



PARTNER *Ireland*



Growing up in Monaghan

PLANET YOUTH 2022

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1

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Planet Youth was introduced in the West of Ireland in 2018 and following a successful ethical approval process with the RCPI – Royal College of Physicians was introduced to Cavan and Monaghan in research collaboration with the RCSI – Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland.

This five-year pilot programme has been initiated and developed by an Implementation Committee, made up of representatives who have a remit for Children and Young People. Some 2,000 post Junior-Cycle students across every second level school and Youthreach Centre throughout Cavan and Monaghan were invited to participate in the Planet Youth Survey and the results contained within these county reports are the first of their kind in both counties.

Planet Youth is an international evidence-based primary prevention model, developed by the Icelandic Centre for Social Research and Analysis (ICSRA) at Reykjavik University. It was initially developed in order to reduce substance use rates amongst young people.

The model uses a whole population approach and offers the opportunity to improve health and life outcomes for young people in many areas. It works by directly targeting the risk and protective factors that determine their substance use behaviours and by enhancing the social environment they are growing up in. By reducing the known risk factors and strengthening the known protective factors the problems associated with adolescent substance use can be reduced or stopped before they arise.

The Planet Youth (Interagency) Implementation group has initiated the project's needs led, bottom-up approach that will see data collated directly from young people, providing us with information on the lives and lifestyle of our young people. Co-funded by 10 local partners, our Memorandum of Understanding for implementation of the Model is for the next 5 years. The Icelandic Centre of Research and Social Studies (ICRSA) of the University of Reykjavik will collate our local data and forward it to our research partners in the Royal College of Surgeons of Ireland.

Our Mission is to lead a process of transformative change by **embedding primary prevention approaches which enhance young people's health, relationships, environment and wellbeing.**

While public bodies and non-profit organisations in Cavan and Monaghan are already working together to improve outcomes for young people, evidenced based prevention needs greater priority. The Planet Youth Data provides an opportunity for all stakeholders to hear and learn directly from our young people about what it is like to grow up as a young person in County Cavan and County Monaghan and this will support our organisations to become more alert to current trends/issues and encourage a responsiveness in the way they think about prevention and their role in it.

Agencies and organisations – big and small – can use the data results as a tool which will enable them to consider what they can do within their remit, either directly or indirectly. This includes reassessing their activities with a view to minimising risk factors and maximising protective factors. While stakeholders will approach Planet Youth in different ways, ultimately the shared objective is to achieve better outcomes for young people.

Prevention activities are more likely to succeed when they are systematic, evidence-based and collaborative. While the need for prevention is increasingly recognised, it often occurs in an ad hoc manner. Planet Youth urges all stakeholders – from national and local government to public bodies, schools and community-based organisations – to play their part in prioritising prevention in an integrated and holistic way.

Data

The Planet Youth model relies on the data derived from biennial cross-sectional surveys that are conducted using the Planet Youth questionnaire. This comprehensive lifestyle questionnaire is administered to the 15-16 year olds who have completed 3rd year in Post Primary Education Centres in Co. Cavan and Co. Monaghan. There are questions on their substance use, physical health, mental health, physical activity, family and school experience, internet use, bullying and many other categories. There are 78 primary questions in the current Planet Youth questionnaire which can be examined and cross-tabulated.

Risk and protective factors

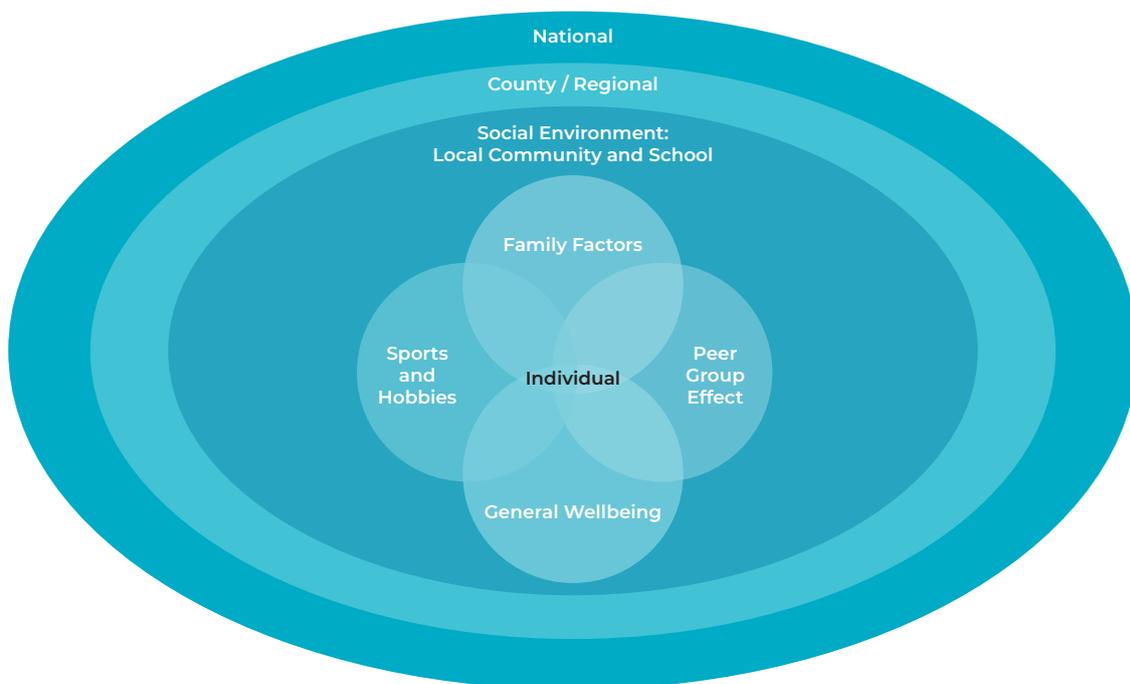
The survey results provide the information for planning, selecting key factors requiring attention, designing suitable interventions, and tracking trends and changes in young people’s behaviours and well-being over time. The main risk and protective factors lie within the domains outlined below.

Parents and Families

School

Leisure Time and Local Communities

Peer Group and Wellbeing



Major domains of intervention

2021 Survey – Year 1 of the 5 year pilot

In October / November 2021, all of the young people in (Cavan and Monaghan) that returned to education after completing their 3rd year in post primary schools/ 1st and 2nd year in Youthreach Centres were invited (via information and assent letters) to participate in the Planet Youth questionnaire. This report summarises the findings of the survey of those who participated.

- **Cavan:** 882 young people from 12 school / Youthreach settings
- **Monaghan:** 845 young people from 13 school / Youthreach settings

Key Messages

Parents and Families

- High percentages of students say it's easy to receive caring and warmth from their parents. Parental caring and warmth are a protective factor for mental health. Those with high levels of parental warmth are five times more likely to report positive mental health.
- About half of the adolescents agree or strongly agree that their parents set rules about what they can do at home and outside the home. Teenagers with low level parental monitoring are up to 5 times more likely to engage in alcohol and / or substance misuse.

School

- High proportions of young people feel safe within school environment and agree that they have friends at school that care about them. High rates express that the adults in school notice when they are having a hard time and offer to help.
- Teenagers getting 7 hours or less sleep are reporting poorer mental health, self-esteem and school engagement.

Leisure Time and Local Communities

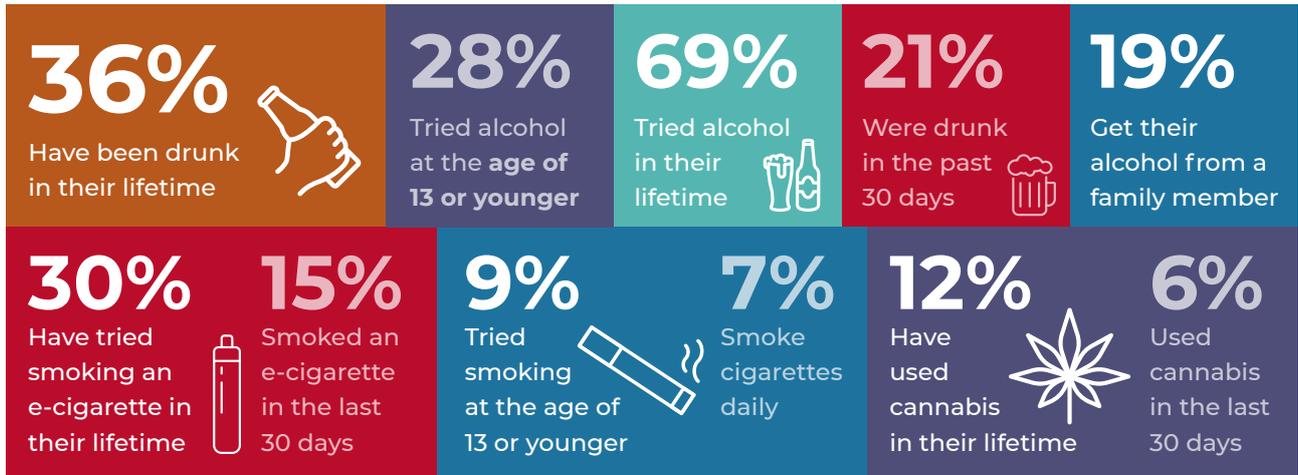
- Access to a range of supervised leisure activities is a protective factor and reduces risk behaviours and associated dangers
- Teenagers that report high levels of unsupervised leisure time regularly are 6 times more likely to use cannabis. It's important that teens have access to organised sports and other constructive leisure time activities to reduce their vulnerability to engage in substance abuse.

Peer Group and Wellbeing

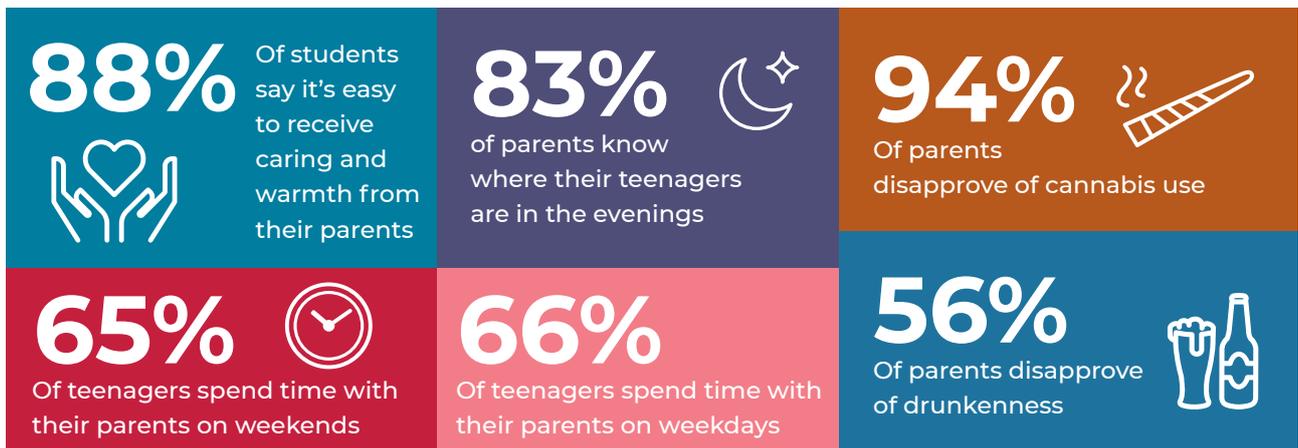
- The most common way for teenagers in Monaghan to access alcohol is through a parent or a carer. Those in parental roles can make a huge difference to the long-term health and wellbeing of our children by agreeing not to supply alcohol to teenagers in our homes or purchase it for them to consume elsewhere.
- Four hours or more of daily social media use creates significant risk for problems associated with sleep, mood and self-esteem. Undisturbed sleep is important for development and between 8 and 10 hours is recommended. Limiting social media and screen use and keeping screens out of bedrooms at night will really help.

Key Findings

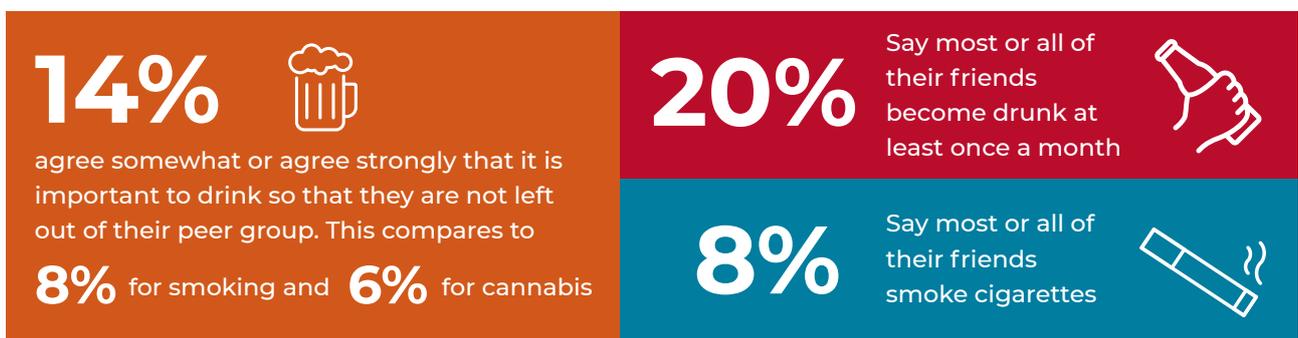
Substance Use



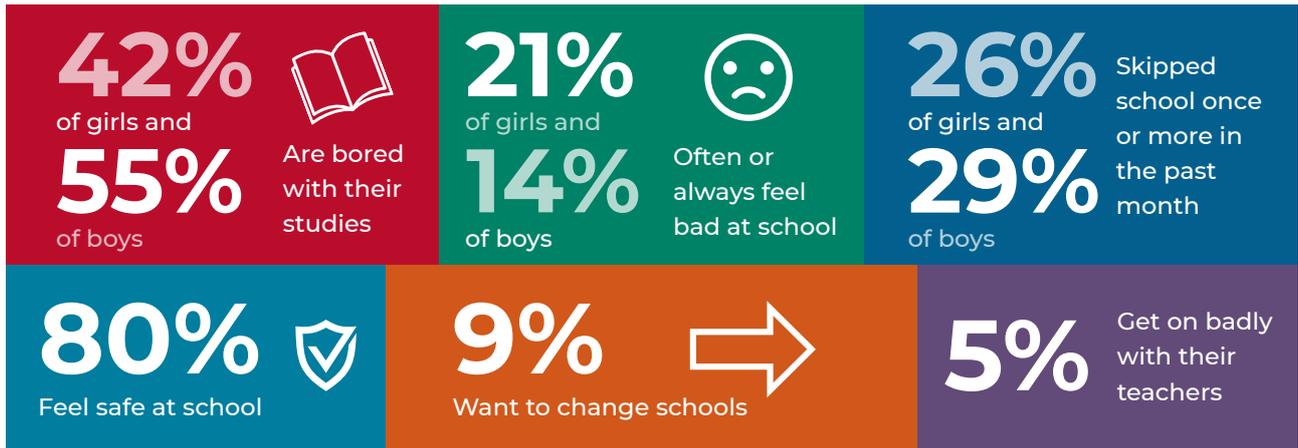
Family



Peer Group



School



Leisure



2 INTRODUCTION

Planet Youth

In the 1990s Iceland had the highest levels of alcohol and substance misuse among adolescents in Europe. A group of social scientists at the Icelandic Centre for Social Research and Analysis (ICSRA), along with policy makers and practitioners, began collaborating in an effort to better understand the societal factors influencing substance use among adolescents and identify potential approaches to prevention. Together they developed an approach founded on three pillars:

1. Evidence-based practice
2. Using a community-based approach
3. Creating and maintaining a dialogue between research, policy and practice

The model has evolved and is now known as Planet Youth. The Planet Youth model has demonstrated that it is possible to develop evidence-based interventions to promote and facilitate social capital on the local community level, in order to decrease the likelihood of adolescent substance use by strengthening the supportive role of parents and schools and the network of opportunities around them.

The evidence for community-based approaches and participatory stakeholder dialogue is based on a validated survey of adolescent behaviours and attitudes. The same survey document, with local contextual modifications, is used in all the countries adopting the Planet Youth approach and is repeated at biennial intervals.

The prevention model that has emerged continuously links local-level data collection from the survey with local-level reflection and action to increase social capital suitable to the needs of the community. The data guides the development of suitable and effective interventions that reduce the identified risk factors and strengthen the protective factors for young people.

Five Guiding Principles of Planet Youth

1. Planet Youth is a primary prevention approach that is designed to enhance the social environment.
2. Planet Youth emphasizes community action and views schools as the natural hub of local community efforts to support child and adolescent health, learning, and life success.
3. Planet Youth engages and empowers community members to make practical decisions using local, high-quality, accessible data and diagnostics.
4. Planet Youth integrates researchers, policy-makers, practitioners, and community members into a unified team dedicated to solving complex, real-world problems.
5. Planet Youth matches the scope of the solution to the scope of the problem, including an emphasis on comprehensive, long-term intervention and efforts to marshal adequate community resources.

Planet Youth County Report

The Cavan & Monaghan Planet Youth Implementation Group conducted the first detailed Planet Youth survey, on the experiences of teenagers living and growing up in their communities in counties Cavan and Monaghan during October and November 2021. The target population was all of the 15- and 16-year-old post-Junior Cycle pupils in every post-primary school and 1st and 2nd year students in Youthreach centres in both county. The Planet Youth survey is repeated biennially amongst this cohort in order to assess changing trends and behaviours.

Each of the schools and Youthreach centres in the county were invited to take part and all of them participated. A total of 1,727 (Cavan 882 / Monaghan 845) pupils completed the survey document from an eligible cohort of 1,942 young people. This represents a completion rate of 86%.

Additional Reports

A series of additional thematic and agency-specific reports may also be developed from the Planet Youth dataset for use by agencies in the region.

3

SURVEY**Survey Document**

The Planet Youth survey questionnaire has a number of standardised questions that are used in every Planet Youth Survey (internationally), but local Planet Youth Groups can also request local and bespoke questions to be included in the survey, so that results can support 'Improved Outcomes for Children and Young People.'

Planet Youth Cavan and Monaghan requested questions in the survey to gather useful information that furthers the overall aim of the project in improving the health and wellbeing of our young population. New areas of questioning included:

- An ethnic identifier as per the Irish Census form
- The addition of non-binary and prefer not to say with the gender question
- Access to alcohol and drugs
- Parent and sibling substance use
- Additional adverse life experience questions
- Barriers to accessing hobbies and sports
- Drug-related intimidation
- Racism
- Sexual health and behaviour
- COVID 19 experience

Survey Methodology

The Planet Youth survey was administered via an online questionnaire amongst the 15 and 16 year-olds in the target community. This first of three surveys was undertaken in October & November 2021. The pupils that were targeted for inclusion were all those who had returned to school/Youthreach after completing the Junior Cycle in June 2021 or had completed 1st or 2nd year in Youthreach. The sequence of events related to the administration of the survey are detailed below:

1. An ethical review was conducted and approval sought and granted by the Royal College of Physicians of Ireland (RCPI).
2. Localisation of the survey was completed through partnership and collaboration with agencies, schools and youth groups.
3. Principals of all of the post primary schools and Youthreach Centres in Cavan and Monaghan were provided with an overview of the Planet Youth Model and invited to act as the medium for which the survey would be rolled out
4. A support services card was developed to be issued alongside the surveys in order to ensure participants had access to contact details of support services if required.
5. All students and parents were given copies of information about the survey and were invited to opt out if they so wished.
6. Access to the online survey, and support materials were provided for each school.

7. Each school appointed a coordinator for their in-house survey and they all attended an online training to ensure consistency of the survey’s administration.
8. The surveys were completed by the students, and automatically uploaded to ICSRA in Reykjavik, where they were analysed and the results and dataset returned to Ireland.

The survey was conducted during class hours, taking approximately 40 – 45 minutes to complete.

