

26 March 2019

SB 11/2019



National Survey for Wales 2017-18: Child Lifestyles (ages 3-7) – Diet and Physical Activity

The National Survey for Wales includes some information about diet and physical activity in children. All results in this bulletin relate to children aged 3 to 7, based on answers from a parent / guardian.

87%

ate **fruit**
every day



68%

ate
vegetables
every day

5%

drank **sugary**
soft drinks
every day



13%

drank **diet** soft
drinks every
day

6%

were not
active on
any day of
the week



65%

were active
seven days a
week

About this bulletin

This bulletin provides information about the diet and physical activity of children aged 3 to 7 living in Wales from the National Survey for Wales in 2017-18. Some initial results were published in June 2018.

The full questionnaire is available on the [National Survey web pages](#).

Additional tables can be accessed via [StatsWales](#).

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Fruit and vegetable consumption

At a glance:

87 per cent of children aged 3-7 ate fruit and 68 per cent ate vegetables every day. Children in the least deprived areas were more likely to eat vegetables every day than those in the most deprived areas. The percentage of children eating fruit every day fluctuated with deprivation.

Figure 1: Percentage of children who ate fruit and vegetables every day, by gender

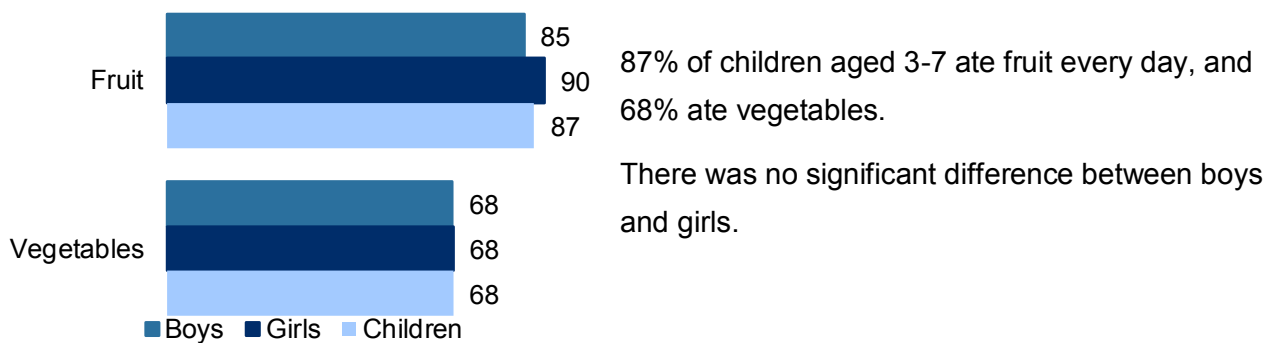
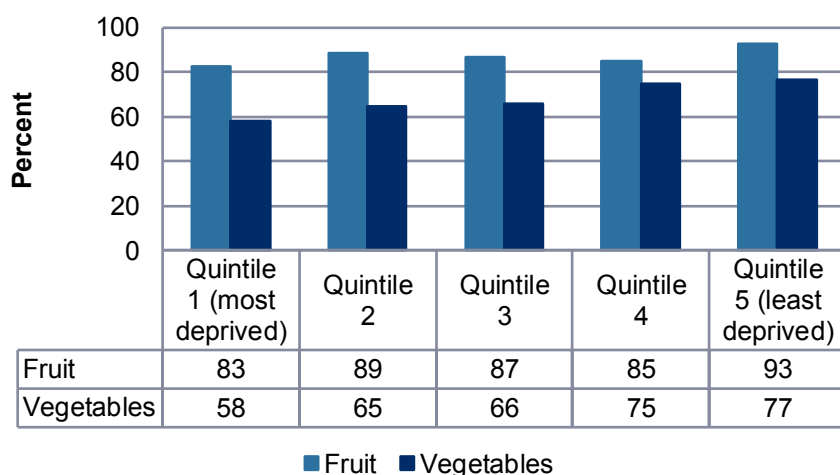


Figure 2: Percentage of children who ate fruit and vegetables every day, by area deprivation



Across WIMD quintiles, there were no statistically significant differences in the proportion of children eating fruit every day.

