demographic and ethnic diversity provides



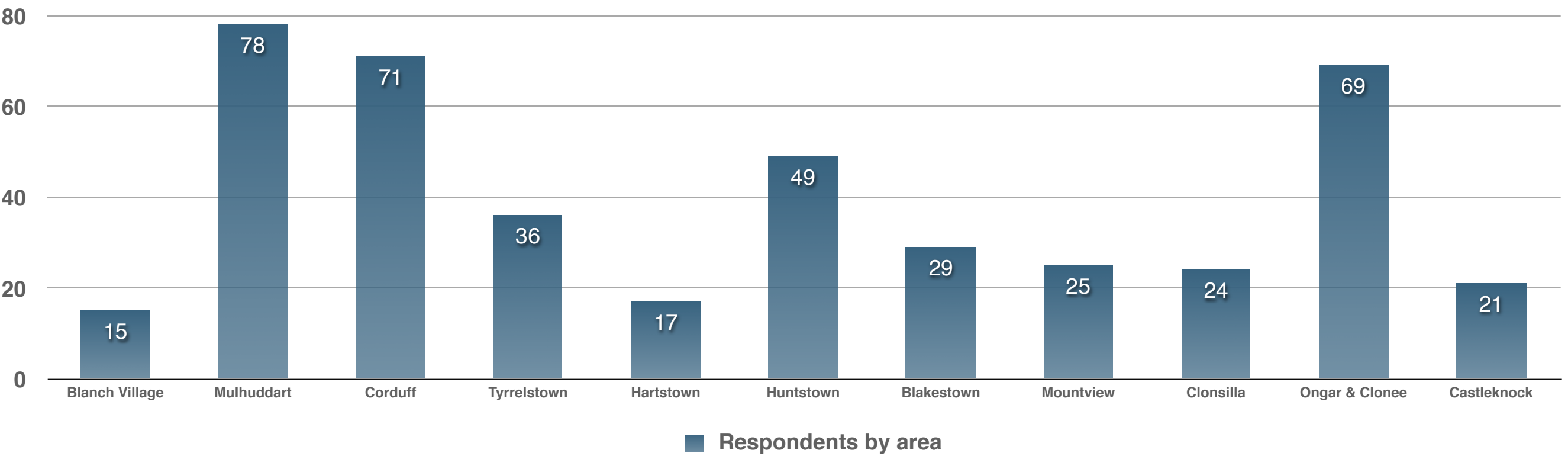
extensive opportunities and challenges for service delivery.

In 2003, Foróige in Blanchardstown commissioned a research project *Youth Perspectives* to engage with young people across their catchment area. This project aimed to determine the views and priorities of young people which in turn, informed the future work of Foróige in Blanchardstown. Further youth consultation was undertaken in 2004, (Project 321) and in 2007, (Today’s Voice, Tomorrow’s Vote) - both reports were aimed at candidates in general, European and local elections. Recommendations were also proposed to relevant organisations to address issues that were identified by young people as part of the process. [Details of Project 321 can be viewed [here](#). To see, Today’s Voice, Tomorrow’s Vote, touch [here](#).]

As it is ten years since the publication of *Youth Perspectives*, Foróige in Blanchardstown undertook to update this piece of work. Youth Perspectives 2.0 aimed to engage with young people aged 12-18 living in Dublin 15 to determine their views and priorities. It is intended that the primary focus of the work of Youth Perspectives 2.0, is to influence the work and plans of youth work in Blanchardstown.

1.2 Methodology

A range of methods were used to gather the views of young people in Dublin 15 through Youth Perspectives 2.0. The VIBE, a youth participation structure of young people from across the catchment area, worked with Foróige in Blanchardstown to agree the research



questions and the process to gather young people's views. External support through Burtenshaw Kenny Associates was provided to design the online questionnaire, to support the design of the Youth Perspectives 2.0 workshop, to analyse and write up this report.

- Online survey - an online survey administered through survey monkey was developed based on themes and questions prepared by The VIBE. This survey was extensive with 48 questions across a range of topics. It asked young people their views on: socialising, drugs and alcohol, safety, education and employment, discrimination, peer pressure and bullying, body image and sexuality.
- 452 young people responded to this survey with 267 (59%) male and 185 female (41%). 401 (88.5%) young people completed all questions in the survey.
- 252 (56%) respondents were teenagers aged 15-18 with 200 (44%) aged 12-14.
- Youth Perspectives 2.0 Workshop- a full day workshop was held on Saturday 1st December where the outcomes of the online survey were presented. Sixty young people from across Dublin 15 attended. They participated in workshops and discussed their views relating to six themes that emerged from the survey. These workshops were facilitated by members of The VIBE with the support of Foróige staff.



1.3 Priorities emerging

While all of the topics that emerged are important for Foróige in Blanchardstown to consider, the young people who engaged in the Youth Perspectives 2.0 workshop outlined that the following are the issues that they would like Foróige in Blanchardstown to prioritise:

1. Bullying.
2. Alcohol and Drug Misuse.
3. Safety.
4. Relationships and Sexuality.
5. Education and Employment.
6. Discrimination.

1.4 Report format

This report presents the outcome of the consultation with young people in Dublin 15. It is presented under the following sections:

Section 2: Socialising and connecting with friends.

Section 3: Bullying.

Section 4: Alcohol and Drug Misuse.

Section 5: Safety.

Section 6: Relationships and Sexuality.

Section 7: Education and Employment.

Section 8: Discrimination.



2. Socialising and connecting with friends

2.1 Where young people spend free time

Young people in Dublin 15 outlined that the top four places to spend free time at weekends and evenings are:

- In each other's houses, (282 young people - 64%)
- On the streets, (246 young people - 56%)
- At the shopping centre, (242 young people - 55%)
- Youth clubs/groups, including sports, (202 young people - 46%)

The park had the lowest responses by 149 young people, 33.6%



It is interesting to note that spending free time in each other's houses, was consistent across the age groups amongst younger (12-14) and older (15-18 year olds). Older young people were less likely to be involved in youth clubs/groups.

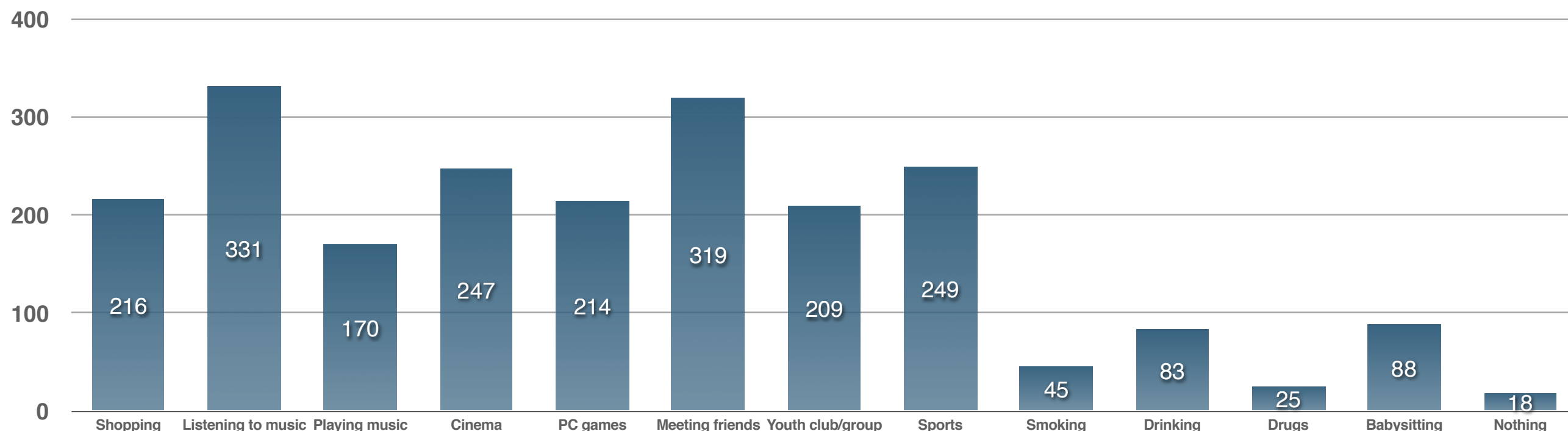
2.2 What young people do in their free time

Over three quarters of respondents (331 or 75%) indicated that they spend their free time listening to music and meeting friends:

- Listening to music, (331 young people - 75%)
- Meeting friends, (319 young people - 72%)
- Playing sports, (249 young people - 56%)
- Going to the cinema, (247 young people - 56%)

209 young people (43%) indicated that they attend youth clubs/groups in their free time. 18 young people indicated that they don't do anything in their spare time.

What young people do in their free time



A breakdown by age again highlights that both younger and older young people like to spend their free time listening to music and meeting friends. The graph above presents a breakdown of this question by age:

- Facebook, (404 young people - 91%)
- Texting, (344 young people - 78%)
- You Tube, (310 young people - 70%)

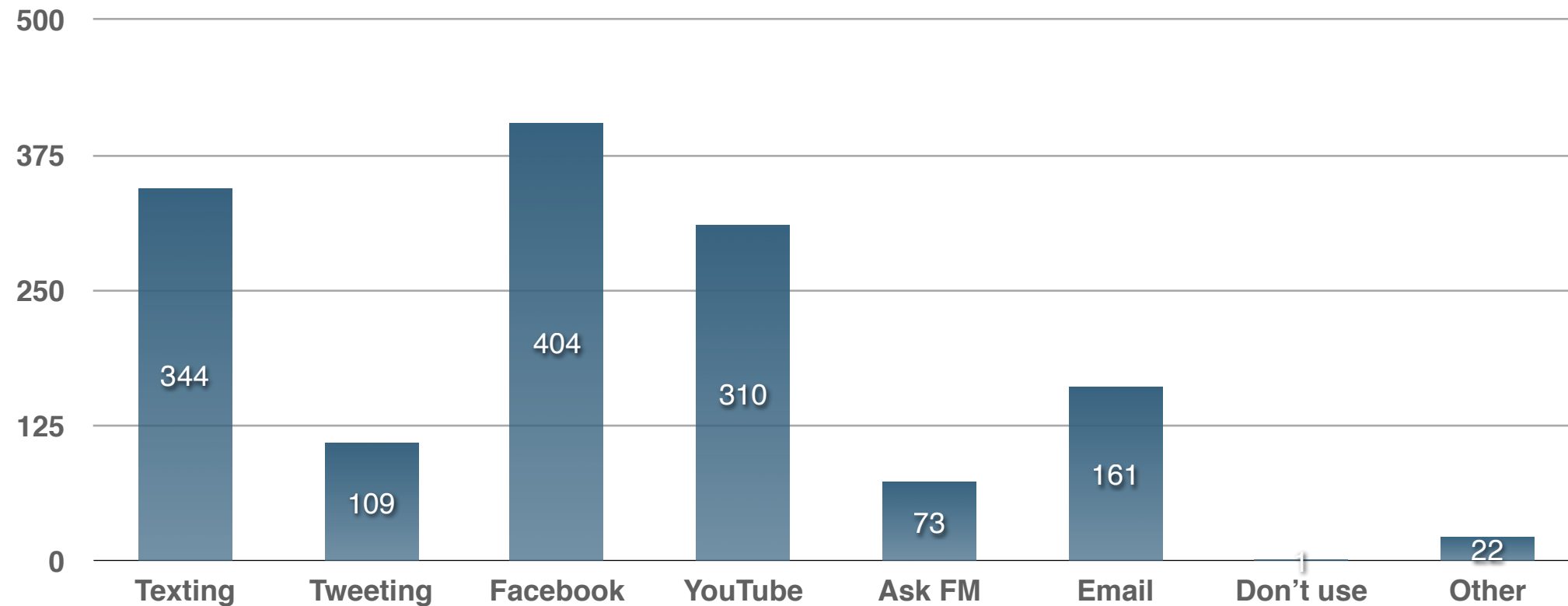
2.3 Social Networking

Only one respondent of the online survey outlined that they did not use social networking facilities. This points to the widespread use of social networking as a way to communicate with others.