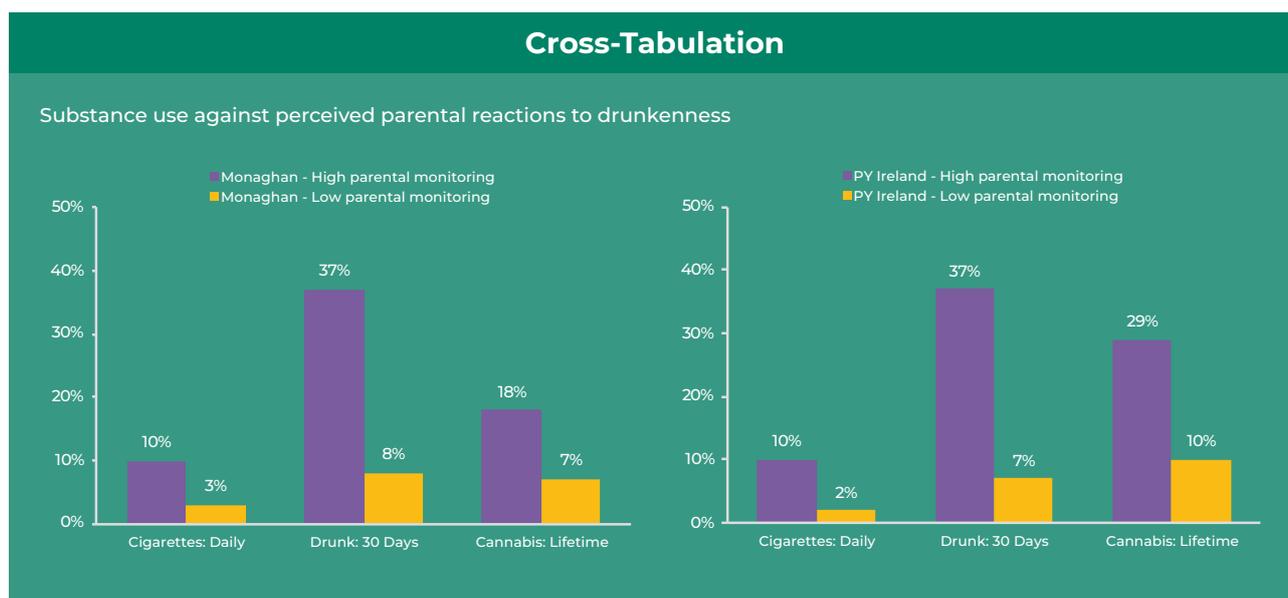
To ensure survey accuracy, some questionnaires were eliminated as part of the data cleansing process in Reykjavik. The criteria for elimination included insufficiently completed forms, reporting the use of a fictitious drug or reporting to have tried every substance 40 times or more.

Note on interpreting data: *Graphs are not generic and are not all visualised with the same scales.*

How To Interpret the Cross-Tabulations

The cross-tabulations shown in this document are used to indicate the relationship between one variable and another. Cross-tabulations can demonstrate the effect and importance of different risk and protective factors. This is a method of quantitatively analysing the relationship between multiple variables by examining correlations within the data that may not be readily apparent otherwise.

Cross-tabulations are used throughout the survey findings to examine the risk and protective factors in different domains. They can highlight factors that are working well and also those that seem to be working poorly or that are unusual in some other way and so worthy of investigation.



Cross tabulation example. Proportion of teenagers that reported lifetime drunkenness, became drunk in the last 30 days and have used cannabis once or more in their lifetime compared against parental attitude to drunkenness.

The orange bar in this example shows the substance use behaviours of teenagers whose parents are disapproving of drunkenness, contrasted against the purple bar representing the substance use behaviours of the teenagers whose parents are more tolerant of drunkenness.

4 SURVEY RESULTS

Number of Participants

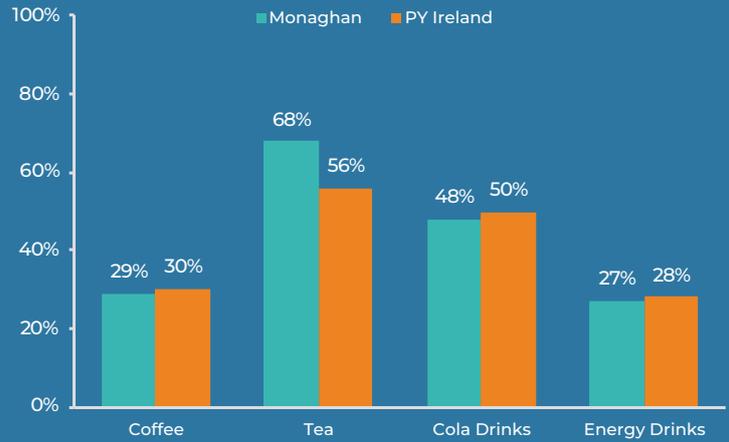
	Boy	Girl	Other*	Total
Monaghan	414	400	15	845
PY Ireland*	2,243	1,943	93	4,405

*PY Ireland represents other participating areas in Ireland in 2021

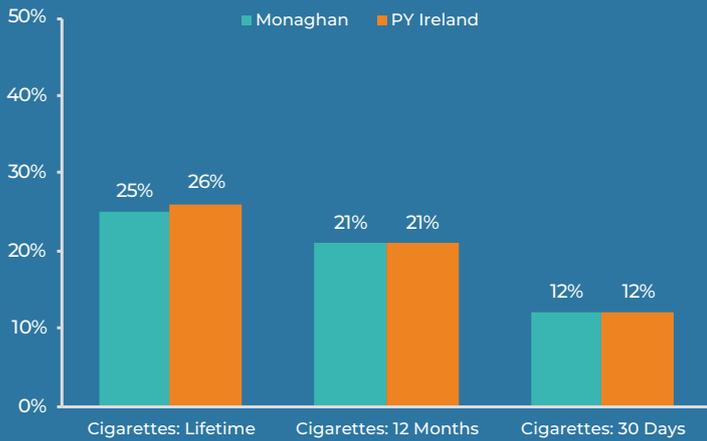
*Identifies other than boy or girl

Substance Use

Percentage of adolescents in Monaghan who drink one or more cups/cans/bottles of the following caffeinated drinks every day



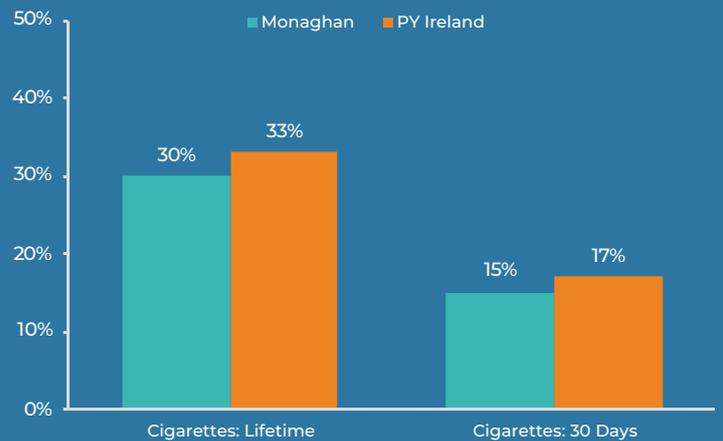
Percentage of adolescents in Monaghan who have smoked cigarettes once or more in their lifetime, in the last 12 months, and in the last 30 days



Note: chart scale total is less than 100%



Percentage of adolescents in Monaghan who have used an electronic cigarette once or more in their lifetime and in the last 30 days

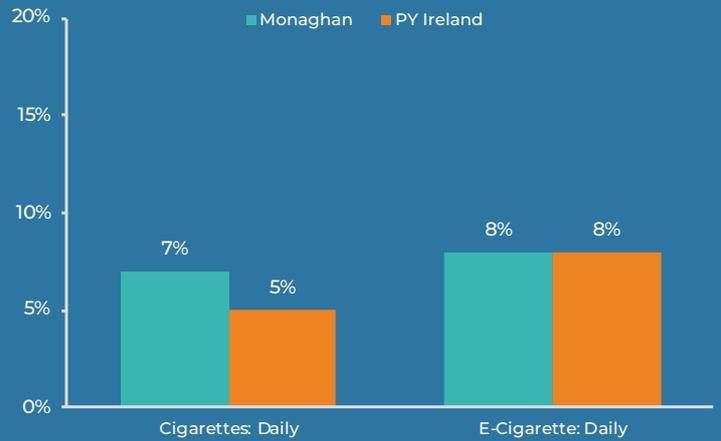


Note: chart scale total is less than 100%



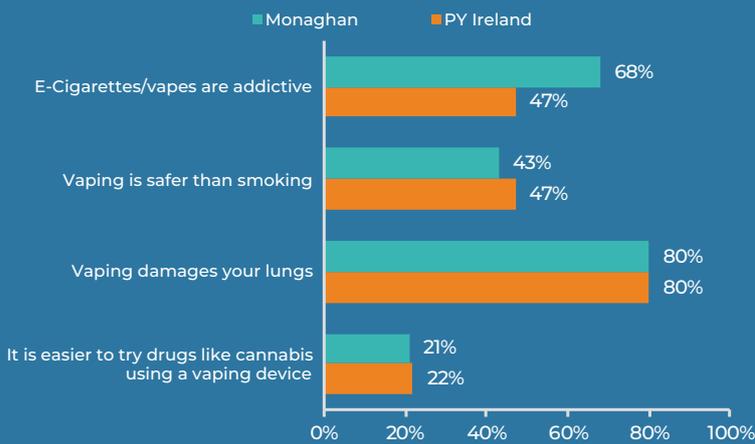


Percentage of adolescents in Monaghan who smoke cigarettes daily or use e-cigarettes on a daily basis

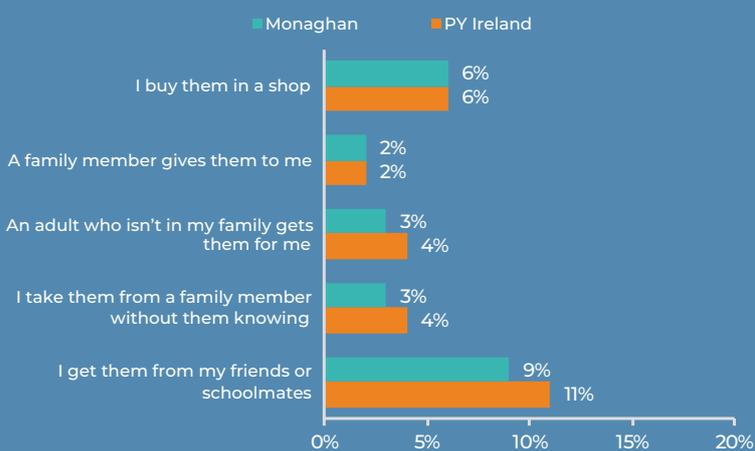


Note: chart scale total is less than 100%

Percentage of adolescents in Monaghan who agree or strongly agree to the following statements about e-cigarette use

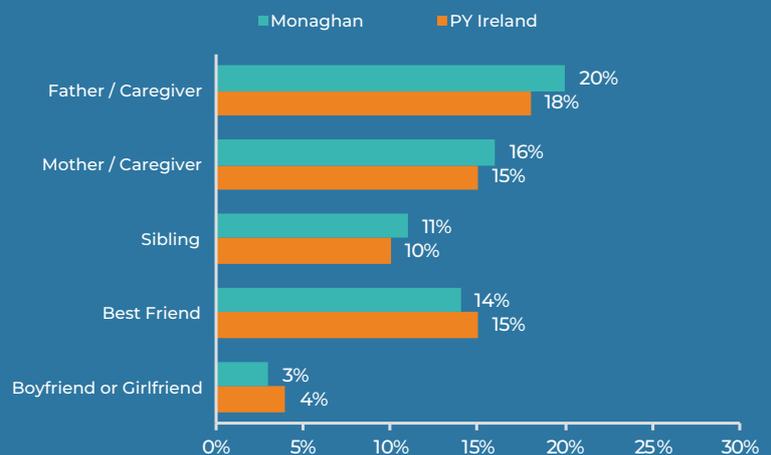


How do you obtain cigarettes? Percentage of adolescents in Monaghan who report getting their cigarettes sometimes or often the following way



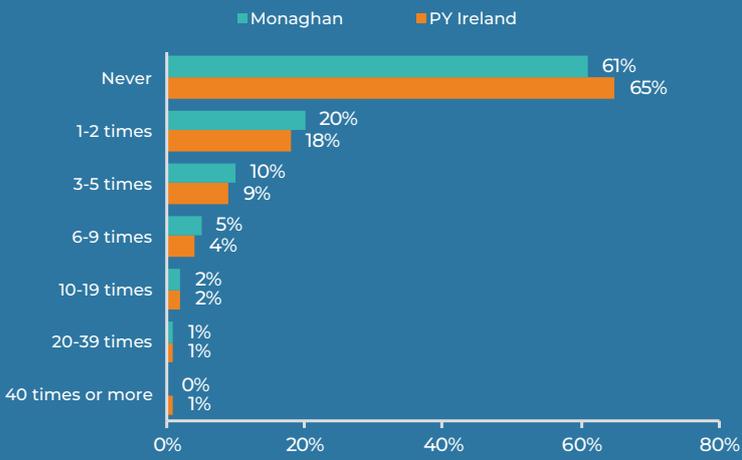
Note: chart scale total is less than 100%

Percentage of adolescents in Monaghan who report the following people smoke tobacco on a daily basis



Note: chart scale total is less than 100%

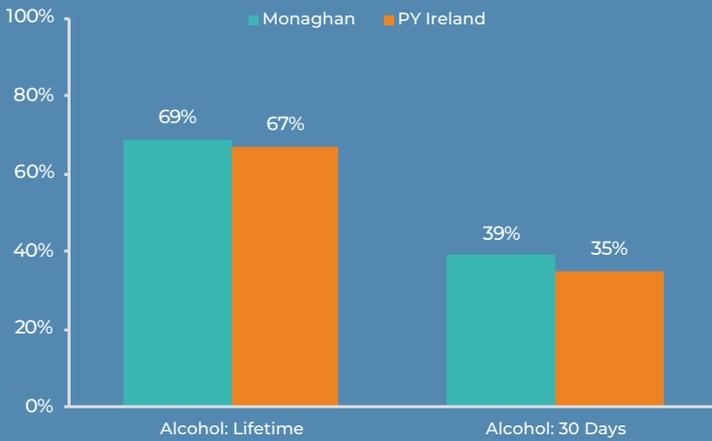
Frequency of alcohol consumption in the last 30 days among adolescents in Monaghan



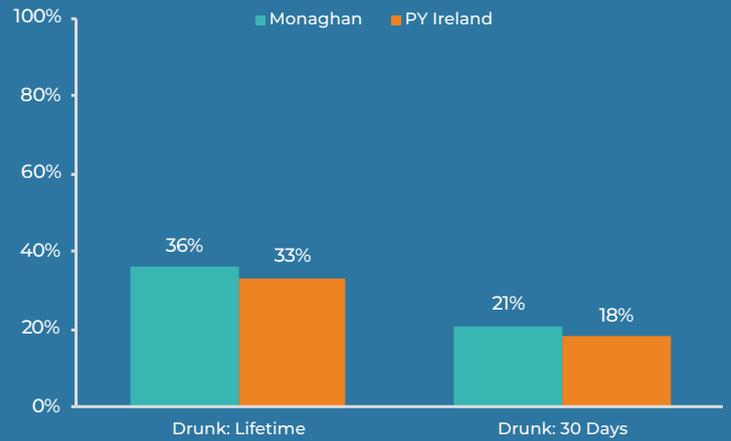
Note: chart scale total is less than 100%



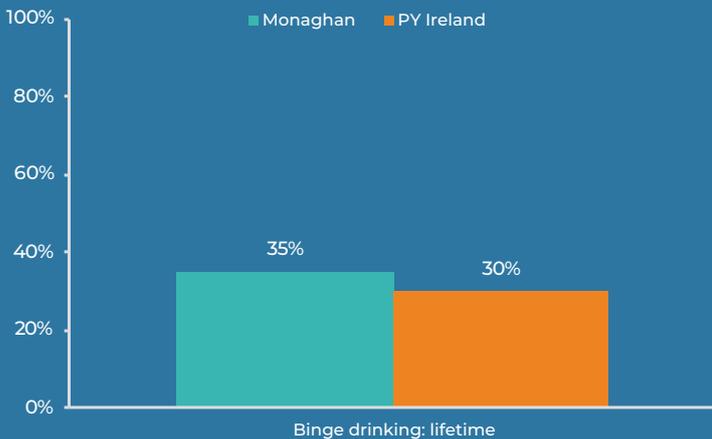
Percentage of adolescents in Monaghan who have used alcohol once or more in their lifetime and in the last 30 days



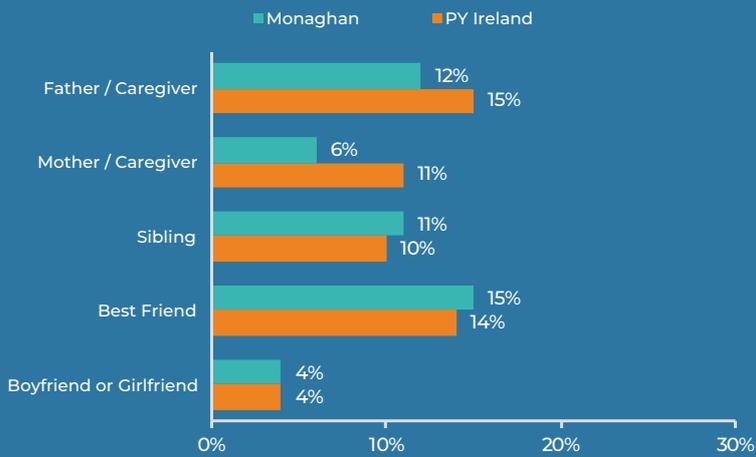
Percentage of adolescents in Monaghan who have been drunk once or more in their lifetime and in the last 30 days



Percentage of adolescents in Monaghan who have had 6 or more standard alcoholic drinks within a 2 hour period or less

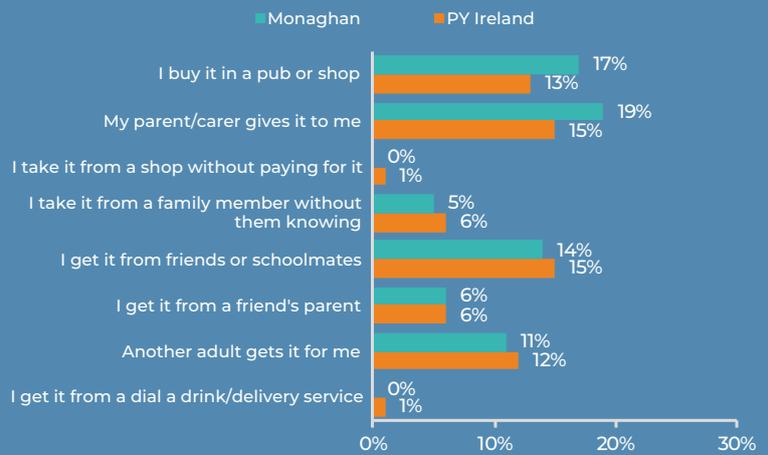


Percentage of adolescents in Monaghan who report the following people become drunk at least once a week



Note: chart scale total is less than 100%

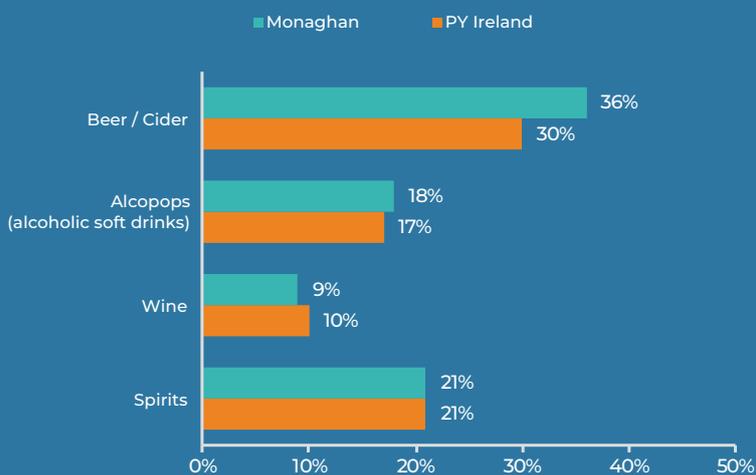
How do you obtain alcohol? Percentage of adolescents in Monaghan who report getting their alcohol sometimes or often the following way