Children in the least deprived areas were more likely to eat vegetables every day than those in the most deprived areas

Children who ate fruit and vegetables every day, by health board

There was little difference across Wales in the proportion of children eating fruit and vegetables every day - the differences between children living in different health boards were not statistically significant.¹

Children who ate fruit and vegetables every day, by year

There was no significant difference between 2016-17 and 2017-18 in the proportion of children aged 3-7 who ate fruit and vegetables every day.

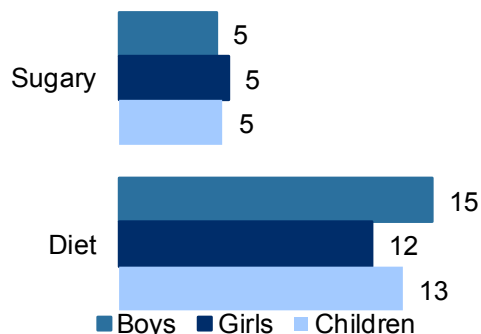
¹ Based on two years of combined data (2016-17 and 2017-18). See [Local health board estimates](#) for further information.

Consumption of sugary and diet soft drinks

At a glance:

5 per cent of children aged 3-7 drank sugary soft drinks every day and 13 per cent drank diet soft drinks every day. Consumption of sugary and diet drinks fluctuated with levels of deprivation.

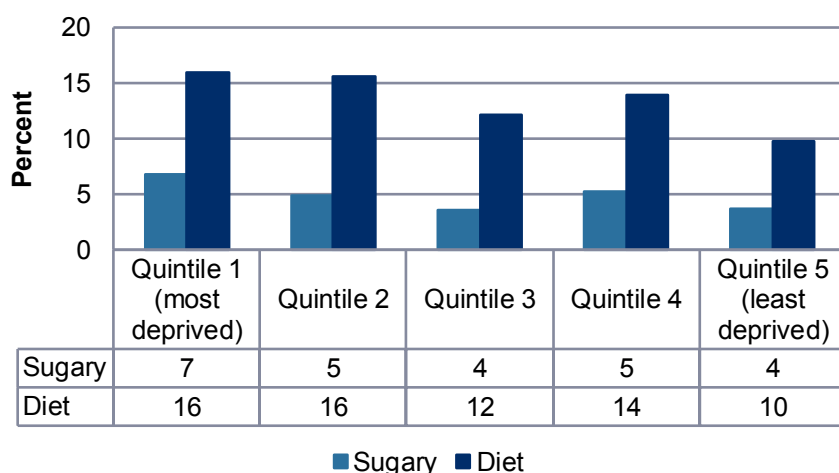
Figure 3: Percentage of children who drank sugary or diet soft drinks every day, by gender



5% of children aged 3-7 drank sugary soft drinks every day, and 13% drank diet soft drinks.

There was no significant difference between boys and girls.

Figure 4: Percentage of children who drank sugary or diet soft drinks every day, by area deprivation



The consumption of sugary and diet drinks by children fluctuated across levels of deprivation. The differences were not statistically significant.

Children who drank sugary or diet soft drinks every day, by health board²

There was little difference across Wales in the proportion of children drinking sugary or diet soft drinks every day. However, the proportion of children drinking diet soft drinks in Cardiff & Vale Health Board (9 per cent) was lower than that in Powys Teaching Health Board (22 per cent) and Cwm Taf Health Board (25 per cent).

Children who drank sugary or diet soft drinks every day, by year

There was no significant difference between 2016-17 and 2017-18 in the proportion of children who drank sugary or diet soft drinks every day.

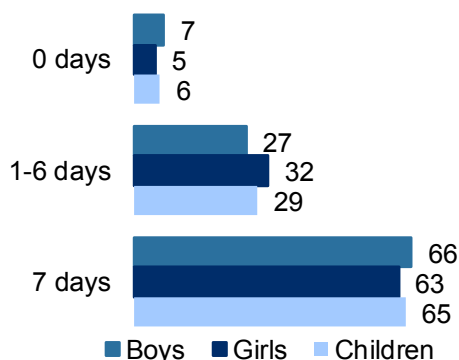
² Based on two years of combined data (2016-17 and 2017-18). See [Local health board estimates](#) for further information.