Almost all young people who responded to the survey use Facebook as a way of communicating (404 young people, 91% of respondents). Other popular ways to use social networking are texting and through You Tube.



Social networking



The most common “other” responses included Viber, Tumblr and Reddit.

A breakdown by age again highlights that both younger and older young people exhibit similar trends to using Facebook, text, YouTube and email.

While most young people overall who responded to the survey, 243 (54.7%) indicated that they have never accepted a friend or followed somebody on Twitter that they don't know (who isn't a celebrity), 45.3% had. This figure is higher in the 15 - 18 age group.

269 (61%) respondents indicated that their Facebook page is private. This is consistent across the age groups. However, 40% or 175 respondents overall do not have privacy settings activated on their

Facebook page. Eighty three (41.5%) of these young people are aged between 12-15 and 92 (37.7%) are 15 to 18 years old. This indicates high levels of young people who have not activated privacy settings.





Of these over a quarter or forty one young people do not know how to activate privacy settings. Twenty two are aged 12-14 and nineteen aged 15-18. Workshop discussions highlighted that it is very important that young people know how to activate privacy settings. Young

people discussed that many young teenagers who use social networking sites are unaware of the ability to activate privacy settings. This concurred with the survey findings.

2.4 Key considerations for planning

Foróige in Blanchardstown should consider the following findings when developing their plans:

- To use social media is used as a way of communicating to young people.
- To develop responses to the gaps that emerged in relation to the levels of awareness and use of privacy settings on social media sites.



For a comprehensive list of research and reports on young people and the internet, visit EU Kids Online:

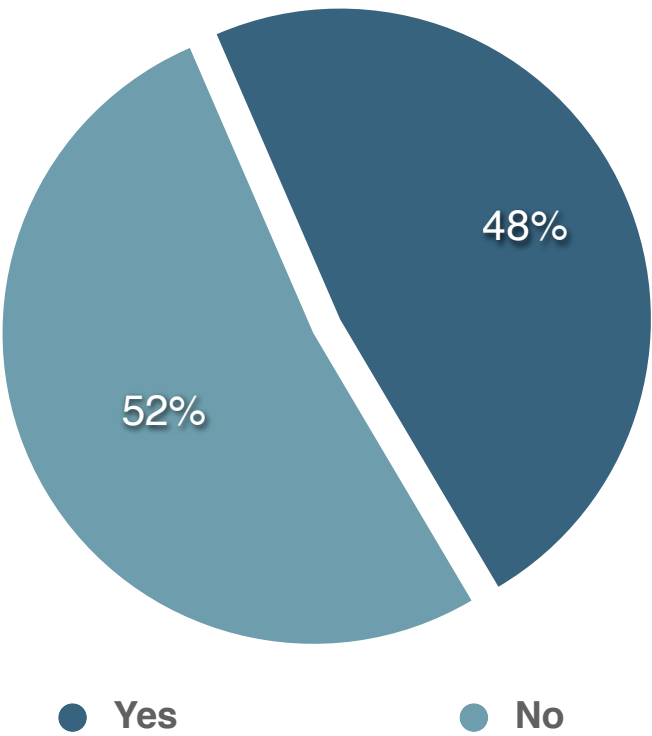
[http://www2.lse.ac.uk/media@lse/research/EUKidsOnline/
ParticipatingCountries/ireland.aspx](http://www2.lse.ac.uk/media@lse/research/EUKidsOnline/ParticipatingCountries/ireland.aspx)

3. Bullying

3.1 Frequency of bullying

While the majority of young people indicated that they never experienced bullying, 197 indicated that they had. It is of concern that bullying is so prevalent. This was the experience of young people who responded to the survey across the age profile. The figure nationally is

Have you experienced bullying?



lower at 23%. According to the Anti-Bullying Centre in Trinity College Dublin, 31% of Primary Students and 16% of Secondary Students have been bullied at some stage.

The vast majority of respondents to the survey 316, (76%), indicated that they had never experienced cyber bullying.

This was the experience indicated across the age ranges in the survey. However, workshop discussions highlighted that social media does provide a way for people to bully others and do so anonymously.

This was largely consistent across the age ranges that responded to the survey.

3.2 Support

Young people indicated through the survey that they would primarily go to family and friends if they were experiencing bullying. Younger teenagers indicated that family would be their first choice with friends second. Older young people reversed that order with respondents indicating friends as their highest preference followed by family. The workshop discussions also highlighted that young people would primarily go to friends or family if they are being bullied. The remaining options were consistent across the ages.

Of concern are the 59 young people who would not go to anybody or don't know where they would access support. The workshop discussions also outlined that there are some young people who may not talk to anybody if they were in this situation which concurred with the survey findings.

The vast majority of young people 303 (73%) have never used designated websites to get information or support. The most common websites used are:

- aware.ie - 7%
- reachout.com - 3%
- headstrong.ie - 3%
- yourmentalhealth.ie - 2%



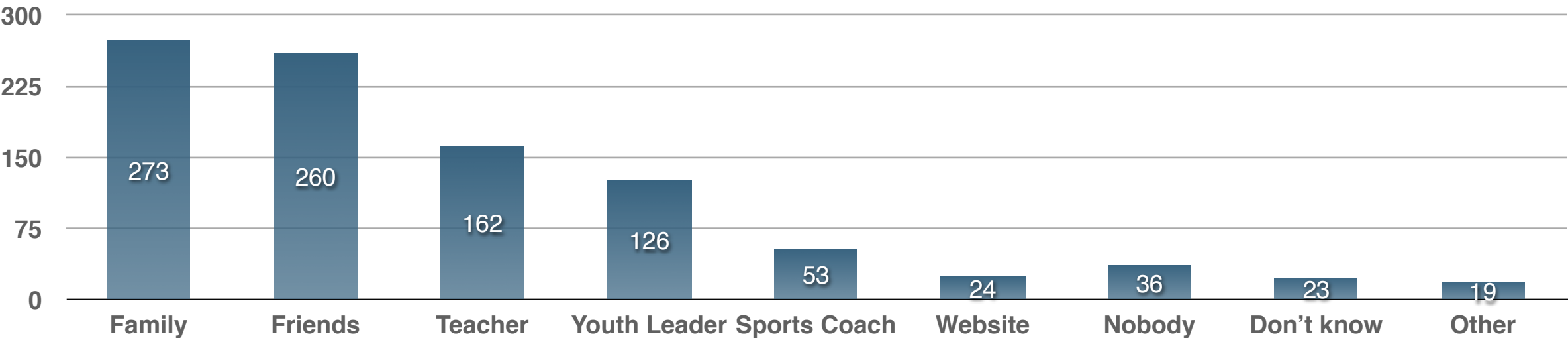
The workshop discussions highlighted that there are low level of awareness of websites, their role and the information that they provide.

3.3 Affects of bullying

Young people who responded to the survey outlined that bullying affects people many ways, (see graph on page 12). There was consistency across the age ranges. Of note is that almost a quarter of respondents (101, 24%) indicated that bullying does not affect people. However, this was not evident in the workshop discussions where the impact of bullying was agreed as being negative.

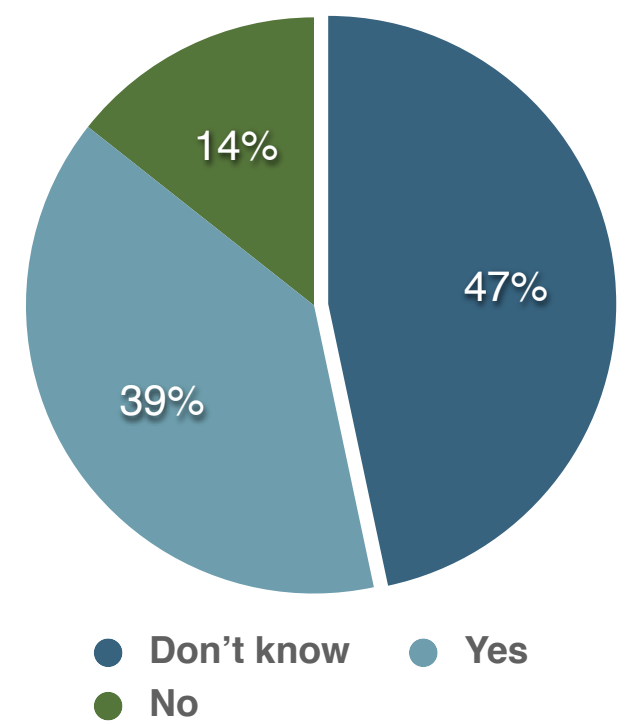
While the majority of young people would not continue to be friends with somebody/group that was pressuring them to do something that they didn't want, it is of note that 46% would continue or didn't know.

Who young people would go to if experiencing bullying?

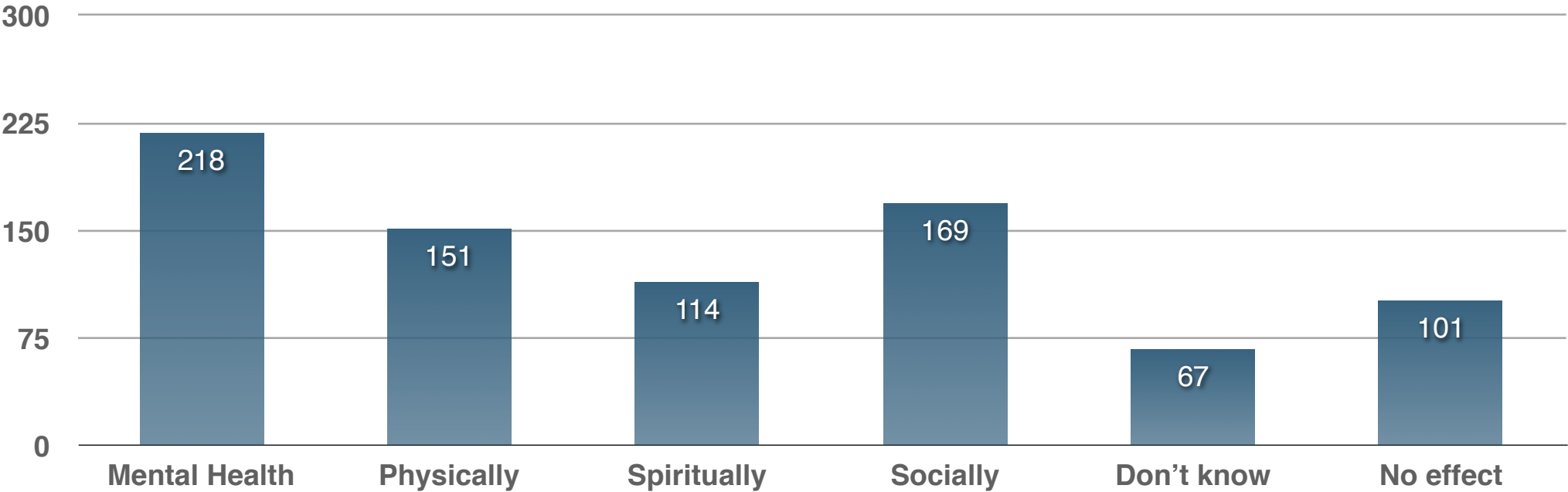


Older teens indicated that they felt most pressure to wear the “right clothes.” There are also high numbers of young people who feel under pressure to be the “right weight.” Young people generally feel least under pressure to have piercings or tattoos. Workshop discussions highlighted that wearing the “right clothes” is very important. Interestingly some communities within Dublin 15 have certain codes of dress which young people adhere to. However, if they are leaving the area for the day they may dress differently. The workshop also highlighted that girls are under more pressure than boys to dress a particular way and to be the “right weight”.