Note: chart scale total is less than 100%

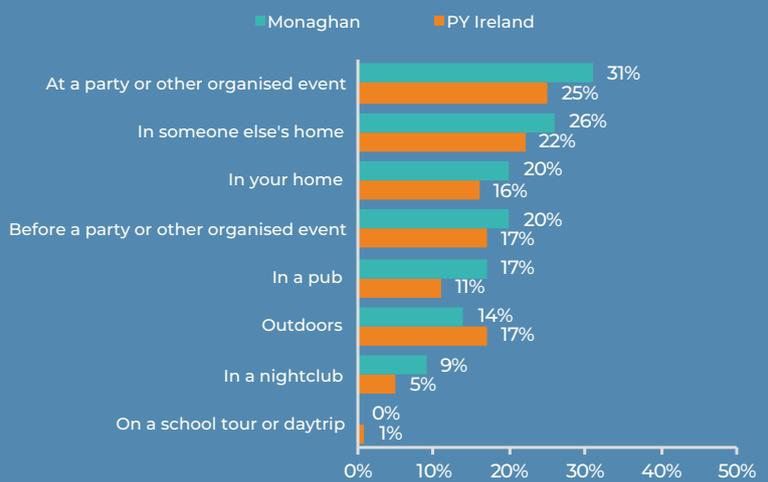


Percentage of adolescents in Monaghan who have drunk the following during the last 30 days



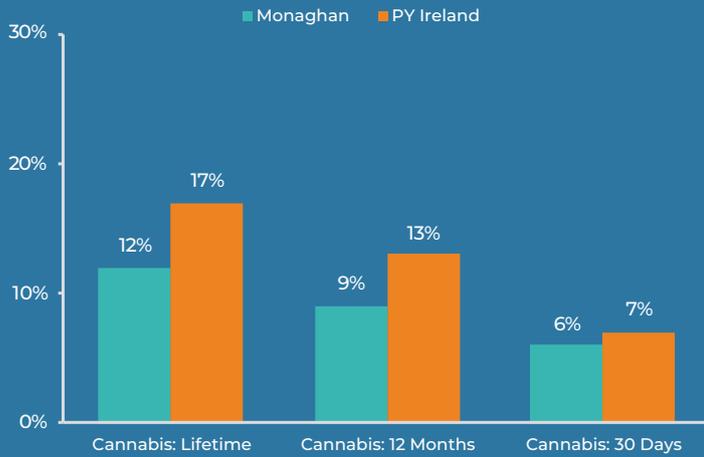
Note: chart scale total is less than 100%

Percentage of adolescents in Monaghan who drink alcohol sometimes or often in the following places



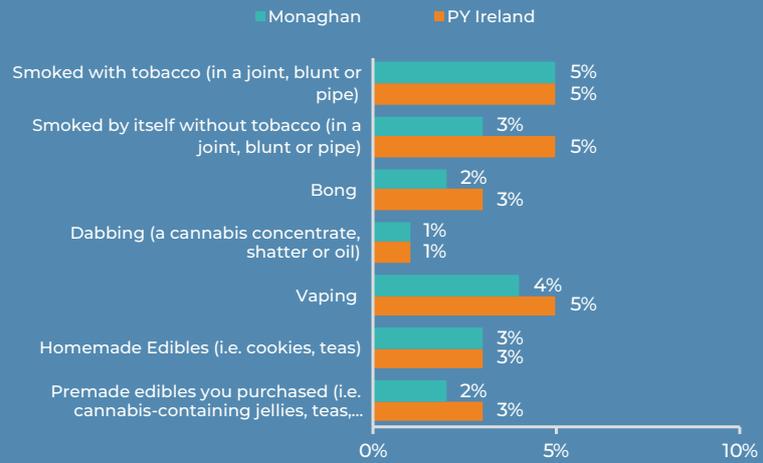
Note: chart scale total is less than 100%

Percentage of adolescents in Monaghan who have used cannabis once or more in their lifetime, in the last 12 months, and in the last 30 days



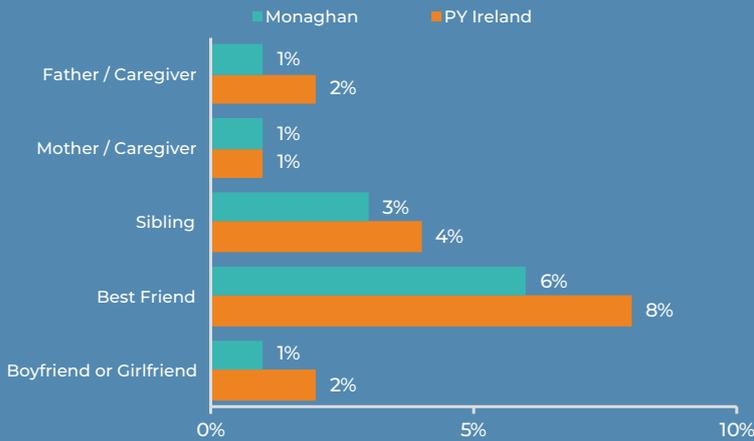
Note: chart scale total is less than 100%

Percentage of adolescents in Monaghan who report having used cannabis in the following forms



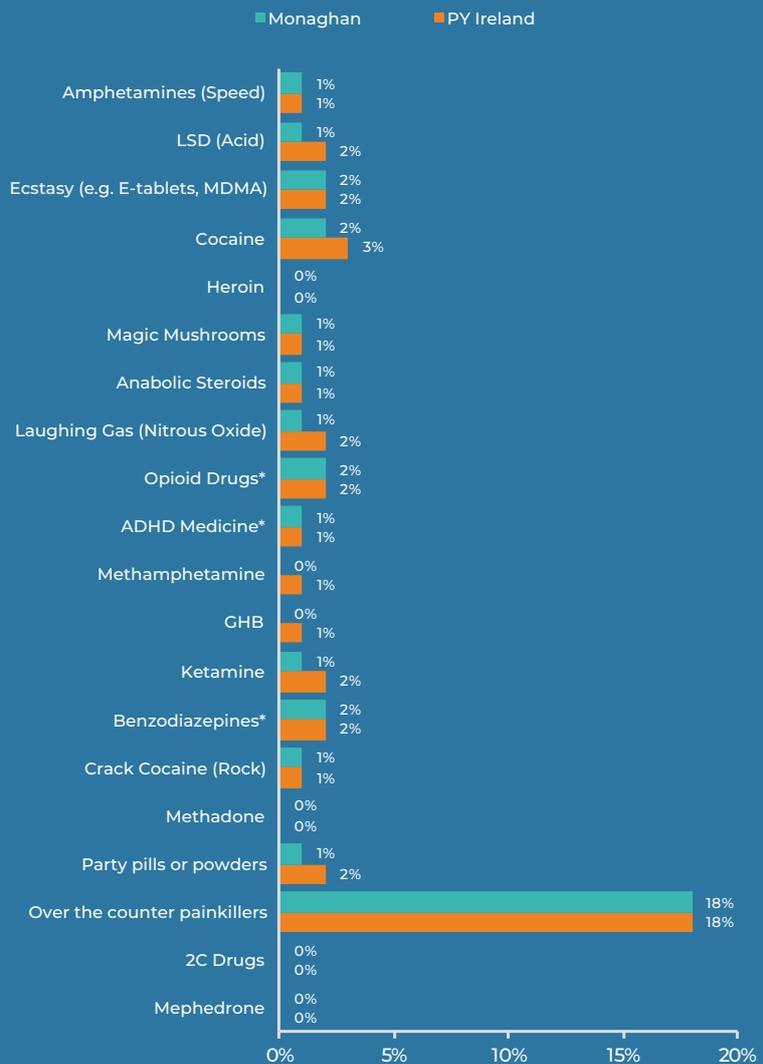
Note: chart scale total is less than 100%

Percentage of adolescents in Monaghan who report the following people use cannabis on a weekly or more frequent basis



Note: chart scale total is less than 100%

Percentage of adolescents in Monaghan who have used the following substances once or more in their lifetime

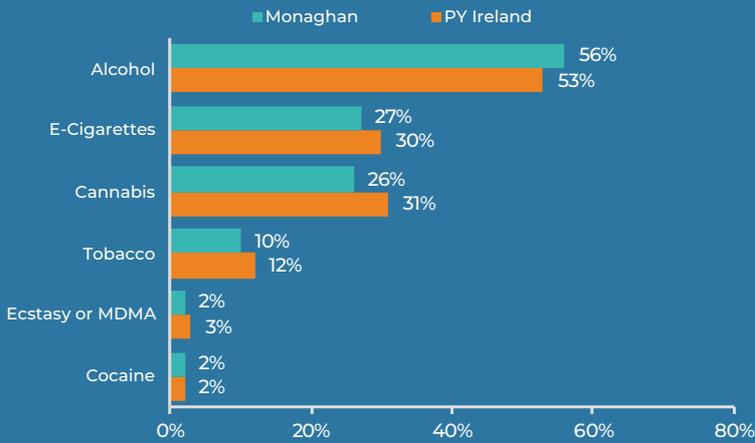


*Without a doctor's prescription

Note: chart scale total is less than 100%



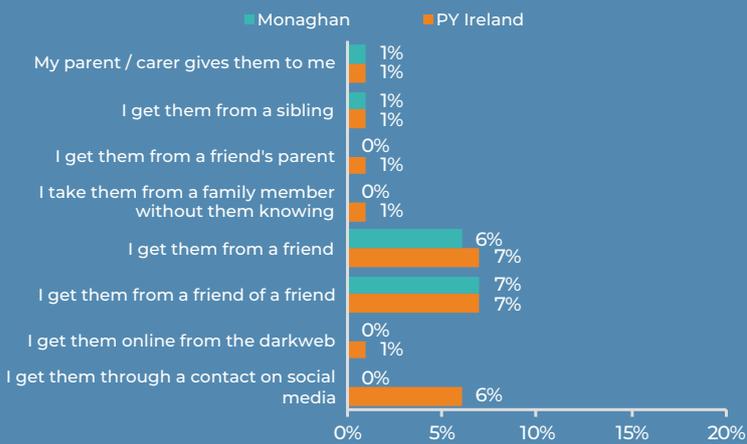
Percentage of adolescents in Monaghan who believe the use of the following substances is mostly not harmful or not harmful



Note: chart scale total is less than 100%

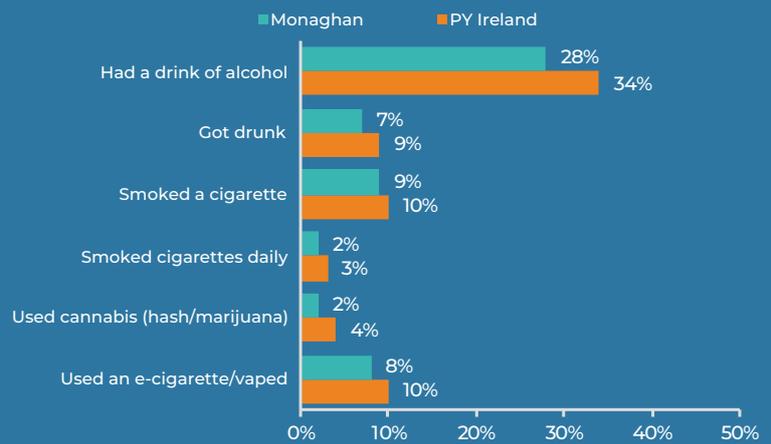


Percentage of adolescents in Monaghan who report getting their drugs sometimes or often the following way



Note: chart scale total is less than 100%

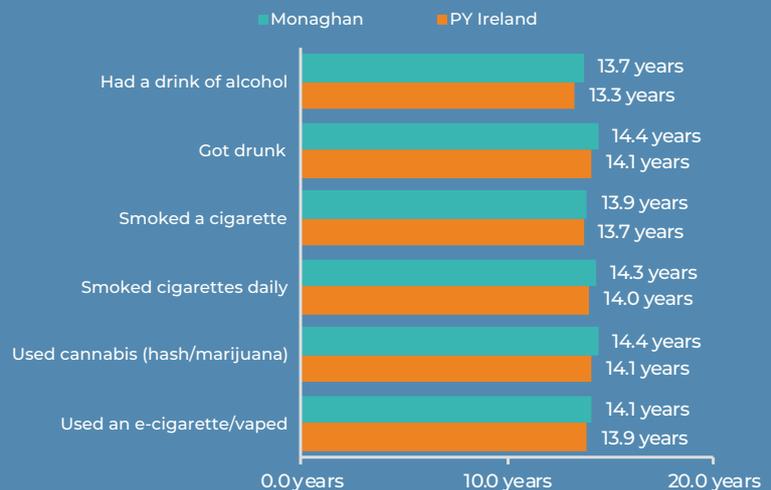
Percentage of adolescents in Monaghan who tried the following for the first time at the age of 13 or younger



Note: chart scale total is less than 100%



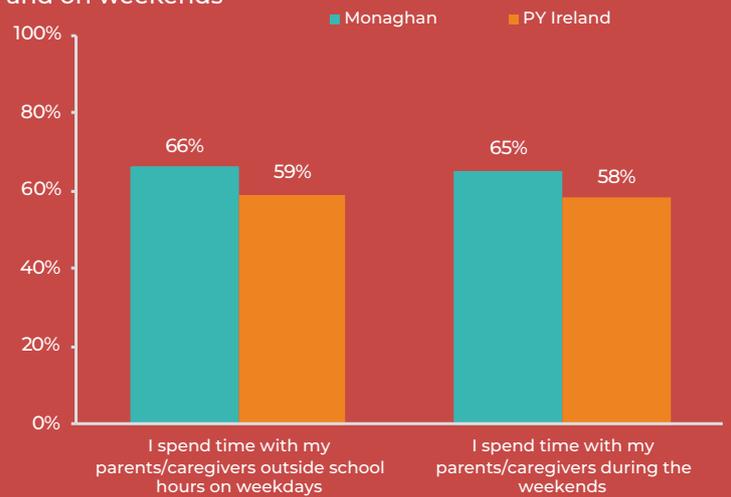
Average age of adolescents in Monaghan who tried the following for the first time



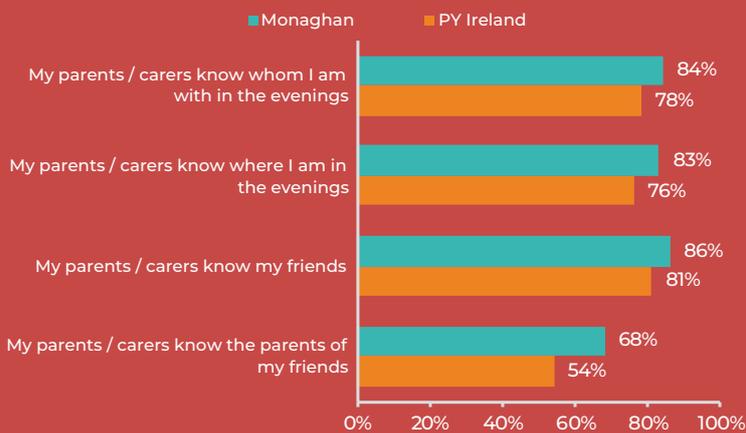
Family



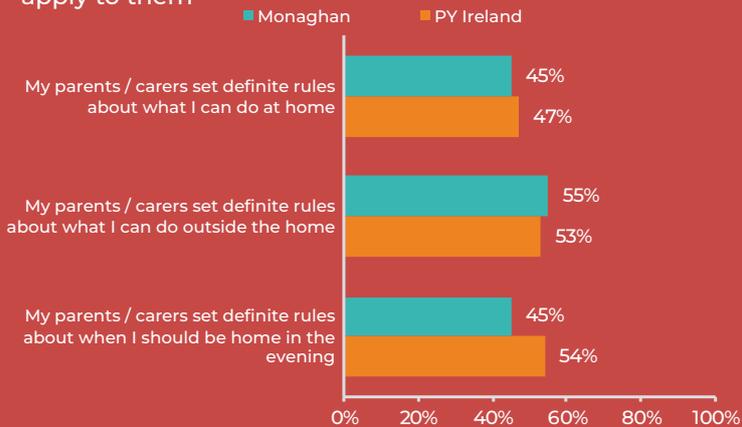
Percentage of adolescents in Monaghan who spend time with their parents often or always on weekdays and on weekends



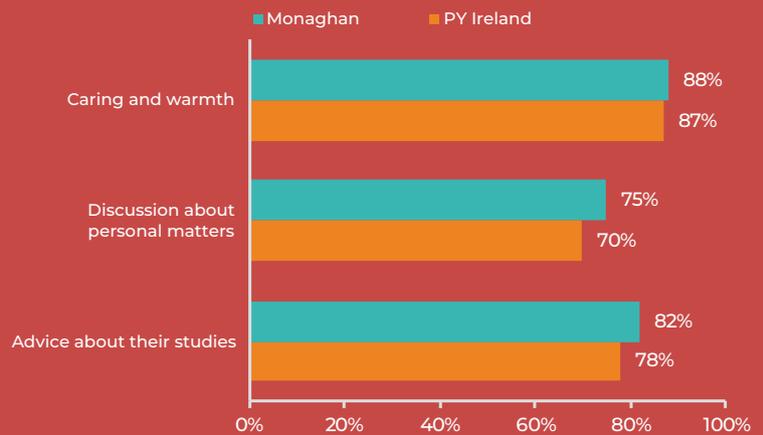
Percentage of adolescents in Monaghan who agree or strongly agree that the following parental monitoring applies to them



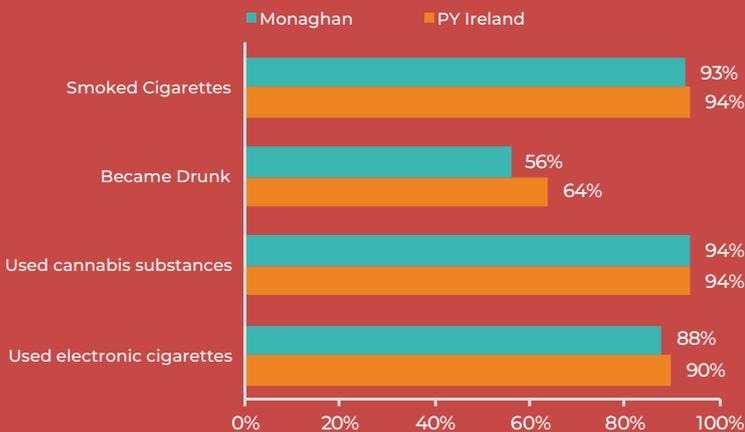
Percentage of adolescents in Monaghan who agree or strongly agree that the following parental rules apply to them



Percentage of adolescents in Monaghan who report that it is very or rather easy to receive the following parental support