Physical activity

At a glance:

65 per cent of children aged 3-7 were active for at least an hour seven days a week. Physical activity fluctuated with levels of deprivation.

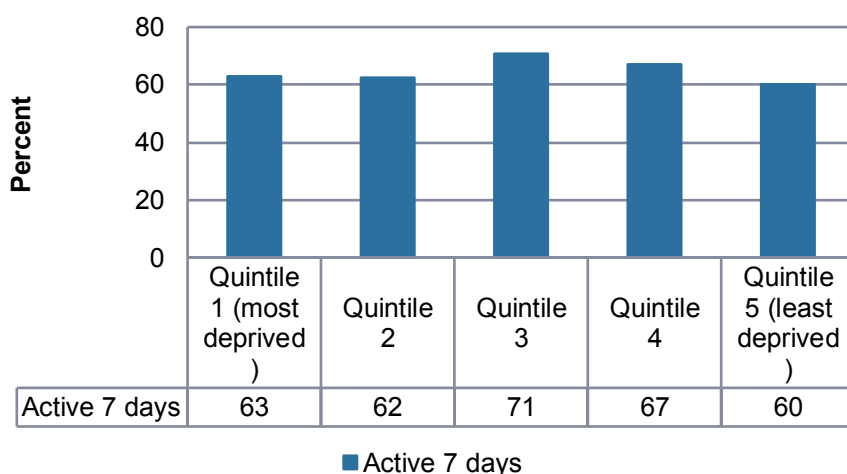
Figure 5: Percentage of children who were active, by number of days in week and gender



65% of children aged 3-7 were active for at least one hour seven days in the previous week. 6% were not active on any days.

There was no significant difference between boys and girls.

Figure 6: Percentage of children who were active for at least one hour every day, by area deprivation



The proportion of children who were active for at least one hour every day fluctuated across levels of deprivation

Children who were active for at least one hour every day, by health board.³

There was little difference across Wales in the proportion of children who were active for at least one hour every day - the differences between children living in different health boards were not statistically significant.

Children who were active for at least one hour every day, by year

There was no significant difference between 2016-17 and 2017-18 in the proportion of children who were active for at least one hour every day.

³ Based on two years of combined data (2016-17 and 2017-18). See [Local health board estimates](#) for further information.

Summary table: Reported diet and physical activity of children aged 3-7 in Wales, 2017-18 (a)

Per cent

	Ate fruit every day	Ate veg every day	Consumed sugary drinks every day	Consumed diet drinks every day	Not active for at least one hour on any day of the week	Active for at least 1 hour between one and six days a week	Active for at least 1 hour seven days a week
All	87	68	5	13	6	29	65
By gender:							
Boys	85	68	5	15	7	27	66
Girls	90	68	5	12	5	32	63
By WIMD deprivation quintile:							
Quintile 1 (most deprived)	83	58	7	16	10	28	63
Quintile 2	89	65	5	16	4	34	62
Quintile 3	87	66	4	12	6	23	71
Quintile 4	85	75	5	14	6	26	67
Quintile 5 (least deprived)	93	77	4	10	4	36	60
By Local Health Board (b):							
Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board	87	69	7	13	8	30	63
Powys Teaching Health Board	90	74	6	22	6	25	69
Hywel Dda University Health Board	89	69	3	12	9	24	68
Abertawe Bro Morgannwg University Health Board	87	66	4	18	9	27	64
Cwm Taf University Health Board	79	58	7	25	6	33	61
Aneurin Bevan University Health Board	85	68	4	12	7	30	63
Cardiff & Vale University Health Board	89	70	6	9	8	32	60
By year:							
2016-17 (c)	86	67	6	15	9	29	62
2017-18	87	68	5	13	6	29	65

National Survey for Wales, 2017-18

(a) See definitions.

(b) Figures for Local Health Boards are based on two years of data combined (2016-17 and 2017-18).