Would you continue to be friends with someone pressuring you?



How bullying affects young people?



3.4 Key considerations for planning

Foróige in Blanchardstown should consider the following findings when developing their plans:

- Awareness and supports to respond to bullying and its impact are required for young people.
- Peer group pressure to look and act a certain way is strong. Being different to the norm is very difficult.
- Friends and family are central in supporting young people who are experiencing bullying.
- There is a low level of awareness and use of websites that provide support to young people experiencing bullying.



Foróige's Be Health Be Happy Programme address health and well-being issues with young people. See **Be Healthy Be Happy** for more information.

For a comprehensive list of research and reports on bullying in Ireland, visit Trinity College's Anti-Bullying Centre.

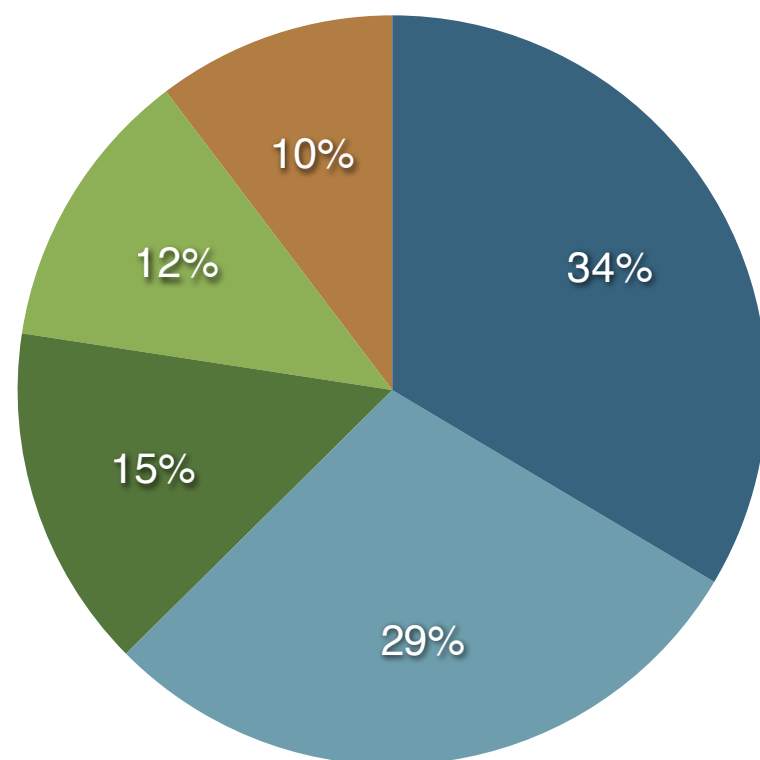
<http://www.abc.tcd.ie/ABC.html>



4. Alcohol and Drug Misuse

4.1 Why young people drink alcohol and take drugs

As indicated in the survey, the main reasons young people take alcohol and drugs are:



- To be cool, part of the gang
- Escape pressures & worries
- Don't know
- Part of the culture, an expectation
- Part of growing up

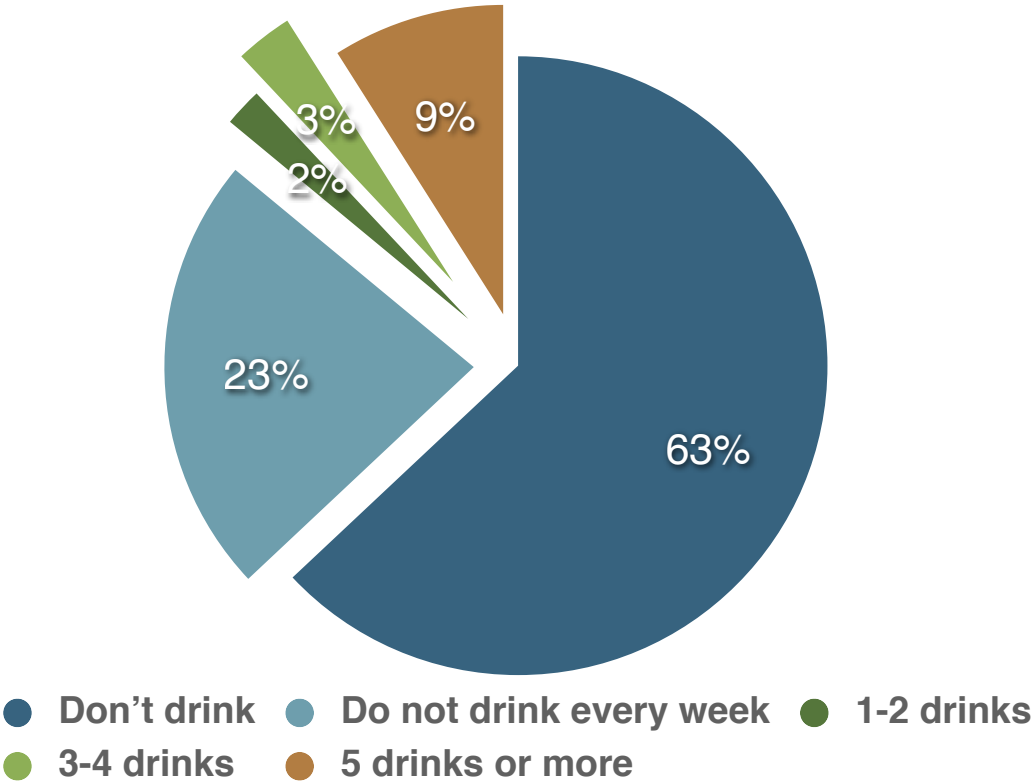
There were some variations across the age groups; most notably, nearly 37% of 12 - 14 year olds say the main reason why young people drink alcohol and take drugs is 'to escape from pressure or worries' - the corresponding figure for 15 - 18 year olds is 52%. Also significant is nearly 25% of 15 - 18 year old state that drinking alcohol and taking drugs is 'part of our culture or an expectation' - the figure for 12 - 14 years is 13%.

The workshop discussions mirrored the survey responses. It was highlighted that the role of peers and friends can play a huge role in whether or not young people drink or take drugs. The workshops also highlighted that parental attitudes towards alcohol and drugs and parental usage of them plays a major role in the consumption of alcohol and drugs by young people. If occasions such as Christmas, birthdays and various religious celebrations are used as times for adults to drink a lot of alcohol, this sends the message that drinking excessively is the norm. These times of the year were also highlighted as times when young people drink most frequently.

While questions in relation to smoking cigarettes were not asked in the online survey, workshop discussions highlighted that young people were more likely to smoke if their parents did and that smoking by young people is more accepted in households where parents smoke.

4.2 Alcohol use

The following chart outlines how much alcohol survey respondents indicated that they drink every week. The majority of respondents 273 (63%) indicated that they do not drink. However almost 10% of all respondents indicated that they have five or more drinks every week. This is higher amongst older teens.

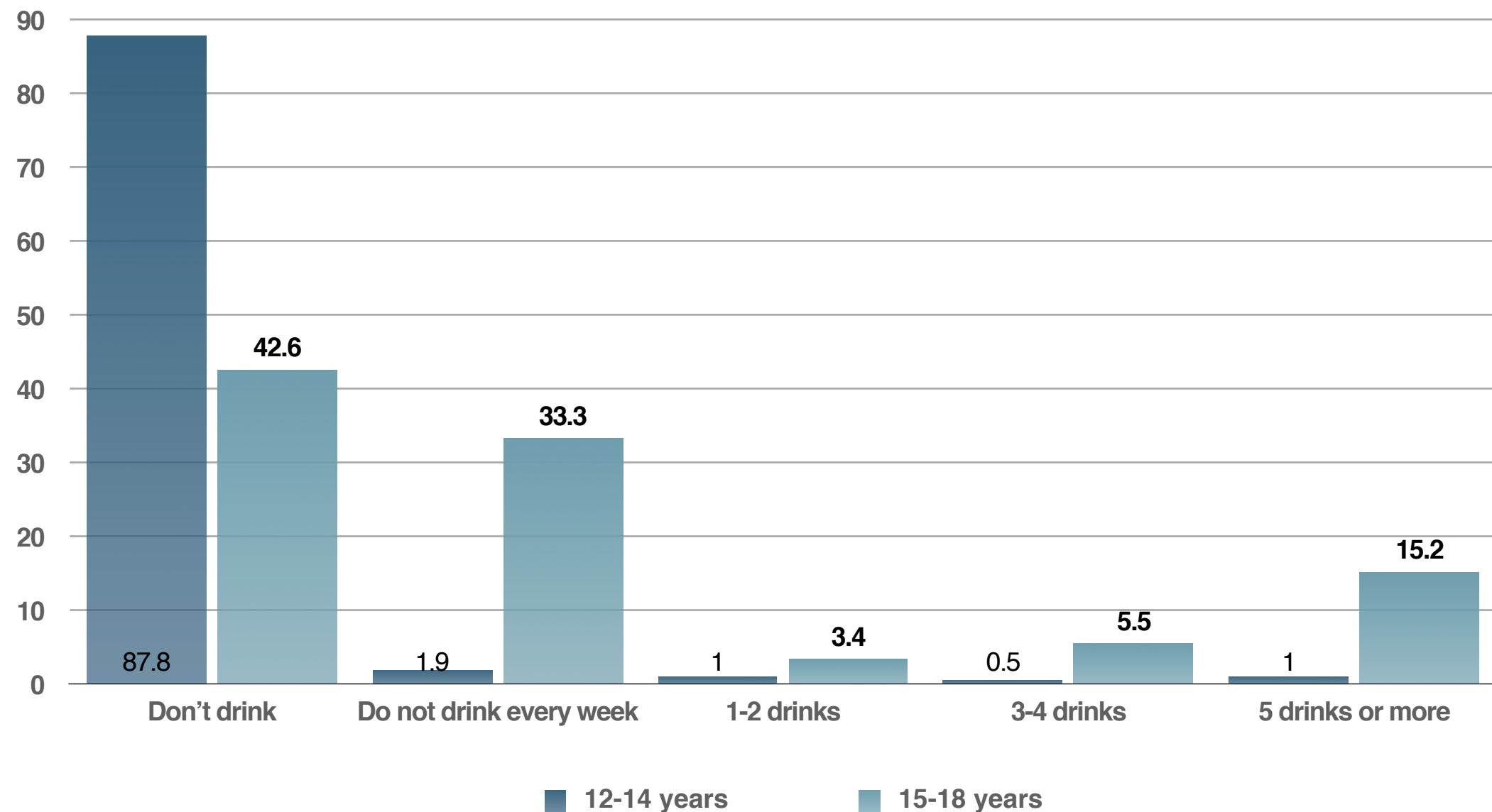


Most people our age in school would have more than five drinks between Friday and Saturday

52% state that young people take alcohol and drugs 'to be cool'

However these results change when broken down by age as it can be seen that older teenagers are more likely to drink alcohol and to drink more regularly.