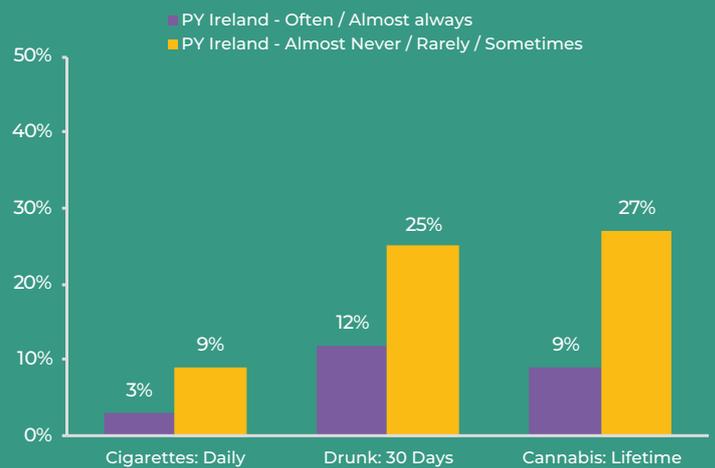
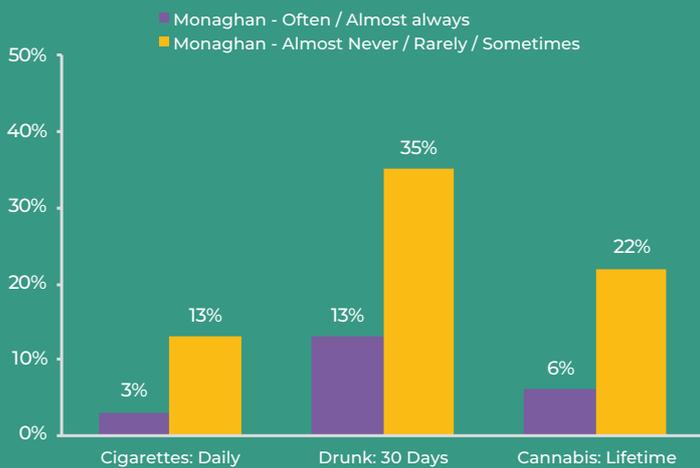
Perceived parental reactions to substance use: Student perceptions that their parents are against or totally against the following substance use



Cross Tabulations

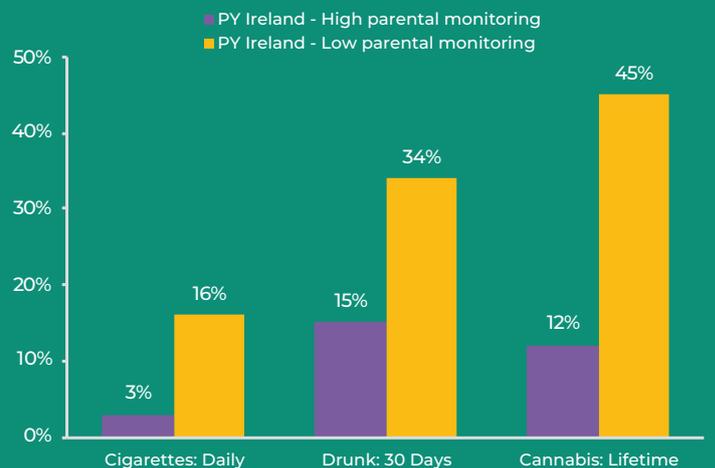
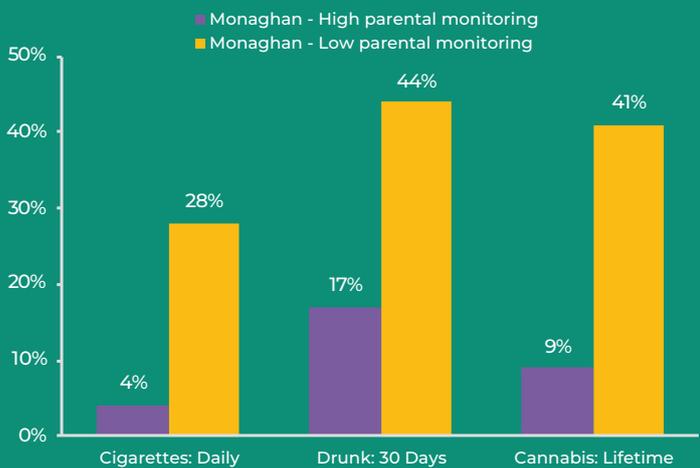


Substance Use against spending time with parents on the weekends



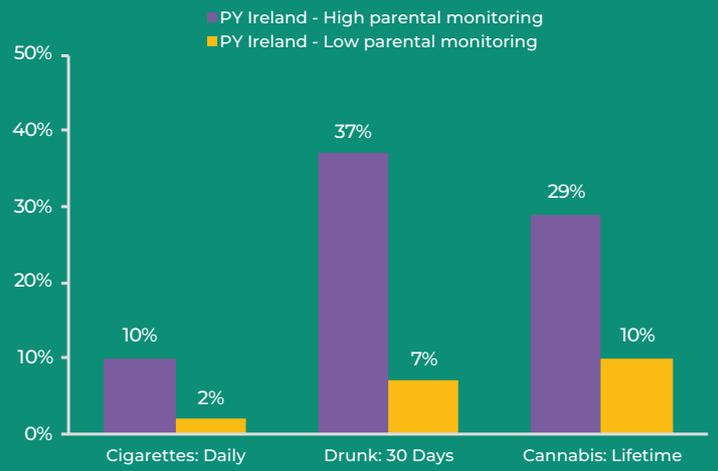
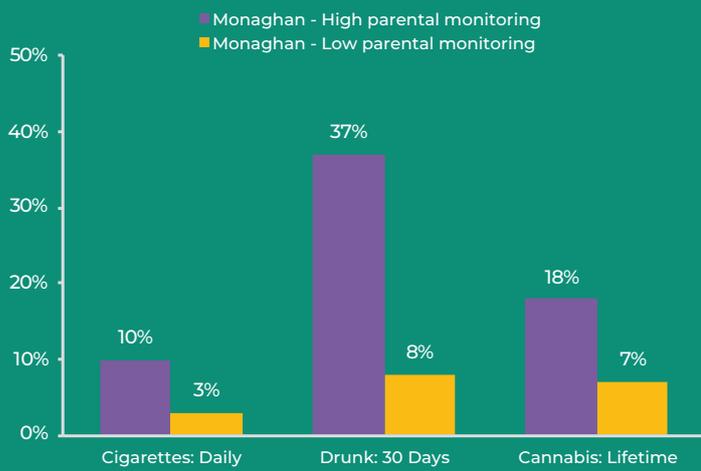
Note: chart scale total is less than 100%

Substance Use against parents knowing adolescent's whereabouts in the evening



Note: chart scale total is less than 100%

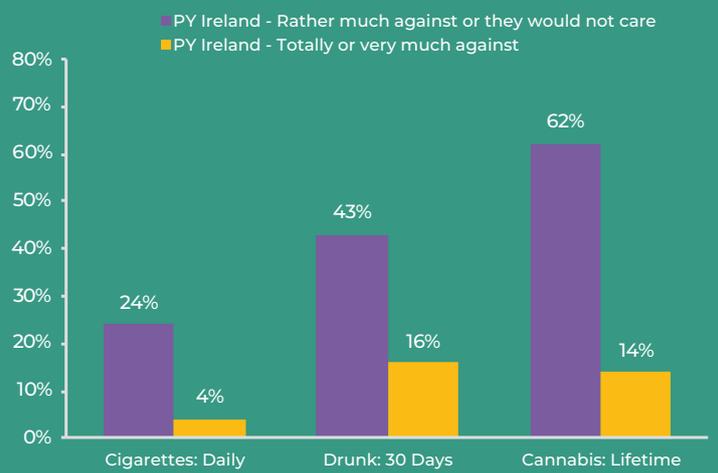
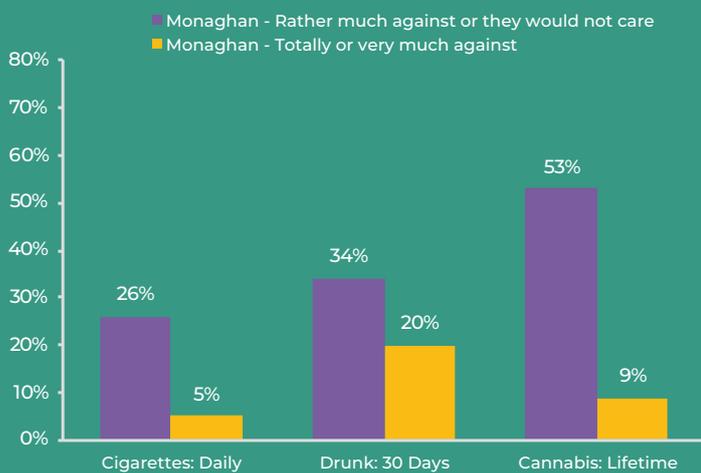
Substance use against perceived parental reactions to drunkenness



Note: chart scale total is less than 100%



Substance use against perceived parental reactions to cannabis use

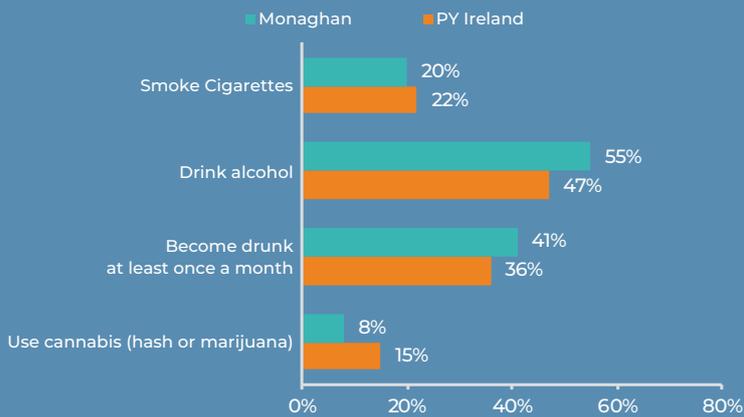


Note: chart scale total is less than 100%

Peer Group

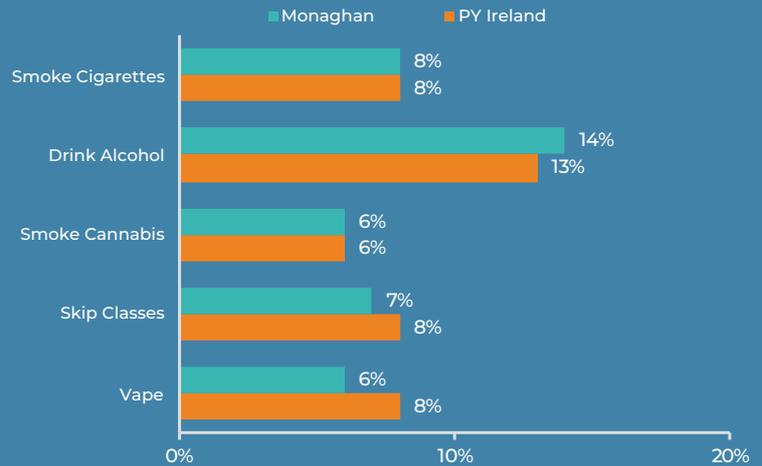


Percentage of adolescents in Monaghan who report that some/most/almost all of their friends:



Note: chart scale total is less than 100%

Percentage of adolescents in Monaghan who agree or strongly agree that it is necessary to do the following in order not to be left out of the peer group



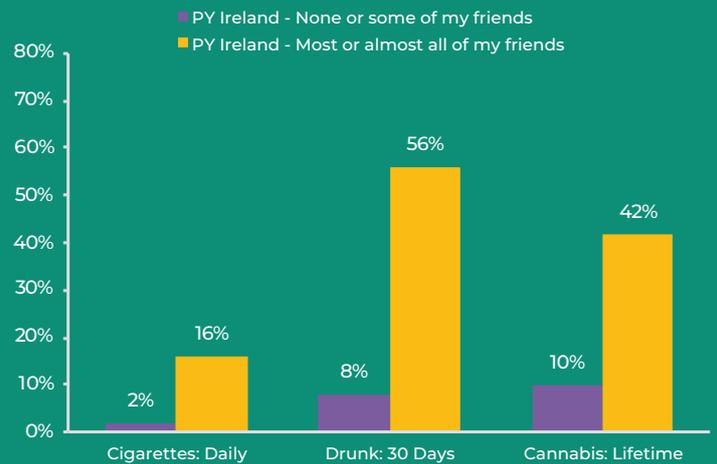
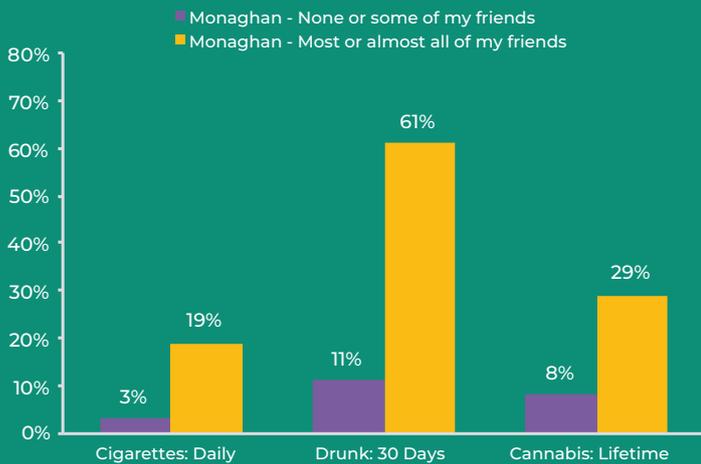
Note: chart scale total is less than 100%



Cross Tabulations

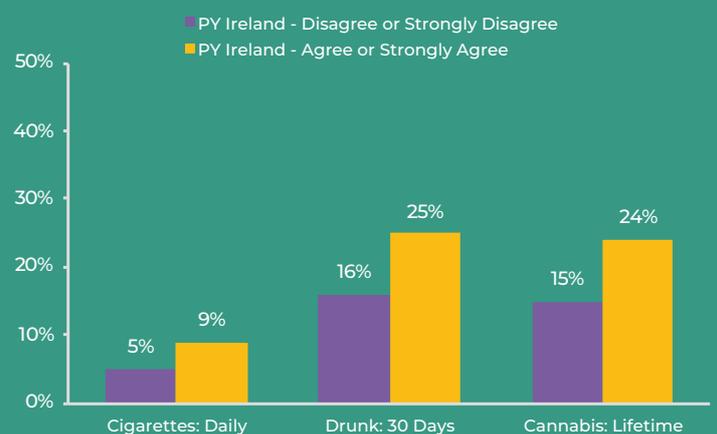
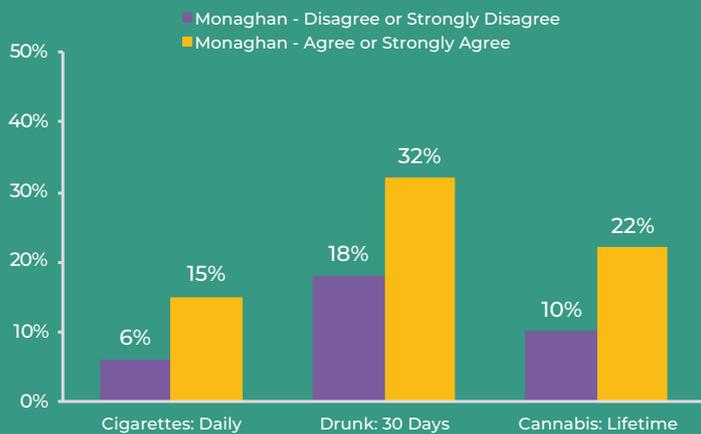


Substance use against perceived level of peer monthly drunkenness



Note: chart scale total is less than 100%

Sometimes it is necessary to smoke cigarettes in order to not be left out of the peer group: Substance use against peer acceptance

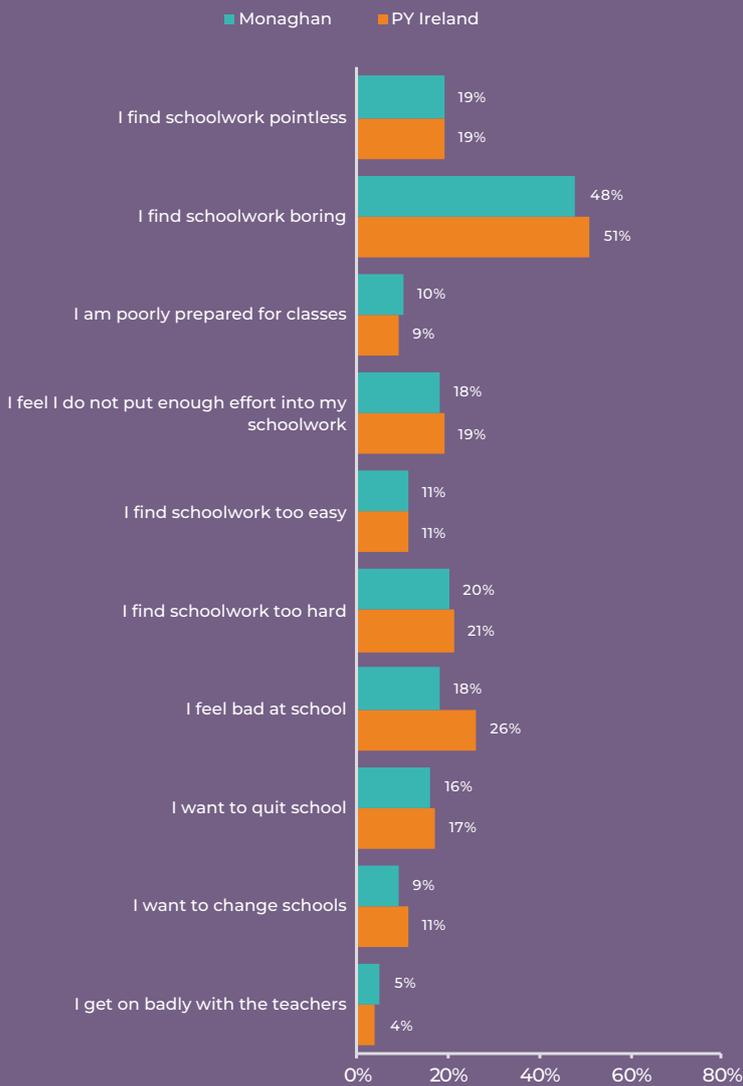


Note: chart scale total is less than 100%

School

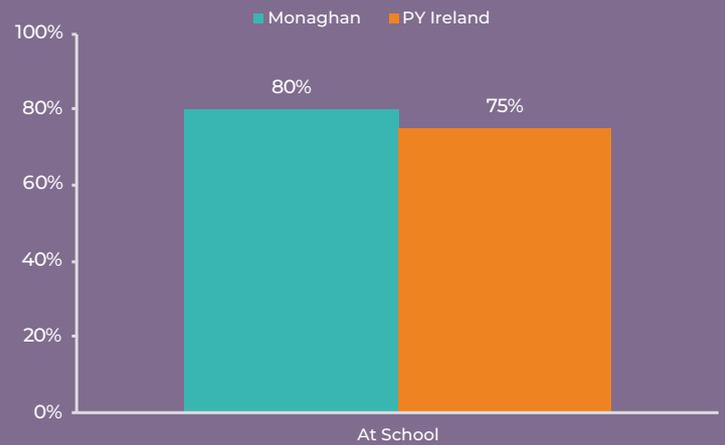


Percentage of adolescents in Monaghan who report that the following school/study attitude applies often or almost always to them

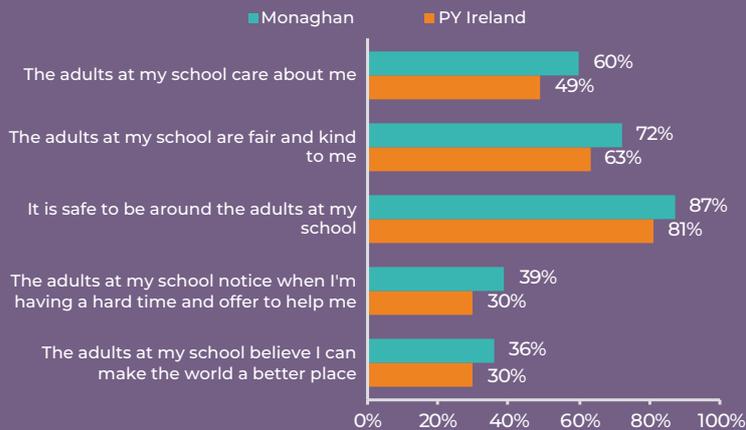


Note: chart scale total is less than 100%

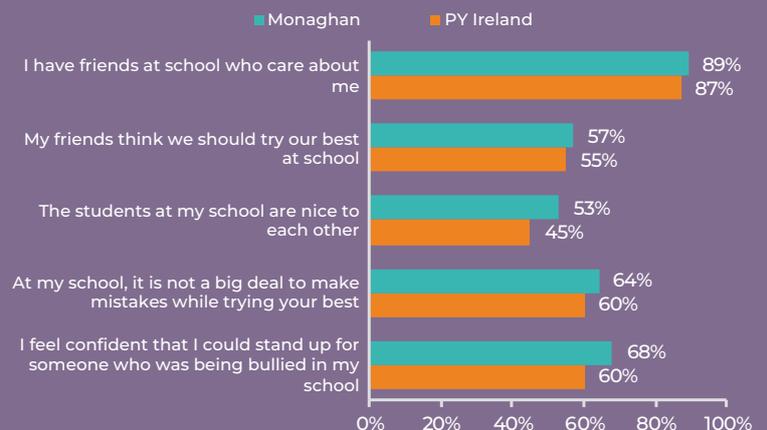
Percentage of adolescents in Monaghan who report often or almost always feeling safe at school