(c) Figures for 2016-17 are based on children aged 3-7 (they will therefore differ from those published previously which were for ages 3-17).

Definitions

The results in this bulletin are based on parents/guardians understanding of their child's health-related behaviours. This can be a complex area to measure and there may be some differences between what parents report and what their children do. However, survey data still provides a reasonable means of comparing patterns for these behaviours between groups and over time. All results in this bulletin are for children aged 3-7. In 2017-18, the questions were asked for children aged 3-7, while in 2016-17, questions were asked for children aged 3-17. Selected results for 2016-17 for just those children aged 3-7 are included in this bulletin for comparison.

Fruit and vegetable consumption

The survey asked parents/guardians questions about their child's consumption of fruit and vegetables to determine how frequently they were consumed in a week.

One question was asked on fruit and one on vegetables. Respondents were asked how many times a week their child ate fruit or vegetables. Responses were then categorised into 'more than once a day', 'every day', '5-6 days a week', '2-4 days a week', 'once a week', 'Less than once a week', 'rarely' or 'never'

Soft drinks

The survey asked parents/guardians questions about their child's consumption of diet drinks as well as soft drinks that contain sugar to determine how frequently they were consumed in a week.

One question was asked on diet coke and other low sugar drinks and one on coke and other soft drinks containing sugar. Respondents were asked how many times a week their child consumed these types of drinks. Responses were then categorised into 'more than once a day', 'every day', '5-6 days a week', '2-4 days a week', 'once a week', 'Less than once a week' and 'rarely or never'.

Physical activity

Physical activity [guidelines](#) recommend that children should be active for at least 60 minutes a day, seven days a week.

The survey asked parents/guardians questions about their child's activity and asked them to report on the amount of time their child was active on each day in the previous seven days. Parents were informed that "exercising" included any physical activity that left their child feeling warm or at least slightly out of breath and that this would include activities such as playing sport, cycling, running or brisk walking and included exercise done at school, outside school, with a club, with friends or on their own.

Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation

The Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation (WIMD) is used as the official measure of deprivation in Wales. Deprivation is a wider concept than poverty. Deprivation refers to wider problems caused by a lack of resources and opportunities. The WIMD is constructed from eight different types of deprivation. These are: income, housing, employment, access to services, education, health, community safety and physical environment. Wales is divided into, 1,909 Lower-Layer Super Output Areas (LSOA) each having about 1,600 people. Deprivation ranks have been worked out for each of these areas: the most deprived LSOA is ranked 1, and the least deprived 1,909. Respondents to the survey have been split into five groups based on the LSOA they live in (with 20% of LSOAs allocated to each group), and results are compared for the most and least deprived.

Key quality information

Comparability with results from former Welsh Health Survey

The National Survey for Wales has replaced the Welsh Health Survey as a source of data on health-related lifestyle among children. Results from the two surveys are not comparable due to the change in survey methodology. A source of information on health-related lifestyle among adolescents is [Health Behaviour in School-aged Children](#).

Background

The National Survey for Wales 2017-18 was carried out by the Office for National Statistics on behalf of the Welsh Government. The results reported in this bulletin are based on interviews completed in 2017-18 (1 April 2017 – 31st March 2018).

23,517 addresses were chosen randomly from the Royal Mail's Small User Postcode Address File. Interviewers visited each address, randomly selected one adult (aged 16+) in the household, and carried out a 45-minute face-to-face interview with them, covering a range of views, behaviours, and characteristics. A total of 11,381 interviews were achieved with a response rate of 54.5 per cent. The survey asked parents/guardians questions about a child in the household. If there was more than one child aged 3-7 in the household, then one child was randomly selected as the subject of questions on diet and physical activity. These questions were answered for around 1,000 children. In 2017-18, the questions were asked for children aged 3-7, while in 2016-17, questions were asked for children aged 3-17.

Interpreting the results

Percentages quoted in this release are based on only those parents who provided an answer to the relevant question. Missing answers occur for several reasons, including refusal or an inability to answer a particular question and cases where the question is not applicable to the respondent.