Alcohol Use Per Week

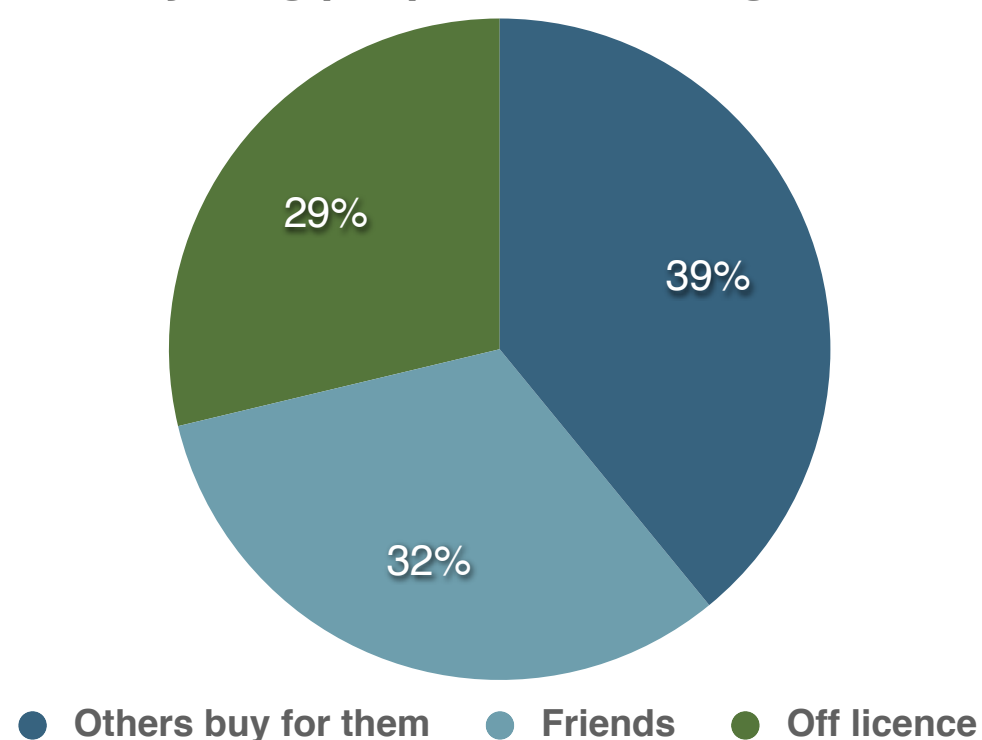


The majority of workshop attendants outlined that the survey results did not mirror their experiences and that alcohol use was under reported. There was widespread agreement that alcohol consumption, is much higher in reality. They also agreed that the amount of alcohol used every week, is higher than reported. This indicates that alcohol use could be higher than the survey respondents indicated.

4.3 How young people access alcohol

237 young people (68%) indicated that young people usually access alcohol by asking others to buy it for them. Friends and off licenses/shops were also highlighted as ways that young people usually access alcohol.

Where young people access drugs/alcohol



259 young people (80%) indicated that young people never access alcohol from youth clubs/groups. The level was similar for “in school” as 71% of young people indicated that alcohol is never accessed there. Responses to this question were broadly consistent across the ages.

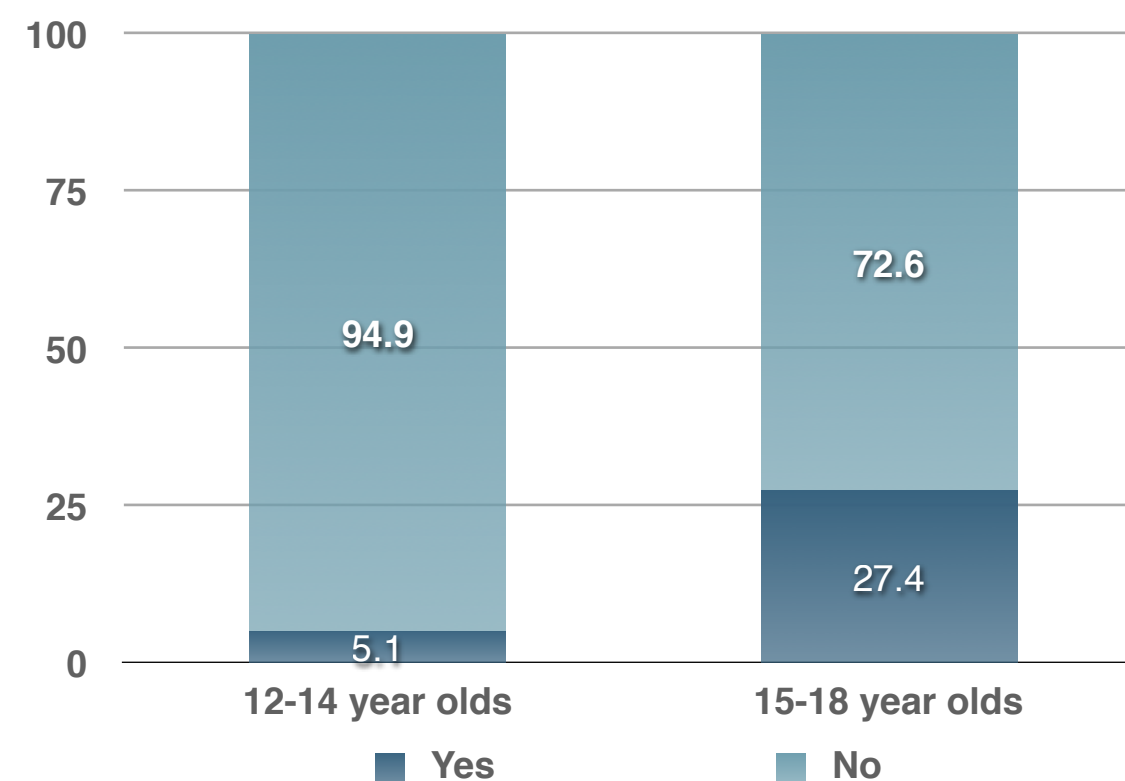
The discussions that took place in the workshop mirrored these survey findings. Young people present at the workshop highlighted that it is common and easy to get others, usually young adults to buy alcohol. Young people also highlighted that accessing alcohol is relatively easy.

4.4 Drug misuse

The following outlines the levels of illegal drug misuse amongst respondents. The vast majority 358 (83%) indicated that they have never used illegal drugs, while 17% or 75 young people had. There are differences across the ages with respondents aged 12-14 indicating that 94.9% have never used illegal drugs. This is compared to 72.6% of 15-18 year olds. Therefore almost a third of young people (27.4%) aged 15-18 indicated that they have used illegal drugs.

The majority of young people (22) who indicated that they had taken drugs, outlined that they didn’t use drugs regularly. A number of young people indicated that they had stopped taking drugs. Others

Levels of Drug Use

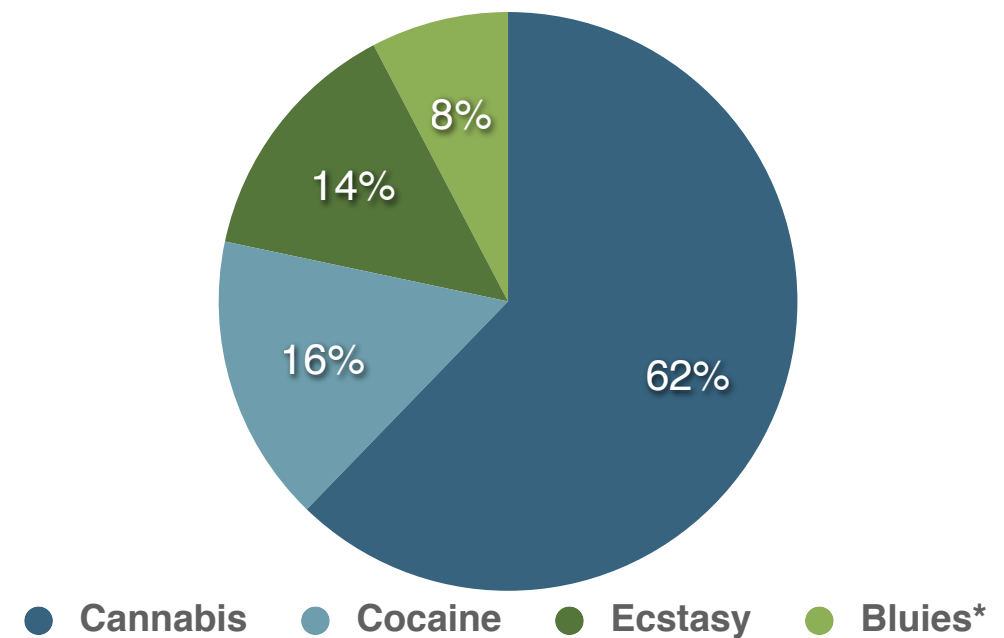


indicated that their use is sporadic and not planned; “on occasion.” However 25 young people indicated that they use drugs at least once per week, with 12 indicating use on a daily basis. The following outlines how often young people who have used illegal drugs use them:

- Daily, (12 young people - 16%)
- Several times per week, (5 young people - 7%)
- Once per week, (8 young people - 11%)
- One-two times per month, (14 young people -19%)
- Once-twice per year, (13 young people -18%)
- Other, (22 young people - 30%)

Cannabis is the drug used by the vast majority of young people who have used drugs (66 or 89%). The second most common drug used is cocaine (17 or 23%) and ecstasy was used by 15 young people, 20%. Heroin was used by three young people. Of the eleven young people who indicated “other” the majority outlined that they used “hash” and “weed.”

Commonly used drugs



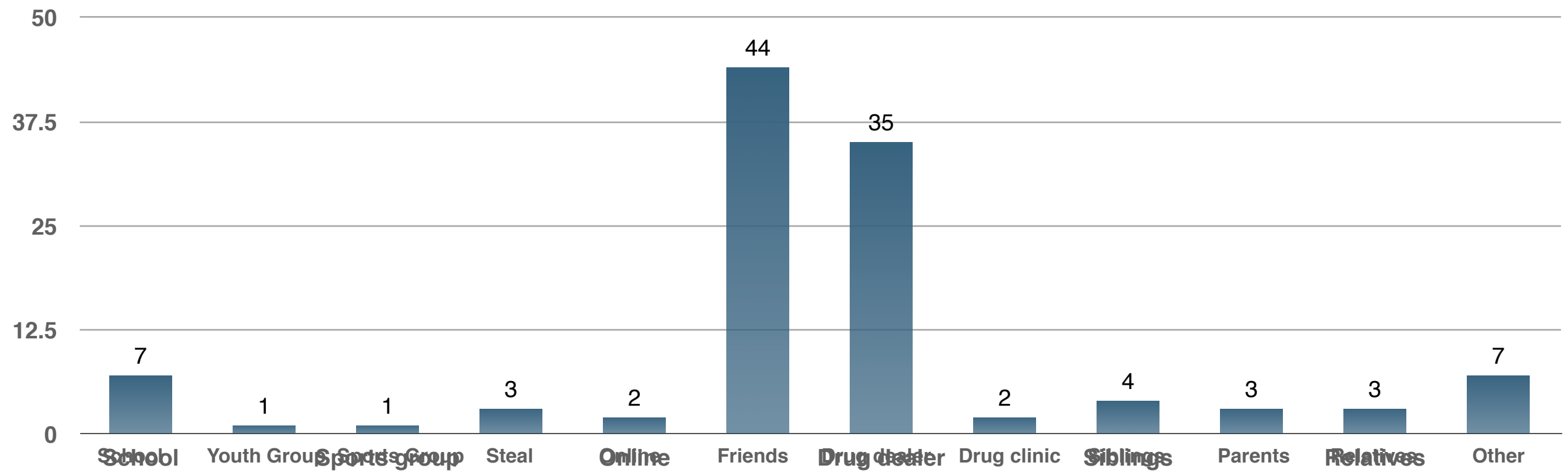
The workshop discussions highlighted that the use of drugs could be higher than reported. Young people who attended the workshop outlined that cannabis is most used by young people because it is:

- Easy to access
- It is safer than ecstasy/speed
- Smells nicer

The following chart outlines where young people who used drugs accessed them. The vast majority access drugs from friends and from drug dealers. This is consistent across the age ranges. The workshops highlighted that drugs are relatively easy to access across Dublin 15.