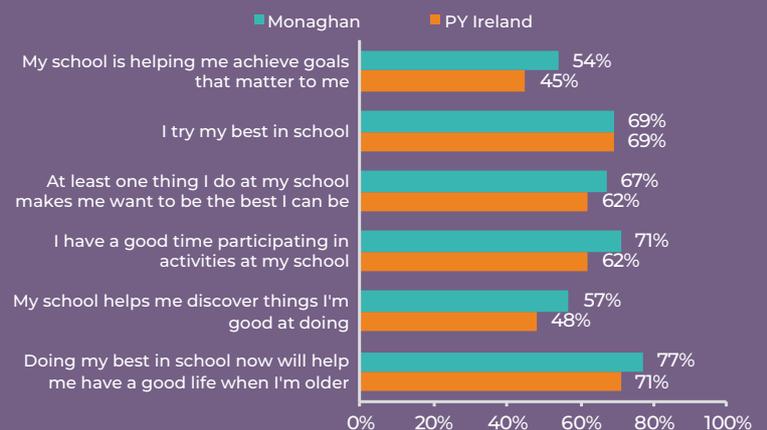
Percentage of adolescents in Monaghan who agree or strongly agree with the following statements about adult support at school



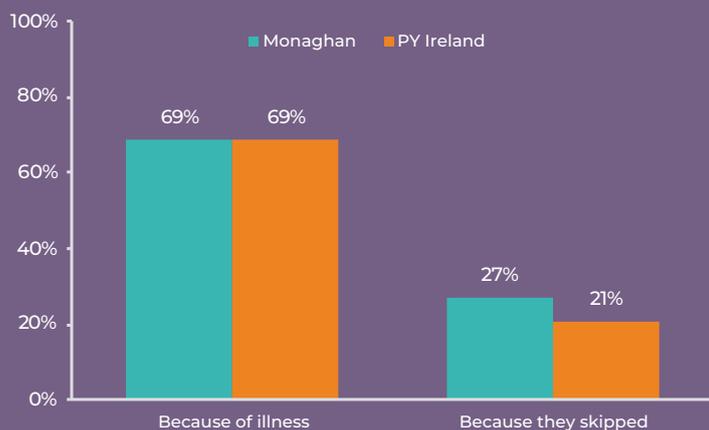
Percentage of adolescents in Monaghan who agree or strongly agree with the following statements about the peer environment in school



Percentage of adolescents in Monaghan who agree or strongly agree with the following statements about school activities and engagement



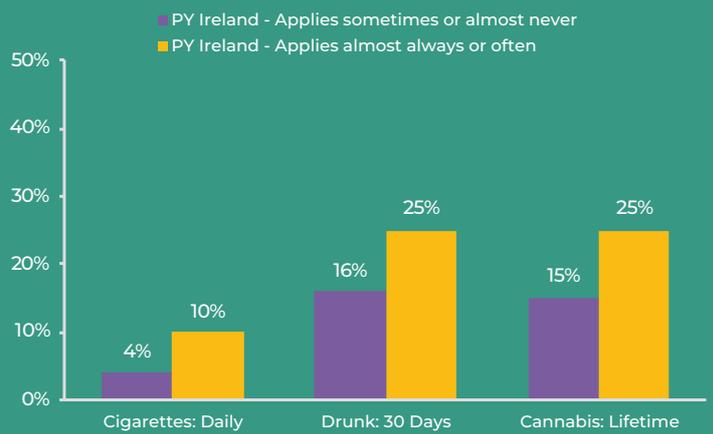
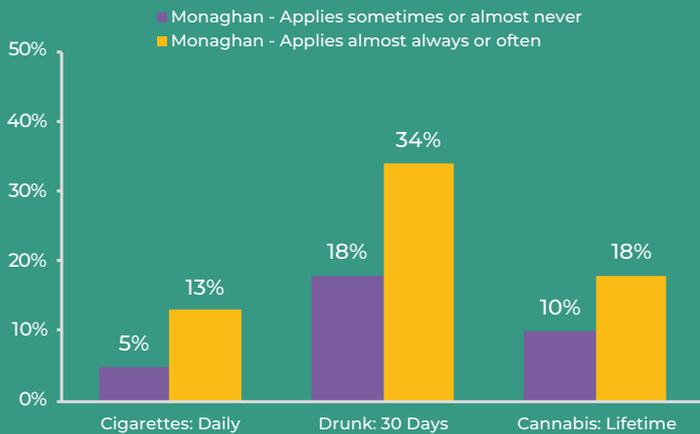
Percentage of adolescents in Monaghan who have missed school once or more in the last 30 days because of illness and because they skipped school



Cross Tabulations



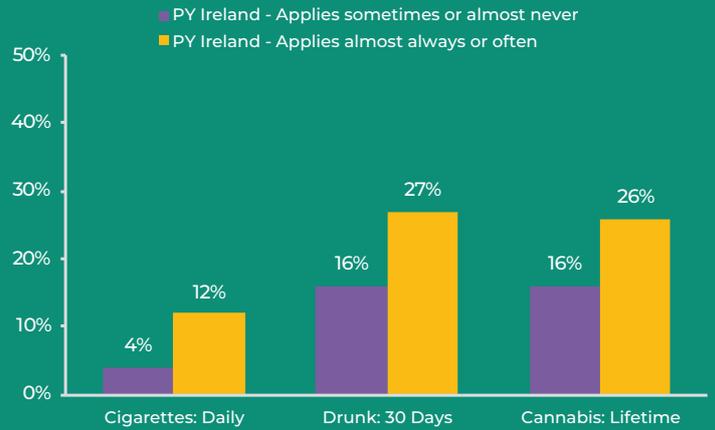
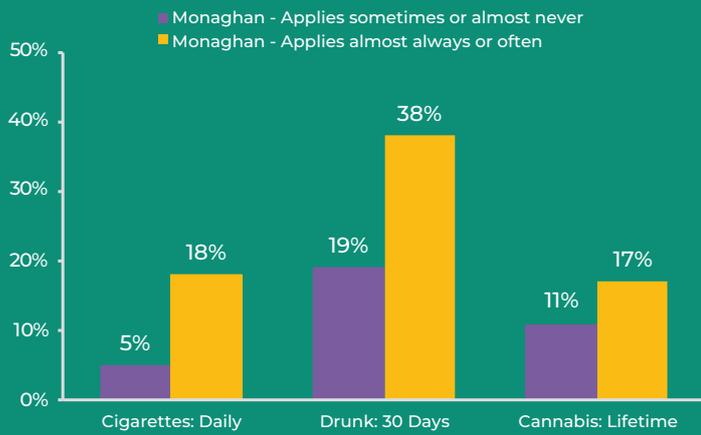
“I find schoolwork pointless”:
Substance use against peer attitude towards school



Note: chart scale total is less than 100%



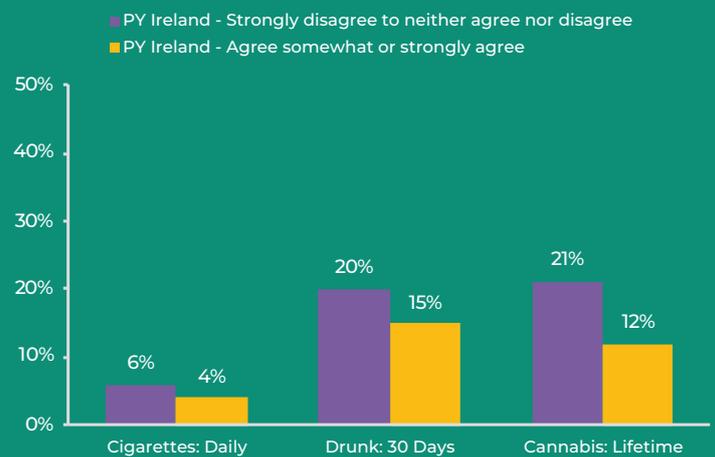
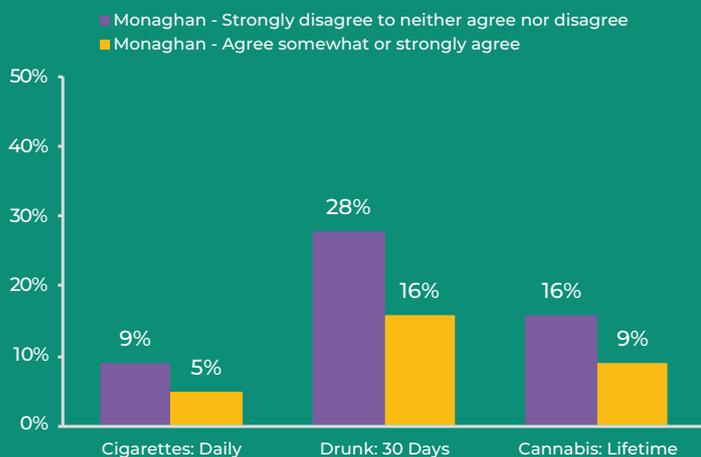
“I want to change schools”:
Substance use against peer attitude towards school



Note: chart scale total is less than 100%



“The adults at my school care about me”:
Substance use against adult support at school

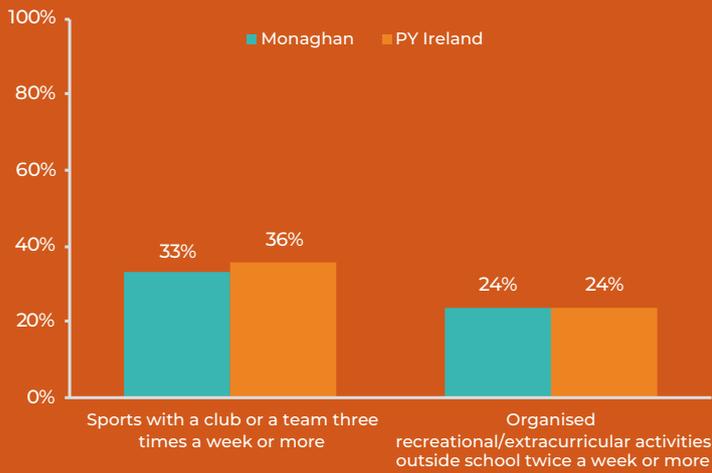


Note: chart scale total is less than 100%

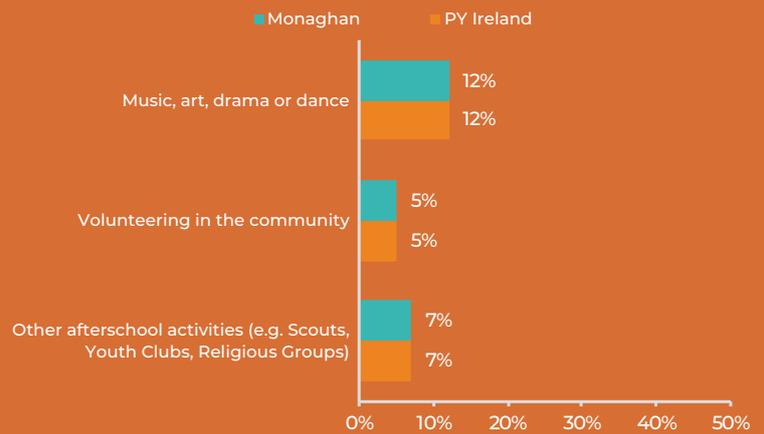
Leisure



Percentage of adolescents in Monaghan who participate in sports with a club or a team and take part in organised recreational/extracurricular activities outside school



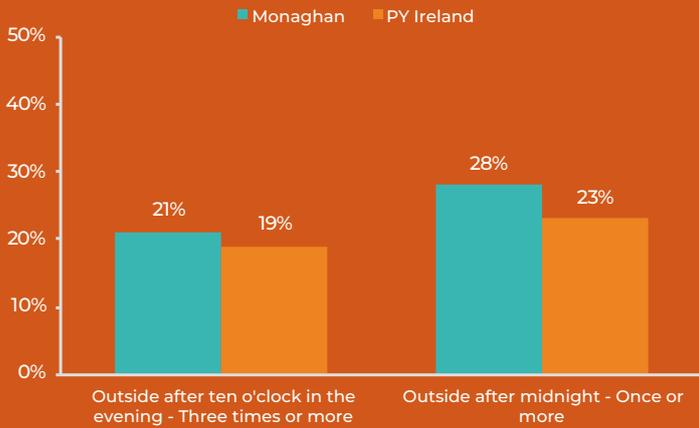
Percentage of adolescents in Monaghan who participate in the following out-of-school activities twice per week or more



Note: chart scale total is less than 100%



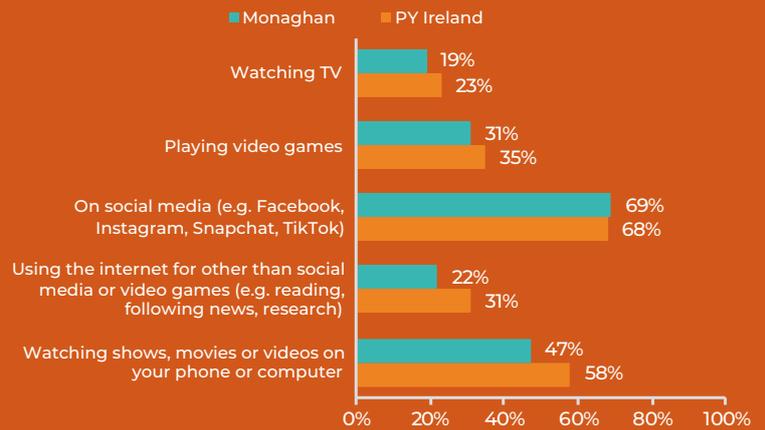
Late outside hours in the previous week:
Percentage of young people in Monaghan who are not at home after 10pm three times or more in a week and after midnight once or more in the past week



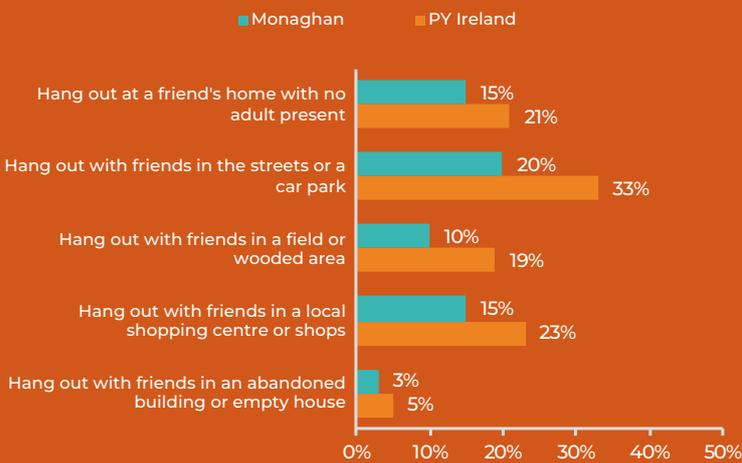
Note: chart scale total is less than 100%



Proportion of adolescents in Monaghan who spend on average 2 hours or more a day on the following activities



Percentage of adolescents in Monaghan who do the following once a week or more



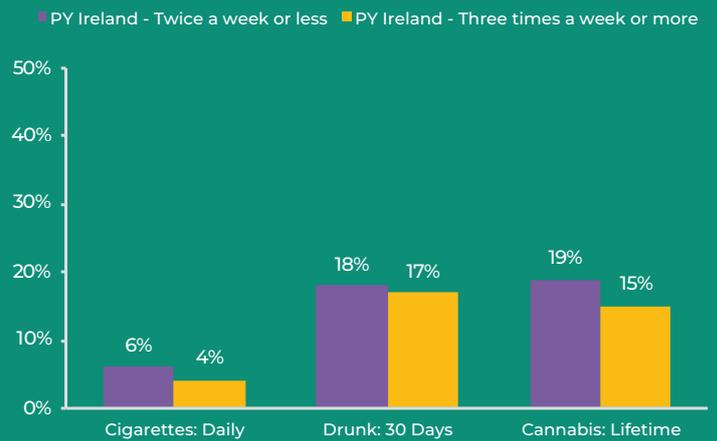
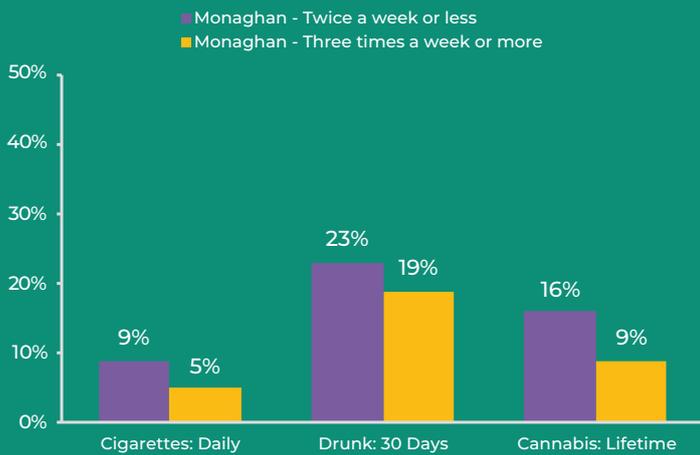
Note: chart scale total is less than 100%



Cross Tabulations

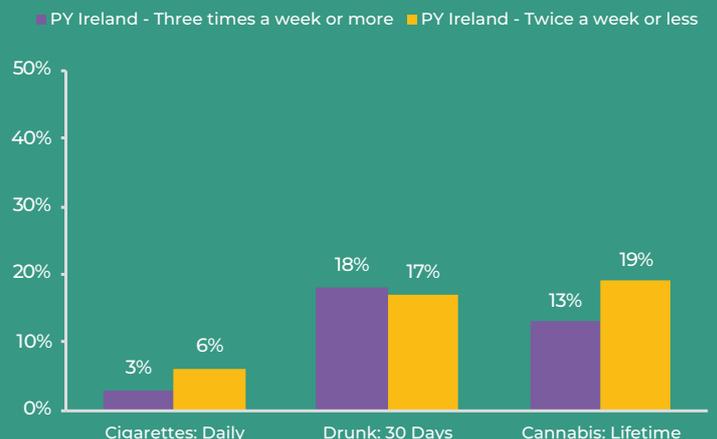
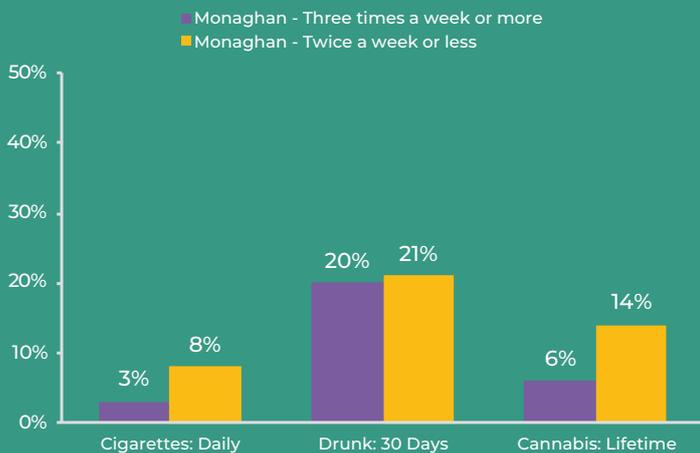


