Health Behaviour in School-aged Children (HBSC) is a cross-national research study conducted in collaboration with the World Health Organization (WHO) Regional Office for Europe.

Every four years HBSC collects data on 11-, 13- and 15-year olds’ health and well-being, health behaviours and social environments. HBSC uses the findings at both a national and international level to:

- gain new insight into young people’s health and well-being,
- understand the social determinants of health, and
- inform policy and practice to improve young people’s lives.

**OUR RESEARCH APPROACH**

HBSC focuses on understanding young people’s health in their social context – where they live, at school, with family and friends. Researchers within the HBSC Network are interested in understanding how these factors both individually and together help to maintain young people’s health as they move from adolescence into adulthood.

Each country selects a proportion of school classes containing 11, 13 and 15 year olds to study, ensuring the sample is representative of young people living in that country within this age group.

**WHY IS RESEARCH ON YOUNG PEOPLE’S HEALTH IMPORTANT?**

There are many new pressures and challenges for young people particularly in early to mid adolescence. They need to deal with considerable change at this time, such as growing academic expectations, changing social relationships with family and peers and the physical and emotional changes associated with maturation. These years mark a period of increasing autonomy, and with that comes independent decision-making that may influence their health and health-related behaviour.

Behaviours established during this transition period can follow through into adulthood, particularly in relation to issues such as tobacco use, diet, physical activity and alcohol use. HBSC’s findings demonstrate how young people’s health changes as they grow through adolescence and can be used to determine effective health improvement interventions.
HOW DO WE SHARE OUR FINDINGS?

The HBSC Network promotes its evidence base through a wide range of scientific journals and reports. It also promotes the development and implementation of evidence-based policy by working with national and international decision makers.

Every 4 years, HBSC, in conjunction with the WHO, publishes an international report comparing the data from all participating HBSC countries. This is widely used by International policy makers and lobbyists, including UNICEF, the European Commission and the OECD.

HBSC member countries produce national reports, which are disseminated to national policy makers and stakeholders. HBSC members also publish scientific articles in a wide range of public health and social science journals.

RESEARCH AREAS

- Body image
- Bullying and fighting
- Eating behaviours
- Electronic media communication
- Health complaints
- Injuries
- Life satisfaction
- Mental health
- Migration
- Obesity
- Oral health
- Physical activity and sedentary behaviour
- Relationships: Family and peers
- School environment
- Self-rated health
- Sexual behaviour
- Socioeconomic environment
- Substance use: Alcohol, tobacco and cannabis
- Weight reduction behaviour

RECENT PUBLICATIONS

Download Growing up Unequal, the latest international report from the HBSC study, featuring data from 42 countries and regions:


Other publications, including peer reviewed papers and collaborations with organisations such as UNICEF and OECD can be accessed and downloaded from www.hbsc.org.

THE HBSC RESEARCH NETWORK

The number of researchers working on HBSC across the 48 countries and regions now exceeds 350. Information regarding each national team is available on the HBSC website.

The study is supported by the International Coordinating Centre, based at the University of St Andrews. It is led by the study’s International Coordinator, Dr Jo Inchley. The study’s Data Management Centre is based at the University of Bergen and is directed by the Data Manager, Prof Oddrun Samdal.

The HBSC study is funded at the national level in each of its member countries and the International Coordinating Centre is funded by member country subscriptions.

CONTACT US

HBSC International Coordinating Centre, Child and Adolescent Health Research Unit (CAHRU), University of St Andrews, Medical and Biological Sciences Building, North Haugh St Andrews, KY16 9TF, United Kingdom

If you would like any further information on the HBSC study, please visit our website: www.hbsc.org

Phone: +44 (0)1334 461 731
Email: info@hbsc.org