*Bluiies - Benzodiazepines or *Benzos*)

Where drugs are accessed



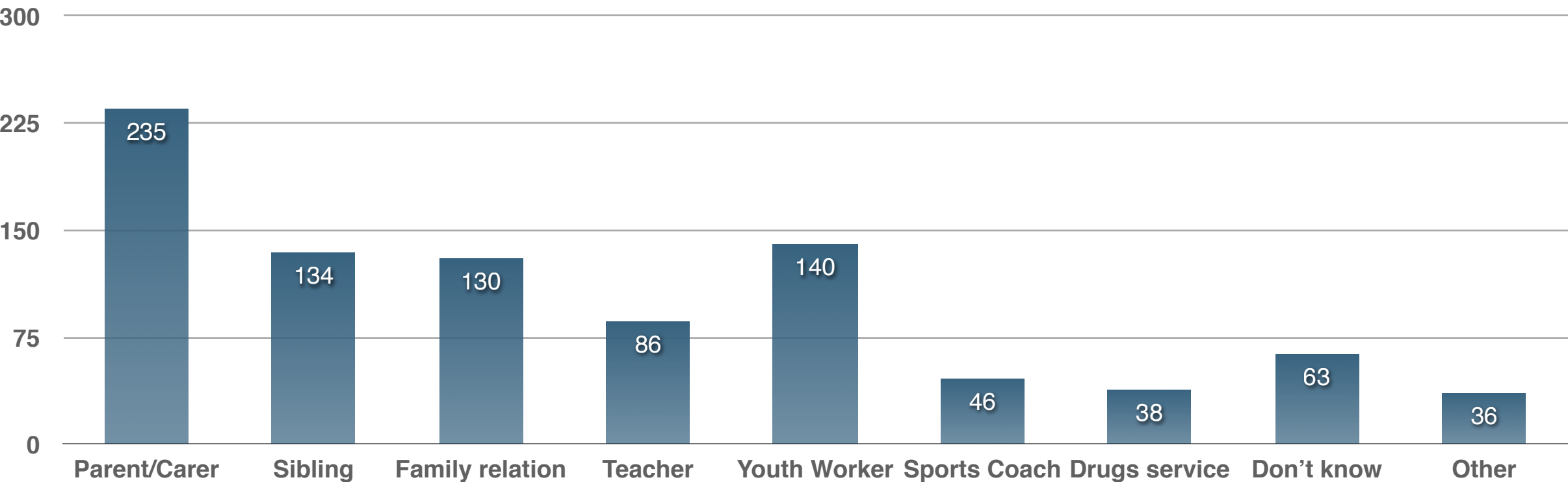
4.5 Information- alcohol and drugs

The majority of respondents 406, (94%) indicated that they have never been in debt as a result of using drugs or alcohol. However 26, (6%) have, seven of these are aged between 12-14. This is a major concern.

Parents/carers are again highlighted as the primary way that young people would get help if they had a drug/alcohol related debt. (59%). Brothers/sisters were also highlighted by 156, (36%) of young people as key sources of support. Eighty four young people (19%) said that they did not know who they would turn to. The five most common sources of support should young people require help in relation to a drug/alcohol debt are:

- Parent/carers, (59% - 253 young people)
- Friends, (45% - 194 young people)
- Brother/sister, (36% - 156 young people)
- Other relative, (25% - 107 young people)
- Youth worker, (23% - 101 young people)

Who young people ask drug or alcohol related questions



These responses were consistent across the ages of respondents.

Sixty three young people indicated that they didn't know who they would ask. A small proportion, 38 young people, indicated that they would ask a service set-up to respond to drug misuse. However, services to provide drug and alcohol information to young people under 18 are primarily provided through youth organisations as they are tailored for this age cohort. This is reflected in the responses shown. Friends were highlighted most frequently under "other."

The workshop with young people highlighted in discussion that sisters/brothers or close relations such as uncles/aunts are more likely sources of information than parents. However, it is important to note that through both research processes, young people highlighted that they access information in relation to drug misuse, primarily within their family unit.

4.5 Key considerations for planning

Foróige in Blanchardstown should consider the following findings when developing their plans:

- The availability and accessibility of alcohol and drugs across Dublin 15.
- The use of alcohol, by young people especially at weekends, holiday times and times of celebration.

- The use of drugs particularly cannabis, which at present is very potent.
- The role that parents and adults play as role models and information providers.
- The role that peers play in influencing decisions to drink alcohol and take drugs.
- The role that positive engagement in clubs and groups plays in supporting young people to delay or reduce their alcohol/drug use.



5. Safety

5.1 Community safety

The vast majority of young people indicated in the survey that they feel safe moving between different areas in Dublin 15 in:

- The morning, (377 young people - 88%)
- The afternoon, (382 young people - 89%)
- The evening, (273 young people - 64%)

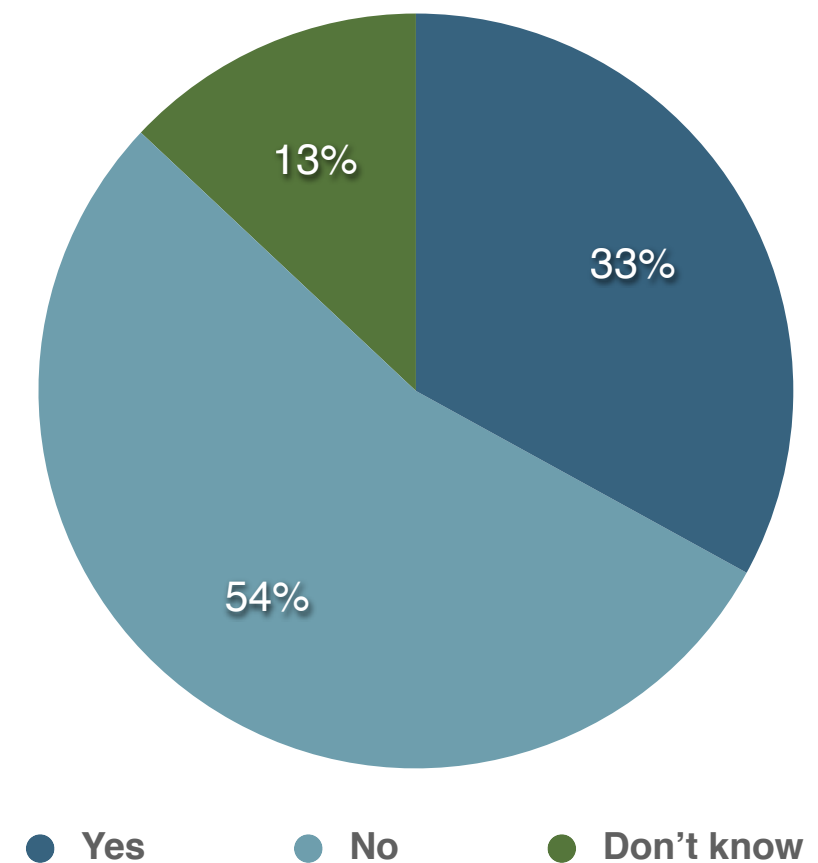
However at night-time more young people feel unsafe moving between different areas in Dublin 15. These results are consistent across the age groups. However, younger teenagers feel slightly less safe overall than 15-18 year olds.

The outcomes of the survey were echoed in the workshop with young people. Young people outlined that they feel most safe walking in the area that they live in.

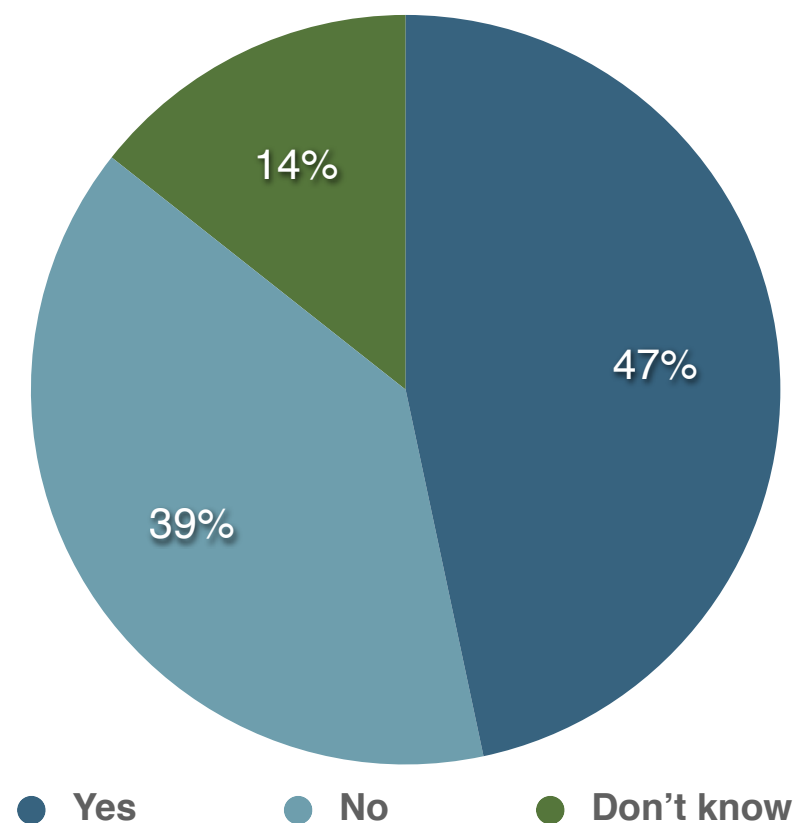
5.2 Experience of crime

Most young people indicated that they/their families had not been a victim of crime. However, older young people, (15-18 year olds) outlined were more likely to indicate that their families were victims of crime (40.3% indicted yes) than those aged 12-14.

Have you/your family been a victim of crime?



Is gang based crime an issue?