Substance use against physical activity in the previous week



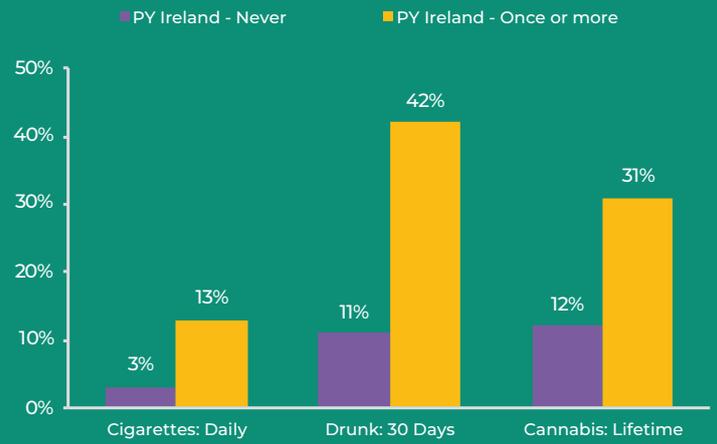
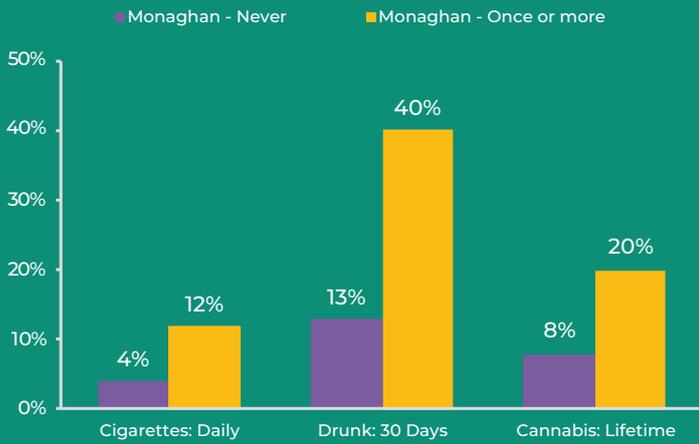
Note: chart scale total is less than 100%

Substance use against sports participation with a club or a team



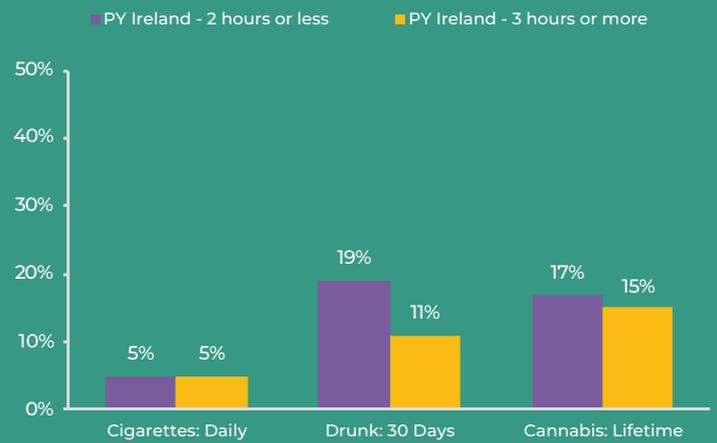
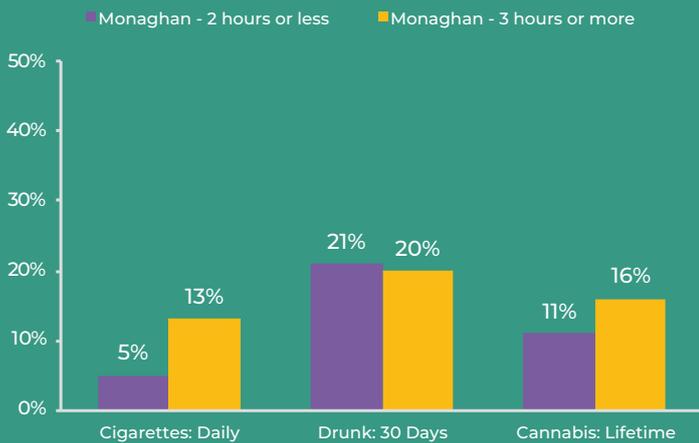
Note: chart scale total is less than 100%

Substance use against leisure time:
Being outside after midnight once or more in the past week



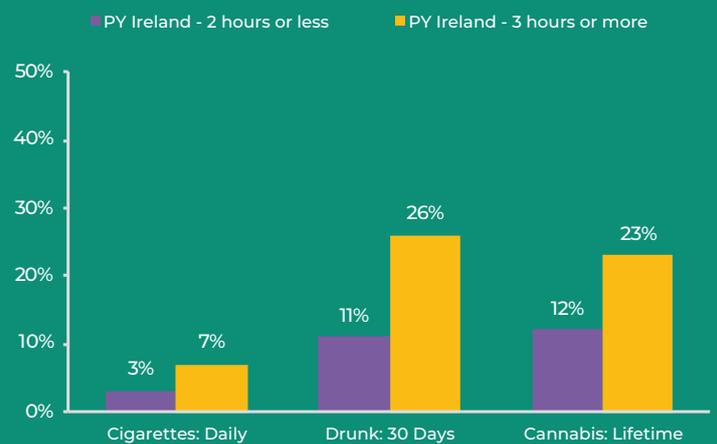
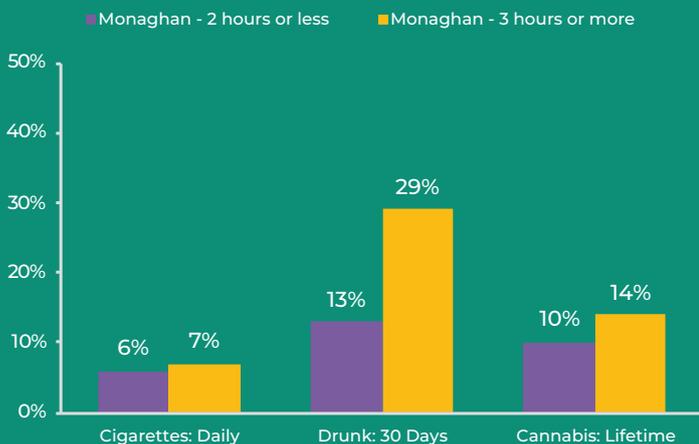
Note: chart scale total is less than 100%

Playing video games 3 hours a day or more: Substance use against screen time



Note: chart scale total is less than 100%

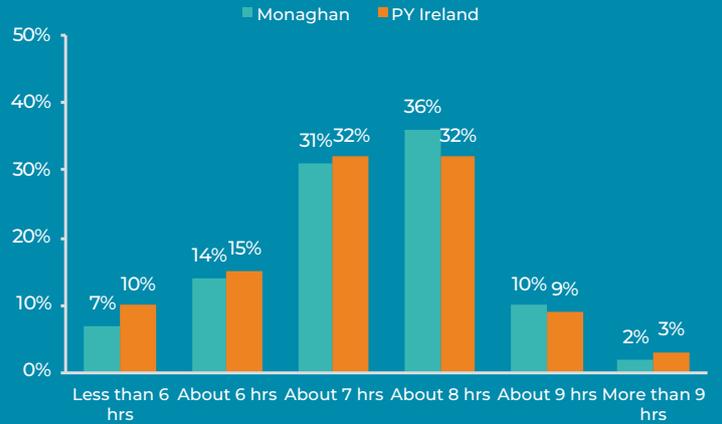
On social media 3 hours a day or more: Substance use against screen time



Note: chart scale total is less than 100%

Wellbeing Indicators

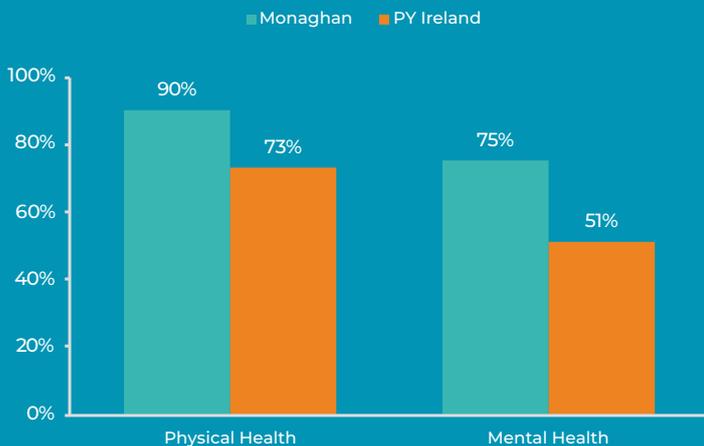
Average number of hours of sleep among adolescents in Monaghan



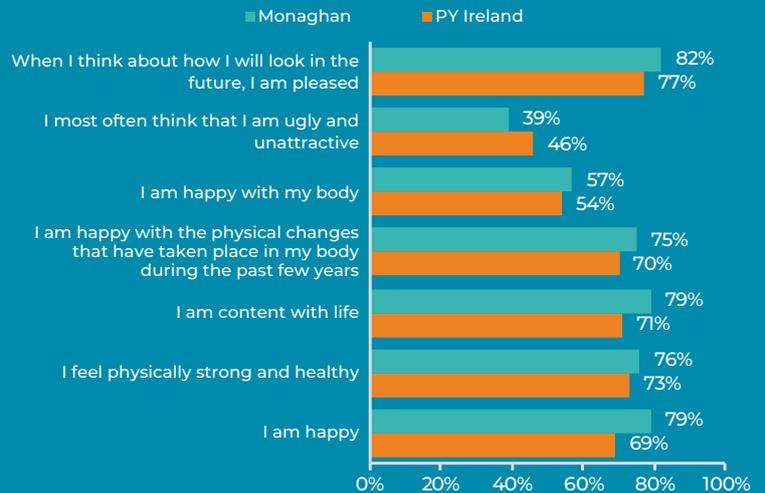
Note: chart scale total is less than 100%



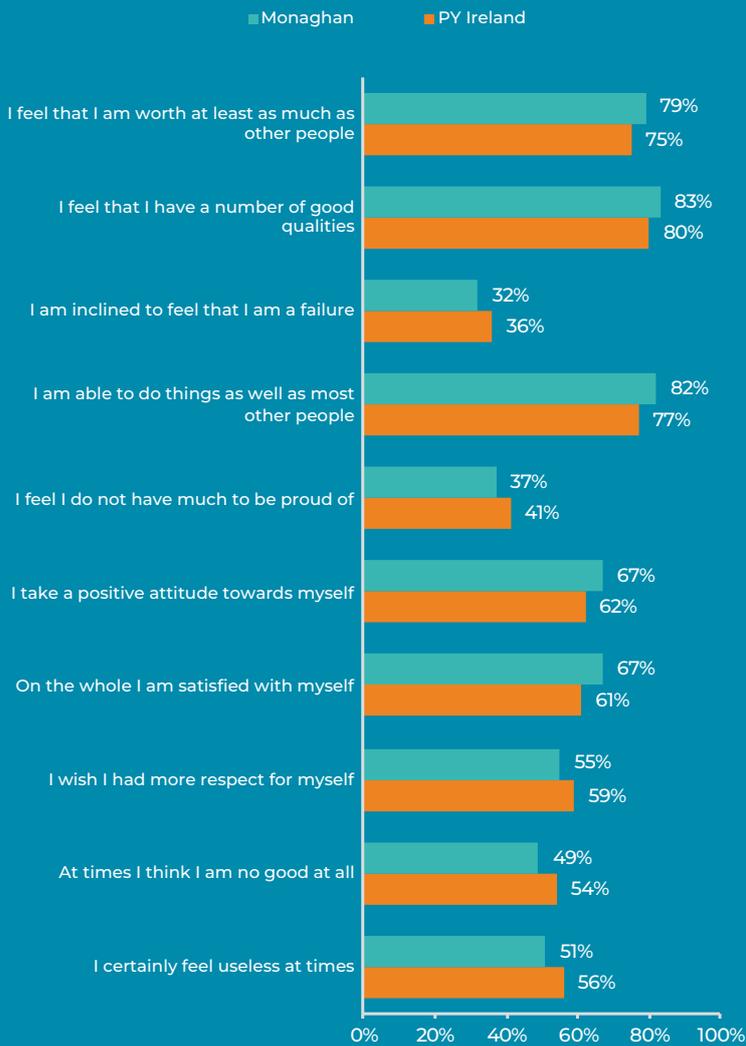
Percentage of adolescents in Monaghan who rate their mental and physical health good and very good



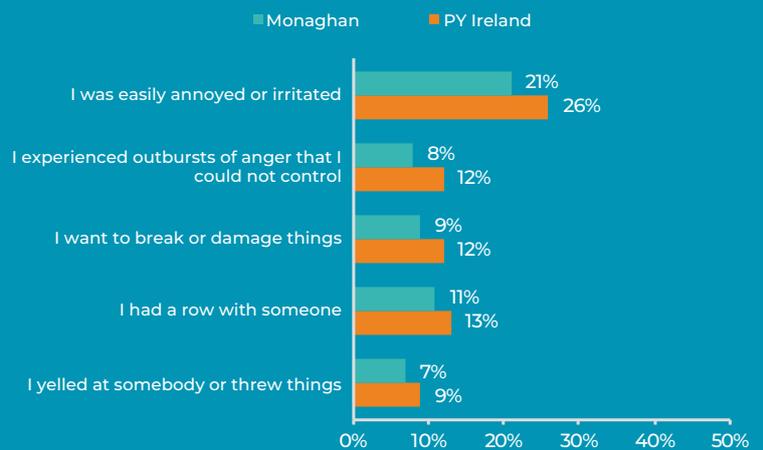
Percentage of adolescents in Monaghan who say the following statements apply very or rather well to them



Percentage of adolescents in Monaghan who agree or strongly agree to the following statements



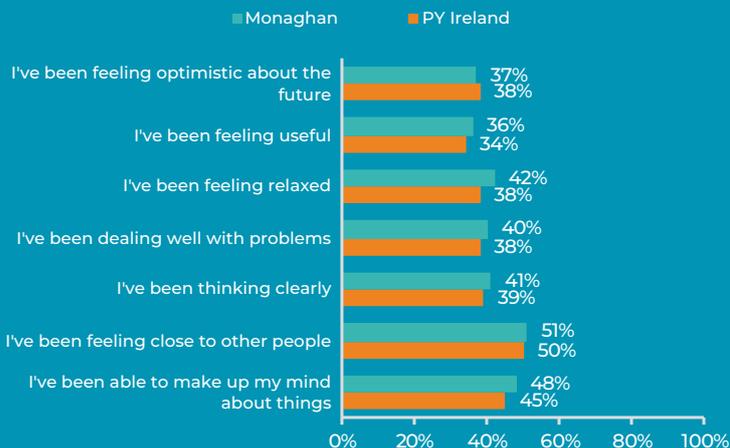
Percentage of adolescents in Monaghan who say the following described their mood often in the last week



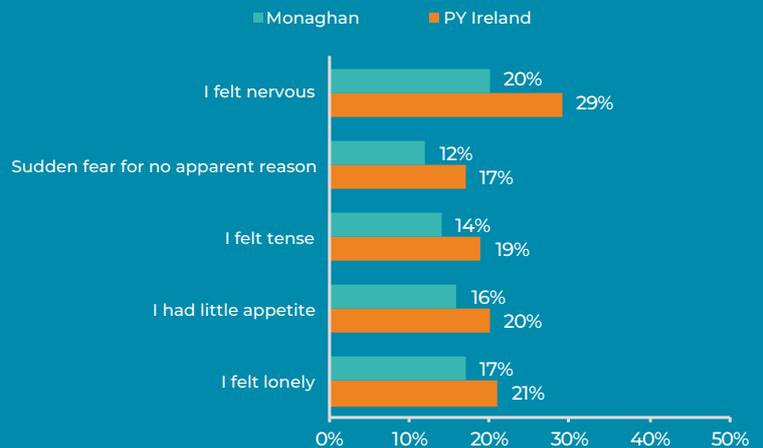
Note: chart scale total is less than 100%



Percentage of adolescents in Monaghan who say the following statements applied often or all of the time to them in the past 2 weeks



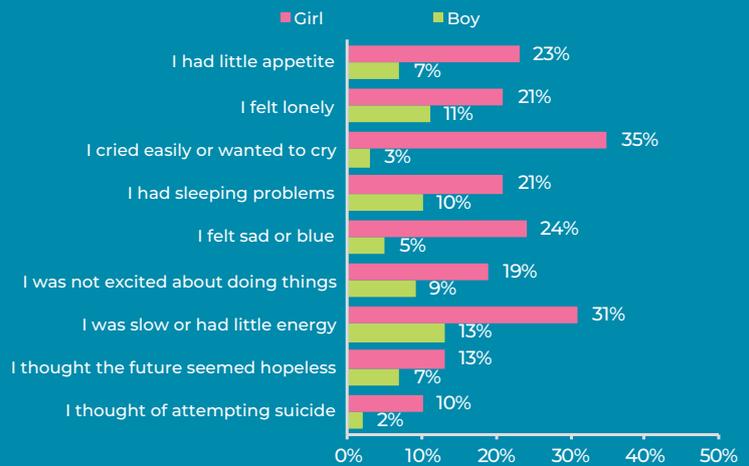
Percentage of adolescents in Monaghan who often felt the following mental or physical discomforts in the past week



Note: chart scale total is less than 100%

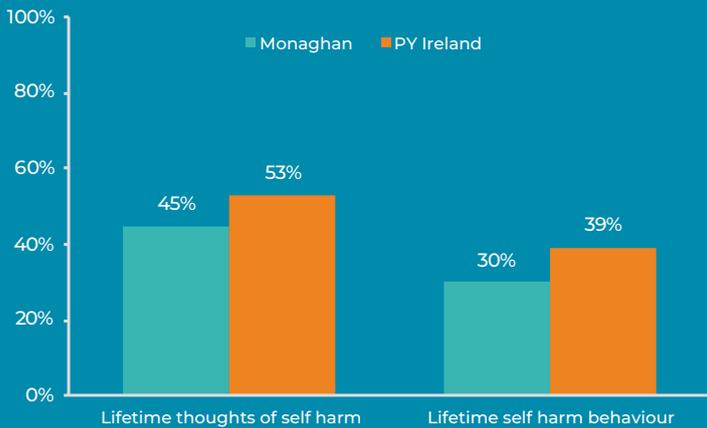


Percentage of adolescents in Monaghan who often felt the following symptoms of depressed mood in the last week by gender