The results of the National Survey are weighted to compensate for unequal selection probabilities and differential non-response (i.e. to ensure that the age and sex distribution of the final dataset matches that of the Welsh population).

Quality report

A summary [quality report](#) is available, containing more detailed information on the quality of the survey as well as a summary of the methods used to compile the results.

Technical report

More detailed information on the survey methodology is set out in the [technical report](#) for the survey.

Sampling variability

Estimates from the National Survey are subject to a margin of uncertainty. Part of the uncertainty comes from the fact that any randomly-selected sample of the population will give slightly different results from the results that would be obtained if the whole population was surveyed. This is known

as sampling error.⁴ Confidence intervals can be used as a guide to the size of the sampling error. These intervals are calculated around a survey estimate and give a range within which the true value is likely to fall. In 95 per cent of survey samples, the 95 per cent confidence interval will contain the 'true' figure for the whole population (that is, the figure we would get if the survey covered the entire population). In general, the smaller the sample size the wider the confidence interval. Confidence intervals are included in the tables of survey results published on [StatsWales](#).

As with any survey, the National Survey is also subject to a range of other sources of error: for example, due to non-response; because respondents may not interpret the questions as intended or may not answer accurately; and because errors may be introduced as the survey data is processed. These kinds of error are known as non-sampling error, and are discussed further in the [quality report](#) for the survey.

Local health board estimates

Sample sizes for questions on child physical activity and diet for local health boards are relatively small, therefore two years of data (2016-17 and 2017-18) have been combined to increase the sample size and improve precision. Even so, it should be noted that the sample size for some areas is still relatively small. Sample sizes are shown in the StatsWales tables, along with 95 per cent confidence intervals to give an indication of the precision of results.

National Statistics status

The [United Kingdom Statistics Authority](#) has designated these statistics as National Statistics, in accordance with the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007 and signifying compliance with the [Code of Practice for Statistics](#).

National Statistics status means that official statistics meet the highest standards of trustworthiness, quality and public value.

All official statistics should comply with all aspects of the Code of Practice for Statistics. They are awarded National Statistics status following an assessment by the UK Statistics Authority's regulatory arm. The Authority considers whether the statistics meet the highest standards of Code compliance, including the value they add to public decisions and debate.

It is Welsh Government's responsibility to maintain compliance with the standards expected of National Statistics. If we become concerned about whether these statistics are still meeting the appropriate standards, we will discuss any concerns with the Authority promptly. National Statistics status can be removed at any point when the highest standards are not maintained, and reinstated when standards are restored.

Well-being of Future Generations Act (WFG)

The Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015 is about improving the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales. The Act puts in place seven well-being goals for Wales. These are for a more equal, prosperous, resilient, healthier and globally responsible Wales,

⁴ Sampling error is discussed in more detail in the [Quality Report](#) for the National Survey.

with cohesive communities and a vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language. Under section (10)(1) of the Act, the Welsh Ministers must (a) publish indicators (“national indicators”) that must be applied for the purpose of measuring progress towards the achievement of the Well-being goals, and (b) lay a copy of the national indicators before the National Assembly. The 46 national indicators were laid in March 2016.

Information on the indicators, along with narratives for each of the well-being goals and associated technical information is available in the [Well-being of Wales report](#).

Further information on the [Well-being of Future Generations \(Wales\) Act 2015](#).

The statistics included in this bulletin could also provide supporting narrative to the national indicators and be used by public services boards in relation to their local well-being assessments and local well-being plans.

Release policy

Information about the process for releasing new results is available from the [Welsh Government's statistics web pages](#), including information on our [revisions policy](#).

Availability of datasets

The data behind the charts and tables in this release are published on [StatsWales](#). An anonymised version of the annual datasets (from which some information is removed to ensure confidentiality is preserved), together with supporting documentation, will be deposited with the UK Data Archive. For more information, please contact us (see below).

Further details

The document is available at:

<https://gov.wales/child-lifestyle-national-survey-wales-april-2017-march-2018>

Next update

To be confirmed

We want your feedback

We welcome any feedback on any aspect of these statistics which can be provided by email to stats.healthinfo@gov.wales

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