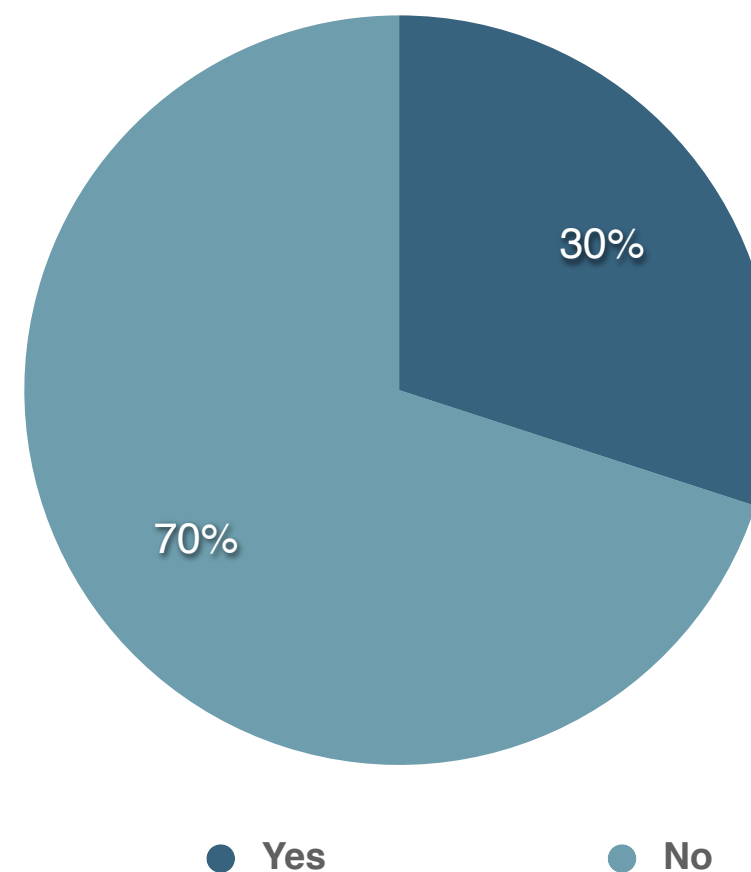
The majority of young people think that gang based crime, (organised adult crime gangs), is a big issue in their area. This was echoed in the workshop discussions.

Respondents indicated that the most frequent types of crime that they think young people are involved in are: Stealing, Assault, Vandalism, Drug dealing, Harassment. This is a broadly consistent view across age ranges.

5.3 Youth involvement in crime

The majority of young people, 277 (70%), indicated that they have never committed a crime. However, 130 (30%) indicated that they have. The levels of young people aged 15-18 who outlined in the survey that they committed a crime were higher than those aged 12-14. 37.3% of 15-18 year olds indicated that they had committed a crime. This is a significant proportion. Discussions at the workshop agreed that involvement in criminal activity is a concern in Dublin 15.

Have you ever committed a crime?



The majority of young people who indicated that they committed a crime, did so with a group, (77 young people - 60%). This is consistent across the age groups.

The reasons that these young people committed a crime are outlined in the following table. The factors are different according to age:

	12-14 year olds	15-18 year olds
Number 1	No money, 37.2%	Boredom, 32.9%
Number 2	Boredom, 25.6%	Don't know, 25.9%
Number 3	Peer pressure	No money, anger, 23.5%
Number 4	Anger, 9.3%	Peer pressure, 18.8%

The levels of young people who answered “*don't know*” to this question is very interesting. This indicates that young people can often find themselves involved in crime with no clear rationale.

The vast majority of young people outlined that they have never carried a weapon. However:

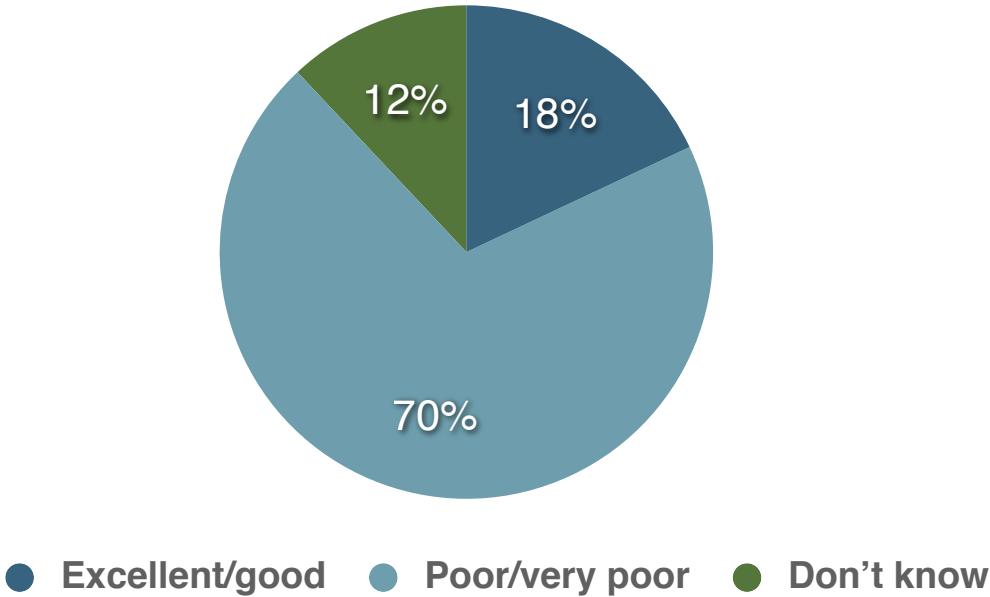
- 87 young people, (21%) indicated that they carried a bat/stick
- 63, (15%) indicated that they carried a knife
- 35, (9%) indicated that they carried a knuckle duster
- 15, (4%) indicated that they carried a gun.

These findings are consistent across the age groups.

5.4 Relationships with the Gardaí

The survey highlighted that 70% of young people outlined that relationships between the Gardaí and young people in Blanchardstown is generally poor or very poor. However, this response was even higher amongst young people aged 15-18; 78% indicated that relationships are poor or very poor. The workshop with young people highlighted their views that relationships between Gardaí and young people are not working well. Discussions highlighted that Gardaí, do not know or understand young people. The way that Gardaí communicate with young people could be improved.

Relationships with Gardaí



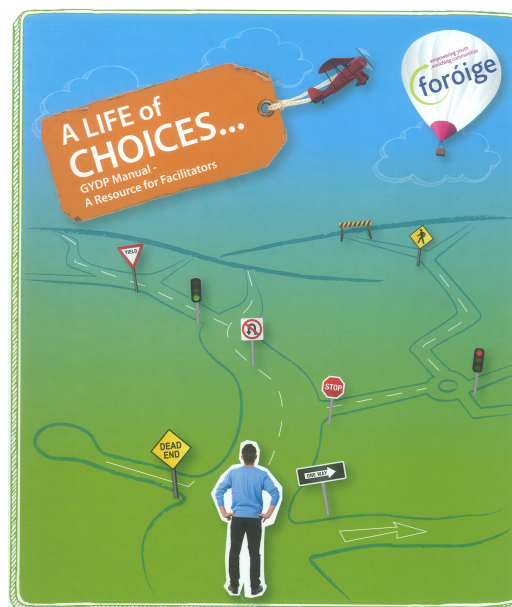
5.5 Key considerations for planning

Foróige in Blanchardstown should consider the following findings when developing their plans.

- The impact of gang based crime on young person's sense of safety.
- Critical analysis of the needs and issues surrounding a young persons offending behaviour.
- The need to increase understanding and improve relationships between the Gardaí and young people in the community.

Information on Foróige's Best Practice Unit and the development of *A Life Of Choices*, a programme developed to enhance Foróige's engagement with young people at risk and enable them to explore crime related issues.

<http://www.foroige.ie/about/best-practice>



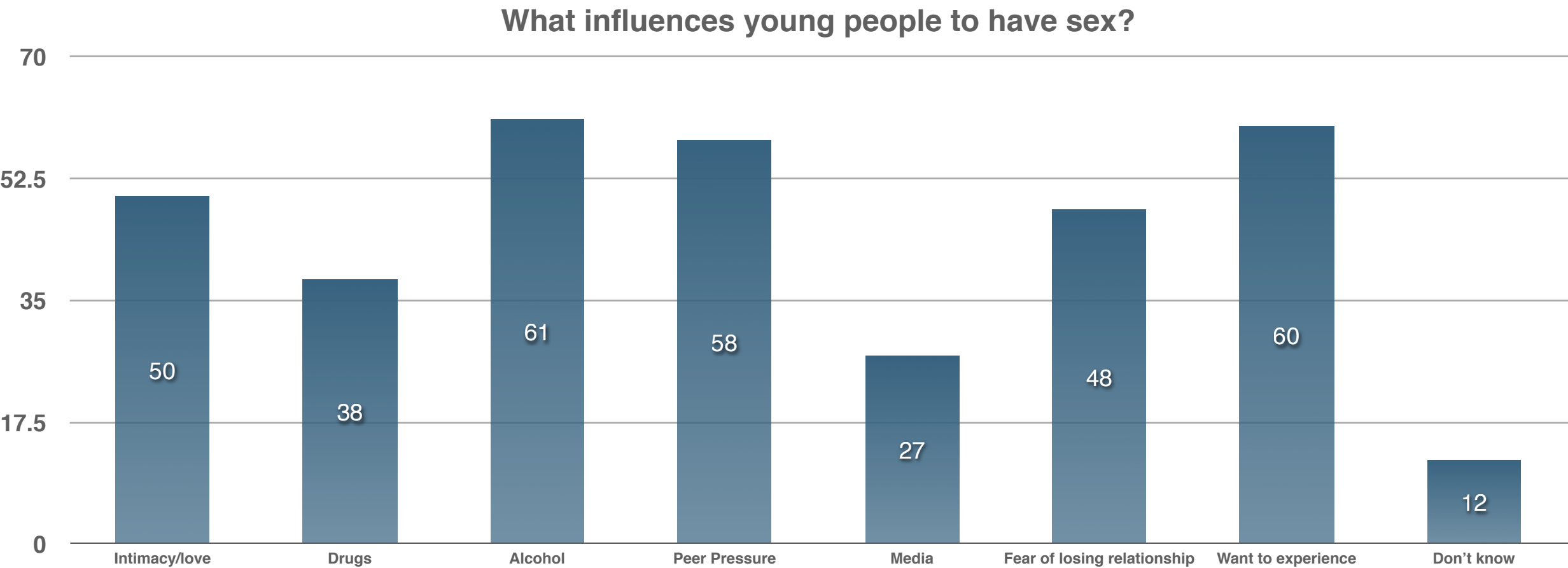
6. Sexuality and Relationships

6.1 Influences

Young people indicated in the survey that while young people are aware of the dangers of unprotected sex (59%), they are pressurised to have sex from an early age (53%). It is not clear whether respondents are of the view that young people are practicing safe sex.

While 38% indicated that they are not, 30% are also not sure and indicated “don’t know”.

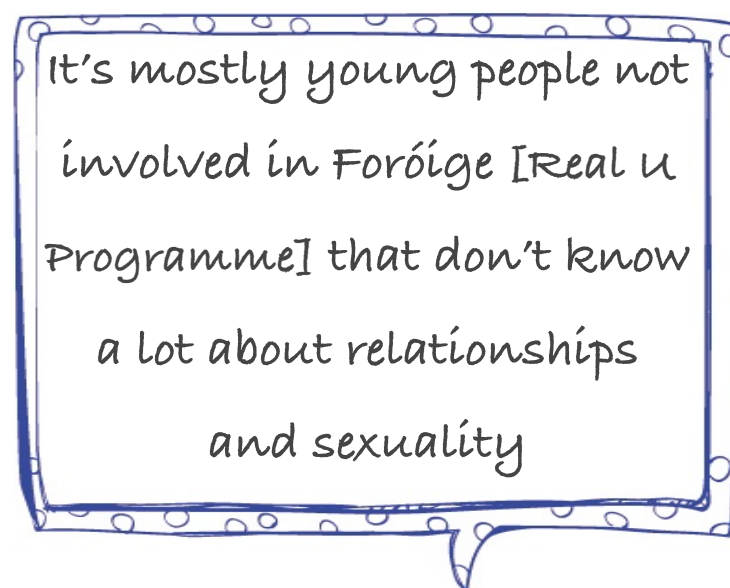
Alcohol was seen to be the main influence in young people’s decision to have sex.