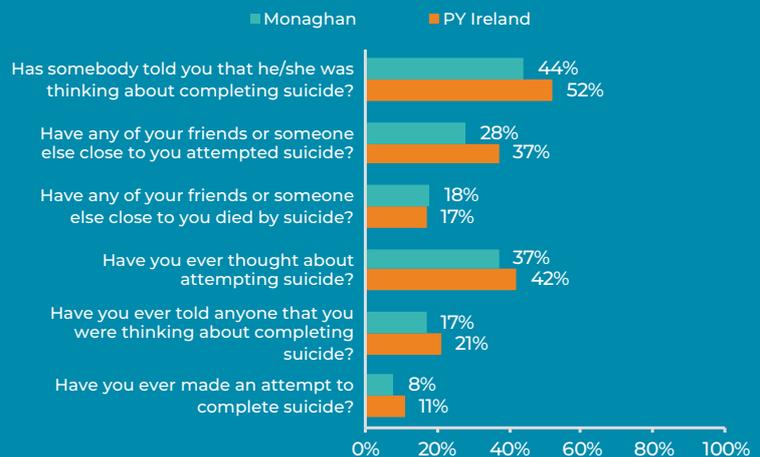


Note: chart scale total is less than 100%

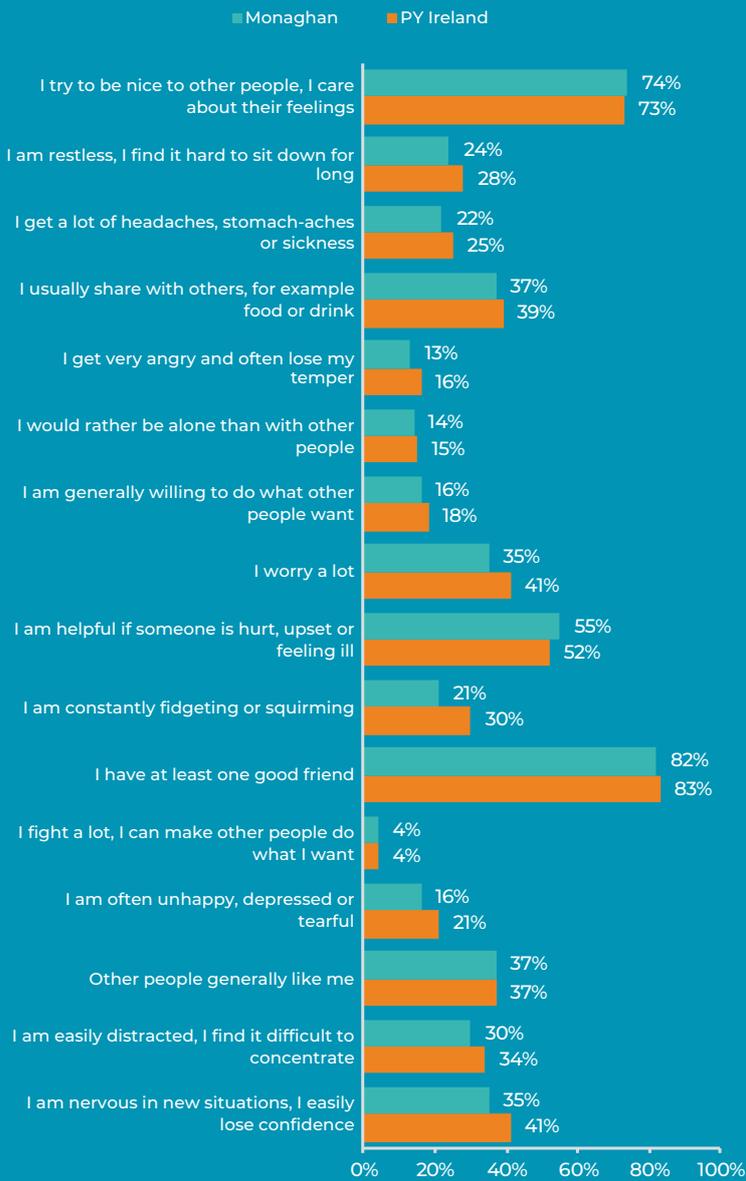
Percentage of adolescents in Monaghan who have thought about harming themselves on purpose and who have harmed themselves on purpose



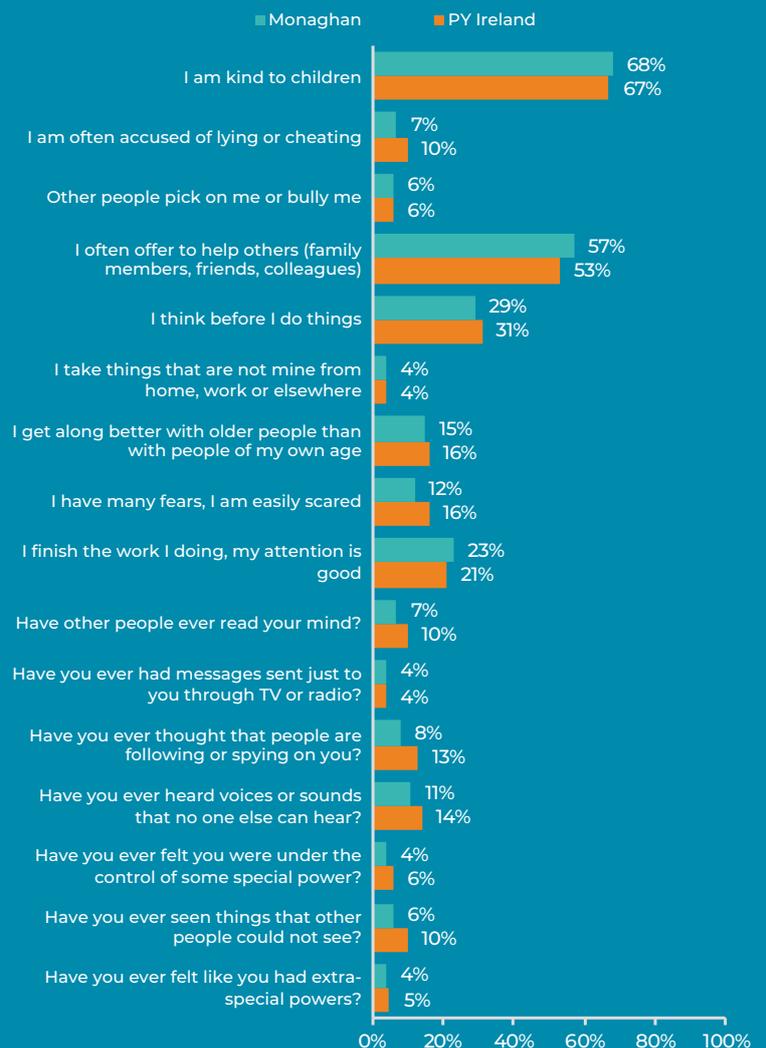
Percentage of adolescents in Monaghan who say the following statements apply to them



Percentage of adolescents in Monaghan who say the following statements are certainly true on the basis of the past six months



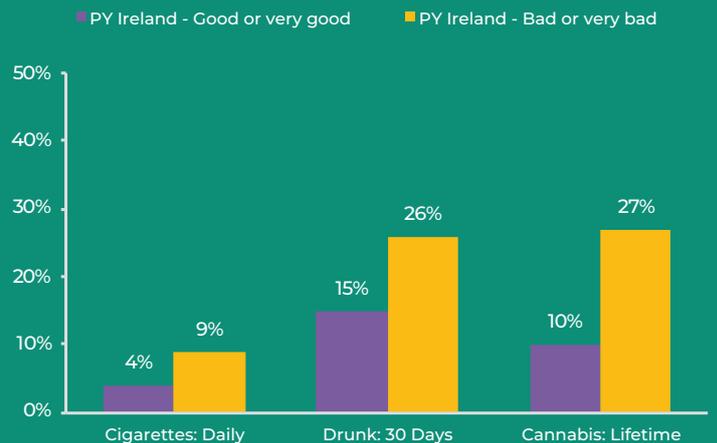
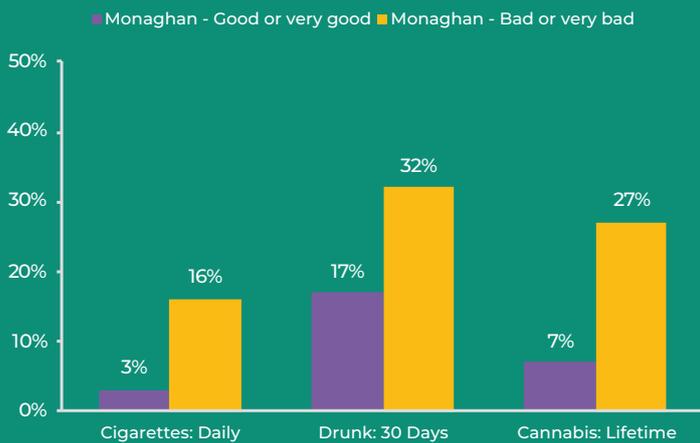
Percentage of adolescents in Monaghan who say the following statements are certainly true on the basis of the past six months



Cross Tabulations



Very good or good mental health: Substance use against wellbeing



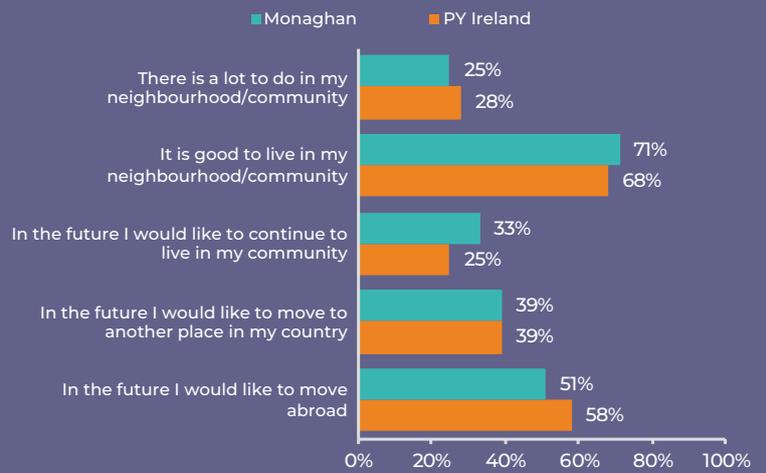
Note: chart scale total is less than 100%



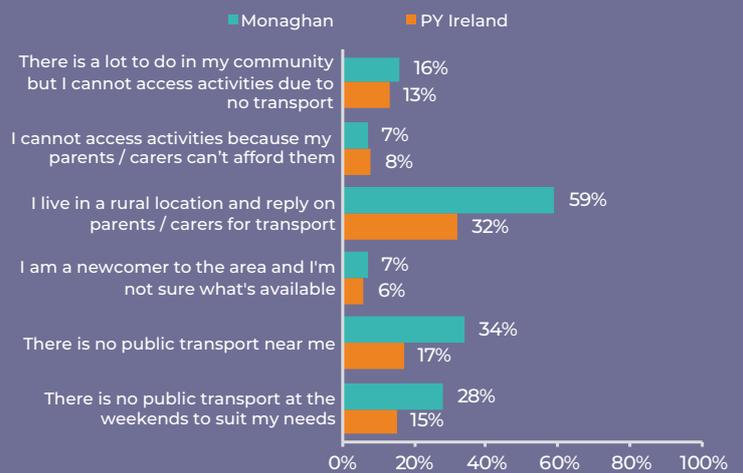
Community



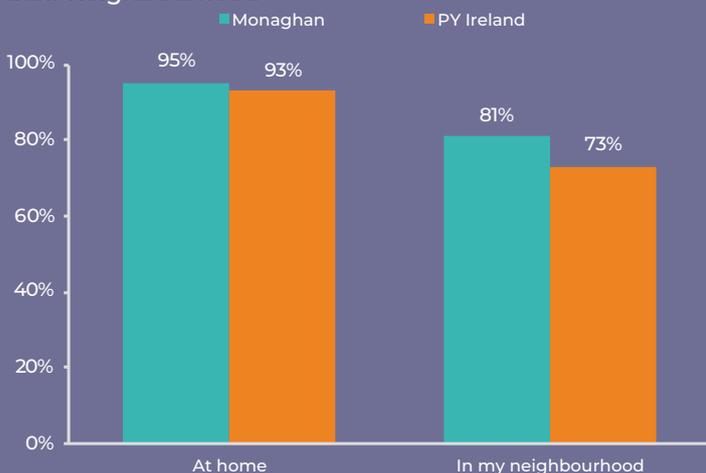
Percentage of adolescents in Monaghan who agree or strongly agree to the following statements



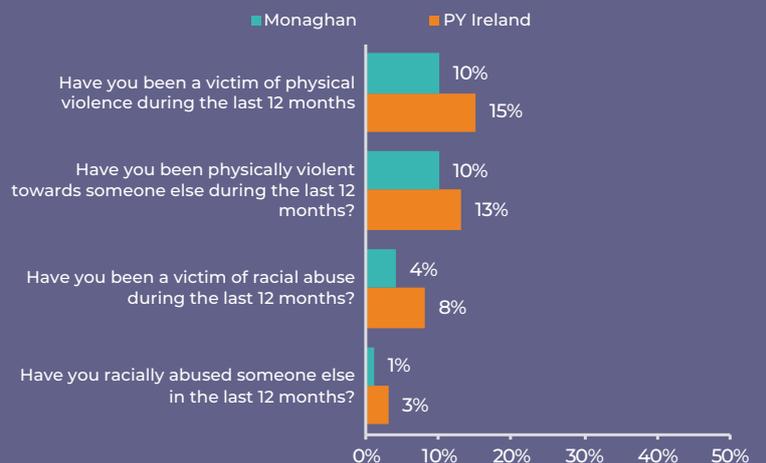
Percentage of adolescents in Monaghan who agree or strongly agree to the following statements



Percentage of adolescents in Monaghan who report often or almost always feeling safe at home and in their neighbourhood

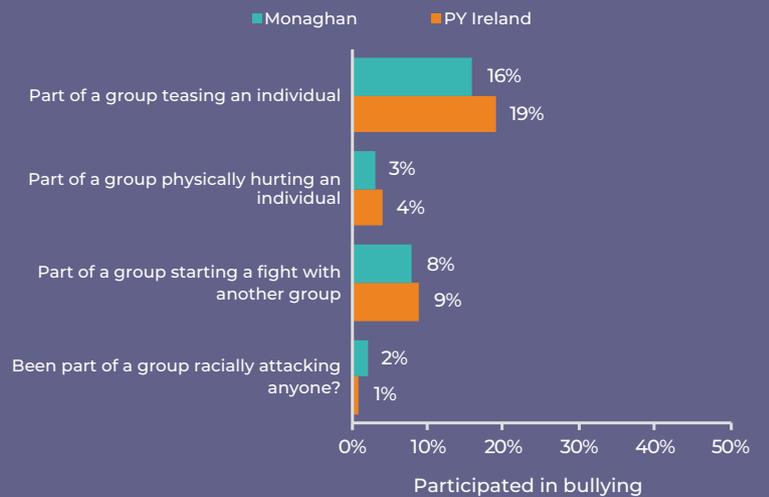
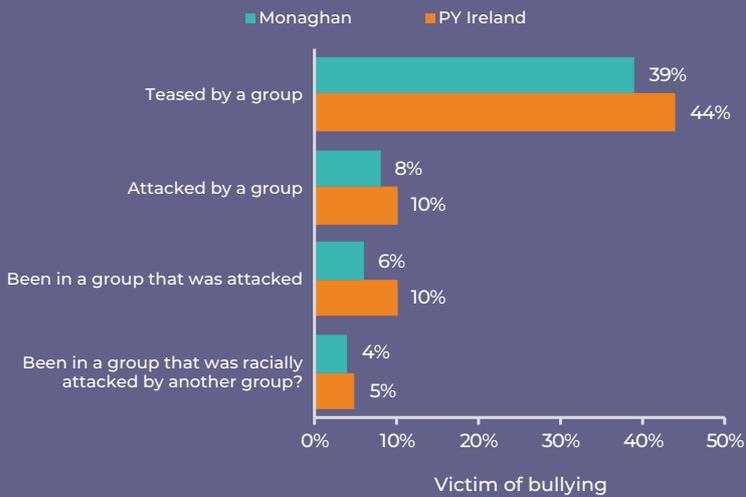


Percentage of adolescents in Monaghan who say the following statements applied to them once or more in the past 12 months



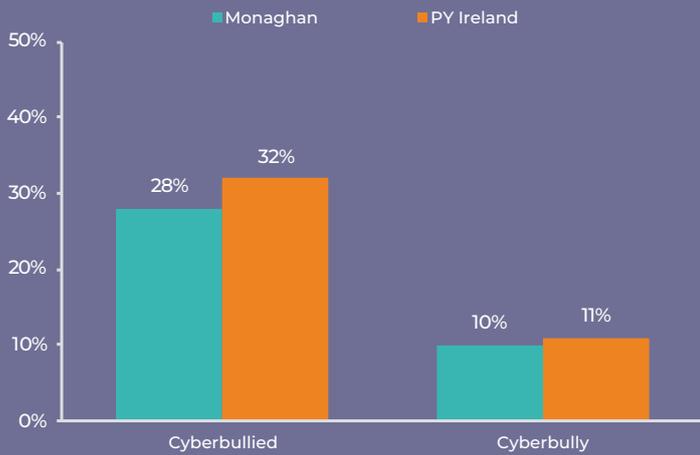
Note: chart scale total is less than 100%

Percentage of adolescents in Monaghan who have been bullied or participated in bullying in the past 12 months



Note: chart scale total is less than 100%

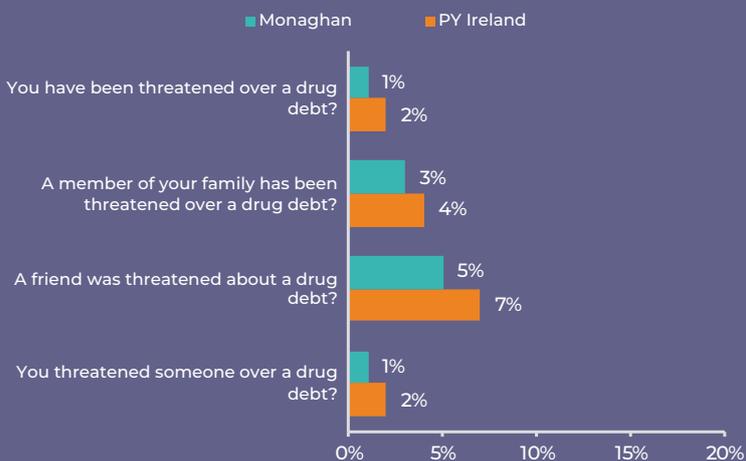
Percentage of adolescents in Monaghan who have experienced cyberbullying or have been a participant in cyberbullying once or more in their lifetime



Note: chart scale total is less than 100%

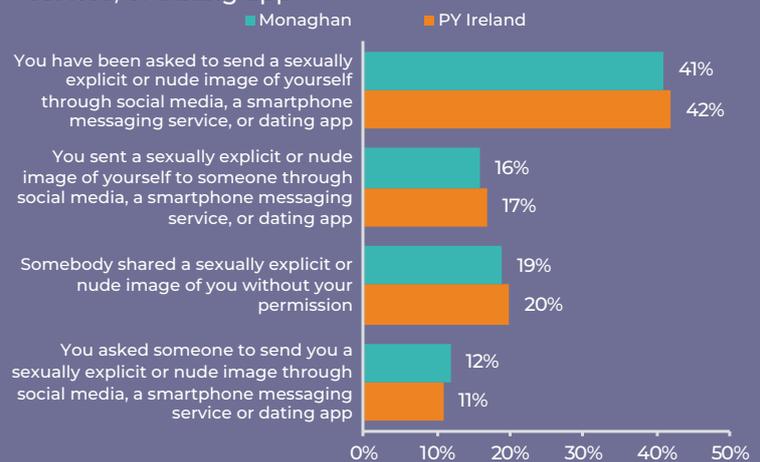


Percentage of adolescents in Monaghan who say the following has happened once or more in their lifetime



Note: chart scale total is less than 100%

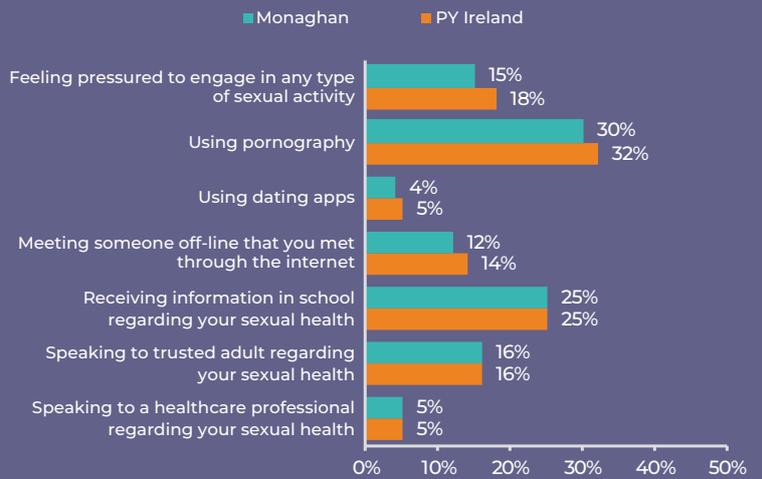
Percentage of adolescents in Monaghan who have been asked to send, have sent or received sexual explicit or nude images through social media, a smartphone messaging service, or dating app