6.2 Information and awareness

The workshop discussion highlighted that information in relation to sexual activity and relationships is provided at school and through youth projects. The discussion highlighted that it is easier to engage and learn from the information provided in youth projects. The difficulty in discussing issues in relation to sex and relationships with parents was highlighted. Young people outlined how these kinds of discussions are embarrassing and are therefore difficult to have with adults. Young Travellers outlined the social stigma that exists for young Traveller girls who are sexually active before marriage.

The workshop highlighted that messages delivered through various media can encourage young people to become sexually active. In contrast there are also reality TV programmes highlighting the challenges experienced by young people who become parents early.



6.3 Key considerations for planning

Foróige in Blanchardstown should consider the following findings when developing their plans:

- Young people require accessible information and support to make choices in relation to sexual activity. Foróige's *Real U* Programme should be resourced to include more young people.
- Young people experience pressures from a number of sources to be sexually active.
- The role of parents as supporters and educators in relation to sexuality needs to be supported and developed further.



Information on Foróige's sexuality and relationships programme, *Real U*.

<http://www.foroige.ie/our-work/health-and-wellbeing-programme>



7. Education and Employment

7.1 Current and future education

The vast majority of young people who completed the survey are in secondary school, (358 - 85%). This is slightly higher for young people aged 12-14, (88.5%) and lower for those aged 15-18, (81.4%).

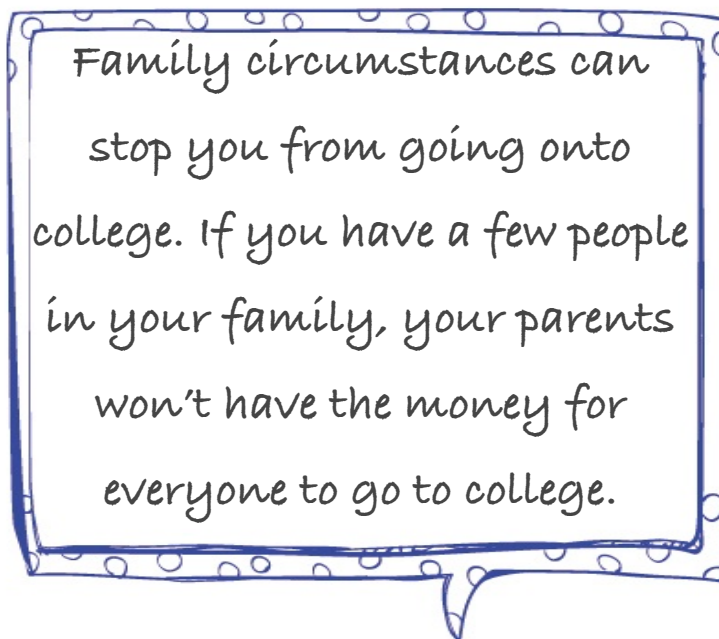
Young people who are still at school indicated that when they are finished they want to:

- Attend third level, (210 young people - 54%)
- Not sure, (85 young people - 22%)
- Attend a PLC course or other certificate, (35 young people - 9%)
- Get a trade, (19 young people - 5%)
- Enter the workforce, (21 young people - 5%)
- Emigrate, (19 young people - 5%)

The levels of young people who are not sure what they want to do are of note and were the second highest option indicated across both young and older age groups. These findings were largely echoed in the workshop discussions. The workshop also highlighted major

concerns regarding the cost of third level. This was seen by many as impacting on their likelihood to progress.

Many young people outlined that the cost of staying on in secondary school can cause a real challenge for their families.



7.2 Support to remain in education

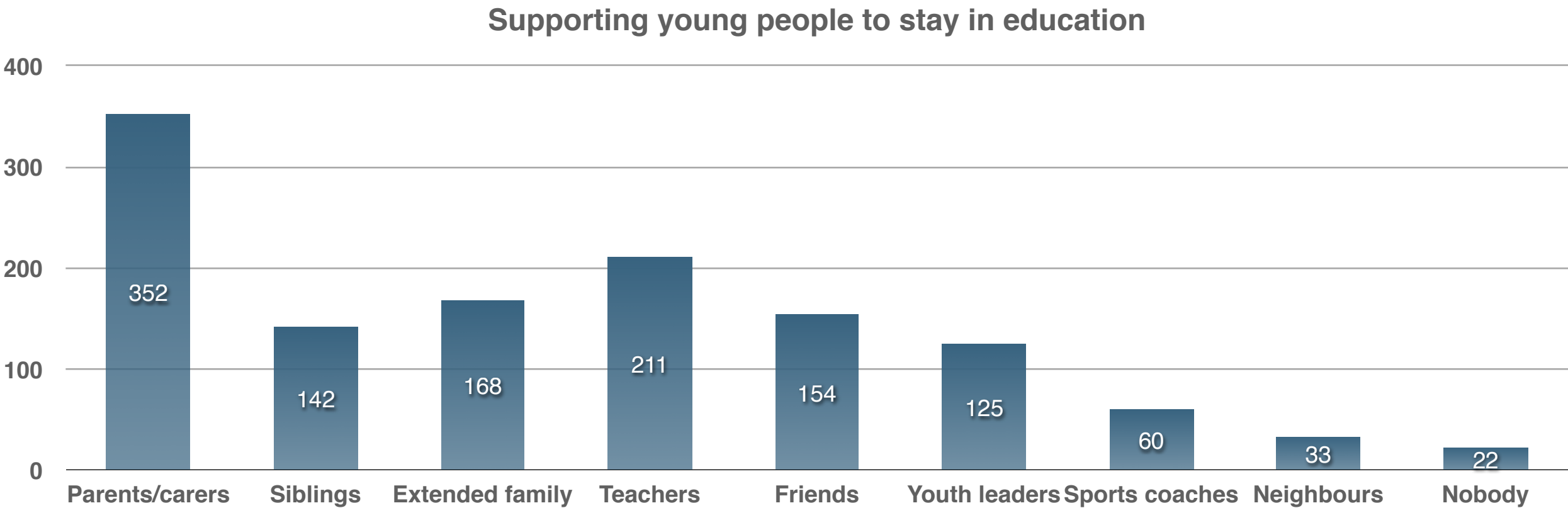
Respondents indicated that support and motivation to participate in education comes primarily from parents/carers, extended family and brothers/sisters. This was consistent across the age groups. The workshop discussions echoed this finding. Parents in particular are seen to have a very influencing role. However, other siblings and noise at home can really impact on young people’s ability to study and complete homework.

The workshop highlighted that schools and teachers can either be very supportive or a negative influence on staying in education.

The majority of respondents to the survey indicated concerns in relation to:

- Lack of jobs-employment opportunities
- Not getting enough points
- Not being clear on what they want to do
- Cost of third level
- Cuts in social welfare
- Training opportunities

Concerns are highest amongst young people aged 15-18 years.



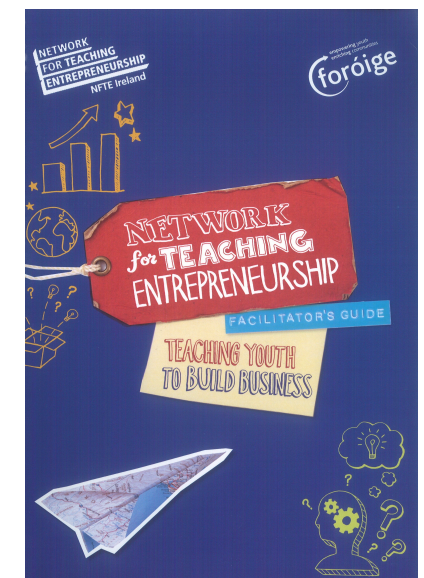
7.3 Key considerations for planning

Foróige in Blanchardstown should consider the following findings when developing their plans:

- Provide opportunities for young people to complete homework and access study support.
- Provide support for young people to consider career and educational choices.
- Identify and encourage young adults who are not in education, employment or training to participate in Foróige's programmes.

- The impact of the recession on the ability of young people to stay in school, take up places at third level and sustain those places.
- The stress that young people, particularly those aged 15-18 are feeling as a result of the recession where competition for third level places is higher and job prospects are lower.

Foróige's **NFTE Programme** is a youth entrepreneurship education and development programme. A number of NFTE programmes operate in Dublin 15.



8. Discrimination

8.1 Experience

While the majority of young people indicated that they had not experienced discrimination in the past month, 146 outlined that they had. This finding was relatively consistent across the age groups. The workshop discussions supported the view that young people experience relatively high levels of discrimination and believed that the levels may be higher than the survey indicated.

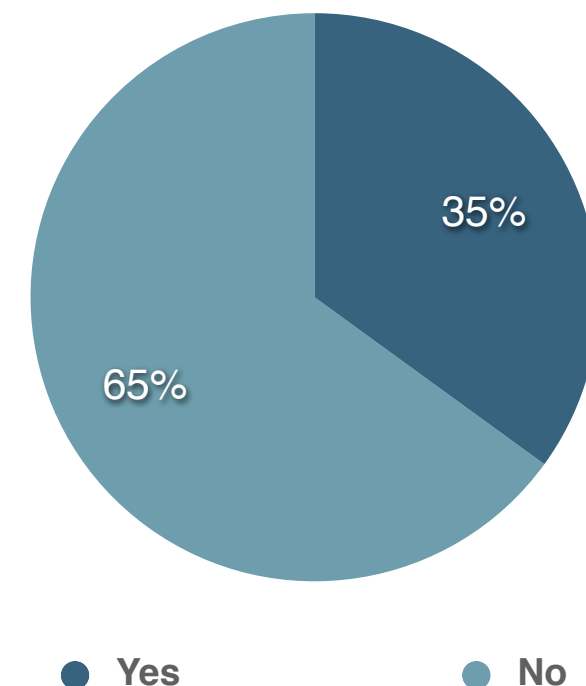
8.2 Reason for discrimination

The survey indicated age variations in relation to why young people felt that they were discriminated. Young people aged 12-14 indicated that physical appearance was the most common reason for discrimination (30 respondents, 47.6%). However, 15-18 year olds indicated that racial discrimination was the primary reason (30 respondents, 36.6%). This was supported in the workshop discussion, with racial discrimination was discussed as a key challenge in Dublin 15. Discussions highlighted that due to the high levels of ethnic diversity there are real challenges between cultures which results in discrimination and can lead to physical violence. The overall survey findings are presented below:

Discrimination is most likely to take place:

- On the streets (80%)
- At school (71%)
- Social networking sites (69%)
- Mobile phones/texts (59%)

Have you experienced discrimination?

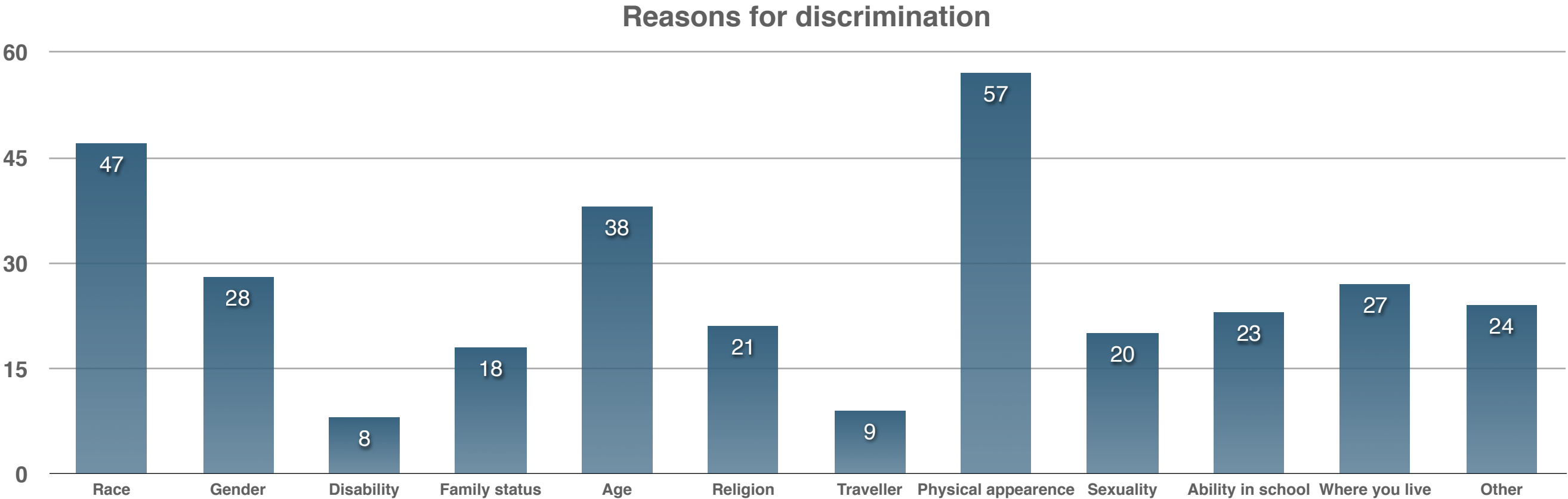


It is of note that discrimination is less likely to take place in clubs/ groups (28%). Both older and younger young people indicated that these are places that discrimination is less likely. The workshop discussions highlighted the level of discrimination that occurs in schools. While schools respond to the issue differently it was highlighted that teachers have a lot to deal with and may not know that discrimination and negative behaviours between young people is occurring.

The discussions also highlighted that discrimination takes place through social media, particularly Facebook and askfm. Young people highlighted that they are often hesitant to intervene directly when

they witness others being discriminated against as they are afraid that they themselves may be then picked on.

Words used by some people
about my skin colour or
accent really upsets and
angers me - even when used in
a 'harmless' or joking way



8.3 Key considerations for planning

Foróige in Blanchardstown should consider the following findings when developing their development plans:

- Young people are experiencing discrimination for a variety of reasons. It is likely that some young people experience multiple forms of discrimination.
- Discrimination is taking place, primarily from young person to young person.
- School and social networking are common ways that discrimination is taking place.
- Discrimination on the basis of race is common. This is a core challenge in Dublin 15 given the levels of ethnic diversity in Dublin 15.

Discrimination affects people mentally, it doesn't make you feel good about where you are from



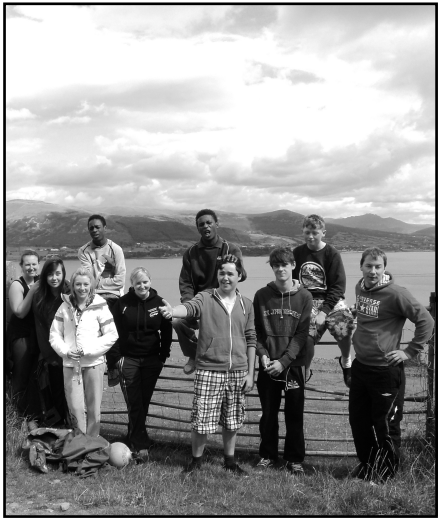
Foróige in Blanchardstown operates a Foróige National Integration Strategy whereby young people from ethnic minority communities are given every opportunity to participate in all programmes and activities through a range of actions. The *Integrate Project 2013* is an initiative supported by Fingal County Council and funded by the Dept of Justice and Equality which addresses integration through a range of programmes; these include, leadership, mentoring and practical integration strategies.

Conclusion



This research was undertaken with the aim of ensuring that Foróige will strive to meet the needs of young people, both now and in the future. Despite the severe cuts to the youth work sector, the young people involved in this process are confident that the programmes developed by Foróige can continue to meet their educational and developmental needs as identified in this report.

Many of the recommendations will prove challenging, particularly in relation to youth employment and training. Foróige will need continued support from both the community and funders in order to ensure positive outcomes for all young people.



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Members of The VIBE

Further reading and resources

Foróige Annual Review, 2012

Social and Economic Profile of Dublin 15, published by
Blanchardstown Area Partnership, October 2012

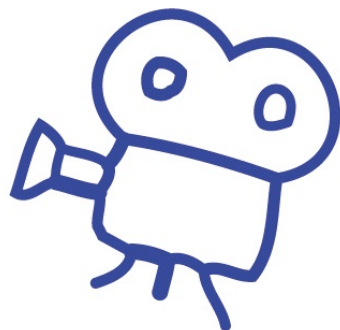
National Youth Council of Ireland



Project 321

Published 2004

Project 321, 2004, addressed youth needs and focused on influencing general election candidates.



Today's Voice, Tomorrow's Vote

Published May 2007

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Today's Voice
Tomorrow's Vote

young people
in dublin 15 have their say



The voice of a generation

The American author Fran Lebowitz once opined that the advantage of being a teenager was that it was "the last stage in your life when you are glad when the phone is for you." Certainly, youth has its own unique reference points, aspirations and concerns, which are formed by the myriad of influences to which the modern-day teenager is subjected. While many adults tend to see the teenage years as something carefree to be enjoyed before being mugged by the material reality of adult life, this also tends to mean that the attitudes and problems of young people are rarely given due hearing and recognition.

The Blanchardstown Youth Service (BYS) which is provided by Foróige in partnership with Co. Dublin VEC, has been an indefatigable representative of youth in Dublin 15 for many years, and recently arranged a get-together between local young people and aspiring Dáil representatives in the forthcoming election. The object of the exercise was to discuss the findings of a survey undertaken in the local schools. In an illuminating evening in the Civic Offices at the Blanchardstown Centre, the themes of the evening were perhaps not surprising with all the "usual suspects" cropping up. However, what was a new departure to normally dismissive adult eyes, was seeing them presented

directly by teenagers themselves. It was an occasion which was – to steal a line from the BYS logo – about 'empowering youth.'

Some of the matters raised will always create friction between teenagers and adults where opinions are largely a function of age. Alcohol is perhaps the most time-honoured example of this dichotomy in attitude between the generations. The youth survey, which is detailed on the back of this supplement, cited an interest in reducing the legal age for drinking to 16 years.

Reactions from politicians was mixed and measured. Some such as Sinn Féin's Felix Gallagher, were not in favour of any change. Those who saw merit in the proposition did so with qualification. Fine Gael's Leo Varadkar suggested that controlled access to alcohol by

degrees in the home could create suitable respect for its mature use. The Green Party's Roderic O'Gorman noted examples of other countries such as Germany, where alcohol is less of a 'forbidden fruit' and apparently that country does not experience our sometimes extreme relationship with the

substance.

It was appropriate in the company of the evening that a reduction in the voting age was another topical matter raised in the survey. For those who dismiss young people as uninterested in politics it was reassuring that a desire to vote was apparent among this group.



Some of the young people at the meeting



Listening to the views of young people (L-R): Joe Higgins TD, Cllr Mags Murray, Roderic O'Gorman, Cllr Leo Varadkar, Cllr Felix Gallagher and Gerry Lynam

Reducing the voting age

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child states that children have a right to be heard when it comes to policies affecting them. It is now also Government policy through the National Children's Strategy that young voices should be heard. But young people not only want to be consulted on issues affecting them, they also want to have a real say, the right to vote.

Today, young people reach social and intellectual maturity at a younger age than before. By the time compulsory school-

Not only can young people leave school and get a job at sixteen, they can also get married. Does it make sense for a married person with a job and children not to be recognised as an adult who can vote? Such a person is a full adult member of society and should be treated accordingly.

Because of the advances in information technology over recent decades, young people are now more aware of political issues than ever before. The broadcast media in particular ensures that everyone, including sixteen year olds, are familiar

for them to have a full understanding of politics.

Even if we take a pessimistic view of the ability of some sixteen year olds to make a well informed and well thought out democratic decision, it is not clear that the passing of two years will make any real difference to such people. Many people are politically unsophisticated or disinterested in politics, but there isn't a significant difference between the ages of sixteen year olds and eighteen year olds that would indicate that they will be apathetic, disinterested or ill

In any case, voters are not required to be fully informed or highly intellectual. Sixteen year olds are in most other respects, adult members of society.

It is often said that 18-25 year olds don't vote in elections and are not interested in politics. That is maybe because they were never consulted when under 18 about what issues were important to them. Why should they begin to care when they reach 18?

However what is clear from the Today's Voice, Tomorrow's Vote project is that young people under 18 are interested and

Naturally it is not a bad way to raise the antennae of the average politician either.

Joan Burton TD says that the Labour Party supports the reduction of the voting age to '16 years for European and local elections', something also mocked by the Green Party representative on the night. It is not clear why these recommendations exclude a say in the make-up the membership of the Oireachtas, surely the most significant influence on the lives of Irish youth. Joe Higgins TD considered the enormous responsibilities and expectation thrust upon 16 year olds by society and then questioned the right to deny them a say in how that very society is run.

The scourge of drugs is, according to the survey, all pervasive, posing a threat with which the vast majority of the participants were familiar. Questions were raised by the young people in relation to the nature of information on drugs. One area where the generation gap tends to show is in the use of language in the information process which left something to be desired in the views of the teenagers. However much information may be aimed at younger people, it was noted by politicians that this is a problem which has its roots in the example shown by many adults in relation to illegal drugs.

With youth representing an eclectic section of society, the vexed question of racism – "abhorrent and vile" in the words of Joan Burton – naturally was part and parcel of the survey. Burton echoes the views of Joe Higgins TD who castigated sections of Irish soci-

find themselves. While this problem in an increasingly cosmopolitan Dublin 15 was roundly condemned, short-term solutions are a difficulty.

Lack of youth-friendly facilities such as youth cafes and community centres was mentioned consistently by the youth group as a problem. This is directly connected to one of the main gripes against young people in the community – their tendency to loiter in estates causing a perceived nuisance. The discussion surrounding the survey results was revealing on this issue, with the young people feeling that they are forced to get together in this informal fashion by the lack of organised meeting areas. Inevitably this causes an uneasy relationship with the Gardaí, which was another focal point of the debate.

Cllr. Felix Gallagher slammed the methods being employed to deal with young people recommending community Gardaí who would engage with young people to a greater degree. He described ASBOs as a "gimmick", and a poor substitute for on the ground community policing. Fianna Fáil's Gerry Lynam concurred also adding that lack of facilities has been a problem for years going back to his own youth and that Gardaí harassing young people was not the solution. Minister for Children, Brian Lenihan TD, has given a commitment towards the provision of a network of youth cafes during the lifetime of the next government, and also acknowledges the need for training of Garda recruits with specific reference to their relationship with young people.

However, as the PDs' Mags Murray pointed out, there is some progress on facilities for young people locally, with a new skateboard park and "graffiti wall" being provided at the Millennium Park at Coolmine. Cllr. Leo Varadkar suggested that while there may be a problem with facilities, young people needed to consider the nature of their social activities and how what might be harmless "hanging about" in their eyes, might amount to intimidation for vulnerable people in

Today's Voice Tomorrow's, 2004, addressed youth needs and focused on influencing general election candidates.