Note: chart scale total is less than 100%

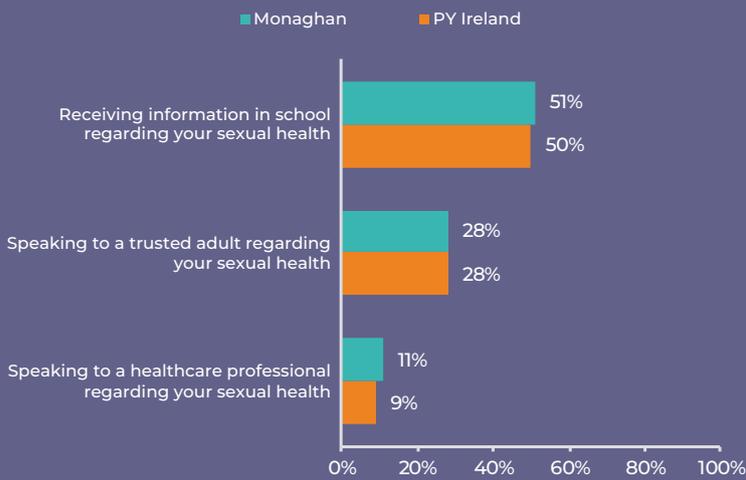


Percentage of adolescents in Monaghan who report the following applied to them once or more in the past 12 months

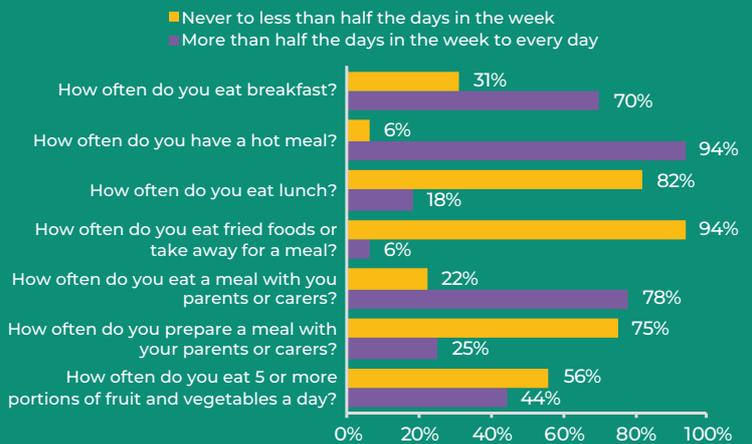


Note: chart scale total is less than 100%

Percentage of adolescents in Monaghan who report the following applied to them once or more in their lifetime



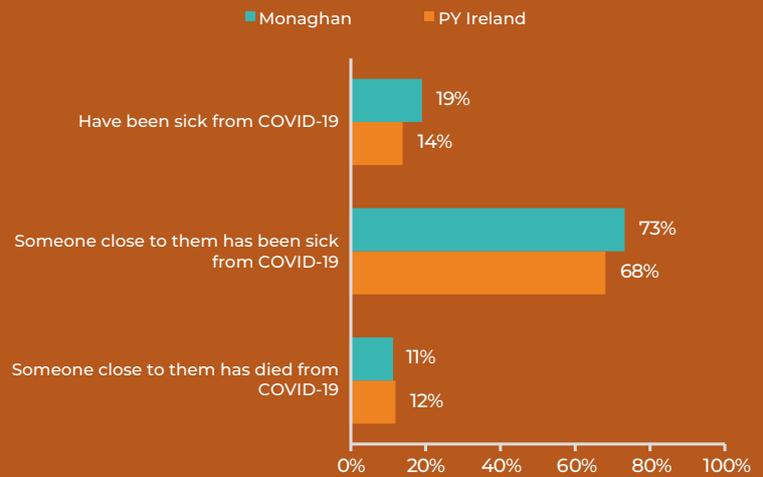
Percentage of adolescents in Monaghan who report how the following statements about their diet apply to them



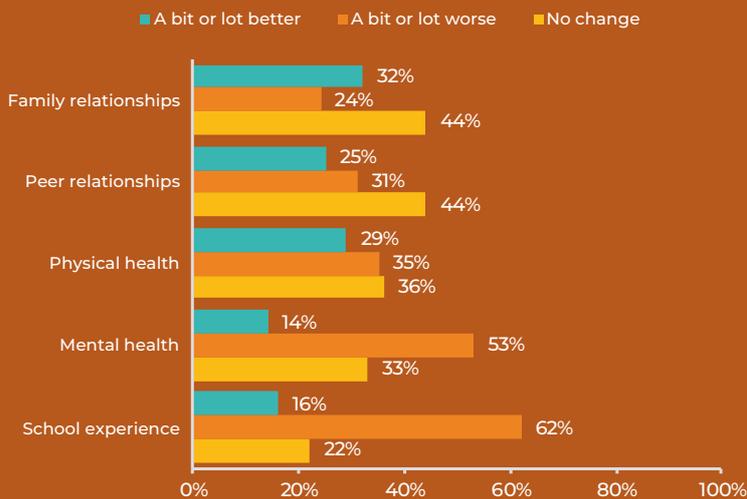
Cross Tabulations

COVID-19

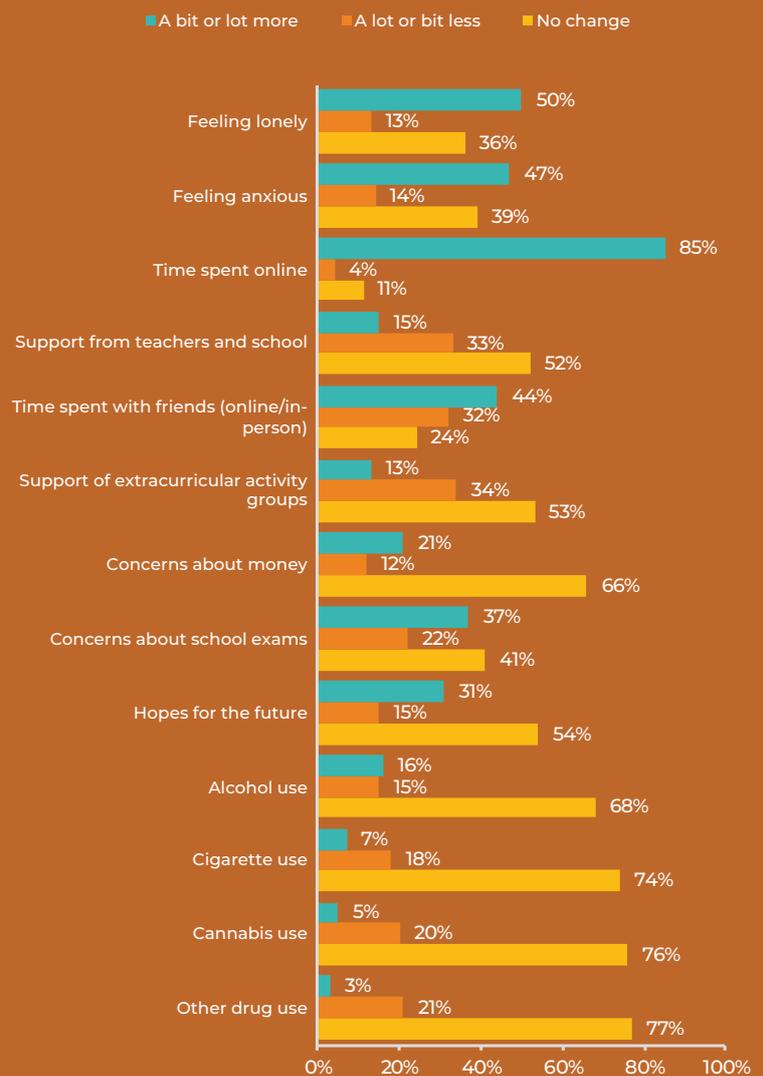
Percentage of adolescents in Monaghan who report they have been sick from COVID-19, or anyone close to them has been sick or died from COVID-19



Adolescents in Monaghan report how COVID-19 affected the following areas of life



Adolescents in Monaghan report how COVID-19 affected the following areas of life



5 CONCLUSION

There are a lot of positive findings to report from the survey. The majority of young people have good relationships with their parents and report being happy and safe in their schools and communities. Additionally, parent and family factors scored very highly with strong connections between parents and high levels of parental care. These protective factors should all be utilised in primary prevention.

A broad societal tolerance towards underage alcohol use is apparent in the findings. Alcohol consumption seems to be an integral part of Irish social life and this is accepted by most people. Alcohol plays an important role in social, cultural and sporting activities. This acceptance permeates into adolescent behaviour and decision-making and norms and needs to be challenged.

Regular participation in sports and other extracurricular activities should be a protective factor for all substances but that is not the case in Monaghan when it comes to alcohol use. Consideration needs to be given as to why this is the case. The degree and nature of substance use is not inevitable but depends upon the configuration of risk versus protective factors in the environment a young person grows up in. The Planet Youth primary prevention model offers an opportunity to address these issues.

This 2021 survey was conducted during the COVID19 pandemic, and it gives a unique insight into the lives of our young people during this period. It is clear the pandemic is having a measurable and significant effect on issues like mood, mental health, screen use, sleep, physical activity and substance use rates.

6

KEY MESSAGES

Parents and Families

- High percentages of students say it's easy to receive caring and warmth from their parents. Parental caring and warmth are a protective factor for mental health. Those with high levels of parental warmth are five times more likely to report positive mental health.
- About half of the adolescents agree or strongly agree that their parents set rules about what they can do at home and outside the home teenagers with low level parental monitoring are up to 5 times more likely to engage in alcohol and/or substance misuse

School

- High proportions of young people feel safe within school environment and agree that they have friends at school that care about them. High rates express that the adults in school notice when they are having a hard time and offer to help.
- Teenagers getting 7 hours or less sleep are reporting poorer mental health, self-esteem and school engagement.

Leisure Time and Local Communities

- Access to a range of supervised leisure activities is a protective factor and reduces risk behaviours and associated dangers
- Teenagers that report high levels of unsupervised leisure time regularly are 6 times more likely to use cannabis. It's important that teens have access to organised sports and other constructive leisure time activities to promote positive life choices and wellbeing.

Peer Group and Wellbeing

- The most common way for teenagers to access alcohol is through their parent or carer supplying it to them. Those in parental roles can make a huge difference to the long-term health and wellbeing of our children by agreeing not to supply alcohol to teenagers in our homes.
- Four hours or more of daily social media use creates significant risk for problems associated with sleep, mood and self-esteem. Undisturbed sleep is important for development and between 8 and 10 hours is recommended. Limiting social media and screen use and keeping screens out of bedrooms at night will really help.
- 90% of young people in Monaghan rate their physical health as good and 75% rate their mental health as good.

7

RECOMMENDATIONS AND SUGGESTED ACTIONS

Improve parental knowledge of the impact of alcohol and other drugs

1. Parent information evenings in schools can highlight the preventative impact of family factors using local survey findings.
2. Provide parent educational programs related to the impact of alcohol and other drugs on their teen's developing brain.
3. Connect families to existing family support and services in their community.
4. Initiate regular ongoing information communications and reminders through social media, text alerts and mailings.
5. Ensure parents can identify and access educational and treatment resources related to substance use.

Utilise the strong connections and communication between young people and their parents

1. Encourage parents to spend more quality time with their children each week.
2. Encourage perceptions of the quality and value of time spent with family members.
3. Support parents to be more engaged with their teens, get to know their peers, where they like spending time and what they are doing.
4. Have clear and consistent parental messaging about expectations and setting boundaries related to substances.
5. Every young person in Monaghan should be able to identify one good adult in their life that they can rely on for help and advice.

Strengthen collaboration and connections between families

1. Increase social cohesion amongst families through shared activities and communications.
2. Increase parental co-monitoring/co-communication about their children's activities and whereabouts.
3. Promote parental cohesion to agree on common goals and behavioural limits for their children.
4. Develop a network of parents to provide regular input and advice to other parents.
5. Develop consistent messages regarding substances and encourage parents to share these with their adolescents.

Improve parental knowledge of the impact of unstructured leisure time on substance use

1. Conduct parent, policymaker, and other community member meetings in locality that use local survey findings to demonstrate the preventive impact of leisure time factors on substance use.
2. Increase opportunities for structured and organised leisure time activities.
3. Raise municipal and area-based funding for organised activities.
4. Make organised leisure time activities accessible to all children.
5. Increase the number and range of leisure time options to reflect a wide range of children's interests and cultures.
6. Provide safe and healthy places for adolescents to spend time and engage with each other.
7. Increase availability of area-based youth clubs for all ages.
8. Decrease the number of unstructured and unmonitored leisure time hours among adolescents.

Increase knowledge of peer factors related to substance use

1. Conduct parent meetings in schools that use local survey findings to demonstrate the impact of peer factors on substance use.
2. Use local survey findings to describe peer norms related to substance use amongst young people.
3. Provide student education workshops focused on building prosocial peer relationships and peer support for positive substance-related decision-making.

Utilise and develop parental networks

1. Seek to develop parental networks. Strengthen the knowledge amongst parents of the protective value of collaboration.
2. Increase the number of parent-supervised activities that include children's friends.
3. Increase the number of family-to-family activities.
4. Increase rates of parents attending student events featuring their children and their children's friends.
5. Encourage peer group attendance at structured and supervised leisure time activities.
6. Encourage peer group attendance in structured and supervised youth centres.
7. Champion adult and teen role models demonstrating prosocial relationships and choices at home, at school, through sport and in the community.
8. Increase volunteer opportunities for young people.

Decrease peer-facilitated access to alcohol and other substances

1. Increase associations with prosocial peers and decrease associations with peers using substances.
2. Monitor outlets and enforce laws related to the sale of alcohol and tobacco to minors.
3. Reduce access to substances in the home.
4. Create a culture that supports delaying the use of alcohol and other drugs.
5. Use parent, school and community meetings to demonstrate the importance of reasonable limits around late outside hours.

Promote positive mental health

1. Encourage awareness of wellbeing and benefit of engagement.
2. Actively promote activities and social connection opportunities that support good mental health.
3. Increased awareness and understanding on substance misuse and non engagement on mental health.
4. Promote a culture where social media misuse and bullying in all its forms is challenged.

Promote Interagency collaboration

1. Build on existing structures that allow collaboration and joint planning to achieve shared outcomes and goals such as the Children and Young Peoples Services Committees, Local Community Development Committees, Drug and Alcohol Forums, Connecting for Life, Joint Policing Committees, and ensure that the Planet Youth findings and prioritised actions are incorporated in county/regional strategic plans etc.
2. Support collaborative approaches to long term funding applications that will provide resources to achieve sustainable outcomes.

Enhance opportunities for participation

1. Encourage children and young people from all communities to actively participate in structures to ensure their voice is being heard.
2. Support parents to actively engage and communicate with organisations in a holistic and impartial manner.
3. Promote community centered approach and encourage volunteering as a means of developing vibrant communities.

8

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Planet Youth model was developed by the Icelandic Centre for Social Research and Analysis (ICSRA) at Reykjavik University. It is a collaborative programme and involves a broad range of stakeholders, all of whom have contributed to the development of this project.

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Finally, a big thank you to all the principals, staff & pupils of the 25 post primary schools and Youthreach Centres for facilitating the survey. Without your support, Planet Youth would not be possible.

Appendices

1. Organisational Partners

Name of member	Organisation / sector
Cavan and Monaghan Planet Youth Working Group	
Maureen McIntyre	<i>Cavan & Monaghan Education and Training Board and Site Lead</i>
Andy Ogle	<i>North Eastern Regional Drug Task Force and Chairperson of Working Group</i>
Stephanie Kane	<i>North Eastern Regional Drug Task Force</i>
Ste Corrigan	<i>Cavan Children and Young People's Services Committee</i>
Collette Deeney	<i>Monaghan Children and Young People's Services Committee</i>
Caolan Faux	<i>Youth Work Ireland Cavan Monaghan</i>

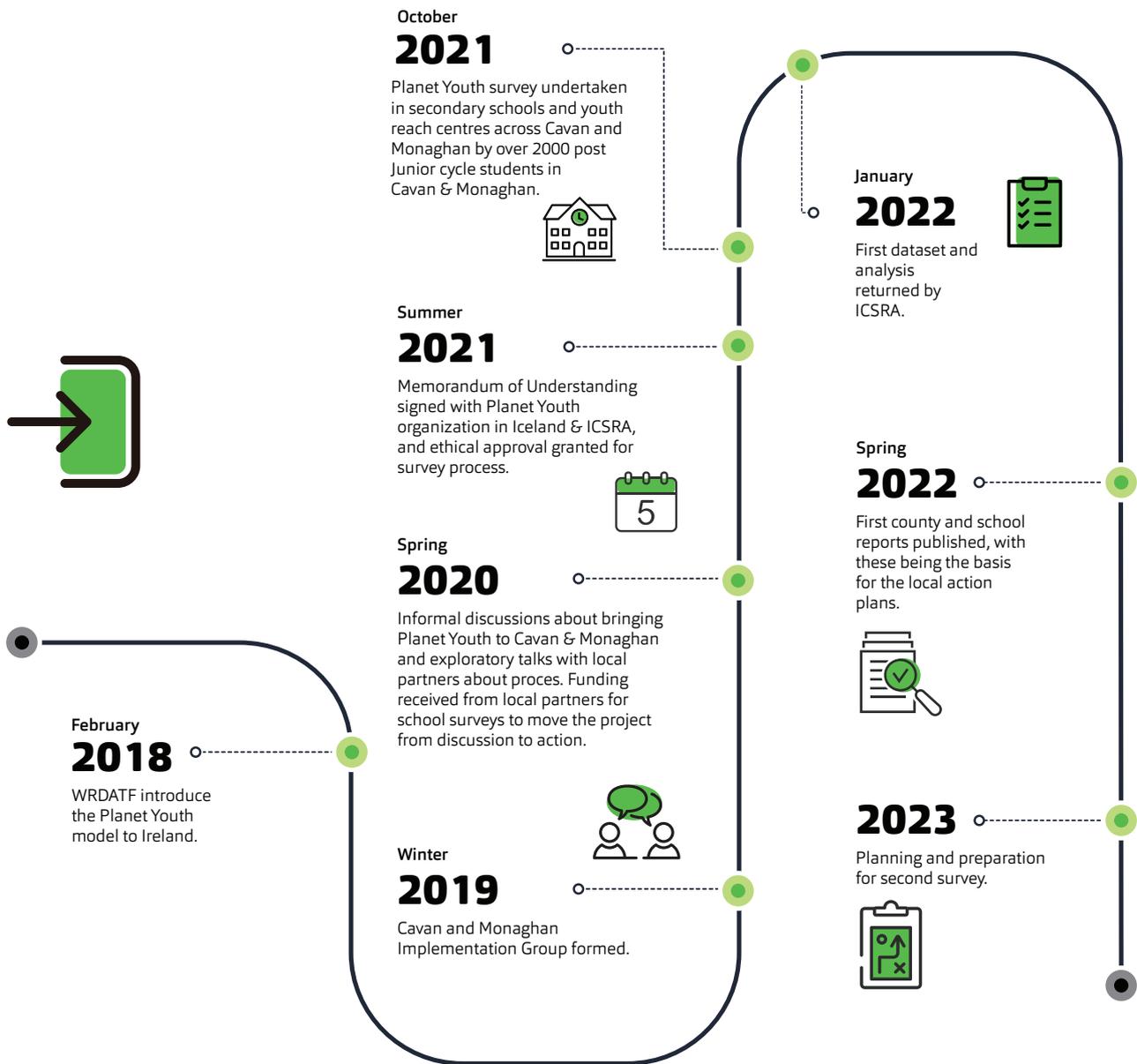
Research Partners

Professor Mary Cannon	<i>MB BCh BAO, FRCPsych, MSc, PhD</i>
Dr. Emmet Power	<i>MB BCh BAO MRCPsych MCPsychI</i>

Planet Youth EHF Officer for Cavan and Monaghan

Erla Maria Jonsdottir Tolgyes	<i>Chief Project Officer, Planet Youth Cavan & Monaghan</i>
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2. Road Map



planetyouthpartner.ie/cavan-monaghan

www.planetyouth.org

